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AN ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING PROCESSES IN SELECTED COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE STATE OF OHIO

The Ohio State University

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AN ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING PROCESSES
IN SELECTED COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE STATE OF OHIO

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

by
Lorraine N. Carpenter, B.M., M.M.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1984

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Dr. Luvern L. Cunningham
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DEDICATION

To my parents,
Benton and Regina Carpenter,
who instilled in me the love of learning
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Although it is impossible to recognize all the individuals who have contributed to my personal and professional development, I do wish to express my deepest gratitude to some very special people. Among them are: Dr. Luvern Cunningham, my advisor, for his continuous and expert guidance, support, patience, and encouragement in all my efforts, for his exemplary contributions to the field of educational administration, and for the very special opportunity to work as his Graduate Research Associate for two years; Dr. William Moore, Jr., for his substantive reactions and suggestions and for his unselfish kindness as my mentor; Dr. Randy Bobbitt, Jr., for his uncanny ability to make order out of my confusion and for being the inspiration for my dissertation, and the entire Academic Faculty of Educational Administration, especially Dr. Jack Culbertson, Dr. Joe Davis, and Dr. Brad Mitchell, for their continuing interest and concern.

I am especially grateful to the four community college presidents and the twelve other community college administrators for their willingness to participate in this study and for their generous sharing of knowledge, experience, and time. Dr. Max Lerner was also most helpful and cooperative in permitting me to pilot test the questionnaire.

At the Mershon Center, special thanks are extended to Dr. Charles Hermann, Director, for his optimistic support; Dr. Robert Woyack for his insightful suggestions and contributions to my Dissertation Proposal;
and Wendy Coons and Peggy Robinson for their laughter and friendship.

It is with deepest appreciation and thanksgiving that I recognize those whose enduring friendships have made me persevere through these times. Among these are Terry Mayberry, Dennis Brown, Ginger Wright, and Craig Cloer who never failed to believe in my abilities and to encourage my efforts; Helena Ferguson, Mary Ann Dempsey, Joyce McCabe, and Theresa Powell for "being there" to share my triumphs and woes and to lend assistance whenever needed; Dr. Richard Cox from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and Dr. Thomas Fulcher from Mitchell Community College in Statesville, North Carolina, whose continuing support and encouragement are most valued; Dr. Dewey Adams and Dr. Kirby Barrick for their assistance in the very early formulation stage of my dissertation; Meg Peters and Kathy Shonkwiler for their assistance; and the many friends whose telephone calls, cards, and letters meant so much.

Finally, I extend thanks to my parents and to my brothers, Jerry, Earl, and Harvey, and their families who have provided loving support through the years.
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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

With the onset of the decade of the 1980s, institutions of higher education were confronted with significant changes in their environments. These changes were highlighted by a substantial decrease in the enrollment of students from among the 18 to 21 year old age group, the dwindling of public financial support for post-secondary institutions, and an inflated and lethargic economy (Young, 1981). These changes have created a major need for administrators of institutions of higher education to become more responsive to the external environment. In order for organizations to adapt to these changes, one mechanism that has been used to establish responsiveness to such problems is strategic decision making. One useful component of these strategic decision making processes may be strategic planning as it decreases the complexity of these decision making processes and increases the length of time the decisions are in force. For the purposes of this research, the definition of strategic planning utilized is a combination of the earlier definitions of Drucker and Cooper and Schendel:

Strategic planning is the continuous process of making present entrepreneurial (risk-taking) decisions systematically and with the greatest knowledge of their futurity; organizing systematically the efforts needed to carry out these decisions; measuring the results of these decisions against the expectations through
organized, systematic feedback and establishing
the major patterns of resource allocation to
relate the organization to its environment.
(Drucker, 1974, p. 125; Cooper and Schendel,
1971, p. 23).

Such strategic planning permits the institution: (1) to monitor,
modify, and update its objectives and alternatives, (2) to plan
changes requiring long lead times, (3) to take a proactive stance,
that is, influence the environment rather than merely react to it,
(4) to provide an internal analytical framework for mutual discussion
of the long term development of the institution, and (5) to provide a
sense of development and direction for the institution (Young, 1981).
Strategic planning can also provide the necessary linkage for institu-
tions of higher education to be responsive to external changes and
emerging educational needs while simultaneously maintaining their
survival and vitality in terms of the contributions made.

Strategic planning is not a new concept. Many organizations,
business and others, have used strategic planning to improve their
advantage competitively, balance their mix of products and services,
develop more effective marketing strategies, determine priorities in
capital spending, improve productivity, and enhance their effective-
ness (Bennis, 1974; Churchman, 1974; Crozier, 1974; Ferguson, 1974;
March, 1974; Millon, 1974; Ramstrom, 1974; Whisler, 1974). The exper-
ience of these organizations demonstrates that the development of a
strategic planning process provides an organizational mechanism to
adjust effectively to long term changes in the environment. Since
educational organizations have been remiss in using this organizational
mechanism (Young, 1981), it has been suggested by some that strategic
planning can be an effective interface between the organization and
its external environment.
Background of the Problem

Historically, strategic planning has not been a part of the administrative function of higher education. "Few collegiate leaders are able and willing to focus systematically on change. They are largely taken up in today's operations and results. Making changes in the goals, strategies, and organizational systems usually occur as reactions to crises" (Kotler and Murphy, 1981, pp.470-471). While administrators have been aware of the constantly changing environment, in the absence of strategic planning they have turned to ad hoc reactions and policies that served short-term objectives without regard to long range goals or long range needs. The reactions and policies include, but are not limited to, the continuation of programs beyond their demonstrated need and restrictions on the establishment of new programs. These policies and activities have caused a lack of cost effectiveness, ineffective utilization of human resources, and the possible loss of some political and public support for the institution (Young, 1981).

Although strategic planning has not been a part of the activities of many colleges and universities it should not be inferred that no strategic planning for higher educational institutions has taken place. More specifically, strategic planning has been done at the state and national levels. The states of Ohio and Washington, among others, have written Master Plans. These plans, created as a result of The Community College Act of 1967, mandated that long-range planning shall be conducted as a continuing means of coordinating and stimulating the development of educational programs within the states' community college districts. In 1972, an amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965 emphasized the
strategic responsibility for statewide planning by authorizing states to designate or create State Post-Secondary Commissions for planning in all sectors. These 1202 Commissions have been created in nearly all the fifty states. Regional consortium such as the League of Innovation have also attempted to support strategic planning. While such state and national efforts are worthy of note and have general application for colleges and universities, they frequently have limited application for administrators who make decisions in specific institutions.

Notwithstanding there are arguments against strategic planning. To some it is too mechanical. Those who criticize it maintain that administrators should rely on the faculty and departments to respond spontaneously to changes in the form of new programs (Shils, 1979). Others say it has more merit for private institutions than for public institutions. Still others view higher education as seeing its objectives in a priori, abstract, permanent terms (Young, 1981). Such educational ideals as "quality" might be violated by strategic planning.

The literature reveals the presence of both synoptic and incremental strategic decision processes. In the synoptic strategy formulation process the decision maker uses a systematic method to solve an entire problem. With the incremental strategy formulation process contrarily the decision maker breaks the problem into subproblems that are solved sequentially.

Fredrickson (1983), through modification of previous summaries primarily by Lindblom (1959) and Mintzberg (1973), has provided a detailed comparison of synoptic and incremental strategic decision
processes. As indicated in Table 1, Fredrickson suggests that they differ on at least six major characteristics: (1) motive for initiation, (2) concept of goals, (3) relationship between means (alternatives) and ends (goals), (4) concept of choice, (5) analytic comprehensiveness, and (6) integrative comprehensiveness.

**TABLE 1**

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SYNOPTIC AND INCREMENTAL STRATEGIC DECISION PROCESSES

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<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Synoptic Processes</th>
<th>Incremental Processes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Motive for initiation</td>
<td>The process is initiated in response to problems or opportunities that appear during constant surveillance.</td>
<td>The process is initiated in response to a problem or dissatisfaction with the current state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept of goals</td>
<td>The process is directed at achieving a specified goal or future intended state.</td>
<td>The process is directed at achieving a modification of the current state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between means (alternatives) and ends (goals).</td>
<td>The goal is identified before and independent of the analysis of alternatives. Decision making is an &quot;ends-means&quot; process.</td>
<td>The goal is identified as part of the decision process. Decision making is an &quot;ends-mean&quot; process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept of choice</td>
<td>The final choice of an alternative is dependent on how it contributes to the achievement of the goal. Decision quality is known only when it is shown that this decision provides the best means to the specified goal.</td>
<td>The final choice of an alternative is made by considering the alternatives (means) and their possible consequences (ends) and simultaneously selecting the one that yields the most desired outcome. Decision quality is judged by the agreement achieved in choosing an alternative (the means to the end).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytic comprehensiveness</td>
<td>When making individual decisions the process attempts to be exhaustive in the identification and selection of goals and the generation and evaluation of alternatives. All factors are considered.</td>
<td>Decision quality is assessed based on the agreement achieved in choosing an alternative (the means to the end).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative comprehensiveness</td>
<td>Conscious attempts are made to integrate the decisions that compose the overall strategy to ensure that they reinforce one another. The strategy is viewed as a consciously developed, integrated whole.</td>
<td>Little attempt is made to integrate, consciously, the individual decisions that could possibly affect one another. The strategy is viewed as a loosely linked group of decisions that are handled individually.</td>
</tr>
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aDeveloped by Fredrickson from similar summaries presented by numerous authors, particularly Lindblom (1959) and Mintzberg (1973), p. 566.

From the above Table, it can be seen that strategic decision processes are multidimensional having process initiation, goals, means/ends, choice, and comprehensiveness characteristics. Fredrickson suggests:

not only that organizations employ both synoptic and incremental approaches, but that strategic
processes may be synoptic on some characteristics (e.g., the process is proactively initiated) and simultaneously incremental on others (e.g., decisions are not integrated) all the while assuming conditions that are neither synoptic nor incremental on others (i.e., strategic action is not the result of conscious choice). (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566).

Nutt (1977), Mintzberg (1973), Lorange and Vancil (1977), and Nutt (1976) have also suggested that organizations employ both approaches.

Statement of the Problem

In an effort to increase the ability of administrators in institutions of higher education to become more responsive to changing environments, the theories and practices developed originally for industry seem plausible. Peter Drucker, one of the nation's leading management theorists, suggests that administrators must start by asking the question "What is our business and what should it be?" (Drucker, 1974, p. 49). He further suggests that management also needs to ask "What will it be? What changes in the environment are already discernible that are likely to have high impact on the characteristics, mission, and purpose of our business? and How do we now build these anticipations into our theory of the business, into its objectives, strategies, and work assignments?" (Drucker, 1974, p. 89). "What will our business be?" aims at adaptation to anticipated changes. It aims at modifying, extending, developing the existing, ongoing business. "What should our business be? (focuses) on opportunities (that are) opening up or (that) can be created to fulfill the purpose and mission of the business by making it into a different business?" (Drucker, 1974, p. 92). He further states that:

From the definition of its mission and purpose a business must derive objectives in a number
of key areas; it must balance these objectives against each other and against the competing demands of today and tomorrow. It needs to convert objectives into concrete strategies and to concentrate resources on them. Finally, it needs to think through its strategic planning, i.e., the decisions of today that will make the business of tomorrow (Drucker, 1974, p. 49).

Crucial to strategic planning, he indicates are:

(1) systematic and purposeful work on attaining objectives;

(2) sloughing off yesterday, and that abandonment be planned as part of the systematic attempt to attain tomorrow;

(3) looking for new and different ways to attain objectives rather than believing that doing more of the same will suffice; and finally,

(4) thinking through the time dimensions and asking 'when do we have to start work to get results when we need them' (Drucker, 1974, p. 128).

The manager cannot decide whether he wants to make risk-taking decisions with long futurity; he makes them by the definition of his role. Strategic planning does not substitute facts for judgment, does not lessen the importance and role of managerial ability, courage, experience, intuition, or even hunch. On the contrary, the systematic organization of the planning job and the supply of knowledge to it strengthen the manager's judgment, leadership, and vision (Drucker, 1974, p. 129).

Higher education has been primarily reactive in its response to the environment. The changes in the environment previously mentioned require higher education to take a more proactive role in its relationship with the environment like its industrial counterparts have done. As suggested by Shirley and Caruthers (1979) the development of such a strategic decision process is basically a matching process where internal capabilities, environmental opportunities and constraints, and personal values are integrated. To take such a stance requires
institutions of higher education to become able to match external opportunities with internal strengths if they expect to exercise control over their own destiny. Millett views the external environment as consisting of social expectations, economic trends, demographic trends and governmental planning (Millett, 1978-Original Source, Snowmass Institute, 1983-Secondary Source).

Thus the purpose of this study is to determine the presence, if any, and the type of strategic decision making processes in selected community colleges in the state of Ohio. The researcher will determine if strategic decision making processes exist, who has the responsibility for these processes, what information is sought, and what is done with the information thus obtained. An attempt will then be made to categorize these strategic decision making processes, if any, into the synoptic and incremental types described in the literature.

**Synoptic and Incremental Strategy Formulation Processes**

The synoptic strategy formulation process is "based on principles of rational decision making and assumes that purpose and integration are essential for a firm's long term success" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 565). Employing this process, the decision maker uses a systematic method to solve an entire problem i.e. broad goal setting.

The incremental strategy formulation process posits a step-wise, problem-solving approach in which the decision maker breaks the problem into subproblems that are solved sequentially. "It starts with needs that may only be vaguely sensed at first and incrementally builds the organization's awareness, support, and eventual commitment around new goals" (Quinn, 1980, p. 34) i.e. short term approximations of the future. As indicated earlier, planning processes in a select number
of Ohio community colleges will be compared in terms of six characteristics of strategic decision processes. A brief description of each characteristic follows.

**Motive for Initiation**

*Synoptic.* "The process is initiated in response to problems or opportunities that appear during constant surveillance" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). Cyert and March (1963), Aharoni (1966), and Steinbruner (1974) have suggested a problem-oriented motive for initiation. Carter (1971) stated that strategic decision processes may also be initiated as a result of an opportunity seeking strategy. A compromise between the exploitation of opportunities and a reaction to problems and crises has been argued by Mintzberg, Raisinghani, and Theoret (1976).

*Incremental.* "The process is initiated in response to a problem or dissatisfaction with the current state" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). In the three "modes" of strategy making delineated by Mintzberg (1973), he points out that each is initiated in response to a different set of variables. The "planning" mode is characterized as allowing an organization to be proactive in seeking opportunities and identifying problems. Hambrick and Snow differ with this view suggesting that although the motive for strategic decision making may arise from a formal planning process, it is "just as likely to arise for reasons of opportunism or environmental pressure" (Hambrick and Snow, 1977, p. 100).

**Concept of Goals**

*Synoptic.* "The process is directed at achieving a specified goal or future intended state" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). The prime
consideration is determining what role goals actually play. Lathan and Yukl (1975), Mitchell (1979), and Steers and Porter (1974), have noted the motivational and performance benefits of goals at operating levels.

Incremental. "The process is directed at achieving a modification of the current state. The process is 'remedial'" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). In the work of Cyert and March (1963) and later expanded by Simon (1964), it is suggested that goals "actually serve as a series of independent 'constraints' imposed by coalition members during bargaining" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 567). Wrapp (1967) and Quinn (1977) argue that good executives should avoid committing themselves to specific goals "because they make it difficult to shift direction and they limit subordinates' perceptions of opportunities" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 567). Braybrooke and Lindblom (1970) argue that since organizations do not have a precise idea of what they want to achieve, "they make incremental, remedial moves away from the status quo" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 568). His view is like Mintzberg's (1973) "adaptive" mode, as organizations are not goal-directed in a "positive" sense.

Relationship Between Means and Ends

Synoptic. "The goal is identified before and independent of the analysis of alternatives. Decision making is an 'ends-means' process" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). Initially the ends are isolated; the means to achieve them are then sought (Lindblom, 1959).

Incremental. "The remedial change outcome is considered at the same time the means for achieving it is analyzed. The processes are intertwined and simultaneous" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). Simon (1945) supported this stating that since all decisions have interdependent
fact (means) and value (ends) elements, it is unrealistic to separate the consideration of means and ends. Lindblom (1959) similarly suggested that since most decisions have multiple components, and various alternatives may impact the components differently, the consideration of means and of ends cannot be separated.

Concept of Choice

Synoptic. "The final choice of an alternative is dependent on how it contributes to the achievement of the goal. Decision quality is known only when it is shown that this decision provides the best means to the specified goal" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). "Child's (1972) concept of 'strategic choice' is fundamental to the strategic management area" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 568).

Incremental. "The final choice of an alternative is made by combining the considered alternatives (means) and their possible consequences (ends) and simultaneously selecting the one that yields the most desired outcome. Decision quality is judged by the agreement achieved in choosing an alternative (the means to the end)" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). March and Simon (1958) stated that bounded rationality forces "satisficing" versus "optimizing" choices. Cyert and March (1963) later enriched this view to describe how the first acceptable alternative was selected.

Bower (1970), Pettigrew (1977), and Aharoni (1966) have studied the impact of political factors on organization action. They observed that executives choose among alternatives based on their sponsor's track record, issues of internal demand generation and power mobilization, and mutual influence and bargaining. Similarly, Narayanan and
Fahey (1982) have suggested that strategic processes can be studied as a series of "evolving coalitions." Quinn (1980) stated "that strategies emerge as executives employ an 'incremental logic' that requires an understanding of both political and rational process factors" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 568).

Alternatives to rational choice as the basis for strategic action has been provided by Allison (1971). His "organization process" and "bureaucratic politics" alternatives characterize it as an "outcome" of organization capabilities or a "political compromise," respectively. Mintzberg et al (1976) suggest that informal judgment, bargaining, or rational analysis was cause for action on strategic alternatives. Finally, "Cohen, March, and Olsen (1972) suggest that action in 'organized anarchies' can be characterized as a 'garbage can' of solutions looking for a problem, and Murray (1978) suggests that firms in regulated environments must "negotiate" their actions with outside constituents" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 568).

**Analytic Comprehensiveness**

Synoptic. "When making individual decisions the process attempts to be exhaustive in the identification and selection of goals and the generation and evaluation of alternatives. All factors are considered" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). Ideally, this view of comprehensiveness leaves out nothing important (Lindblom, 1959).

Incremental. "When making individual decisions the strategy considers only a few alternatives to the status quo as alternative actions and only a restricted range of consequences in their evaluations. All possible factors are not considered" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566).
Bounded rationality, the impact of individuals' cognitive limits, has been used to explain why organizations are noncomprehensive in their initial "search" for alternatives and to describe how they "learn" (Cyert and March, 1963). "Although cognitive style (Bariff and Lusk, 1977; Zmud, 1979) and distortions (Nisbett and Ross, 1979; Tversky and Kahneman, 1974) may explain some variation in the comprehensiveness of individuals' information processing, their strategic process impact is unclear" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 569). Braybrooke and Lindblom (1970) and Summer (1959) have argued that one cannot assume that the required information will be available in a timely fashion without considering the costs involved in obtaining it. This led Aharoni (1966), Bourgeois (1980) and Litschert and Bonham (1978) to theorize that a major impact on strategic processes is caused when organization slack is present. Even if adequate internal resources exist within an organization, Braybrooke and Lindblom (1970, p. 121) have suggested that the requirement for analytic comprehensiveness may lead to "achieving tomorrow's solution to yesterday's problem."

Integrative Comprehensiveness

Synoptic. "Conscious attempts are made to integrate the decisions that compose the overall strategy to insure that they reinforce one another. The strategy is viewed as a consciously developed, integrated whole" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). Hambrick and Snow (1977, p. 109) have summarized the integrative comprehensiveness argument in their observation that "because of their importance, strategic decisions must be closely linked to each other to form a consistent pattern for unifying and directing the organization."
Incremental. "Little attempt is made to integrate, consciously, the individual decisions that could possible affect one another. The strategy is viewed as a loosely linked group of decisions that are handled individually" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). Ansoff (1979) and Murray (1978) have argued and demonstrated that the level of integration demanded by most strategic planning systems is impossible to achieve due to increased environmental change. In a similar fashion, Mintzberg (1978) has argued that formation not formulation should be used to characterize strategic decision processes.

Quinn (1978, 1980) has explained how executives develop organization strategy without trying to integrate decisions comprehensively. He "has suggested that they cognitively apply an incremental logic that concentrates on a limited number of themes" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 569). Doz (1980) has stated that in multinational firms, executives are not concerned with integration but rather let each decision be made on its merits. Quinn's observation has raised the most questions concerning requirements for integrative comprehensiveness. He observed that:

It is virtually impossible for a manager to orchestrate all internal decisions, external environmental events, behavioral and power relationships, technical and informational needs, and actions of intelligent opponents so that they come together at a precise moment (1978, p. 17).

Many authors have presented detailed arguments supporting synoptic strategic decision processes (Grant and King, 1982; Steiner, 1979; Thompson and Strickland, 1981). Contrarily, contributors in a variety of fields including strategic management, individual behavior, organizational theory, and public policy have questioned the reality and

With community colleges facing numbers of environmental changes, a tool to deal with these problems may be strategic decision making. The research objective related to this problem is to see what if anything community college administrators are doing to deal with the changing environment and to what degree these six processes are being used by community college administrators. Several primary and secondary research questions will be used to provide general direction.

The Research Questions

The following primary research questions will be used as a guide:

1. What or who initiates the strategic decision process?
2. What role is played by goals in the process?
3. What is the relationship between means (alternatives) and ends (goals)?
4. How and by whom is the final choice of an alternative determined?
5. How comprehensive is the institution in making strategic decisions?
6. How do persons responsible for planning activities integrate those decisions into an overall strategy?

In addition, five secondary research questions will be included:

1. What problems are created for the institution by changes in its environment?
2. What can be known about changes in the environment, and how can such knowledge about change be acquired as an aid in strategic planning?
3. What methods are used to forecast environmental changes?
4. Are particular methods of analysis and forecasting better suited for some types of environments than others?
5. How should the institution integrate environmental assessments into its strategic planning process?
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The researcher had a twofold purpose in selecting this literature for review. First, the synoptic and incremental strategic decision processes are expatiated. Second, the importance of the organization/environment interface is shown. Studies summarized are germane to the five secondary research questions. Literature described here relates to the primary research questions.

**Synoptic and Incremental Strategy Formulation**

*Synoptic strategy formulation* has been largely drawn from the economists' view of "rational" decision making. "It is assumed that corporate management has considerable discretion, is analytical and rational, and can plan comprehensively" (Murray, 1978, p. 960).

Authors such as Ansoff, Steiner, and Andrews have represented the mainstream of synoptic strategy formulation. Such formulation includes: (1) the identification of current strategy, (2) analysis of environment, resources and gaps, and (3) identification and evaluation of strategy options, strategic choice and implementation (Andrews, 1971; King and Cleland, 1978; McNichols, 1977). To achieve the objectives of the organization, strategic plans employing corporate resources to exploit opportunities and solve critical problems are then devised. The means for implementation are provided by short- and long-range operating programs and budgets. "The prime criterion in such strategy making is maximization of long-run profitability with strategic
choice fundamentally a matter of maximizing return on investment through optimization of a portfolio of either product lines or businesses" (Murray, 1978, p. 960).

Within the framework of synoptic strategy formulation,

the microeconomic assumption of a unitary voice within the firm has predominated; organizational preferences are assumed to be known and consistent, cause-effect relationships fairly well understood, and information availability sufficient to tackle most issues (Narayanan and Fahey, 1982, p. 26).

This framework focuses on the content of strategies. "Its utility lies in rendering available a normative analytical calculus to derive what Mintzberg (1977, p. 36) has termed an 'intended' strategy". This model assumes not only that a certain degree of consensus among decision makers exists but also that strategy formulation can be understood by treating organization members as if they are centrally coordinated purposive individuals (Allison, 1971). Furthermore, this model can provide objective reasons for the choice of strategic decisions and their subsequent success or failure. "Within this perspective, failures in strategic issue recognition, development, and implementation are viewed as analytical shortfalls" (Narayanan and Fahey, 1982, p. 32).

In incremental strategy formulation, "processes used to arrive at the total strategy are typically fragmented, evolutionary, and largely intuitive. The real strategy tends to evolve as internal decisions and external events flow together to create a new, widely shared consensus for action among key members of the top management team" (Quinn, 1978, p. 7). Lindblom (1959) first discussed the basic
difference between synoptic and incremental approaches at the organizational level "by providing a detailed comparison of these two approaches as strategy formulation processes" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 565). Braybrooke and Lindblom (1970), using public policy examples, argued that organizations do not have a precise idea of what they want to achieve. Lindblom (1959) described the "science of 'muddling through,' or what he and Braybrooke later came to call 'disjointed incrementalism'" (p. 47). "Lindblom emphasizes the serial nature of incremental changes from the status quo and notes that the fragmentation of decision making...also makes the process a 'disjointed' one" (Murray, 1978, p. 962). Murray (1978) further states that the rational-normative synoptic model can be questioned as to its representativeness of organizational reality. Narayanan and Fahey (1982) developed a framework to explicate strategic decision making from a political perspective. They assert that the rational-analytic (synoptic) conception stresses strategy content and "neglects the turbulent undercurrents of organizational politics manifest in the interactions among various coalitions within the organization as they endeavor to influence strategic decisions" (Narayanan and Fahey, 1982, p. 27). The political perspective on the other hand focuses sharply on these dynamics (i.e. context):

(1) analyzing one's own internal situation: strengths, weaknesses, competencies, problems;

(2) projecting current product lines, profits, sales, investment needs into the future;

(3) analyzing selected external environments and opponents' actions for opportunities and threats;

(4) establishing broad goals as targets for subordinate groups' plans;
(5) identifying the gap between expected and desired results;
(6) communicating planning assumptions to the divisions;
(7) requesting proposed plans from subordinate groups with more specific target goals, resource needs, and supporting action plans;
(8) occasionally asking for special studies of alternatives, contingencies, or longer-term opportunities;
(9) reviewing and approving divisional plans and summing these for corporate needs;
(10) developing long-term budgets presumably related to plans;
(11) implementing plans; and
(12) monitoring and evaluating performance

Although the stages in the above process are not always the same, they commonly recur. These stages include:

Sensing Needs: Effective top executives constantly and consciously seek multiple contact points with managers, workers, customers, suppliers, technologists, and outside professional and government groups in an effort to sense needs for strategic change within the organization.

Building Awareness: Once a sensed need is felt, frequently the next step is to commission study groups, staff, or consultants to illuminate problems, options, contingencies or opportunities. Although these studies may lead to specific incremental decisions, they more often generate broadened or intensified perceptions of future potentials.

Broadening Support: This stage centers around much unstructured discussion and probing of positions. The guiding executive "encourages other key players to see opportunities in a new light, define areas of indifference or concern, and identify potential opponents and points of contention keeping goals broad and unrefined. His main purpose is to begin constructive movement without threatening major power centers" (Quinn, 1977, p. 35).
Creating Pockets of Commitment: In order to create necessary skills or technologies, test options, or build commitment deep within the organization, exploratory projects may be needed. The guiding executive must "keep his options open, control premature momentum, and select the right movement to meld several successful thrusts into a broader program or concept" (Quinn, 1977, p. 35).

Crystallizing a Developing Focus: Through the use of ad hoc committees, either support is broadened and commitment is increased or organized opposition is generated. The guiding executive can influence its direction by selecting the committee's membership, charter, and timing. Gradually the goal begins to appear in the executives' public statements, guidelines for division, and other appropriate places.

Obtaining Real Commitment: The new goal is reflected in budgets, programs, proposals, controls, reward systems, and recruiting and staffing plans.

Continuing Dynamics: As years may pass before the above steps are effected, the executive responds opportunistically to new threats, crises, and proposals, molding and modifying his own concerns and concepts. To prevent the newly arrived at consensus from becoming inflexible, the executive must purposely continue the change process with new faces and stimuli at the top i.e. eroding the very strategic goals which he just created.

Contrary to the criticisms of "logical incrementalism," Quinn (1977) views this type of strategy formulation as purposeful, politically astute, and effective. "It is a proactive management technique for improving and integrating both the analytical and behavioral aspects of strategy formulation" (Quinn, 1978, p. 8).

Organization/Environment Interface

"Analysts of organizational affairs have consistently mentioned transactions with the environment as a crucial, if not the most crucial issue" (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967, p. 151). One of the
earliest attempts to describe organizational environments was the work of Emery and Trist (1965). They described four types of environments: placid-randomized, placid-clustered, disturbed-reactive, and turbulent. Each of these environments differed according to the source and nature of the interdependence between the environment and the organization. In a placid-randomized environment, "the resources desired by the organization are randomly distributed throughout the environment, with a constant probability of uncovering necessary resources as the organization searches the environment" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 63). Organizations' survival depends on the extent to which they can use different kinds of resources, can store a single resource, or can use an abundant resource, i.e. one which they are likely to encounter frequently in the environment. The placid-clustered environment refers to an environment in which the pattern of resources is sequentially predictable. "Single organizations survive by accumulating enough resources to survive the periods of resource scarcity or by reducing their need for resources during lean periods" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 64). In the third type of environment, disturbed-reactive, "the distributions and probabilities of resources are created by the actions of the organizations themselves" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 64). The resulting oligopoly is characterized by competitive interdependence. "Predictability in such an environment derives from the ability of organizational actors to identify their interdependencies and to anticipate the sequence of actions and reactions of competitors" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 64). In the fourth type of environment, turbulent, even greater uncertainty is created for
the organization. This environment "involves the connection of sets of actors to other sets of actors, such that any one actor is connected to the set of actors with which he is immediately interdependent, and the environment itself is interconnected with other sets of interdependent actors" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 64). "The interconnectedness of one set of actors with other sets increases the interdependence among all and may increase the uncertainty of outcomes. While interdependence is increased, whether predictability or uncertainty is increased is partially a function of the organization's ability to recognize and control the increased number of actors which may affect its operation" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 65).

Terreberry (1968) claimed that the four types of environments described by Emery and Trist "were stages in an evolutionary chain and that organizational environments were becoming increasingly turbulent" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 65). Warren (1967; Warren, Rose, and Bergunder, 1974) was also concerned with the effect of the general network in which interorganizational activity is embedded. Turk (1970) found that organizational achievement benefited when an organization was embedded in a richly connected interorganizational network. He argued that "it was easier to introduce new organization into an environment that was already richly connected" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 65).

**Uncertainty of Environment**

A very prominent theme in the literature has been the description of organizational environments in terms of their uncertainty. "Uncertainty refers to the degree to which future states of the world cannot be anticipated and accurately predicted" (Pfeffer and Salancik,
1978, p. 67). It is determined "by the level of forecasting capability of the organization at a given point in time; as forecasting techniques improve, uncertainty diminishes" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 68). Uncertainty is problematic for an organization when the uncertainty involves important interactions with other environmental elements that are important for the organization i.e. an element of critical organizational interdependence.

Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) have also researched these boundary spanning relations in an effort to determine the quality of the information exchanged across the organizational boundaries, the major determinants of the quality and its consequences. They studied high-and low-performing companies in three different industries to measure four features of the groups which they thought might vary with the certainty-uncertainty continuum. The features studied were: (1) the degree of reliance on formalized rules and formal communication channels within the unit; (2) the time horizon of managers and professionals in the groups; (3) their orientation toward goals, either diffuse or concentrated; and (4) their interpersonal style, either relationship- or task-oriented. In an environment which is relatively stable, a predetermined set of operating rules specifies the job and the traditional superior-subordinate channel of communication is present. Since fairly short time horizons are usually adequate to take account of the reactions of such an environment to the firm's actions, they contend that a straightforward, task-oriented approach in managerial style is sensible to use. Contrarily, if there is an uncertain and rapidly changing sector of the environment, a flatter organization is employed i.e.
more points of contact with the environment.

Formal rules cannot be formulated that will be suitable for any appreciable period of time so heavy reliance upon them is not advised. "More of an all-to-all communications pattern is indicated, which can keep environmental clues moving throughout the unit for interpretation at all points instead of just through superior-subordinate channels" (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1973, p. 153). Similarly a longer time orientation is usually needed. Such a complex and sophisticated communication network necessitates an interpersonal style that emphasizes building strong relationships rather than just accomplishing the task, per se. "An organization in which each of its boundary-spanning units is well matched with its corresponding environmental sector is in a desirable position to detect opportunities for new kinds of favorable transactions with the environment and to anticipate newly developing hazards in the environment" (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1973, p. 153-154).

Three elemental structural characteristics of environments are concentration, munificence, and interconnectedness. Concentration refers to the extent to which power and authority in the environment is widely dispersed; munificence to the availability or scarcity of critical resources; and interconnectedness to the number and pattern of linkages, or connections, among organizations. "These three structural characteristics, in turn, determine the relationships among social actors-specifically, the degree of conflict and interdependence present in the social system. Conflict and interdependence, in turn, determine the uncertainty the organization confronts" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 68).
Jelinek, Litterer, and Miles (1981) state that organizations are "open" systems with fuzzy boundaries, fuzzy because the organization is continually reaching out to incorporate or influence outside actors and events. Nevertheless, they contend that the most important aspects of the total environment of an organization are those directly connected with the organization's purpose or task. Beyond the task environment, environmental forces and their linkages to organizational action become more difficult to trace and to predict as the organization is subjected to a broad range of forces that are difficult to anticipate or influence. A third point is that the characteristics, interests, and skills of the top executive in an organization profoundly affects the organization's relation to its environment through their perceptions. The top executive's interpretations of events moderates the manner in which the real or 'objective' environment is perceived by key organization members (Jelinek, 1981).

The extent to which environmental changes have influenced organization design continues to be debated among management scholars. Some see environmental forces essentially determining organization structure and process while others maintain that environmental forces establish only the framework within which organizations are built and operated.

The literature is replete with complex research concerning the organizational-environmental interaction. As depicted below, Thompson's (1967, pp. 70-73) four-cell typology and Lawrence and Lorsch's (1967, pp. 23-54) dichotomization of diversity and dynamic describe the problems of differentiation between and adaption to directly related organizational components having different kinds of environments.
1. Homogeneous-stable 1. Low diversity and not dynamic
2. Homogeneous-shifting 2. Low diversity and highly dynamic
3. Heterogeneous-stable 3. High diversity and not dynamic
4. Heterogeneous-shifting 4. High diversity and dynamic

Figure 1  ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLEXITY AND DIVERSITY

The more disparate the environments confronting two directly related components, the more difficult integration of the components becomes (Jurkovich, 1974). With some revisions and additions to the work of Thompson, Lawrence and Lorsch, and Emery and Trist, Jurkovich developed a 64-cell matrix to conceptualize the ways in which scholars have attempted to conceptualize environmental conditions. His matrix pulls together such environmental dimensions as complex/noncomplex; stable/unstable; and high-change/low change. Jurkovich (1974) delineates four major environmental factors which organizational decision makers or members of scanning units must analyze: (1) complexity, (2) the routineness or nonroutineness of a problem-opportunity state, (3) the presence of organized or unorganized sectors-elements or units of the environmental field-human and nonhuman-that decision makers perceive as relevant for the organization, and (4) the issues of whether such sectors are directly or indirectly related to the organization.

Complexity
Child (1972, p.3) defines environmental complexity as "the heterogeneity and range of activities which are relevant to an organization's operations." In essence then the more diversity in the relevant
environmental activities and the greater the number of them, the higher the complexity. Duncan (1972) found that heterogeneity has little effect on uncertainty. Similarly Simon's (1965) definition of complexity, simple pieces added together, only insignificantly affects uncertainty. As Starbuck stated, "the same environment one organization perceives as unpredictable, complex, and evanescent, another organization might see as static and easily understood" (Starbuck, 1973, p. 24). Thus the meaning of complexity or noncomplexity is a matter of perception. Thompson (1967, p. 70) indicates that "organizations confronted with a complex environment must develop special monitoring units to monitor the activities of individual or clusters of sectors, routinely reporting behavioral patterns to critical decision making points that make decisions based on that information and/or feed back requests for further information and advice."

Routine and Nonroutine Problem-Opportunity States

Varying degrees of uncertainty are assumed with problem-opportunity states. Thompson (1967, p. 134) has given four analytical strategies, computational, judgmental or compromise, and inspirational, which may be used depending upon the degree of uncertainty. Computational strategies assume a high degree of certainty; judgmental and compromise a moderate degree of uncertainty; and inspirational a high degree of uncertainty. The strategies designed by the decision makers determine whether the organization can handle the situation as a routine or a nonroutine activity.
Another determinant of the degree of routineness and nonroutineness is the percentage of organizational members with information problems. The higher the percentage, the more nonroutine the problem-opportunity state is. Perhaps access to critical information cannot be gained, or a significant portion of the information cannot be trusted, or the set of information categories they need for decision making is uncertain.

When the environmental field is dominated by noncomplex routine sectors, the basis for decision rests more on deductions and inductions from the information itself. With complex routine sectors, attention is focused on the decisions themselves, leaving the information gathering problems to the decentralized monitoring units. Where mainly non-complex, nonroutine environmental sectors are found in an organization, reliance is placed on noncalculable judgments or advice from specialists. In complex nonroutine sectors, decision makers concentrate less on the decision and more on the information. Frequently negotiation, both directly and indirectly, with those at the information source is necessary to extract better or more useful information than presently accessible in an effort to develop standardized decision program packages.

March and Simon (1958, p. 151) and Ashby (1968) have suggested that there appears to be limits to the amount of routine and nonroutine activities and variety-complexity that an individual can comfortably handle. Jurkovich suggests that this notion might be equally valid when applied to the whole organization. He raises the question as to the limits of environmental nonroutine complexity that an organization can handle before entropy occurs. He suggests that the boundary of entropy is expanded through decentralization.
Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

The literature reviewed, both synoptic/incremental and environmental, provide background and conceptual structure for this study. The two sets of questions which appear on page fifteen are drawn from this review. The research design and method to answer these questions follows.

Rationale

The research design is qualitative and utilizes the content analysis method. This research heavily parallels the Strategic Process Research of Dr. James W. Fredrickson of Columbia University (1983, pp. 565-575).

According to Blau and Scott, there are three ways to obtain information about people: by watching them, by asking them questions, and by examining materials that have been written by them or about them. The research techniques which correspond to these questions are: observation, interviewing, and the analysis of documents. A study may use a combination of all these approaches or may concentrate on one at the exclusion of the others (Blau and Scott, 1962).

Procedure

The procedures for data collection follow the framework delineated by Blau and Scott with a concentration on interviews and analysis of documents and records.
1. Interview

The aim of the interviewing process is to access the perspective of the interviewee. Patton similarly states that "The purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone's mind...." (Patton, 1980, p. 197). There are three approaches to qualitative interviewing: (1) the informal conversational interview, (2) the general interview guide approach, and (3) the standardized open-ended interview (Patton, 1980, p. 197). The extent to which the interview questions are pre-determined and standardized before the interview determines which approach should be used.

Strategic planners within Ohio's community colleges will be interviewed using a general interview guide approach or what Guba and Lincoln describe as the structured interview (1981, p. 155). In this type of interview, "the problem is defined by the researcher before the interview, the questions have been formulated ahead of time, and the respondent is expected to answer in terms of the interviewer's framework and definition of the problem" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 155). This interview approximates a questionnaire in appearance and is likely to be used in situations in which representative samples of persons are asked identical questions about something that interests the investigator. "All respondents are taken to be of equal importance. The object is usually to get representative or 'typical' responses" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 164). The interview, however, allows for more flexibility than does the questionnaire since questions can be restated if not understood initially. Furthermore, interviews are more personal than questionnaires, are a better exploratory tool,
are better in sensitive areas, permit the interviewer to note the respondent's affective responses, approximate real-life situations more closely than questionnaires, and usually end with better sampling because of fewer turndowns (Guba and Patton, 1981, pp. 164-166).

With respect to data collection, there are many advantages of interviewing (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 83). These advantages are that:

1. Less chance exists for misunderstanding between the inquirer and the respondent than in other approaches.
2. The interviewer is likely to receive more accurate responses on sensitive issues, and the interview itself is likely to provide a more complete and in-depth picture than other forms of inquiry.
3. The interview format is more flexible than other approaches to data gathering and provides wide latitude within which the respondent's responses can be explored and fruitful leads explicated.
4. Interviews provide for continuous assessment and evaluation of information by the inquirer, allowing him to redirect, probe, and summarize.
5. Interviews provide information much more quickly than does observation.

2. Analysis of Documents and Records

Existing planning documents and records were analyzed by the researcher to gather information concerning past strategic planning processes, how the documents were developed, who developed them, how they were used, who was the source of the initiative, and the frequency with which they were revamped, altered, or discarded.

Questions contained in the problem statement provided the framework for data gathering. These questions were first field tested using a pilot interviewer's suggestions for revisions, additions, and/or deletions.
Patton emphasizes the importance of accessing program documents. He feels:

They provide the evaluator with information about many things that cannot be observed because they may have taken place before this evaluation began, because they include private interchanges to which the evaluator is not directly privy, and because they reflect aspects of the organization that may be idealized in formal documents but which, because those ideals are not realized in actual program performance, might be unknown to the evaluator. They also provide stimulus for generating questions that can only be pursued through direct observation and interviewing (1980, p. 152).

Guba and Lincoln also emphasize the importance of documents and records. They state that (they) "are a stable, rich, and rewarding source and records, if not documents, constitute a legally unassailable base from which to defend oneself against allegations, misinterpretations, and libel" (1981, p. 234).

Patton suggests there are many advantages to the multimethod approach proposed for this study:

By using a combination of ...interviewing, and document and record analysis, the (researcher) is able to: use different data sources to validate and cross-check... findings, build on the strengths of each type of data collection while minimizing the weaknesses of any single approach, and increase both the validity and reliability of...data" (Patton, 1980, pp. 157-158).

The sequence for collection of data for this study began with the researcher interviewing the President of each of four community colleges in Ohio plus designated strategic planners within each of these institutions. Secondly, records and documents were analyzed. Where further information and/or clarification was necessary, phone contact with the appropriate individuals was utilized.
Sample

A purposeful sample of four community colleges in Ohio (1 rural, 1 suburban, and 2 urban) has been drawn. The sample excludes vocational/technical institutes and other two and four-year institutions in the state. For purposes of maintaining anonymity, pseudonyms have been used to refer to the four community colleges in the study. For reasons of geographic proximity and financial feasibility, Ohio was chosen for this study.

Treatment of Data

Content analysis, a multipurpose research method, is useful for investigating any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis of inference. Content analysis as a research technique dates from the beginning of the twentieth century, although scattered studies going as far back as the 1740's have been cited (Dovring, 1954). The quantity of such research continues to increase with more content analysis research published between 1950 and 1958 than during the entire first half of the twentieth century.

When content analysis studies are classified according to purpose, more than 98 percent of the studies dealt primarily with the content of text during the first two decades of the twentieth century. In describing trends in content analysis by discipline, "Barcus found that over 60 percent of all empirical content analysis research has been focused in five mutually exclusive areas of inquiry, each of which accounts for at least 10 percent of the total: the study of social values, propaganda analyses, journalistic studies, media inventories, and psychological-psychoanalytic research" (Holsti, 1969, p. 21). Although journalistic and political studies continue to be a frequent source of
content analysis, increasingly the trend is toward wider application within a variety of disciplines and spheres of specialized inquiry as folkloristics, biography, history, psychoanalysis, linguistics, propaganda, cognitive organization, and psychotherapy (Pool, 1959). Recently the use of content analysis has expanded to nonlexical materials. Although:

Earlier uses of content analysis were largely confined to analyses of 'natural' or 'available' data i.e., data which exist without any active participation by the investigator (e.g. newspapers, books etc.), increasingly content analysis has also been applied to verbal data produced by subjects at the behest of the investigator. This class of data may be of two somewhat different types: (1) the research method generating only verbal data, which may then be subjected to content analysis and (2) the by-product of other standard techniques of social research e.g. responses to open-ended questions generated in survey research (Scheuch and Stone, 1964), written messages derived from a simulation study (Brody, 1963), or verbal communication produced during group interaction (Bales, 1950; Mills, 1964; Holsti, 1969, p. 23).

In summation, the history of content analysis reveals a series of interrelated and continuing trends:

*Increased use of content analysis,
*Heightened concern for theoretical and methodological issues,
*Application to a broader spectrum of problems, especially those focusing on the antecedents and effects of communication,
*Increased use for testing hypotheses, as opposed to purely descriptive research,
*Greater diversity in the material studied,
*Use in conjunction with other techniques of social research,
*and Content analysis by means of computers.
Thus content analysis is an appropriate method to use for the purposes of this research. An important feature of content analysis is that it is a "nonreactive" or "unobtrusive" research technique (Webb et al., 1966).

Although "definitions of content analysis have tended to change over time with developments in technique and with application of the tool itself to new problems and types of materials" (Holsti, 1969, p. 2), there exists broad agreement on the requirements of objectivity, system, and generality.

**objectivity** - stipulates that each step in the research process must be carried out on the basis of explicitly formulated rules and procedures. Even the simplest and most mechanical forms of content analysis require the investigator to use his judgment in making decisions about his data (Holsti, 1969, p. 3). Objectivity implies that these and other decisions guided by an explicit set of rules that minimize - although probably never quite eliminate - the possibility that the findings reflect the analyst's subjective predispositions rather than the content of the documents under analysis. Thus one test of objectivity is: can other analysts, following identical procedures with the same data, arrive at similar conclusions? The investigator who cannot communicate to others his procedures and criteria for selecting data, for determining what in the data is relevant and what is not, and for interpreting the findings will have failed to fulfill the requirement of objectivity" (Holsti, 1969, p. 4).

**systematic** - means that the inclusion and exclusion of content or categories is done according to consistently applied rules. This requirement clearly eliminates analyses in which only materials supporting the investigator's hypotheses are admitted as evidence. It also implies that categories are defined in a manner which permits them to be used according to consistently applied rules (Holsti, 1969, p. 4).
generality - requires that the findings must have theoretical relevance. Purely descriptive information about content, unrelated to other attributes of documents or to the characteristics of the sender or recipient of the message, is of little value. Thus all content analysis is concerned with comparison, the type of comparison being dictated by the investigator's theory (Holsti, 1969, p. 5).

"The requirements of objectivity, system, and generality are not unique to content analysis, being necessary conditions for all scientific inquiry. Thus in general terms, content analysis is the application of scientific methods to documentary evidence" (Holsti, 1969, p. 5).

In recent literature there has been considerable debate over whether content analysis must be quantitative and whether it must be limited to the manifest content or probe for more latent aspects of communication. Holsti rejects the rigid dichotomy which is sometimes implied in the quality-quantity debate. His two reasons are that:

(1)measurement theorists are generally in agreement that qualitative and quantitative are not dichotomous attributes but fall along a continuum (Lazarsfeld and Barton, 1951) and (2) whether stated explicitly or not, many of the most rigorously quantitative studies use nonnumerical procedures at various stages in the research (Holsti, 1969, p. 11).

Thus both qualitative and quantitative methods should be used by the content analyst to supplement each other. By using both of these approaches, the investigator is most likely to gain insight into the meaning of his data. Pool (1959, p. 192) summarizes
It should not be assumed that qualitative methods are insightful, and quantitative ones merely mechanical methods for checking hypotheses. The relationship is a circular one; each provides new insights on which the other can feed.

The second issue, manifest content, deals with whether content analysis should be limited to manifest content (the surface meaning of the text) or whether it can be used to analyze the deeper layers of meaning embedded in the document. Holsti and Stone (Stone et al., 1966) jointly developed a broad definition of the method: content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages. Although this definition incorporates the objectivity, systematic, and generality characteristics of content analysis mentioned before, it does not include any reference to quantification nor does it stipulate that content analysis must be limited to describing the manifest characteristics of messages. The case of:

a rigid qualitative-quantitative distinction seems unwarranted for the purposes of defining the technique, for excluding certain studies from consideration as examples of systematic analysis of documentary data, or, by itself, for praise or condemnation of content analysis. (In the latter case) inferences about the latent meanings of messages are permitted but they require corroboration by independent evidence (Holsti, 1969, p. 14).

Use of Content Analysis

Holsti (1969, pp. 16-17) lists three general classes of research problems for which content analysis is likely to be especially
appropriate:

(1) when data accessibility is a problem and the investigator's data are limited to documentary evidence, or the investigator prefers to collect the data through some form of content analysis even though she has direct access to the subjects, or investigator wishes to develop an independent line of validation for data obtained through other methods even when direct access to the subject poses no difficulty

(2) when, given certain theoretical components of the data themselves, the subject's own language is crucial to the investigation

(3) when there are technical advantages because the volume of material to be examined exceeds the investigator's ability to undertake the research by herself i.e. analyzing only a sample of it and making inferences about the larger universe from which it was selected.

In sum, content analysis was used to analyze the data gathered through interviews relevant to the presence of strategic decision processes in four community colleges in Ohio. The existence of synoptic strategic decision processes, incremental processes, or a combination of the two processes as described by Fredrickson was determined.

Content analysis was used to analyze existing planning documents and records. A system for coding was developed.

Coding is the process whereby raw data are systematically transformed and aggregated into units which permit precise description of relevant content characteristics. The rules by which this transformation is accomplished serve as the operational link between the investigator's data and his theory and hypotheses (Holsti, 1969, p. 94).
In preparing these rules the analyst makes a number of decisions:

* How is the research problem defined in terms of categories?

* What unit of content is to be classified?

* What system of enumeration will be used?

Holsti (1969) notes that these are not independent decisions but rather interrelated ones which "are always made on the basis of the original formulation of the inquiry problem" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 243).

Categories

"Content analysis stands or falls by its categories. Particular studies have been productive to the extent that the categories were clearly formulated and well adapted to the problem and to the content" (Berelson, 1952, p. 147). Thus, the development of categories is of major significance to this work. Holsti delineates five general principles of category construction.

Categories must first and most importantly "reflect the purpose of the research; the analyst must define clearly the variable she is dealing with (the 'conceptual definitions'), and secondly, she must specify the indicators which determine whether a given content datum falls within the category (the 'operational definition')" (Holsti, 1969, p. 95). Secondly, categories must be exhaustive. "This means that all relevant items in the sample of documents under study must be capable of being placed into a category" (Holsti, 1969, p. 99). To accomplish this, coders must define each of the concepts (or variables) as precisely as possible by characterizing its major properties thereby determining whether content units fall within
its boundaries. "The better the category definition, the more likely is it to conform to the requirement of exhaustiveness" (Holsti, 1969, p. 99). Thus categories should be mutually exclusive meaning that no single content datum can be placed into more than one cell or category. Stated another way, definitions of the variables employed by the investigation must be precise and unambiguous. Fourth, categories should be independent. When content units are scaled along some dimension or whenever some form of ranking is used to assign values to content units, this independence is difficult, if not impossible, to satisfy. Finally, "the rule that each category must be derived from a single classification principle stipulates that conceptually different levels of analysis must be kept separate" (Holsti, 1969, p. 100). The researcher must keep this in mind when forming the categories.

Two broad typologies of categories exist: the "what is said" (or subject matter) dimension and the "how it is said" (or device dimension). In these two broad areas, some of the possibilities might include the following adapted from Holsti, 1969:

"What is said" categories:

*Subject matter - what is the communication about?
*Direction - how is the subject matter treated (favorably, unfavorably, strongly, weakly, humorously, seriously)?
*Values - what values, goals, or needs are stated?
*Methods - what methods are utilized to achieve goals or intentions?
*Traits - what are the characteristics ascribed to the persons or contexts described?
*Actors - to whom is the performance of certain acts ascribed?
*Authority - at whose behest or in whose name are statements made?

*Origin - where, or from whom, does the communication originate? Unascribed documents will often come into the hands of an inquirer, that is, they will simply be listed as having come from a "project" or "program."

*Target - to whom is the document directed; that is, to what person or group or office?

*Location - where does the action take place or what site or event does the document describe?

*Conflict - what are the sources and levels of conflict?

*Endings - is there closure and, if so, are conflicts resolved happily, ambiguously, or tragically?

*Time - when does the action take place? If a series of documents exist, is there some implied chronological order to the sequence of events, or do all documents describe different perspectives and perceptions of the same event?

"How it is said" categories:

*Form or type of communication - what is the medium of communication (for example, a newspaper report, radio or television speech, editorial, project memorandum, quarterly progress report, personal letter, administrative log or journal, personal diary, or the like)?

*Form of statement - what is the grammatical or syntactical form of the communication?

*Device - what is the rhetorical or persuasive or propagandistic method used? (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, pp. 244-245).

As there are no standard norms of classification:

The construction of categories is often a trial and error process, forcing the investigator to move between the data and either an a priori or a grounded theory. 'Sorts' are performed on items of data; when these 'sorts' do not account for all units of data, other tentative categories are generated. The process is completed by using either a combination of theory and data or a combination of theory building or context-construction and data. Categories are modified until the system is complete and each datum can be sensibly accounted for (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 245-246).
Since the construction of categories is often a trial and error process, only crude categories have been chosen at the outset. They are the six characteristics of synoptic and incremental strategic decision making stated earlier.

Units of Analysis

Another coding decision which must be determined is the designation of units of analysis. "The unit of analysis may be either a single word or symbol, a theme (which is defined as an assertion about some subject), the characters or actors about whom a communication is concerned, a grammatical unit, or the type of item" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 246). The selection of a unit or units of analysis also depends upon three considerations:

1. which units best meet the needs of the researcher;
2. which units best fit the requirement of research, since the determination of the unit of analysis can mediate the results of the analysis; and
3. which units fulfill the criteria of "better data, more data, and least costly data" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 246).

Systems of enumeration must also be devised if the analysis is to be carried out on a quantitative basis:

Systems of enumeration identified thus far in a variety of content analysis include measures of time and space; actual appearance of the unit of analysis; measures of the frequency of the unit's appearance, and measures of its intensity (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 246).

In sum, "coding decisions must be integrated with all aspects of the research design" (Holsti, 1969, p. 126). Thus in this research, the coding decisions described herewith will be utilized to analyze
the data into appropriate categories, units of analysis, and systems of enumeration if applicable.

Appraise

This study appraised the presence of synoptic and/or incremental strategic planning procedures within the community colleges of Ohio.

"What content analysis as such does is to provide a more or less precise description of the content in terms meaningful for the problem at hand" (Berelson, 1952, p. 188). Largely, there are two points at which a content study can go wrong: (1) "in applying the techniques of analysis, in which case the description of the content itself is mistaken, and so is anything which follows it and (2) in applying the techniques of interpretation or inference to the correct content description" (Berelson, 1952, p. 188). This problem of inference does not exist in those many studies in which the description of content itself is the primary objective. In such studies, implicit inferences are contained about the causes or the consequences of the content. "Where the central concern is with the content as such - with the content as the category not the indicator - then the problem of inference is virtually non-existent" (Berelson, 1952, p. 189).

Berelson suggests that in any discussion of the inference problem the first consideration is to limit the number of inferential steps and thus of qualifying assumptions by securing data as "close" as possible to the real categories under study. This may eliminate the content analysis altogether. Secondly, he states that the researcher should base the inference upon firm data on the non-content side. Finally, he indicates that the inference should be specified in detail, including
the chain of influence from cause to content or from content to consequence.

Thus there are two types of inferences drawn from content data the direct and the inverse. "In the direct method, essentially, the content is taken at face value. What it says is, in effect, translated into an inference about non-content matters. In the inverse method, the opposite of the content statement is taken as the inference" (Berelson, 1952, p. 194-195).

The basic problem for the researcher, then, is to decide which inference to make the direct or the inverse. In the final analysis, the inference itself must be tested by methods directly applicable to it. "To that end, full and unambiguous statements of the detailed inference itself, of the line of reasoning that went into it, and of the assumptions contained therein would serve the cause" (Berelson, 1952, p. 195).

In summation, for this research content analysis was used with interview data as follows:

- a. extensive notes and where permitted taping of the interviews were made and then typed
- b. the transcripts of the notes were read through many times looking for patterns which emerged
- c. these patterns were linked if possible to the synoptic and incremental strategic decision processes

The data answers two content analysis issues: (1) do other people agree with the rules used as to coding? and (2) do people code the same things the same way i.e. is intercoder reliability present?
Significance of the Research

Strategic planning seems of paramount importance when one considers the conditions of decline already existing in institutions of higher education and predicted for the future. Although the severity and precise nature of the decline is unknown, nearly everyone concurs that higher educational institutions are facing an era of cutbacks (Cameron, 1983; Carnegie Council, 1980). Evidences of decline apparent in the external environment include:

1. the threat from federal legislation and policy i.e. the second-order environment;
2. the duration of conditions of decline promises to be long term;
3. the conditions of decline are severe enough to threaten the survival of many of the organizations;
4. political slack among major resource providers is low;
5. domain choice flexibility is generally limited by the constituencies of the organization themselves more than by mandate;
6. multiple constituencies exist both inside and outside the organizations demanding different types of performance from the organizations and threatening to withdraw support;
7. the legitimacy of institutions of higher education is questioned;
8. the demand for traditional services is decreasing;
9. public support, while essential for the viability of the organization, is tenuous; and
10. lobbying legislatures is required in order to obtain financial and political support such as subsidies and various forms of aid (Cameron, 1983, pp. 373-374).

Thus one purpose of this research is to generate insights into the use of strategic planning as an effective tool for use by
administrators in institutions of higher education to cope with these conditions of decline as they force them to pay particular attention to adapting to and manipulating the external environment rather than focusing mainly on internal processes and procedures. Furthermore, this study attempted to identify the utilization of either synoptic or incremental strategic planning processes by strategic planners within an institution.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are used to explicate terms introduced in this study:

**strategic planning** - The continuous process of making present entrepreneurial (risk-taking) decisions systematically and with the greatest knowledge of their futurity; organizing systematically the efforts needed to carry out these decisions against the expectations through organized, systematic feedback and establishing the major patterns of resource allocation to relate the organization to its environment (Drucker, 1974, p. 125; Cooper and Schendel, 1971, p. 23).

**community college** - A two-year post-secondary educational institution which is publicly supported and designed to carry on three levels of educational functions: transfer, vocational and technical, and continuing education.

**synoptic** - A model of strategy formulation in which the decision maker uses a systematic method to solve an entire problem.

**incremental** - An alternative model of strategy formulation which posits a step-wise, problem-solving approach in which the decision maker breaks the problem into subproblems that are solved sequentially.
**task environment** - The individual members, aggregates of individuals, and organizations which impact upon the institution.

**strategic decision making** - A decision process concerned with what initiates the process, the role played by goals, the relationship between means and ends, the concept of choice, how comprehensive institutions are in making decisions, and how administrators integrate decisions into an overall strategy.

**Limitations of the Study**

One limitation is the small number (4) of community colleges on which to base generalizations. Given this sample size, generalizability to other community college populations and settings and to other organizations in general outside the state of Ohio is difficult.

A second limitation is the possible bias of the researcher. Although the researcher consciously strived for objectivity, unconsciously her cognitive map may have distorted her perceptions.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the strategic decision making processes in selected community colleges in the state of Ohio. Its objective was to discover if the administrators of community colleges employed strategic decision making processes and, if they did, the nature of these processes. The framework employed to analyze these strategic decision making processes was based upon the framework developed by Fredrickson (1983). This framework delineates two types of strategic decision processes: synoptic and incremental. These types differ on six characteristics: (1) motive for initiation, (2) concept of goals, (3) relationship between means (alternatives) and ends (goals), (4) concept of choice, (5) analytic comprehensiveness, and (6) integrative comprehensiveness.

Data relevant to the strategic decision making processes in the colleges were derived from the research questions in the interview guide (Appendix C) and the questionnaire (Appendix B). The data were obtained from the presidents and twelve other administrators responsible for the areas of communications with business and industry, funding, and student enrollment.

For purposes of maintaining anonymity, pseudonyms have been used to refer to the four community colleges included in the study. They are referred to as High Rock Community College, Little River
Community College, Peaceful Springs Community College, and Great Oaks Community College. In each case "Administrator A" refers to the President of the College.

Prior to beginning the interviews, the Presidents shared their perceptions and philosophies regarding planning. These were unexpected data and are presented first in this Chapter. These are followed with a presentation of findings organized around the six primary research questions. Next the findings are presented as relate to the five secondary questions. Finally, ancillary findings are reported. As the presentation of findings follows the primary and secondary research questions, they do not follow the sequence of the questionnaire and interview guide found in Appendices B and C.

The Presidents' Perceptions and Beliefs About Planning

The Presidents of the four community colleges shared their perceptions and beliefs about planning. These included their philosophies of what strategic planning is, a description of the planning which exists in their institution, and the relationship between the President and the Board as it relates to this planning process.

Philosophies Concerning Planning

The President at Little River Community College made a distinction between long range planning and strategic planning. He explains:

Strategic planning is something more than long range planning. Strategic planning really focuses on the why a lot more than the how. Strategic planning really gets down to saying what in the hell are you really about or what are you really in business to do? Where should you be making your thrusts? It's really getting at the essence of the purpose of the institution and projecting that over time. For the most part in long range planning you don't
get to the whys too much. That to me is purely strategic planning, getting at the why; why are we doing it; and the ought, what ought we to do.

He explains his concern indicating that it is easy to get so involved with all the long range planning that one loses sight of the strategic plan for the institution. He continued:

So many people now or many institutions pride themselves on having a long range plan and they're now pushing out five years ahead and so on. That process is a very laborious process, a very involved and complex process especially if you move it through a collegial faculty in the institution. What happens in that process is that it totally overshadows the strategic planning as I define it as you get so caught up in all of the enabling kinds of things that are going to make you get objective ten or fifteen or whatever.

He stressed that the same problem exists in the annual budgeting process where very little time gets set aside specifically apart from all of that to just talk about:

...What should we be serving? Is there a whole section that ought to be dropped off and thrown in the river and add another one over here? What really are we about? I mean that is not done very much at all in many institutions not just educational institutions but it's something that really needs to be done now. I mean it is becoming increasingly critical. That's why people get themselves in so much trouble. You can go pell mell down the road and plan five years ahead and you're going the wrong direction.

The President at High Rock Community College discusses the difficulty of doing strategic planning:

Most people can't make strategic planning work would nearly be my thesis. They have pieces of it. It takes a lot of work; it's exceptionally hard to do. It requires I
think even a kind of dedication, commitment at times, that cannot be systematized all together within the institution. Even strategic planning defies system. Strategy itself is not stable; it is flexible. Strategic planning is in my professional view, the attempt to get one step beyond simple, system decisions like PPBS, to get beyond the zero based budgeting models that is what Chris Argyris would call double loop processes.

This President viewed the concept expressed by Chris Argyris as important to the strategic planning literature. In the opinion of this President, Argyris' concept of "parallel systems headed in one direction" indicates he probably knows more about the phenomenon of strategy and decision making than most of the people this President has read.

The President also feels that "strategic planning doesn't work in an application sense the way the literature talks about it:"

Most of the people from Harvard and Stanford and the organizational science people have studied the issues from a scientific and a research base in the universities. They have never had to be responsible for doing strategic planning incidentally, showing results.

He emphasized that "strategic planning is a dynamic process."

Those who attempt to make it static are:

...the traditional European minds, where there is a single loop, straight loop answer to the problem. It's in the creative and maybe within the Eastern mind I believe and in the nontraditional minds that a and b and c and d can all be moving in parallel systems, all having implications, all transcending in a very real sense in a spiritual sense. It is truth if in fact what we are trying to get at in effect is truth, right answers which is another view. Strategic planning really tries to get at the best answers given the options and opportunities.
Lying on his coffee table was a copy of Marilyn Ferguson's book, The Aquarian Conspiracy to which he made reference:

Marilyn Ferguson probably gets closer to bridging in a very logical way for people who need to try to understand. It gets very close to helping the rational mind deal with what appears to be irrational circumstances in which you have to then draw rationality back out of it. There are three steps to that process. Ferguson does a good job.

He described the characteristics one needs to accomplish strategic planning. These include having:

* great patience in translating concepts to realities
* a unique understanding about human nature
* the ability to do strategic planning in an organized environment
* an understanding of the spiritual realm and the human dimensions of change
* compassion

He also felt it important that the person be systematic commenting "I think that's always been a problem in strategic planning. On the one hand you say that it is creative and dynamic; on the other hand it must be structured and systematic enough so that you become predictable."

President/Board Relationship

The President at Great Oaks Community College stressed that times have changed and that it is increasingly challenging for a President to effectively communicate with his Board:

During the gee whiz era everything was wonderful. There was a pot of gold; you were getting more students; you were getting more state money; and the faculty knew that the pot of gold would never end. Gee whiz ain't it wonderful.
As circumstances have changed, he predicts administrators operating under that old style will not last. He has seen states where collective bargaining has come in for example and where within a two year period, fifty percent of the Presidents are fired. Reasons for termination included:

* inability to stand the heat or no desire to stand the heat
* unable to deal with the issues
* unwilling to look people in the eye, understand what the institution is about and take the flack and the fire
* uninformed Boards
* split between President and Board

Therefore the key in his opinion is "how do you make sure that the Board and the President stay together because in effect they are the only two groups that have the full umbrella view of the organization." Although some of the other administrators may have a partial overview, only the President is the "umbrella person." As such he has to educate the Board what this President terms "reciprocal nudging." In turn, "the Board's got to speak very clearly to the President in terms of what they think as a Board is the legal entity of what this place is all about; what they think is important or not important." In his Institution, fortunately this is the case although it isn't always easy:

Oh we have some spirited discussions in terms of trying to find a hybrid kind of solution, very useful, very helpful in terms of making some very unique programs go. When I came here we had 8,000 students ten years ago. We've got 19,000 now. It has taken a lot of Board effort, a lot of presidential effort, and a lot of effort of everybody to make it happen.

The President at High Rock Community College indicated that the fact that members of the Board of Trustees are only appointed for five
year terms makes strategic planning "very difficult to most people and very difficult to come by here in Ohio for community colleges." Because of their term of office:

It is very difficult to get them to realize and understand the dilemmas that exist beyond even the times that they serve on the Board. In most instances most of those Board members are not terribly conscious of long term; they're looking for short term kinds of interpersonal issues. I am the only continuity to the Board.

The question arises "what is the Board's role in strategic planning?" The President indicated that his present Board is:

...making decisions right now that the previous Board bound them to in a strategic sense with Governor Rhodes and the Board of Regents. So the actors have changed in the environment and the question is how do you handle and maintain what I would call institutional focus, institutional consistency, continuity on decisions that roll out of strategic planning.

He views the Board of Trustees as a "governing Board" with he being their "chief executive officer." The Board is where really strategic planning goes on at one very important level "because strategic planning is policy planning and my Board is my policy body."

His organization for accomplishing this consists of three committees to the Board: "a planning committee that is staffed by one of my Executive Vice Presidents; the Management Committee that is staffed by my other Executive Vice President; and the Community Affairs Committee that is staffed by my public relations officer."

He works primarily with the Chairman of the Board a relationship he describes as:

We have the kind of relationship where he can call me and I can tell him what I want
him to do today. Then he'll turn around and say to me "well I'm not sure we can do that." "I say fine; well what's your answer." If he doesn't have a better answer, he's got to do what I say do.

Planning Within the Institutions

The President at Peaceful Springs Community College recognizes that his Institution really needs to be doing more with regard to planning although "we've gotten some pretty good results I guess without what I would consider real strategic planning." He admits, however, that "it makes more sense to go that way." Even though he admits "it's a rare bird that ever gets into this kind of business, planning," he is certain that administrators should go that route:

Administrators are not planning like we should. We should have plans developed, changes that we are going to have to make in programs. We've got programs that are going good that are not going to be going good five years from now. We should be making studies and doing some planning of what programs are going to be needed by just five years away. It's hard. We struggle but that's likely because we are so new. We are struggling to really establish something, to establish what we have.

He went on to compare what the state of Ohio does to attract new industries compared to the Carolinas. Referring to North Carolina:

The state's done a hell of a good job. In North Carolina a business or industry can say hey we want to come in. They'll provide the land, they'll pay for the training of the staff and the forces that that industry is going to need; and they'll give them tax breaks where in the state of Ohio they don't do anything. We train them; the company has to pay for it or they have to pay for it themselves. The state doesn't pay for it. North Carolina is head and
shoulders above us. I think South Carolina is also above us.

At Little River Community College, the President briefly commented about the planning in his Institution:

We have a five year plan that has goals each year. We are always four years ahead of the year that we are budgeting for. I have objectives for one year and longer range objectives for four or five years out. I think we have a very systematic five year long range-short range planning process that's totally integrated with budget planning.

At Great Oaks Community College the President began the interview by saying "our approach is a modified MBO approach. I'm going to show you that approach, I'm going to take you through it; and I'm going to tell you why we do it:"

My judgment is that many institutions, community colleges, can get into the habit of floating. We go through the self-hypnosis of convincing ourselves that we are so unique and different and our problems aren't like anybody else's in the universe and therefore they can't be quantified; they can't be put down into specifics. You know, that's absolutely marlarky. There are nuisances of how we run this operation that are unique and different.

In his Institution, they go "through a process every two years, updated every year, of trying to figure out what are the priorities that (they) are about."

He opens the planning document, sits beside me, and outlines the steps in the process.

Initially, the Board is informed of the Tasks to Be Accomplished for the next two years which are derived from very careful consideration of "the kinds of things that (the college personnel) think need to be done." Out of that comes the Management with Objectives renamed as some of his "educational people got persnickety and thought that
the preposition (by) was wrong and with is (used)."

These objectives are then placed into four areas:

(1) routine goals—how do you keep the ship afloat; (2) problem solving goals—what are the problems that you've got to solve; (3) creative goals—what are those kinds of creative things that we know in the learning/teaching process and involvement with the community or a hundred other kinds of things that we've got to work on; and lastly (4) professional goals—how are you going to get at it; what are you looking for.

Each objective is considered achieved when the designated accomplishment has been attained by the date indicated.

In his view, the President "obviously has a generalist's generalist's (view) stating:"

I'm responsible for the umbrella activity. I'm not responsible for the day to day kinds of things. The President in my judgment has got to in very simple terms has two responsibilities: one is do things right and that's a product of the education that you're going through now to know how to accomplish various kinds of administrative sorts of things and those are important but those are the routine goals. But much more important is to do the right things. How do you give the right things the proper sense of urgency; that's my job; what's important? What's not important? And we do that through this process.

He works with the Vice Presidents and Deans on each of the goals so that "every administrator in the college (knows) what the other individual is doing and why they're doing it, no games played."

Everyone at his Institution is paid on merit "from the secretary on down to the President." As such when time comes for
We go through formalized responsibility in each of these areas of saying how you're doing. Maybe we bit off too much; maybe we need to change it; maybe reprioritize it; maybe we need a kick in the fanny to get going with it. Those are then written up and both sign off so you know exactly where you are; how you're doing.

In the judgment of the President this is important in terms of superior/subordinate relationships and the increased understanding which results:

(If) you look at most superior/subordinate relationships, their understanding of what they want done or what they think they want done between the two is off about twenty-five percent of the time. If it's off twenty-five percent of the time that means that fifty percent of the time, there's not a very good professional relationship or personal relationship when you are out of sync fifty percent of the time.

Each chairperson does that for each department as well. Recently the Kellogg study on chairpersons was completed in his Institution. The results showed that his "chairpersons knew more about their role and were more excited about their role than any (of the five groups included from) across the country." A partial explanation for this in the President's view is that "they're good people with understanding precisely what they're doing or precisely what they're not going to do in terms of (a particular) situation."

The President admits that not "everything is sweetness and light in this" and "everybody doesn't love it. It takes a while to go through the anxiety." When the process was begun, those new into MWO felt they had "to go along with the President's decision making
process as that's the President's style of doing things." Some three
to four years into the process he queried his Deans as to whether
"it made sense, or should it be changed, or modified?" Contrarily,
"they've institutionalized it. They say "oh no it's a really helpful
device for us to make sure that we do those things that are necessary."

He views professional growth as very important even for those
having Ph.D degrees as "the arena is changing" and the College "is
simply trying to keep up and lead in the arena." The President gave
evidences of this stating:

We are the first institution in the state of Ohio to have a CAD system. We will be the
first system in the state of Ohio, probably in the midwest to have a major robotics
training center with GM to train all kinds of individuals in the maintenance, program­
ning, and operation of a variety of robots. We're involved in retraining people. Those
things just don't happen by floating around. They happen by very clear design of what you
are about.

The President at High Rock Community College also began the inter­
view by describing the planning process at his Institution and by
sharing planning documents with me. His Institution "is very con­
scious of annual planning, (and) doubly conscious of the relationship
of annual planning that is a local phenomenon to two year biennial
planning in the state." The five year Plan for Higher Education
developed by the Board of Regents "in effect becomes a policy
framework for institutions like ours and all four year institutions
as far as that is concerned. We are conscious of that as a part of
the environment. Finally, the Capital Plan is a six year proposition
in Ohio."
His College was one of the community colleges in the state required by 1962 legislation to have an official plan before the College could begin operation. He views that plan "as really the kind of strategic statement, strategic plan in a sense that looks out at least over the horizon of a five and ten year period." A ten year horizon is also a part of the College's Blueprint for Excellence in the Third Decade. He states:

Those are elements of documentation here about what we think we believe and what we think we are doing. On an operational side it happens; it is a very clear process. The classical processes of environmental scan and of identifying targets of opportunities, making choice, and setting resources aside to do that are part of the process here. It is really part of a very clear systematic decision process.

In an article called "Incremental Strategic Planning: A Creative Adaptation" which he and two other administrators at his College had written, strategic planning in the educational side is discussed. Decisions that ought to be driven out of the educational side center on "key issues of how do you use new dollars set aside through making good choice to redirect or to update (or) to change the focus of institutional directions." It is the responsibility of his Vice President for Educational Planning to annually structure this process.

In order "to make the Institution grow systematically in another direction or at least to emphasize a focus of growth that it would not normally grow in given incremental budgeting" for the third year specific programmatic choices have been made setting aside half a million dollars to spend in advance manufacturing technology. He
has an "annual resource allocation task force" within the Institution that "supplements the normal budgeting process because the hard decisions on allocation have to do with some fairly systematic decisions about reallocation that's both human and fiscal and facilities as far as that's concerned."

He suggested that the sequence of my definition of strategic decision making be made more systematic by putting evaluation last. That is:

Resource allocation is a process that precedes anyway the evaluation cycle and because that is true evaluation outcomes, specific outcomes, targeted outcomes, results oriented outcomes, need to be evaluated. My view is that that is the most difficult piece.

This is important in his view as:

The only way we will know we are going to achieve what we have chosen as targets in strategic planning will be somehow to be able to differentially reward because everybody does not perform equally in our kind of organization and you have to have a way to reorient the culture.

In his opinion, "the literature on strategic planning and the question of evaluation of results of decision making through systematic feedback (is) a tough one." A lot of emphasis is placed on PME systems in his Institution: "planning first, management and managing for results (second), and then evaluation feedback so that the reiteration of the cycle takes place properly." This is his reason for having a "Vice President for Academic Affairs which is really planning, a Vice President for Human Resources, and Administration which is really management." He comments:

It's our decisions about how to implement in that triangle evaluation of the whole
system where the executive office of the president which really represents (the) executive guiding force to strategic planning with the Board. It really all meshes. Now that's the philosophy of what we think we are doing.

Primary Research Questions

The primary research questions focused on the characteristics of strategic decision making processes: motive for initiation, concept of goals, relationship between means and ends, concept of choice, analytic comprehensiveness, and integrative comprehensiveness. In this section, data are presented to answer the six primary research questions as relates to the colleges' communications with business and industry, local, state, and external funding, and student enrollment.

1. What or who initiates the strategic decision process?

The strategic decision process with regard to communications with business and industry at times is initiated by administrators within the colleges while at others it is initiated by local business and industry. Within the colleges, frequently it was the President who did the initiation as he is often on a "first name basis" with corporation presidents and chief executive officers, spends a lot of time in the industries talking to workers and coming to know their problems and serves in leadership positions within the community. At other times a member of the President's Cabinet "who has a good idea for articulation or an activity or a strategic direction to take with business and industry" is the initiator. Sometimes the Chairman of the Board of Trustees in the College who is also a corporate president or other leader in the business and industry
community initiates an idea to help strengthen the college's relationship with business and industry. At High Rock Community College, the Executive Director of the Career Resources Institute or members of his staff might initiate the process as that is their "raison d'être."

As indicated in Table 2 (Appendix D), three fourths of the administrators indicated they attempt to anticipate change in the business and industrial community and react in advance.

In the area of funding, the point of initiation for the strategic decision process varied with the type of funding whether local, state, or external. In the three colleges having a local tax base, the strategic decision process with regard to local funding is initiated by the administration of the Colleges. The fourth College is a state community college and therefore has no local tax base. The Board of Trustees has the right to decide the amount of the milage to be put on the ballot and the length of time of the levy. Half of the administrators viewed their colleges' relationship to local funding over the last five years as steady as shown in Table 3 (Appendix E). However, as shown in Table 2 (Appendix D) three fourths of the administrators indicated that they attempt to anticipate change with regard to local funding and react in advance.

Contrarily, the strategic decision process for state funding is initiated by the state. It is an "FTE driven formula" meaning it is based on the number of full time equivalent students enrolled in each college. As a consequence as shown in Table 2 (Appendix D), there
was unanimous agreement among all the administrators that they attempt to anticipate change with regard to state funding and react in advance. Similarly, three fourths of the administrators felt the relationship of their college to matters of state funding had increased over the last five years as shown in Table 3 (Appendix E).

It is not surprising then that all but one administrator indicated that they attempt to influence the state legislature beyond the efforts of their lobbyist. When asked to describe their view of the legislature whether an opportunity, a potential threat or an opportunity and potential threat, half of the administrators viewed it as both an opportunity and potential threat.

Strategic decisions concerning external funding, as with local funding, are initiated by the college administrators. Whether it be through an active Foundation, endowment program or public and private grants which are donated, the colleges all were very aggressive and successful "in getting local business people to contribute." The colleges varied in their use of these funds some designating it for capital expenditures while others used it solely for scholarships and leadership programs for their students. The colleges' relationship over the last five years with regard to external funding had increased in the opinion of half of the administrators as indicated in Table 3 (Appendix E). Administrator A at Little River Community College predicted the importance of external funding in his Institution as an alternative funding source will continue to increase. Thus, as shown in Table 2 (Appendix D), it is not surprising that three
fourths of the administrators attempt to anticipate change in matters of external funding and react in advance.

With regard to student enrollment, the strategic decision process is initiated largely by the college administrators. Administrator A at Little River Community College shares the point of initiation, however, with local industries. His College initiates enrollment in "normal degree programs" but the initiation for "noncredit courses" comes from outside the College from the industries themselves. The administrators at the other three colleges considered themselves to be the initiators. At Peaceful Springs Community College it may be a faculty member or the Vice President for Student Services who indicates a need which eventually gets passed on to the President's Cabinet for consideration. Administrator B at this College gave examples of increased efforts in the area of student enrollment including working more with welfare agencies and JTPA, and increasing offerings in student counseling and counseling for people seeking employment. Administrator A at Great Oaks Community College listed use of brochures, media advertising, postings on bulletin boards, contact with high schools, use of a mobile information center, and keeping track of the number of calls to the admissions center as avenues for student enrollment. At High Rock Community College, Administrator B indicated that weaknesses in enrollment can be detected from the consistent student enrollment analysis done by the Office of Institutional Planning and Research.
The average age of students in the community colleges is almost 30. As indicated in Table 2 (Appendix D), all but two of the administrators felt that their college attempted to anticipate change in student enrollment and react in advance. Almost an equal number of administrators considered the relationship of their College to student enrollment as both steady and increasing as shown in Table 3 (Appendix E).

Related to the whole issue of initiation is what causes the same event to be perceived as a problem in one community college and an opportunity in another. Almost two-thirds of the administrators felt it was both the personality of the administrator and political and social influences from the community which caused the same event to be perceived as a problem in one community college and an opportunity in another.

2. What role is played by goals in the process?

In the strategic decision process, the role played by goals affects where emphases are placed within the college, the time frames established for accomplishing those goals, the priorities assigned to those goals by the administration, the degree of seriousness displayed by the college in attempting to achieve its goals, the perception of those goals as future desired states, the increased level of awareness on the campus resulting from dissemination of those goals, and the deletion or addition of goals where warranted.

Placing of Emphases

One role played by goals in the strategic decision process is that they help determine where emphases are placed within the colleges.
Goals are "the parameters in which choices are made" by the college administrators. As indicated in Table 4 (Appendix F), all but one of the administrators set goals in the areas of special courses to offer, external funding, academic goals, and program goals. A considerable number also set goals with respect to retention of students and reaction to closing industries. At least three fourths of the administrators set goals where local funding and public relations are concerned. The least importance was given to goal setting in matters of state funding, adjunct faculty needed, and projection of new industries.

**Time Frames Employed**

The presence of goals necessitates time frames be established by the colleges in accomplishing those goals. The time frames used by the colleges range from six months to fifteen years. However, as indicated in Table 5 (Appendix G), the greatest majority of administrators set goals within one year time frames in all three areas of communications with business and industry, funding, and student enrollment. Although the local tax levy dictates the need in three of the colleges for setting goals as far out as ten to fifteen years, the highest percentage of administrators set goals within five year time frames or less. Even within that five year time frame, many administrators stressed that goals are an ongoing, continuous process of being constantly cognizant of both internal and external circumstances which may warrant immediate attention or on a quarterly basis.

As Administrator A at Little River Community College indicated "the general themes of what we are trying to do are percolated and
strung out along a five year base but the spinoffs and elaborations of those are done on more of a yearly basis." Administrator A at Great Oaks Community College concurred saying "there are a lot of thoughts for five years but you've got to keep those thoughts more careful like in terms of six months or one year."

Priorities Assigned to Goals

The existence of goals also helps determine the priorities given to the different areas of communications with business and industry, funding, and student enrollment. Nearly three fourths of the college administrators prioritize goals with regard to local and state funding and academic concerns as shown in Table 6 (Appendix H). Over half of the administrators prioritize goals in the areas of programs and special courses to offer and at least half prioritize goals pertaining to public relations, external funding, and student retention. It is interesting to note that half of the administrators do not prioritize goals with respect to projection of new industries and reaction to closing industries and nearly half do not prioritize goals pertaining to retention.

Seriousness In Achieving Goals

When goals are present, varying degrees of seriousness exist for achieving them. Of those responding, nearly sixty percent described their college as very seriously attempting to achieve the goals related to special courses to offer and local funding and at least half very seriously attempting to achieve the goals of public relations and state funding. Almost three fourths of the administrators considered their college seriously attempted to achieve retention goals.
while half of them thought the college seriously attempted to achieve goals concerning projection of new industries. Nearly half of the administrators viewed the college as very seriously attempting to achieve goals of adjunct faculty needed and to seriously achieve academic and program goals. Only one administrator viewed the college's attempts as not serious in the areas of adjunct faculty needed and reaction to closing industries. Similarly, only one administrator deemed the college's attempts as neither seriously or not seriously as pertains to projection of new industries and external funding.

Perception of Goals

In determining goals, the administrators are channeling the course of action to be followed whether it be a modification of the current state or achievement of a future intended state. Administrators characterized goals in all three areas of communications with business and industry, funding, and student enrollment as remedial in nature. Very few administrators with the exception of projection of new industries considered any of the goals to be future desired states.

Dissemination of Goals

The dissemination of goals on the campus helps increase the level of awareness. Administrators utilize both oral and written methods for dissemination. The planning documents of the various institutions are the primary written source of goal dissemination as they "incorporate the goals of every sector so every part of the campus knows what everybody is about" explained Administrator A at Little River Community College. Faculty meetings are the principal avenue for verbal dissemination of goals.
Deletion/Addition of Goals

At times goals must either be deleted or added. Only Administrator A at Great Oaks Community College admitted that there are times when mistakes are made and goals have to be reevaluated, reprioritized, and deleted as they are no longer appropriate. All others, however, indicated there were no goals they would drop. A compilation of suggestions given for additional goals include:

*contributing more substantially at a regional and national level to the management capabilities of community colleges
*improving responsiveness of the institution to the external environment
*improving the assessment, programming, tracking, following, and monitoring of students
*being more attentive to learning breakthroughs and utilizing them in the classroom
*establishing a campus center for improved learning
*implementing improved systems for decision making
*getting approval to develop student housing
*hiring more staff thus yielding more time to accomplish additional goals

3. What is the relationship between means (alternatives) and ends (goals)?

The overwhelming majority of administrators indicated that goals are identified and agreed on before means for achieving them are analyzed. Two administrators disagreed that this was true for projection of new industries, reaction to closing industries, and retention goals. One administrator disagreed that this was true regarding external funding and program goals. Otherwise there was total agreement among the administrators, that it is an "ends-means" process as pertains to special courses to offer, adjunct faculty needed, public relations, local and state funding, and academic goals.

In an effort to determine if goals (ends) are affected by available alternatives (means), administrators identified whether time,
politics, or economy singly or in combination tended to modify, delay, or stop the strategic planning process.

Time and the economy tended to be the factors chiefly responsible for modifying, delaying, or stopping the strategic planning process in the areas of special courses to offer, adjunct faculty needed, reaction to closing industries, and academic and program goals. The economy was most important in modifying, delaying, or stopping the process as to the projection of new industries, and local, state, and external funding. Politics seemed to be the chief factor in modifying, delaying, or stopping the strategic planning process with regard to public relations and time with regard to student retention.

4. How and by whom is the final choice of an alternative determined?

All but one administrator indicated that they frequently use goal-maximizing when choosing an alternative as shown in Table 7 (Appendix I). This means that the choices are ones to which they assign maximum importance and which they interpret in the broadest sense possible. Three fourths of the administrators consider organization/constituent negotiation in determining the choice of an alternative wherein they recognize the constraints and limitations imposed by a number of external social and political forces with whom the college must negotiate implicitly if not explicitly. In this determination, over half make use of incremental logic i.e. using fragmented, evolutionary, and largely intuitive strategic processes to solve a problem by breaking it into subproblems that are solved sequentially.

In an effort to determine if strategic action was the result of conscious choice of the administrators, administrators indicated whether strategic decisions made in the areas of communications with
business and industry, funding and student enrollment were their choice or were imposed on the college by others. As to who determines the final choice of an alternative, three fourths of the administrators feel that they themselves make the choice as to special courses to offer, adjunct faculty needed, projection of new industries, reaction to closing industries and local funding. Half of the administrators feel they also determine the choice of an alternative with regard to public relations, state and external funding, and academic, program, and retention goals while half felt that this decision was imposed on the college by others. It is interesting to note that Administrator A at High Rock Community College and Administrator A at Great Oaks Community College both felt that in all three areas of communications with business and industry, funding, and student enrollment, strategic decision making was both the choice of the administrator and imposed on the college by others.

When the administrators were queried if there are some goals imposed from outside which tend to inhibit rather than liberate their colleges, only five administrators found such goals inhibiting. The great majority of them viewed these imposed goals as liberating.

5. How comprehensive is the institution in making strategic decisions?

Administrators indicated the degree of comprehensiveness they use in categorizing decisions based on the stimuli that evoked them, their solutions, and the process used to arrive at them. As shown in Table 8 (Appendix J), more than three fourths of the administrators were frequently comprehensive in categorizing decisions as to opportunity stimuli i.e. those decisions initiated on a purely voluntary basis to
improve an already secure situation. Slightly more than two thirds of
the administrators were frequently comprehensive as to problem stimuli,
those decisions falling in the middle and evoked by milder pressures
than crises. Almost half of the administrators were frequently compre-
hensive as to crisis stimuli, decisions in which the college responds
to intense pressure as the severity of the situation demands immediate
action.

With regard to solutions, almost half of the administrators
frequently were comprehensive in categorizing decisions by using either
custom-made solutions developed especially for the decision or modified
solutions which combined ready-made and custom-made features to fit
particular situations. More than two-thirds of the administrators
were infrequently comprehensive in categorizing decisions based on
fully-developed solutions at the start of the process or ready-made,
fully-developed solutions in the environment during the process.

With regard to the process used to categorize decisions, three
fourths of the administrators indicated they are frequently compre-
hensive when the process involves development activity after recogni-
tion. Half of the administrators indicated that they are frequently
comprehensive when the process may or may not involve formal diagnosis
or authorization and almost half indicated this to be the case when the
process involves either internal, external, or new option interrupts.

Administrators gave their reactions to the need for/ability to
be comprehensive in information gathering relative to strategic deci-
sion making. As Administrator D at High Rock Community College indi-
cated, information is viewed as important as "it guards against
unnoticed options," but as several indicated the amount which can be
gathered depends on the timeliness of the decision. Administrators A
and B at Little River Community College said the magnitude of the
decision, the cost of making a wrong decision, and the presence or
absence of a data based management system are factors influencing the
amount of information gathered. Several administrators commented on the
danger of "information overload" as one "can get so much information
one is afraid to make a decision as all alternatives begin to look good
or bad and decision can't be made." In the same vein Administrator A
at High Rock Community College stated that "choice is a question as
much of an empirical process as it is an intuitive process. At some
point, he said, one just has to make an intuitive leap that's a good
and right decision." "Although all pertinent data should be gathered,"
commented Administrator C at High Rock Community College, "there is
always a lack of people to translate the data into information that a
decision making body can use that is relative and inclusive." One
must have a "propensity for action" and not use information gathering
as a "cop-out to getting on with the task at hand" stressed Admini-
istrator A at Great Oaks Community College. "The real makings of a
true administrator is the one that makes the right decision without
all the facts" he commented.

6. How do persons responsible for planning activities integrate
those decisions into an overall strategy?

There was unanimous agreement among the administrators at the
colleges that they attempt to integrate decisions into an overall
strategy. No one felt that decisions were treated separately by
different components of the institution.
The principal avenue used by nearly three fourths of the administrators for integrating decisions into an overall strategy is planning documents. Much less use is made of faculty and staff meetings, the Cabinet process involving the President and the four Deans, strategy sessions, informal brainstorming sessions, memos, minutes of Board meetings, newsletters, and retreats for integrating decisions into an overall strategy.

**Secondary Research Questions**

The five secondary research questions are concerned with the use of strategic decision making processes as a tool in the strategic planning of the community colleges with regard to environmental complexity. Environmental complexity refers to "the heterogeneity and range of activities which are relevant to an organization's operations" (Child, 1972, p.3). Data are presented to answer what problems are created for institutions by changes in the environment, how can information regarding environmental changes be obtained and forecasted, which methods of analysis and forecasting best fit which environments, and how can environmental assessments be integrated into the strategic planning process of the institutions.

1. **What problems are created for the institution by changes in its environment?**

   Changes at the state level, local level, and national level all create problems for the institutions. Increased control at the state level has affected the autonomy, funding, student fees, expansion plans, and indeed the future of the community college system. Where autonomy and funding are concerned, increased state control has decreased the autonomy of the community colleges and increased
problems of funding. In the past the community colleges were totally autonomous in hiring their own legal counsel for example. That freedom has now been overridden with the State Attorney General indicating he shall provide legal counsel disallowing the colleges to do that any longer. Funding problems arise as "the language of the legislation causes (the colleges) to always end up with a whole batch of students in the system that are beyond really the general funding base." Had Issues 2 and 3 passed, one administrator conservatively estimated that a $5 million reduction in state funds would have occurred.

Increased state control has had a negative impact on student fees as "it is an enrollment driven formula (and) has increased student fees dramatically." A related concern expressed is the need for another "tuition level for two year college students" rather than being lumped together with four year institutions in the state.

Problems of expansion have also come about as the state has indicated that if the colleges want its capital dollars, then "all contracts on capital will be bid out of the state architect's office." The Board of Regents' requirements as to the approval of new programs, implementation of programs they request, and requirements concerning enrollment standards "affect building planning" at the colleges.

There is also the problem of the state's economic development and its impact on the future of the community colleges. The increasing role played by the state in economic development outside of higher education particularly through the Department of Development and Governor Celeste's Strategic Plan for Economic Development influences that future.
At the local level, closing industries have created a number of changes in the colleges. Unemployed workers often come to the college for retraining and/or upgrading of skills. The declining economy within the community ultimately affects the local funding provided the colleges. With few employment opportunities, many high school graduates and young people up to age 30 move away from the community thus removing potential students from the colleges. With increased use of robotics in some of the local industries, more training programs have been established in the colleges to retrain people to work in this area.

At the national level, funding of higher education continues to decrease. This has created the necessity for the colleges to consider increasing the amount of their local levy, increase tuition rates, increase lobbying efforts at the state level, and look to alternative sources of funding for their institutions.

2. What can be known about changes in the environment, and how can such knowledge about change be acquired as an aid in strategic planning?

Changes in the environment pertain to acquiring knowledge relevant to the local environment, local economy, local demography, and local politics/legislation. Where the local environment is concerned, projection of new industries, new and obsolete technology, liaisons with area high schools and universities and public relations are involved. Reaction to closing industries is also of key importance leading to implementation of the necessary retraining programs, possible upgrading of faculty and/or securing adjunct faculty, and possible expansion of facilities or addition of equipment. Such knowledge is primarily obtained through the President's contacts.
with local business and industry and by forming advisory committees composed of members from the business community, administrators and faculty working together to meet the needs of the local environment.

With regard to the local economy, recession, inflation, unemployment, eroding local, state, and national funding of higher education, and greater faculty and staff concern relative to economic security resulting in possible increase in turnover of administrators and faculty become concerns. Knowledge concerning these matters comes primarily from reports of state and national economic trends and forecasts.

The local demography is concerned with the large decline in the traditional college-going segment, the steadily increasing numbers of senior citizens, lifelong learning needs, and where applicable the urban-rural migration. Knowledge concerning these matters is largely obtained through demographic and educational studies done at the national, state, and local levels.

Local politics/legislation involves using the lobbyist to favorably influence issues for the community colleges, monitoring the state legislature and legislative issues having potential to impact the college, and developing contingency plans should such legislation pass. Knowledge involving these concerns is obtained through the lobbyist, by having community college personnel attend legislative sessions, by establishing relationships with local representatives in the House and Senate, and by receiving and reading legislative reports.

3. What methods are used to forecast environmental changes?

In two of the four community colleges studied, an environmental
scan is done to forecast environmental changes and their potential impact on the colleges. In other instances, the President's leadership in the community with various civic and business organizations, provides valuable insights into changes in the environment. Advisory committees composed of members of the business community and college personnel assist in this endeavor.

4. Are particular methods of analysis and forecasting better suited for some types of environments than others?

For rural community colleges where industries are continuing to close, where the economy is depressed, and where there is a migration of people away from the area resulting in declining enrollments, it would seem their focus needs to be on determining the educational needs of those remaining and if necessary revamping curriculum to meet those needs particularly where senior citizens are concerned. Working very closely with business and industry which remain would seem warranted striving to make them aware of what the college can do for them and encouraging them to avail themselves of the opportunities there. Maintaining a close working relationship with state legislators as to the economic and demographic conditions of the community should also be helpful in an effort to secure additional funding and trying to encourage new industry to move to the area. Continuing to communicate frequently with area high school counselors so they might encourage graduating seniors to come to the college would also be advisable. Where local tax levies exist, educating the community as to those conditions in an effort to get their support on upcoming tax levies is also recommended.
For urban community colleges the effect of closing industries and the economy is also felt but perhaps to a lesser extent due to the density of the population and the larger number of existing industries in the area. One of the chief foci would seem to be increased communications with business and industry as to their needs, plans for expansions, and retraining of personnel. Upgrading of faculty and additions to existing curriculum may be necessary to meet those needs. Efforts at the state and local levels may be warranted to secure increased funding for expansion of college facilities in keeping with the new technologies. Another focus is raising the general educational levels of the citizens particularly those who don't read or write sufficiently well or who need to complete their high school education.

5. How should the institution integrate environmental assessments into its strategic planning process?

From the community colleges studied, the most effective means of integrating environmental assessments found was including an environmental scan as an integral part of the strategic planning process. The environmental scan deals with matters of the local environment, local economy, local demography, and both local and state level politics and legislation which influence the college and outlines the educational responses needed in each area.

Ancillary Findings

There were two sets of data gathered as a part of this study which are not included in either the primary or secondary research questions. These data concern the type of governance and the presence or absence of collective bargaining in the colleges.
When asked to indicate on the questionnaire the appropriateness of bureaucratic, collegial, or a combination of bureaucratic and collegial governance for their institutions, a combination of bureaucratic and collegial was reported to be the most appropriate form of governance. During the interviews, the administrators were asked to order three index cards as to the kind of governance which actually exists on their campuses. Again, the most prevalent form of governance in existence was a combination of bureaucratic and collegial. In both instances, the administrators considered collegial to be second as to appropriateness and use and bureaucratic last as to appropriateness and use.

Collective bargaining was only present at High Rock Community College and Peaceful Springs Community College. The large majority of the administrators did not feel that the presence of collective bargaining had impacted strategic planning in their institution one way or another. Administrator C at Peaceful Springs Community College and Administrator D at High Rock Community College did feel that collective bargaining had some financial implications in terms of strategic planning as it has a large bearing on how resources are allocated and it becomes more difficult to plan for "reaggregation of people and new organizational structures." However, in the view of Administrator A at High Rock Community College, the presence of collective bargaining has helped as "now we know what the constituencies believe as constituents. As an input to the strategic planning process now at least we have coherent voices and that is crucial to strategic planning."
Summary

In this Chapter, data relative to the Presidents' philosophies and perceptions regarding planning in their institutions have been presented. In addition, data answering the primary and secondary research questions as well as a small section of ancillary findings have been presented. From the data presented, it is apparent that strategic decision making processes are used as a tool in the strategic planning of these institutions with regard to environmental complexity.

In the following chapter, these data will be analyzed to determine the type of strategic decision making processes which exist in these community colleges.
CHAPTER V
ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The objective of this investigation was to provide a description of the strategic decision making processes in a sample of selected community colleges in the state of Ohio. The framework used in analyzing these strategic decision making processes was based upon the framework developed by Fredrickson (1983). This framework delineates two types of strategic decision processes: synoptic and incremental. These types differ on six characteristics: (1) motive for initiation, (2) concept of goals, (3) relationship between means (alternatives) and ends (goals), (4) concept of choice, (5) analytic comprehensiveness, and (6) integrative comprehensiveness.

As indicated in Table 9 (Appendix L), the findings supported Fredrickson's (1983) contention that not only do organizations employ synoptic, incremental, or a combination of both strategic decision making processes, but also that strategic decision making processes may be synoptic on some characteristics and simultaneously incremental on others. As shown in Table 9 (Appendix L), the colleges' administrators used synoptic decision processes with regard to motive for initiation and integrative comprehensiveness. However, in the areas of concept of goals and analytic comprehensiveness, they employed incremental decision processes. Furthermore, the administrators utilized a combination of both synoptic and incremental
decision making processes relative to the relationship between means and ends and the concept of choice.

A second finding was that the strategic decision making processes used by the administrators were issue specific. Data showed the decision making style varied according to the issue being faced. Thus Fredrickson's categories cannot simply be used to describe a general administrative style.

This seems to be the way management is perceived in the management literature. In the contingency approach proposed by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), the need for fit between the organization and its external environment was stressed as a determinant of organizational performance. Lawrence and Lorsch viewed the critical determinants of structural differences (differentiation) and of the resulting coordinative interactions (integration) to be the organization's responses to perceived environmental uncertainties. Perceived uncertainty along dimensions like clarity of goals, interpersonal or task orientation, locus of decision-making power in related sub-units, and timing of environmental feedback determine the varieties of differentiated response. Balancing differentiation with environmental uncertainty and integration with differentiation is necessary for success. The structure of the organization is thus determined by varied responses to environmental uncertainty.

The challenge of management is to coordinate the processes of the internal environment of the organization while making allowances for the influence and impact of the external environment. The most appropriate management style becomes the one most suited for that
particular situation. From the strategic decision making styles employed by the administrators in this study, it is apparent that they have learned that some styles fit better than others as shown in Table 9 (Appendix L). Although this fit across styles was found, it was not determined by this study the link between this fit and improved performance.

Similarly, Galbraith (1973) stated that there is no one best way to structure an organization and not all ways of structuring an organization are equally effective. His contention was supported by the earlier empirical studies of Woodward (1965) and the Aston Group (1969). Woodward concluded that the technology determined the structure giving us the technological imperative. The Aston Group determined that the size of the organization determined the technology giving us the technological impingement.

Galbraith provided a model for dealing with information uncertainty. In mechanistic structures where the environment is viewed as stable and controlled, the use of hierarchy and rules and regulations in decision making was suggested. On the other hand, planning and scheduling approached the organic system proposed by Burns and Stalker (1961) as it allows for some discretion in lower levels of the organization. March and Simon (1958) have suggested that decision making is most appropriately made by those closest to the task. However, when environmental uncertainty becomes very complex, the use of hierarchy, rules and regulations, and planning and scheduling may be too costly to maintain or too slow to deal with the problem. Galbraith suggested that at that point the organization must develop new techniques including
environmental management (boundary spanning), creating self-contained units (decentralization), or slack (lowering the performance level) all of which decrease the organization's need for information processing.

In other instances the organization must increase its capacity through vertical information systems such as using data control systems or through lateral relations including task forces, integrator roles, and matrix among others. If an organization is unable or refuses to narrow its span of control, it will automatically resort to lowering its performance (slack). Cyert and March (1963) proposed that slack is typically present in organizational operations and that few, if any, organizations operate at the limits of efficiency.

With the increasing environmental complexity facing these community colleges, their structures are becoming increasingly more organic. As shown in Table 3 (Appendix E) in all areas, excluding local funding, the administrators viewed the relationship of their college over the last five years as increasing. More organic structures are necessary if the colleges are to cope effectively with this changing relationship. The use of planning by these institutions also approaches the organic system as it reduces the amount of information processing in the hierarchy by allowing for more discretion in the lower levels of the organization. The data showed that the majority of administrators viewed the choice of goals to be their determination, not imposed on them by others.

To deal further with the environmental uncertainty, the administrators of these community colleges serve a boundary spanning function. They are continually seeking improved and additional methods for meeting the needs of the community and students that they serve.
A third finding was that there were commonalities among the college administrators by issue as shown in Table 9 (Appendix L). Such commonalities among the community colleges are not unusual as the overall nature of the institutions is more alike than it is different as to philosophies, objectives, procedures, and programs (Cross, 1971; Cohen and Brawer, 1982; Moore, 1970). This is because they are all state funded institutions which are subject to the same state politics, the same certifying and licensing agencies, and the same controlling bodies. Although under local influences, the goals and expectations of the community colleges tend to be nationwide (Gleazer, 1980; Kerr, 1980; Wattenbarger, 1968).

Another explanation for this clustering could be because the administrators of these colleges are largely self selected into the occupation. Thus it may be that people having common cognitive mapping (Johnson, 1977) choose to be community college administrators. They then have commonalities in terms of their career paths. Therefore, although they may come from different backgrounds, they receive common education, training, and administrative experiences which may lead to commonalities in decision making styles among administrators by issue as shown in Table 9 (Appendix L).

In the following section, the focus shifts from effective matches between these colleges and their environment to the processes by which these institutions manage relations with their environments. In the open systems model proposed by Katz and Kahn (1966), the shift is from structure to process. Open systems are dynamic and depend on a constant exchange of energy with their environment where the inputs are the
students, the throughputs are the teaching technologies, and the outputs are the graduates. Equifinality and dynamic homeostasis also characterize open systems. These community colleges demonstrate the use of equifinality as more than one type of process is used by the administrators as shown in Table 9 (Appendix L) while they attempt to achieve balance between the institution and its environment that is dynamic homeostasis.

Aldrick and Pfeffer (1976) further describe management processes in two views of organizations, the natural selection model and the resource dependence model. In the natural selection model, the long-term survival or success of organizations is an ecological process. In this view of organization environment interaction, management plays essentially a reactive role in their perception of and response to environmental conditions. In the resource dependence model, more proactive transactions between the organization and its environment are emphasized. Here managers constantly attempt to influence or shape environmental conditions to produce a better fit with organizational needs and desires.

In the following section, data were organized around the primary and secondary research questions. They reveal the use of both reactive (incremental) and proactive (synoptic) strategic decision making processes by the administrators as shown in Table 9 (Appendix L).

**Primary Research Questions**

The primary research questions focused on the characteristics of strategic decision making processes: motive for initiation, concept of goals, relationship between means and ends, concept of choice, analytic
comprehensiveness, and integrative comprehensiveness. In this section findings are presented to justify the categorization of the community colleges as shown in Table 9 (Appendix L) as relates to the issues of communications with business and industry, funding, and student enrollment.

1. What or who initiates the strategic decision process?

The motive for initiation can be either synoptic, incremental, or a combination of these two types of strategic decision making processes. Synoptic processes are initiated in response to problems or opportunities that appear during constant surveillance (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). These processes are more proactive in nature. Incremental processes are initiated in response to a problem or dissatisfaction with the current state (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). These processes are more reactive in nature.

Within three of the four institutions, synoptic strategic decision processes existed with respect to communications with business and industry as evidenced in the following comments:

We might just simply do something with business and industry to procure ideas of the ways we might develop a new program. (Administrator B, Little River Community College)

...anything that is initiated out of this office I usually initiated it. (Administrator D, Peaceful Springs Community College)

The President initiated it. He thought we needed to do something to get our relations with the business and industrial communities stronger. (Administrator D, Great Oaks Community College)

The fourth institution, however, makes use of both synoptic and incremental strategic decision processes in communication with business
and industry as Administrator D indicated:

It is an educational process in which we establish: (a) our identity; (b) our existence; and (c) what we can do for and with them (synoptic). Although there are those that call up the College and say "hey we've got twenty-two people that we'd really like to put through a course in data processing. What do you have?" (incremental). (Administrator D, High Rock Community College)

All four institutions employ synoptic strategic decision processes in matters of both local and non-state external funding. Administrator D at High Rock Community College illustrated this pertaining to local funding:

I'm talking about a local tax base that is totally controlled within our Institution to the extent that we want to put milage on the ballot. That we are totally proactive in. (Administrator D, High Rock Community College)

On the other hand, Administrator A at Little River Community College responded this way:

Local funding is begun in the budgeting process and eventually passed on by the Board. (Administrator A, Little River Community College)

Administrator B focused on the strength of his Institution's Foundation:

We have been very successful in getting the local business people to contribute to the Foundation. (Administrator B, Great Oaks Community College)

Finally, Administrator A indicated the reason for beginning external funding sources at his Institution:

External funding sources are very much sought out by the College. We have a strong Foundation and a modest endowment program. We purposefully started them as an alternative funding source. (Administrator A, Little River Community College)
With state funding, contrarily, all four institutions are incremental in their strategic decision processes as evidenced by the statements of Administrators from Great Oaks Community College and High Rock Community College respectively:

The state is on an FTE driven formula. They do ask for our input but it's useless to be on their committees. For all intensive purposes we have no say in that; that is dictated. (Administrator B)

...the area we are most reactive in would be state funding. (Administrator D)

In the area of student enrollment, three of the institutions are synoptic. The respondents from High Rock, Peaceful Springs, and Great Oaks Community Colleges speak to this synoptic decision process:

The Office of Institutional Planning and Research does a consistent analysis of student enrollment ...so we could usually pick up fairly quickly where there are opportunities where enrollment should be growing, whether or not they are growing, and could check that out. (Administrator B, High Rock Community College)

This year we're going to try to do more with the agencies like welfare, JTPA, to increase student counseling, and to move our group counseling with people seeking employment up from spring quarter to include winter quarter and spring quarter. (Administrator C, Peaceful Springs Community College)

We need to work very hard to let people know precisely what we have. We do specific mail-outs to specific people. We send out traditional stuff to high schools. (Administrator A, Great Oaks Community College)

At the fourth institution, both synoptic and incremental processes are used in the area of student enrollment as explained by Administrator A:

In the normal degree programs, the College initiates the process. We try to maybe
lead them or help ahead of the ball (synoptic). A lot of times they call you on the phone and say "next week I want to train a hundred people in quality and process control" (incremental). (Administrator A, Little River Community College)

2. What role is played by goals in the process?

This section examines the role played by goals in strategic decision processes. With synoptic strategic decision processes, the process is directed at achieving a specified goal or future intended state (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). With incremental strategic decision processes, the process is directed at achieving a modification of the current state. The process is "remedial" (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566).

With the exception of the high technology centers established by the colleges and the 150 acre land purchase by Little River Community College with the long range purpose of "encouraging business and industry that is compatible with the kinds of things that the College trains for to settle there," the strategic decision processes employed by all four colleges relative to goal setting seem incremental.

In the area of communications with business and industry, special courses to offer are "set up on a quarter by quarter basis" with adjunct faculty needed on a "six months or six hours" basis. Reaction to closing industries is done on a "continuous basis" and may be a "crash course" response in terms of having to "immediately set up programs for retraining people."

Local funding goals encompass a ten year span because of the ten year levy. Although Administrator B at Peaceful Springs Community College stated they have a five year plan with regard to state funding, the other three colleges think in terms of two years because
of the state's two year biennial plan but even there it is "more like one year because the second year is never firm," according to Administrator A at Little River Community College. External funding goals are typically one year in length although Administrator D at Little River Community College felt it was "very short term in nature (more like) six months."

Student enrollment goals range from a Five Year Master Plan at Peaceful Springs Community College which is adjusted annually to "quick rush quarterly reactions" depending on the previous quarter's enrollment at High Rock Community College.

Projection of new industries tends to have goals as far out as five years or longer due to use of environmental scans, development of high technology centers, and land purchases. In the opinion of Administrator D at High Rock Community College, public relations should also be planned five years out especially "if you're going to establish some sort of an ongoing relationship with business and industry that maybe would have a grant coming in."

Further support is given to the presence of incremental strategic decision processes in goal setting considering the small number of administrators who conceptualized any of the areas as future desired states. The highest number of administrators, three, considered projection of new industries as a future desired state. Even fewer administrators considered reaction to closing industries, external funding, and academic, program, and retention goals to be conceptualized as future desired states. Only one administrator viewed local and state funding, special courses to offer, and public relations in this manner.
3. What is the relationship between means (alternatives) and ends (goals)?

In synoptic strategic decision processes, goals (ends) are identified before the strategic alternatives (means) for achieving them are analyzed. Decision making is an "ends-means" process (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). In incremental strategic decision processes, the remedial change outcome is considered at the same time the means for achieving it is analyzed. The processes are intertwined and simultaneous (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566).

Administrators at the community colleges indicated whether the administrators in their colleges clearly agreed on goals set in the three areas of communication with business and industry, funding, and student enrollment before selecting and evaluating ways to achieve them. The overwhelming majority of administrators answered affirmatively on all categories. Only eight negative responses were recorded: two for projection of new industries, two for reaction to closing industries, one for external funding, one for program goals, and two for retention goals. Totally affirmative responses were otherwise received for these areas as well as special courses to offer, adjunct faculty needed, public relations, local funding, state funding, and academic goals.

From these responses, the administrators are predominantly synoptic in their strategic decision processes as they identify the goals (ends) before selecting and evaluating the strategic alternatives (means) for accomplishing them.

To assess whether goals (ends) are considered at the same time as the alternatives (means) for achieving them are analyzed, administrators indicated whether time, politics, or the economy either singly
or in combination tended to modify, delay, or stop the strategic planning process. Only in the area of retention was time by itself thought to modify, delay, or stop the strategic planning process. However, when time was combined with the economy, the strategic planning processes in special courses to offer, adjunct faculty needed, reaction to closing industries, and program goals were either modified, delayed, or stopped. Politics in and of itself only modified, delayed, or stopped the strategic planning process with regard to public relations. The economy was considered the single most important factor in modifying, delaying, or stopping the strategic planning process in the projection of new industries, local, state, and external funding, and academic goals.

Administrators frequently indicated that it was the combined effects of time and the economy or otherwise time, politics, and the economy alone which caused the strategic planning process to be modified, delayed, or stopped. From their responses, the ends are affected by the means. They are seemingly intertwined and simultaneous and thus more incremental in nature.

4. How and by whom is the final choice of an alternative determined?

Distinguishing between synoptic and incremental strategic decision processes with regard to the concept of choice involves how the final choice of an alternative is made. With synoptic, the final choice of an alternative is dependent on how it contributes to the achievement of the goal. Decision quality is known only when it is shown that this decision provides the best means to the specified goal (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). With incremental, the final choice
of an alternative is made by combining the considered alternatives (means) and their possible consequences (ends) and simultaneously selecting the one that yields the most desirable outcome. Decision quality is judged by the agreement achieved in choosing an alternative (the means to the end) (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566).

As shown in Table 7 (Appendix I), administrators were given a list of concepts with their definitions which are frequently used to describe strategic decision making processes. They indicated whether they made very much or very little use of these concepts. Concepts used most frequently by administrators were goal-maximizing choice, organization/constituent negotiation, and incremental logic. More specifically, all but one administrator frequently used goal-maximizing choice, three fourths used organization/constituent negotiation, and all but four administrators used incremental logic. Somewhat more moderate use was made of satisficing with just less than half using that concept. Only four administrators used sponsor endorsement and political bargaining. The concepts of individual judgment and a garbage can were the most infrequently used of all the concepts by all but two administrators. Over half seldom used satisficing and political bargaining.

From these responses, the administrators use both synoptic and incremental strategic decision making processes in determining the final choice of an alternative. In using goal-maximizing choice, they are synoptic in their strategic decision making processes whereas in the use of organization/constituent negotiation and incremental logic they are incremental in their strategic decision making processes.
The frequent use of goal-maximizing choice by these community college administrators runs contrary to the bounded rationality ("satisficing") suggested by March and Simon (1958). Murray's suggestion (1978) that firms in regulated environments must "negotiate" their actions with outside constituents is supported by three fourths of the administrators in this study. The use of incremental logic by eight of the administrators supports Quinn's view (1980) and runs contrary to the synoptic model which maintains that a decision maker uses a systematic method to solve an entire problem without breaking it into subproblems.

When strategic planning leads to strategic decision making, the administrators indicated whether they themselves made the choice or whether it was imposed on their colleges by others. In the area of communications with business and industry, three fourths of the administrators responsible for this area indicated special courses to offer, adjunct faculty needed, projection of new industries, and reaction to closing industries were all the choice of the administrator. The administrators were split down the middle concerning public relations with half considering it the choice of the administrator while half did not.

In the area of local funding, three-fourths of the administrators responsible for this area felt it was their choice while only one-fourth felt it was imposed on the college. State and external funding were considered by half of the administrators to be imposed while half thought they were the choice of the administrator.
With regard to student enrollment, half of the administrators responsible for this area considered academic, program, and retention goals to be the choice of the administrator while half felt they were imposed.

The responses of the Presidents at High Rock Community College and Great Oaks Community College indicated that in all three areas they felt it was both the choice of the administrator and imposed on the college from outside. The Presidents at Little River Community College and Peaceful Springs Community College were divided in their responses at times considering it their choice but at others considering it either imposed or a combination of both.

From the standpoint of the colleges as a whole, more frequently than not strategic decision making is the choice of the administrator and/or President.

When goals are imposed from outside they are viewed by the majority as liberating rather than inhibiting. In the view of one administrator they are opportunities:

The more goals that are out there it seems to me clearly don't inhibit you if in fact you understand that those are options, possibilities to choose from. The more options and probabilities there are the better you can do what you want to do.

(Administrator A, High Rock Community College)

5. How comprehensive is the institution in making strategic decisions?

In the area of analytic comprehensiveness, a synoptic strategic decision maker attempts to be exhaustive in the identification and selection of goals and the generation and evaluation of alternatives. All factors are considered (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). An incremental
strategic decision maker on the other hand considers only a few alternatives to the status quo as alternative actions and only a restricted range of consequences in their evaluation. All possible factors are not considered (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566).

Based on Mintzberg's work (1976), administrators were asked the degree of comprehensiveness in categorizing decisions: by the stimuli that evoked them, whether opportunity, crisis or problem decisions, by their solutions whether given, ready-made, custom made, or modified solutions, and by the process used to arrive at them. As indicated in Table 8 (Appendix J), almost three fourths of the administrators frequently were comprehensive as to the opportunity stimuli that evoke decisions. More than half were frequently comprehensive as to problem decisions and slightly less than half as to crisis decisions.

Almost half of the administrators were either very frequently or frequently comprehensive in using custom-made solutions or modified solutions. Only four of the administrators were frequently comprehensive in using fully-developed solutions or ready-made solutions.

With process, three fourths of the administrators made frequent use of development activity after recognition while half frequently used processes involving formal diagnosis or authorization. Less than one half frequently used internal, external, or new option interrupts.

From these responses, the administrators viewed it more important to be comprehensive in opportunity decisions, custom-made solutions, and development activity after recognition.

In an effort to determine whether administrators consider all factors in their strategic decision processes, they were asked to give
their reactions to the need for/ability to be comprehensive in information gathering relative to strategic decision making. In the view of these administrators there are both cognitive and institutional limits to being comprehensive in information gathering prior to making a decision. Cognitively, many viewed too much information, "information overload," as dangerous as it is confusing as to which alternative is best.

Administrator D at High Rock Community College summed up the importance of information as it lets one know:

* if there is a decision to be made
* whose decision it is
* what are all the possible options from the decision
* how to evaluate each of the alternatives
* how to play out the consequences of the decision to see if it precipitates another problem

Institutionally, there are limits as to time, the presence or absence of a data based management system, the presence of time based studies, people capable of translating the data into a useable form, and funding for such a position. The timeliness of the decision was stressed more often by the administrators than any other factor.

However, Administrator A at Little River Community College stressed that through the use of a data based management system it is possible to gather information in a timely fashion and make it relevant to the decision process:

If you're not shooting to get there you are in trouble. The person that says I can't gather comprehensive enough information to run my institution or to make good decisions better get out of the administrative process because that is absolutely essential if you are going to run it and if you are going to plan.
Intuition is also important to two other administrators:

I think intuition is really the heart of the entrepreneurial process and it really is the heart of the leadership process. (Administrator A, High Rock Community College)

We have made a lot of decisions just by the seat of the pants type of thing. They have been made more on individuals' and groups' experience and expertise in their own area and maybe just a gut feeling of what's good for [insert college name]. (Administrator B, Peaceful Springs Community College)

Finally, having a "propensity for action" and using networking is important in the view of Administrator A:

I get phone calls from all over the country on a regular basis. I call people around in terms of saying "hey this is what I am thinking about what is your experience with it?" That network gives me a pretty good feel of whether it's going to go or not go. (Administrator A, Great Oaks Community College)

From these comments, the administrators are generally unable to consider all possible factors but rather a few alternatives and a restricted range of consequences prior to decision making. Thus, they are more incremental in the degree of analytic comprehensiveness they obtain before making strategic decisions.

6. How do persons responsible for planning activities integrate those decisions into an overall strategy?

In synoptic strategic decision processes, integrative comprehensiveness involves conscious attempts to integrate the decisions that compose the overall strategy to insure that they reinforce one another. The strategy is viewed as a consciously developed, integrated whole (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566). In incremental strategic decision processes, little attempt is made to integrate, consciously, the individual decisions that could possible affect one another. The strategy
is viewed as a loosely linked group of decisions that are handled individually (Fredrickson, 1983, p. 566).

When asked if they attempted to integrate decisions at their college, all of the administrators answered affirmatively. The principal method used by administrators for integrating decisions was the planning documents. Examples of these documents at the colleges include "Third Decade Directions" Strategic Educational Planning Process: Design Document, FY 1985-89 Long Range Plan and Self-Study Report, Project Plans for 1983-1984, and Tasks To Be Accomplished and Goals 1982-84 (Appendix K). In the development of these documents there is input from administrators, faculty, and staff across the campus thereby increasing the level of knowledge, understanding, and communication concerning the goals of the college and those of each department. Other procedures used to integrate decisions include faculty and staff meetings, informal brainstorming and strategy sessions, memos, newsletters, the Cabinet process, minutes of Board meetings, and retreats.

These attempts to integrate planning decisions into an overall strategy exhibit synoptic strategic decision processes. The administrators consciously try to develop the planning decisions into an integrated whole.

**Secondary Research Questions**

1. What problems are created for the institution by changes in its environment?

Among the problems created for the community colleges as a result of increasing control at the state level are decreased autonomy, decreased funding, increased student fees, and limits to expansion plans of the colleges. To counteract these, the administrators
are very active in monitoring and attempting to influence the State Legislature. All but one administrator indicated that the most frequent method for monitoring the State Legislature is through establishing relationships with local Representatives in House and Senate. Three fourths of the administrators monitor the Legislature through the community college lobbyist. Two-thirds indicated they monitor the State Legislature by receiving and reading legislative reports while slightly more than half indicated they accomplished this by attending legislative sessions.

Numerous reasons were given for the importance of influencing the State Legislature including:

* educating legislators as to what community colleges are and that these are their constituents
* exerting pressure such as in a levy to get endorsement from a legislator
* for funding purposes
* in order to preserve a reasonably high level of institutional autonomy
* in keeping with Governor Celeste's commitment to strategic planning as a methodology in the state of Ohio and its linkage to economic development which influences the future of the community college system
* to influence the language of legislation and how priorities are going to be established
* to counter the centralization effects of the Board of Regents

Administrator A at Great Oaks Community College and Administrator A at Peaceful Springs Community College summed it up when asked if they influenced the State Legislature:

Damn right. Ohio is a very politicized state. You are very naive if you think that you don't have to jump into politics with a fervor if you're going to do the best that you can for your institution. If we don't have a good working relationship with the Legislature, we're dead. You've got to be a politician to have a successful college operation.
The administrators' proactive attempts at monitoring and influencing the State Legislature exhibit the use of synoptic strategic decision processes. However, since half of the administrators view the State Legislature as both an opportunity and a potential threat both synoptic and incremental strategic decision processes are operating.

At the local level, the closing of industries has created problems for the community colleges. In response to these closings the administrators were immediately reactive (incremental) as illustrated in the following comments:

The steel mill's closing was very traumatic because that was our biggest employer. We had to immediately set up programs to retrain the people for other jobs and upgrade their training for other jobs. That had to happen when the industries closed. (Administrator A, Peaceful Springs Community College)

We respond (to closing industries) immediately. We set up programs at night, bring them in in groups and work with them. We get the industries to provide some educational monies to support the people that they laid off to go to school. (Administrator B, Great Oaks Community College)

The long term effects of these closings such as high unemployment, young people moving away from the community, and a dwindling economy force the colleges to take proactive measures (synoptic). Administrators at Little River, Peaceful Springs, and Great Oaks Community Colleges spoke to this concern:

(We are trying) to encourage business and industry that is compatible with the kinds of things that we train for to settle in the area. We can provide them with space in our $51.2 million high technology training facility over night on a lease basis. The idea is to try to bring a
smoke stack town into the new age of technology. (Administrator A, Little River Community College)

Business and industry that come to this area to locate, they want to see and to talk about what we can do for them as far as training programs. We do anything they want. We can set up training programs of about any kind that they want. We have robotics, mechanical and electrical engineering, to plastics, to civil and we can train the office people. (Administrator A, Peaceful Springs Community College)

I've got a proposal in which talks about GM's new robotics firm and __ working together to train people in robotics in this community. ___ is a blue collar town. If it's going to survive it's going to have to change (from) a service economy base to a high technology base. (Administrators B & D, Great Oaks)

Such proactive (synoptic) involvement at the local and state levels help offset the problems created for the Institutions by decreased funding of higher education at the national level. Administrator D at Little River Community College indicated:

Federally as long as federal funding for student aid continues then I believe that we will be able to continue serving students whom we ought to be serving. But if that money goes away then those students will go away and I think to the extent that that's an influence that's an absolute influence. (Administrator D, Little River)

As indicated in Table 2 (Appendix D), the administrators attempt to be proactive in all areas.

2. What can be known about changes in the environment, and how can such knowledge about change be acquired as an aid in strategic planning?

Changes in the environment relate to changes in the local environment, local economy, local demography, and local politics/legislation.
In the local environment, areas of concern involve new and obsolete technology, projections of new industries, reaction to closing industries, liaisons with area high schools and universities, and public relations. It is primarily through the Presidents' contacts with business and industry and through the use of advisory committees that knowledge of these are acquired and steps towards rectifying them are initiated.

In an effort to meet the needs of the new technologies and to move from a "tinkering patent" of earlier times to the "high technology patent" of today, all of the colleges have either built or are building high technology training centers and have revised their curriculums to meet these needs. As Administrator A at Little River Community College stated his College gets involved in training programs with local industries "to help them advance their methods and to become more competitive." Such commitments exhibit synoptic decision making processes.

Two of the colleges, High Rock Community College and Little River Community College, make use of environmental scans which help in the projection of new industries. These environmental scans are contained in the "Third Decade Directions" Strategic Educational Planning Process: Design Document at High Rock and in FY 1985-89 Long Range Plan and Self-Study Report at Little River. As Administrator A at Little River Community College indicated "we try to first of all project, using as much of a research and data base as we possibly can what the environment is going to look like out as far as five years." As a part of that, his College has acquired 150 acres of land for attracting new business and industries to settle there. The overriding goal is to
establish "a more stable mutually beneficial relationship between business and industry." Administrator D at High Rock Community College similarly stated that "I think we have been very fortunate in being able to do the things that I think both business and industry and the Institution feel are prudent and realistic and beneficial."

These proactive efforts indicate the presence of synoptic strategic decision making processes.

Involvement in projection of new industries is partially a response to closing industries. When industries close, the institutions immediately react with programs of retraining to equip these people with employable skills once again. Such decision making is more incremental in nature.

Where liaisons with local high schools and universities are concerned, Administrator C at High Rock Community College feels that his Institution "takes a more wholistic view of the whole educational environment" than do the other community colleges. His Institution has devoted "substantial financial and human resources to providing leadership in coordinating the total education effort K-14 with particular focus on basic skills education." All the colleges devote time to recruiting efforts at the local high schools. Once they leave that particular community college, Peaceful Springs Community College utilizes exit interviews as a part of the tracking systems to ascertain the success of the students finding employment and/or transferring to the university. Administrators A, C, and D at Little River Community College expressed concern for improving student tracking at their Institution. These efforts are largely synoptic in scope.
With public relations, Peaceful Springs Community College has built a recreation center and is "thinking about ways to open it up to the community with a health club for them." Administrator A at Great Oaks Community College views his College as being "very much the center core of what's going on in this community" through the use of the Mobile Information Center as well as "the interlocking directory between major industrial business groups." His College "is looked upon as a neutral ground for solving problems." He commented that as President:

He is looked upon as serving as a mediator for labor disputes, for job shutdowns, for regional government, for quality of education, for economic development, I'm talking about very specific finite responsibilities where the President has served in the major leadership role for solving those issues. And that's very helpful in terms of making this community a better community.

Administrator D at High Rock Community College also stressed the importance of public relations:

I think public relations is immediate and ongoing and as far in the future as you possibly can. There is a whole set of strategies around public relations in terms of grants and contracts, image, national exposure, promotion, highlights of individuals and so forth, ties to communities, organizations, advisory committees; the list is endless in a given college how we can deal with public relations.

Such involvement with public relations involves synoptic strategic decisions.

With the local economy, recession, inflation, and unemployment have impacted the community college. As Administrator A at Peaceful Springs Community College demonstrated in the following statement, the
President's role in this is very key:

I interface with the Development Corporation, the Chamber of Commerce, with a number of committees trying to do this economic development function.

Similarly, at Great Oaks Community College, the President is "Chairperson of the Mayor's Council on Economic Development." According to Administrator B the President was actively involved in trying to save local industries from closing such as Tire and Rubber and Press.

The environmental scans which are a part of the planning at High Rock Community College and Little River Community College are also helpful in predicting such economic problems. These efforts also demonstrate synoptic decision making processes.

With the local demography, the decline in the traditional college-going population, the increased numbers of senior citizens, lifelong learning needs, and the urban-rural migration have created problems for the community colleges. At Peaceful Springs Community College Administrator C indicated:

Basically what's happening is all our younger people anywhere from recent high school graduates up through the thirties probably are leaving this area to find other jobs. What we are turning into very rapidly is a more or less elderly environment. Health care facilities and service type facilities are springing up everywhere. So we've had to adjust some of our programs to comply with what's happening.

At Great Oaks Community College, instructors teach classes at the local Retirement Center to better accommodate some of its senior citizens.
The importance of retraining was emphasized by Administrator A at Little River Community College:

> When you look down the road to 1990 or so, eighty percent of the work force in 1990 by most predictions is already in the work force now. So it's retraining is the job, not new training.

Lifelong learning within the institution is also important. Administrator A at Great Oaks Community College expects his faculty to continue to grow professionally even if they have a Ph.D. and the reason given is:

> You've got to keep growing because the arena is changing. It's not that you are any less bright it's that we are simply trying to keep up and lead in the arena.

Indices of other demographic problems were given by Administrators at High Rock, Peaceful Springs, and Great Oaks Community Colleges:

> Demographically, half of the people in our County don't have a high school diploma. We have the largest Ukranian ethnic concentration in the world (creating) English as a second language problems. (Administrator A, High Rock Community College)

> I think community colleges (in general) have to be prepared for a wider range of people. We've got people with Ph.D's coming back here to learn something so they can go to work. We've got to deal with those people as well as the GED person, as well as the high school person. We've got all those people to deal with. (Administrator C, Peaceful Springs Community College)

> In the city of , we have about forty-five percent of the people (who) are not high school graduates. GED programs are a big thing. (Administrator D, Great Oaks Community College)
The colleges are attempting to be proactive in solving these problems and as such display synoptic strategic decision making processes.

With local politics/legislation, one of the chief concerns is getting support for the local levy. As Administrator D at Great Oaks Community College indicated:

It's always appropriate for us to court those corporate structures which can assist us in levy campaigns. It does a lot for Sohio to endorse our levy because it says to the employees now I'll vote for that.

At Great Oaks Community College, Administrator A and at Little River Community College Administrator D indicated that their institutions get involved in the local politics:

This is the first city in America that had city manager form of government. Our form of government here, although there is a lot of bickering going on as there always is in politics, the graft and corruption that I saw in so many eastern communities in my judgment simply does not exist here which is great.

We are in an area where there is very, very strong competition between the two major localities in the County and in some ways the Institution gets wrapped up in that.

At Peaceful Springs Community College, Administrator B indicated that a local levy doesn't exist but some local money is generated in terms of "student fees, renting of facilities, and temporary investments which are controlled by the Institution." To compensate for that Administrator A indicated:

We might work the political thing a little more. It seems to me some of them don't have the same relationship with their Representative that we have. (Peaceful Springs Community College)
Such involvement by the institutions in political activities also demonstrates synoptic strategic decision processes.

3. What methods are used to forecast environmental changes?

Environmental scans are used by High Rock Community College and by Little River Community College to forecast environmental changes. Other methods used for detecting changes in the environment include the Presidents' leadership with civic and business organizations and advisory committees which include members from the business community.

Administrator B at High Rock Community College pointed out the purpose of the environmental scan:

We do the environmental scan once a year primarily in relation to the strategic planning process but really internalize the fact that we are responsible for it on a continuous basis. We try to really keep fairly close tabs on what's going on with areas that are either fast growing or fast declining that we know can impact on our relationship in either a positive or a negative way.

At Little River Community College, Administrators A and B indicated the value of having the environmental scan:

It permits the breadth of our response to be a little more comprehensive. It is very comprehensive, points out what is going to impact in any way and helps to eliminate surprises. It aids in monitoring national trends and economic forces and things that exist within the environment which are national, regional, or statewide in scope.

Administrator A at Great Oaks Community College described his leadership role in the community:

The degree of my involvement in the community assures them that in any decision making in the community in any area they can call. We're on a first name basis whether it be the President of a multi-national corporation, a four star general at the Base, a person in the
Chamber of Commerce, people in the hospital organizations, my job is to know them all. I do.

Administrator B at High Rock Community College views her College as "one of the more gregarious institutions in the area" commenting:

None of the institutions in the area are probably as risk oriented and have a leadership style throughout the institution or throughout the executive level as we do. The two Executive Vices we have and the President are all fairly high stake players and so they are likely to launch out in an area where somebody else would not.

All of the community colleges make use of advisory committees. As an example, Administrator A at High Rock Community College mentioned the involvement of "presidents, managing partners of international firms, executive vice presidents, i.e. the most powerful groups representing the private sector" in the planning process of the Unified Technology Center there.

Through the use of environmental scans, Presidential involvement, and advisory committees, synoptic strategic decision processes are used in forecasting environmental changes.

4. Are particular methods of analysis and forecasting better suited for some types of environments than others?

In those communities where industries have closed, the community colleges have reacted immediately to that providing retraining programs for unemployed workers which demonstrates incremental strategic decision processes. As an aftermath to closing industries, the colleges continue to upgrade their programs, faculty, and facilities to meet the training needs of the remaining industries and to hopefully attract new business and industry to the area. This shows use of synoptic
strategic decision processes. By continuing to maintain close relationships with State Legislators they attempt to secure funding for their institutions to keep it viable through this period of recession and inflation which is also synoptic in nature. Working within the community to attract high school seniors, upgrading general educational levels of the citizenry, and offering programs of instruction to the elderly also demonstrate synoptic strategic decision processes.

5. How should the institution integrate environmental assessments into its strategic planning process?

Through the use of environmental scans at High Rock Community College and Little River Community College, attempts are made to integrate environmental assessments. These colleges are proactive in this regard and therefore use synoptic strategic decision processes. The other two community colleges in the study, Peaceful Springs Community College and Great Oaks Community College, rely on Presidential contact, Board member influence, or other means to integrate environmental assessments into their strategic planning processes. As such they are lesssynoptic in their approach compared to High Rock Community College and Little River Community College.

Summary

From the foregoing discussion, an attempt as been made to analyze the findings. There were three principal findings. First of all, the findings supported Fredrickson's (1983, p. 566) suggestion that not only do organizations employ both synoptic and incremental strategic decision making processes, but also strategic processes may be synoptic on some characteristics and simultaneously incremental on others.
Secondly, the strategic decision making processes used by the administrators were issue specific. Finally, there were commonalities among the colleges by issue.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the strategic decision making processes in a sample of selected community colleges in the state of Ohio. Using the framework developed by Fredrickson (1983), these processes have been analyzed as to two types: synoptic and incremental.

There were three major findings as shown in Table 9 (Appendix L). The findings supported Fredrickson's (1983, p. 566) suggestion that not only do organizations employ both synoptic and incremental strategic decision making processes, but strategic processes may be synoptic on some characteristics and simultaneously incremental on others. Secondly, administrators used dominant strategic decision making processes by issue. Finally, the colleges clustered by issue. In the conclusions which follow, clarification regarding the clustering of the colleges by issue is provided.

Conclusions

From an exploration of the several elements that contribute to strategic decision making processes, a number of conclusions have resulted. These conclusions are organized around the six primary research questions. As described below, synoptic decision processes were used by the administrators with regard to the motive for initiation and integrative comprehensiveness. Incremental decision processes were utilized by the administrators in the areas of concept of
goals and analytic comprehensiveness. Both synoptic and incremental decision processes were used where means and ends and the concept of choice were concerned.

1. What or who initiates the strategic decision process?

In the initiation of strategic decision processes, the community colleges engaged more in synoptic processes. This is particularly true in the areas of communications with business and industry, local and external funding, and student enrollment. The colleges are very proactive in their response to problems or opportunities which exist whether it involves increasing their relationship with business and industry, seeking community support for local and external funds, or actively recruiting students. The one exception to this concerns state funding where all four colleges use incremental strategic decision processes. The colleges react to the dictates of the state's biennial budget.

2. What role is played by goals in the process?

It seems reasonable to conclude that incremental strategic decision processes are largely employed by all four colleges relative to goal setting. The exceptions to this are the presence of high technology centers established by the colleges and the 150 acre land purchase by one of the colleges which are more proactive thereby exhibiting synoptic strategic decision processes. This goal setting focuses on the projection/attraction of new industries and with the enhancement of public relations. Otherwise, the colleges are absorbed in goal setting which modifies the current state whether it be a special course to
offer, adjunct faculty needed, retraining of displaced workers, securing external funds, or reacting to an enrollment crunch. As yet the college administrators fail to conceptualize goals set in these areas as future desired states.

3. What is the relationship between means (alternatives) and ends (goals)?

Within the community colleges studied, both synoptic and incremental strategic decision processes exist concerning the relationship between means and ends. On the one hand, the overwhelming majority of administrators indicated in all areas they clearly agreed on goals set before selecting and evaluating ways to achieve them. This is an "ends-means" process and therefore synoptic in nature.

On the other hand, administrators frequently indicated that the combined effects of either time and the economy or time, politics, and the economy tended to modify, delay, or stop the strategic planning process. As such, the ends are affected by the means i.e. the outcome is considered at the same time the means for achieving it is analyzed. This "means-ends" process is intertwined and simultaneous and thus more incremental.

4. How and by whom is the final choice of an alternative determined?

In determining the final choice of an alternative, the colleges employed both synoptic and incremental strategic decision processes. The frequency with which goal-maximizing choice is used by all but one of the administrators illustrates this point. With goal-maximizing choice, the administrators assign maximum importance to the choices and interpret them in the broadest sense possible. As such the final choice
of an alternative is more synoptic as it depends on how it contributes to the achievement of the goal.

The administrators' frequent use of organization/constituent negotiation and incremental logic reveal more incremental strategic decision processes. In the former, the administrators must negotiate with constraints and limitations imposed by a number of external social and political forces. In the latter, the problem is broken into sub-problems which are solved sequentially. In both of these the final choice of an alternative is more incremental as it results from combining the considered alternatives and their possible consequences and simultaneously selecting the one that yields the most desirable outcome.

5. How comprehensive is the institution in making strategic decisions?

It seems logical to conclude that all of the colleges utilize incremental strategic decision processes relative to comprehensiveness. As there are both institutional and cognitive limits to being comprehensive in gathering information, the administrators are unable to consider all possible factors prior to making decisions. In their consideration of a limited number of alternatives and consequences, they make use of incremental strategic decision processes.

6. How do persons responsible for planning activities integrate those decisions into an overall strategy?

In integrating decisions into an overall strategy, the administrators display synoptic strategic decision processes. Primarily through the use of planning documents, they consciously attempt to integrate decisions into an overall strategy. Administrators, faculty, and staff from across the campus contribute to the development of these documents thus achieving campus wide interaction.
Other Observations

In studying strategic decision making processes, several other observations seem noteworthy. These observations deal with the colleges' use of strategic planning in its relationship with the external environment, perceptions of administrators, goal setting, the relationship between means and ends, how choices are made, and the comprehensiveness and integration of strategic decision processes on the campuses.

1. Over the last five years, the colleges' relationship in the areas of communication with business and industry, state funding, and external funding has increased.

The colleges' increasing relationship with business and industry is particularly noticeable in the areas of retraining people displaced by robots and retraining and upgrading skills of unemployed individuals due to closing industries. College administrators, particularly the Presidents, work very closely with struggling local industries in an attempt to prevent their closing. Similarly, Presidents are instrumental in encouraging new industries to move into the area. Some of the business personnel become a source of adjunct faculty in the newer technology training programs now offered at the community colleges. In general, the increased relationship with business and industry evolves from the feeling of "making the college very much the center core of what's going on in the community" and of working jointly with local business and industry to move the community from a "service economy to a high technology base."

The increased relationship of the community colleges with respect to state funding is largely due to the fact that state allocations over the last five years have not kept pace with inflation.
This has forced administrators not only to make better financial decisions than they did a decade ago when money was more plentiful but has also made them become very involved with the framework and context used in establishing the state's biennial budget as it impacts the institution. Thus escalating student fees, limiting expansion of facilities, and developing contingency plans for pending and/or new legislation having a monetary impact on the institution become very real concerns. The importance of maintaining good rapport with the legislators and of educating them about the community college system becomes paramount if their future support is to be gained.

The colleges' increased relationship in matters of external funding has as its primary purpose the establishment of an alternative source of funding. These external funds are used for scholarships to attract students, for capital interests, for institutional expansion, and for various other reasons. Maintaining and increasing the level of these external funds helps prevent the colleges from being constrained by the state funding level.

2. Administrators unanimously agreed that they attempt to be proactive with regard to state funding.

Such unanimous agreement is not surprising as fifty to sixty percent of the budgets of the community colleges come from the state of Ohio. Administrators must be proactive to secure those resources which are essential in order to do the things that are in the best interest of their college and community. The heightened competition for scarce resources dictates that the administrators, particularly the Presidents, be "politicians" if a successful college operation is to be realized.
3. The general consensus is that it is the personality of the administrator and political and social influences from the community which cause the same event to be perceived as a problem in one community college and an opportunity in another.

Although other administrators in addition to the Presidents were interviewed on each college campus, it was the personality characteristics of the President which the administrators injected into their discussions. The fact that the Presidents are on a "first name basis" with the chief executive officers across the community reflect their effective human relations skills. The risk orientation and leadership style of the Presidents were characterized as being "high stake players who are likely to launch out in an area where somebody else wouldn't" and being "the most aggressive persons in the world." A sense of candidness and fairness was apparent where the President was referred to as a "tough guy" with "no hidden agendas" and "no games played." "If he thinks the faculty aren't moving on issues, he tells them." The magnitude of the President is apparent when a fellow administrator states that he "gives the President so much credit; he's great; he's magnificent."

The political and social influences from the community include the colleges' involvement in local and state politics, with local business and industry, and in general service to the community. The political influence is evidenced in the administrators establishing and maintaining good relationships with State Representatives and Legislators and utilizing their "clout" when possible. Support given to the Legislators during their campaigns, both Democrats and Republicans, by spending ones private funds attending dinners for them is another example. The local political influences are
especially linked to the local tax levy when the college may become very involved in "strong competition between two major localities in the county." Social influences are apparent in the "involvement of the most powerful groups from the private sector in the planning process of the college," in the college's commitment of funding and human resources to the "total education of the county K-14," and in building a recreation center geared to the needs of the community. A combined political and social influence exists when the President calls up an industry about to make a decision to move to the area and encourages them to come.

4. The four areas in which goals are most frequently set are special courses to offer, external funding, academic goals, and program goals with the most frequently used time frame being one year. Generally these goals are identified and agreed on before means for achieving them are analyzed.

Generally speaking, the most frequently used time frame in goal setting was one year. Academic goals, program goals, and goals concerning special courses to offer were frequently set and the colleges either very seriously or seriously attempt to achieve them. Academic goals were one of the areas in which the highest percentage of administrators set priorities. Goals pertaining to external funding reflect the growing necessity for an alternative source of funding at the colleges.

With the exception of goals pertaining to program, retention, external funding, reaction to closing industries, and projection of new industries, the administrators unanimously agreed that in all other areas, goals are identified and agreed on before means for achieving them are analyzed. This "ends-means" process applied to
special courses to offer, adjunct faculty needed, public relations, local funding, state funding, and academic goals. This finding runs contrary to Simon's (1945) belief that since all decisions have interdependent means and ends, it is unrealistic to separate the consideration of means and ends.

5. Goal-maximizing choice was the strategic decision making concept most frequently used by administrators.

In using goal-maximizing choice, the administrators select choices to which they assign maximum importance and which can be interpreted in the broadest sense possible. This finding runs contrary to the bounded rationality ("satisficing") suggested by March and Simon (1958) and the "organized anarchy" described by Cohen and March (1974). Similarly, it does not support the "garbage can" description of organizational choice delineated by Cohen, March, and Olson (1972).

6. The timeliness of the decision most influences how comprehensive one can be in information gathering prior to decision making.

The time factor involved in decision making does not permit administrators to be as comprehensive in information gathering as they might wish to be. Although gathering sufficient information to make a "quality decision" is important, intuition plays a part in the process as one eventually has to make an intuitive leap "that's a good and right decision" and live with it. Successful institutions have a "propensity for action" with administrators that "make the right decisions without all the facts."

7. Planning documents are the principal method used to integrate decisions into an overall strategy.

The administrators unanimously agreed that they attempt to integrate decisions at their college. The principal method of integration
was planning documents which provide the goals of the various areas of
the college and ways of achieving them.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

The process of collecting, organizing, and analyzing information
about strategic decision making processes has uncovered the need for
additional research. More specifically, the following are recommended:

1. This study did not address whether the fits across the
strategic decision making styles of the administrators lead
to improved performance. Further research is needed to
determine if there is a relationship between the strategic
decision making style used and improved performance.

2. In Chapter V, two major explanations were given as to why
these community colleges may have clustered by issue: the
common environment of the community colleges and the common
cognitive mapping of the administrators. Future research
may wish to address reasons for these variances.

3. This study focused on a small sample of community colleges
within the state of Ohio. Future research may want to
investigate whether the same findings would hold true:
(a) for a larger sample of community colleges within the state
of Ohio or (b) for a sample of community colleges from other
states.

4. Community colleges were the institutions investigated in this
research. Future studies may wish to focus on whether the
findings would hold true for other types of educational and/or
business organizations.

5. This research occurred at one point in time. Longitudinal
research of these same institutions is needed to determine if
the findings would hold true over an extended period of time.

6. This study focused on the strategic decision making styles used
in the areas of communications with business and industry,
funding, and student enrollment. Future research may wish to
investigate whether strategic decision making styles would also
vary for other issues.

7. In this study, two of the community colleges utilized environ-
mental scans as a part of the strategic planning of their insti-
tutions. Future research may want to determine the effectiveness
of environmental scans at predicting environmental changes.
Recommendations for Practice

Recommendations for practice have been posited in regard to both training and community college administration. These recommendations are offered with the objective of encouraging better preparation of prospective community college administrators and more efficient and effective use of strategic decision making processes by administrators within community colleges.

1. Administrators within community colleges need to be aware of the three types of strategic decision making processes: synoptic, incremental, or a combination of synoptic and incremental.

2. Community college administrators should be able to fit appropriately the different strategic decision making styles to the various issues.

3. In universities where training programs for prospective community college administrators exist, one thing that should be included is an understanding of and an ability to use strategic planning as a mechanism for dealing with external environmental concerns.

4. The nature of community colleges is different when compared to four year colleges due to the rapidity with which planning must be done. Individuals at the state level who make policies should understand the special nature of these institutions and recognize that strategic planning within these institutions must be continuous and ongoing.

5. As a part of the strategic planning process, all community colleges should include an environmental scan as an integral part of the planning documents of their institutions.

6. Community college administrators in their strategic planning processes should continue to expand their past history of communicating with local business and industry.
APPENDIX A

Letters
July 9, 1984

Dear

May I introduce Ms. Lorraine Carpenter. She is a graduate student in educational administration at Ohio State University. I am chairperson of her Ph.D. committee. Moreover she has been my Graduate Research Associate for the past two years.

She is seeking the participation of a small number of community colleges in her research. She is focusing on planning and planning processes within a sample of these community colleges. Data collection will require interviews with you and a small number of other staff persons from your institution. Her research is, in my judgment, important. Other committee members are Dr. William Moore, Jr., and Dr. H. Randolph Bobbitt, Jr., Chairman of the Department of Management and Human Resources.

Thank you for allowing this introduction. Members of her committee hope that your community college can be included.

Sincerely yours,

Luvern L. Cunningham
Novice G. Fawcett Professor
of Educational Administration
July 9, 1984

Dear

May I introduce myself. I am a Ph.D. candidate at The Ohio State University conducting research on planning within a small number of the community colleges in Ohio. My advisor is Dr. Luvern L. Cunningham, Novice S. Fawcett Professor of Educational Administration.

The primary purpose of this study is to determine the nature of planning in Ohio two-year community colleges. More specifically I am interested in how colleges define planning, whether strategic decision making is involved, and what purposes planning serves in these times of change and uncertainty. I hope that you will be willing for me to visit with you sometime in July. I would like to hear your thoughts about planning and decision making in regard to planning. Should you be willing to participate, I would like later to interview other members of your staff about this topic.

I will call your office on July 12 to determine if you are willing to participate. If so I would like to meet with you and others in your institution later in July to discuss planning. We thank you in advance for your participation in this study.

With sincerest appreciation,

Lorraine N. Carpenter
Ph.D. Candidate and Graduate Research Associate
APPENDIX B

Questionnaire
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which best describes your institution over the last five years with regard to the following three areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Declining</th>
<th>Steady</th>
<th>Increasing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
   a. Communications with business/industry | | |
   b. Funding: Local, State, External | | |
   c. Student Enrollment | | |

2. Given the following definitions and descriptions of kinds of governance, please indicate the appropriateness of each type for your institution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Appropriate</th>
<th>Less Appropriate</th>
<th>Least Appropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
   a. Bureaucratic: decisions made by administrators with little or no input from faculty | | |
   b. Collegial: faculty and administrators share the decision making process | | |
   c. Combination of bureaucratic/collegial | | |

3. Is collective bargaining present in your institution? (yes) (no)

4. Please circle the best description of the amount of local and state control of your college:

   a. Local and state control remained the same over last five years
   b. Increased control by state vs. local over last five years
   c. Increased control locally vs. state over last five years
5. Below is a list of ways community colleges can monitor the state legislature. Please check the methods you use for monitoring the state legislature:

a. ___ through lobbyist
b. ___ by having community college personnel attend legislative sessions
c. ___ by establishing relationships with local representatives in House and Senate

6. Please circle which of the following best describes your view of the legislature:

a. opportunity b. potential threat c. opportunity & potential threat

7. Does your college attempt to influence the state legislature?___(yes)___(no)

8. Does your college involve itself in lobbying efforts beyond those of the lobbyist, Hal Roach?___(yes)___(no)

9. Please check which best describes your institution's relationship to the need for change in each of the following three areas:

wait for change attempt to react to occur and anticipate change and react in advance

a. Communications with business/industry

b. Funding:
   Local
   State
   External

c. Student Enrollment

10. Please check which of the following causes the same event to be perceived as a problem in one community college and an opportunity in another:

a. ___ nature of institution e. ___ mandates given by Board of Trustees
b. ___ personality of administrator f. ___ other causes
c. ___ location of institution
d. ___ political and social influences from community
11. Please check which you believe best describes your college's response to the following issues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similar to other community colleges</th>
<th>Dissimilar to other community colleges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Local environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Local economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Local demography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Local politics/legislation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Below you will find several areas in which goals are set. Please check the areas in which your college sets goals:

a. Communications with business/industry:
   1. Special courses to offer
   2. Adjunct faculty needed
   3. Projection of new industries
   4. Reaction to closing industries
   5. Public relations

b. Funding:
   1. Local
   2. State
   3. External

c. Student Enrollment:
   1. Academic
   2. Program
   3. Retention

13. During what time frames are goals in the following three areas set:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>six mos.</th>
<th>one year</th>
<th>five years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

a. Communications with business/industry:
   1. Special courses to offer
   2. Adjunct faculty needed
   3. Projection of new industries
   4. Reaction to closing industries
   5. Public relations

b. Funding:
   1. Local
   2. State
   3. External
13. (cont'd.)

   six mos. one year five years

c. Student Enrollment:
   1. Academic
   2. Program
   3. Retention

14. If your college sets goals in the following three areas, please check their characteristics:

   specific  general  specific  measurable conceptua-
   and       general    lized as future desired states

   a. Communications
      with business/industry:
      1. Special courses to offer
         ______ ______ ______ ______
      2. Adjunct faculty needed
         ______ ______ ______ ______
      3. Projection of new industries
         ______ ______ ______ ______
      4. Reaction to closing industries
         ______ ______ ______ ______
      5. Public relations
         ______ ______ ______ ______

   b. Funding:
      1. Local
         ______ ______ ______ ______
      2. State
         ______ ______ ______ ______
      3. External
         ______ ______ ______ ______

   c. Student Enrollment:
      1. Academic
         ______ ______ ______ ______
      2. Program
         ______ ______ ______ ______
      3. Retention
         ______ ______ ______ ______
15. Do you try to prioritize goals in the three areas listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Communications with business/industry:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Special courses to offer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adjunct faculty needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Projection of new industries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reaction to closing industries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Public relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Funding:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. External</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Student Enrollment:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Academic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Retention</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

16. Please check the one which best describes your college's attempts to achieve its goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>very seriously</th>
<th>seriously</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>seriously</th>
<th>not seriously</th>
<th>not very seriously</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Communications with bus/ind:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Spec. course to offer</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Adj. fac. needed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Proj. of new ind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Reaction to cl. ind.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Public relations</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Funding:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. External</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Student Enr.:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Academic</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Retention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Do the administrators in your college clearly agree on goals set in the three areas below before selecting and evaluating ways to achieve them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Communications with business/industry:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Special courses to offer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adjunct faculty needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Projection of new industries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reaction to closing industries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Public relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Funding:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. External</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Student Enrollment:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Academic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Retention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. Listed below are some concepts that are frequently used to describe strategic decision making processes. Please read each concept, its definition, and indicate how you usually go about making choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Very Very Much</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal-maximizing choice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisficing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor endorsement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political bargaining</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A garbage can</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18. (cont'd.)

organization/constituent negotiation - constraints and limitations imposed by a number of external social and political forces with whom the organization must negotiate implicitly if not explicitly. ________

incremental logic - using fragmented, evolutionary, and largely intuitive strategic processes to solve a problem by breaking it into subproblems that are solved sequentially. ________

19. Some administrators categorize decisions by the stimuli that evoked them, by their solutions, and by the process used to arrive at them. If your institution employs processes that are similar, please check how comprehensive you attempt to be in each.

A. Stimulus:

1. opportunity decisions - those initiated on a purely voluntary basis, to improve an already secure situation. ________

2. crisis decisions - organizations respond to intense pressures. The severity of the situation demands immediate action. ________

3. problem decisions - those decisions falling in the middle, evoked by milder pressures than crises. ________

B. Solution:

1. given fully-developed solutions at the start of the process ________

2. ready-made, fully-developed solutions in the environment during the process ________
19. (cont'd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Infrequently</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Very Frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. custom-made solutions developed especially for the decision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. modified solutions combining ready-made and custom-made features to fit particular situations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Infrequently</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Very Frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. involves development activity after recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. may or may not involve formal diagnosis or authorization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. involves either internal or political interrupts where there is disagreement on the need to make a strategic decision, external interrupts where outside forces block the selection of a fully-developed solution, or new options interrupt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

Interview Guide
INTERVIEW

1. Please order these cards based on the kind of governance that actually exists in your institution: bureaucratic, collegial, or a combination of bureaucratic/collegial.

2. If collective bargaining is present, how has this impacted upon your strategic planning? Please give examples.

3. You have indicated the amount of local and state control of your college over the last five years. Given your answer, what impact has this had on strategic planning in your institution.

4. Why or why not does your college attempt to influence the state legislature?

5. Please describe how the strategic decision process is initiated in the following three areas:
   a. Business/industrial concerns
   b. Matters of funding:
      1. Local
      2. State
      3. External
   c. Area of student enrollment

6. In each of the three areas given above, who initiates it?

7. You have indicated areas in which you feel your college is dissimilar to other community colleges. In the dissimilar areas, why and how is this true?

8. How, if at all, do goals affect your strategic decision processes?

9. Are there some goals imposed from outside which tend to inhibit rather than liberate the college? Please give examples.

10. Are there additional goals you would like to set but have been unable to do so due to lack of time, money, or other problems? Are there some goals you feel should be dropped?

11. Please give specifics as to your college's attempts to achieve its goals.

12. Are goals disseminated to your college staff?
13. Please check which of the following tends to modify, delay, or stop the strategic planning process in each of the three areas listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Politics</th>
<th>Economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Communications with business/industry:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Special courses to offer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adjunct faculty needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Projection of new industries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reaction to closing industries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Public relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Funding:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. External</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Student Enrollment:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Academic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Retention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. When your strategic planning leads to strategic decision making in each of the three areas below, please check how the decision is made:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Choice of</th>
<th>Imposed on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>administrator</td>
<td>others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Communications with business/industry:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Special courses to offer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adjunct faculty needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Projection of new industries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reaction to closing industries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Public relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Funding:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Local</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. External</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Student Enrollment:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Academic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Retention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Much of the recent literature speaks to comprehensiveness in information gathering. Some view this to be impossible due to both cognitive (information overload) and institutional (time, cost) limits. Please give your reaction to the need for/ability to be comprehensive in information gathering relative to strategic decision making.
16. Relative to the integration of strategic decisions, do you and your planners try to integrate decisions or are decisions treated separately by different components of the institution.

17. Please indicate which procedures, in addition to formal planning systems, your college uses to integrate decisions:

_____ workshops
_____ newsletters
_____ other
APPENDIX D

Relationship of Institutions to Need for Change
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wait for Change to occur and react</th>
<th>Attempt to anticipate change and react in advance</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications with business and industry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

Relationship of Institutions over Last Five Years
### TABLE 3

**RELATIONSHIP OF INSTITUTIONS OVER LAST FIVE YEARS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Declining</th>
<th>Steady</th>
<th>Increasing</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications with</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business and industry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

Areas in Which Goals Are Set by The Institutions
TABLE 4
AREAS IN WHICH GOALS ARE SET
BY THE INSTITUTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication with business and industry:</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special courses to offer</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct faculty needed</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection of new industries</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to closing industries</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funding:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>External</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Enrollment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G

Time Frames Used in Setting Goals by The Institutions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6 mos.</th>
<th>6 mos.-1 yr.</th>
<th>1 yr.</th>
<th>1-5 yrs.</th>
<th>5 yrs.</th>
<th>10 yrs.</th>
<th>10-15 yrs.</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications with business/industry:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special courses to offer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct faculty needed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection of new industries</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to closing industries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Enrollment:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H

Priorities Assigned to Goals by The Colleges' Administrators
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>NO RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications with business/industry:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special courses to offer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct faculty needed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection of new industries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to closing industries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Enrollment:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I

Frequency With Which Administrators Use
Strategic Decision Making Concepts
TABLE 7
FREQUENCY WITH WHICH ADMINISTRATORS USE
STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING CONCEPTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use very much</th>
<th></th>
<th>Use very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>goal-maximizing choice</strong> - choices to which one assigns maximum importance and which are interpreted in the broadest sense possible.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>satisficing</strong> - decision makers settle for acceptable as opposed to optimal solutions.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>individual judgment</strong> - choices based on one's own private goals or motives which may or may not coincide with those of the organization.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>sponsor endorsement</strong> - political factors or organization action causes executives to choose among alternatives based on their sponsor's track record.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>political bargaining</strong> - interactions among various coalitions within the organization endeavoring to influence strategic decisions.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>a garbage can</strong> - problems, solutions, participants, and choice opportunities move relatively independently into and out of the decision area metaphorically labeled a &quot;garbage can&quot;.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>organization/constituent negotiation</strong> - constraints and limitations imposed by a number of external social and political forces with whom the organization must negotiate implicitly if not explicitly.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>incremental logic</strong> - using fragmented, evolutionary, and largely intuitive strategic processes to solve a problem by breaking it into subproblems that are solved sequentially.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX J

Degree of Comprehensiveness Used by Administrators in Categorizing Decisions


### TABLE 8

**DEGREE OF COMPREHENSIVENESS USED BY ADMINISTRATORS IN CATEGORIZING DECISIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stimulus:</th>
<th>Infrequently</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Very Frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. <strong>Stimulus:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>opportunity decisions</em> - those initiated on a purely voluntary basis, to improve an already secure situation.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>crisis decisions</em> - organizations respond to intense pressures. The severity of the situation demands immediate action.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>problem decisions</em> - those decisions falling in the middle, evoked by milder pressures than crises.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. <strong>Solution:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>given fully-developed solutions at the start of the process.</em></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>ready-made, fully-developed solutions in the environment during the process.</em></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>custom-made solutions developed especially for the decision.</em></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>modified solutions combining ready-made and custom-made features to fit particular situations.</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 8
(continued)

**DEGREE OF COMPREHENSIVENESS USED BY ADMINISTRATORS**

**IN CATEGORIZING DECISIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Infrequently</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Very Frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. involves development activity after recognition.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. may or may not involve formal diagnosis or authorization.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. involves either internal or political interrupts where there is disagreement on the need to make a strategic decision, external interrupts where outside forces block the selection of a fully-developed solution, or new options interrupt.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX K
Planning Documents
PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Official Plan of Community College "Third Decade Directions" Board of Trustees, 1984

Strategic Educational Planning Process: Design Document


Environmental Scan-Update 1984

FY 1985-89 Long Range Plan and Self-Study Report

Community College, 1984

Long Range Plan FY 1983-84 Update

Student Services Report To The President 1982-1983

Tasks To Be Accomplished and Goals 1982-84 Community College

Department Chairpersons' and Counselors' Goals For 1982-84 Community College
APPENDIX L

A Categorization of Strategic Decision Making Processes

Within the Community Colleges
## TABLE 9

### A CATEGORIZATION OF STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

**WITHIN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SYNOPTIC</th>
<th>INCREMENTAL</th>
<th>COMBINATION OF BOTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOTIVE FOR INITIATION:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with business &amp; ind.</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>local state</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,PS,LR,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,PS,LR,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>LR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCEPT OF GOALS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with business &amp; ind.</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,PS,LR,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,PS,LR,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEANS AND ENDS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with business &amp; ind.</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,LR,PS,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,LR,PS,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCEPT OF CHOICE:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with business &amp; ind.</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,LR,PS,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,LR,PS,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANALYTIC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COMPREHENSIVENESS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with business &amp; ind.</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,LR,PS,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,LR,PS,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTEGRATIVE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COMPREHENSIVENESS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication with business &amp; ind.</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
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<td>HR,LR,PS,GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>LR,PS,GO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HR,LR,PS,GO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Abbreviations: LR=Little River Community College; PS=Peaceful Springs Community College; GO=Great Oaks Community College; HR=High Rock Community College
LIST OF REFERENCES

Aharoni, Y.A. *The Foreign Investment Decision Process*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1966.


