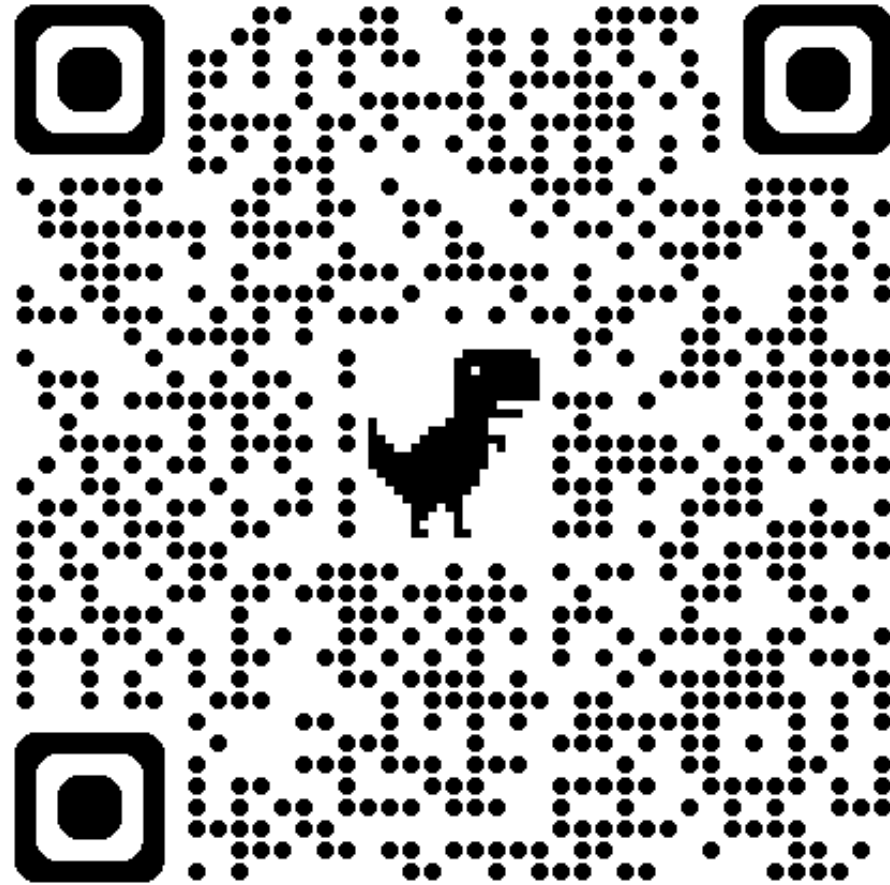


Advancing Community College Practices: Updates and Insights from Research



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We Want to Hear from You!

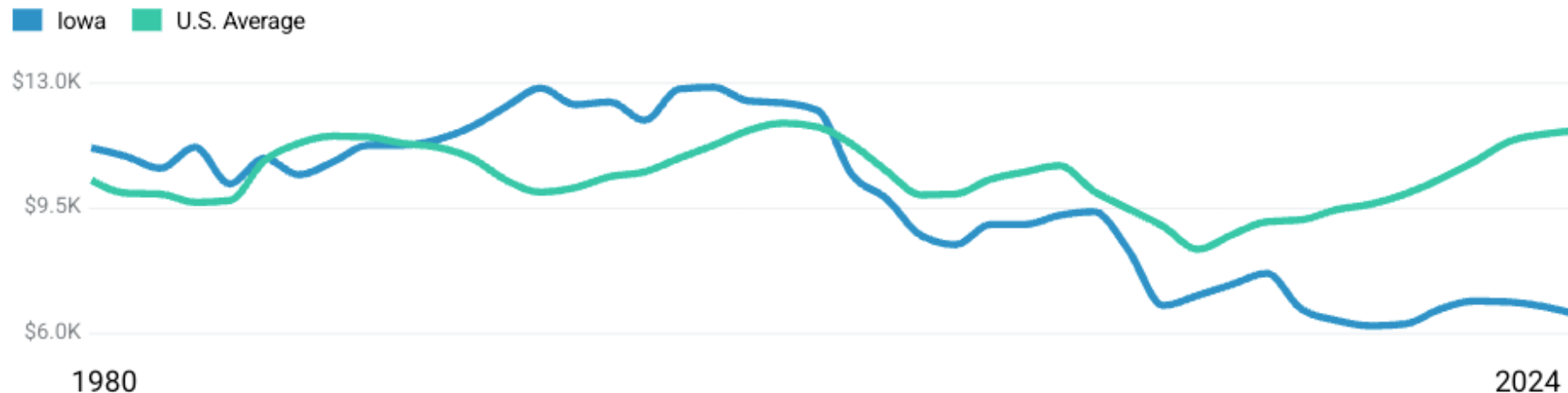


Trends in Community College Research

- Community College Finance
- Community College Baccalaureate Programs
- Culturally Responsive Structures and Support
- Intercollegiate Athletic Reforms
- Recent ISU Dissertations

Community College Finance Research, I

- The latest State Higher Education Finance (SHEF) report finds that in 2024, public higher education appropriations per full-time equivalent (FTE) increased 0.8% beyond inflation, surpassing pre-COVID-19 pandemic funding levels in 2019 by 17.9% (SHEEO, 2025).
- In 2024, total education revenue at community colleges in Iowa was \$11,586 per FTE; 49% of this revenue was derived from tuition and fees (SHEEO, 2025).
- In 2024, public colleges and universities in Iowa had \$6,538 in education appropriations per FTE, approximately 56% of the US average (SHEEO, 2025).
- Education appropriations per FTE in Iowa have decreased by over 40% since 1980 (SHEEO, 2025).



Community College Finance Research, II

- **Local Funding**

- Moving tax levy increases onto trustee agendas and securing voter approval is a complex process that relies on knowledgeable policy and political advocates (Turk & Smith, forthcoming).
- Support from a coalition of community members who value the college and recognize funding needs is critical for winning voter approval (Turk & Smith, forthcoming).

- **Free College/Promise Programs**

- There are estimated to be over 400 college promise programs across all 50 states, including 16 states with their own statewide promise program (College Promise, 2023; Kunkle & Taylor, 2025).
- Larger states, states with greater shares of white residents, and states under unified Democratic control are all more likely to adopt a statewide free community college program. By contrast, states in which community colleges receive a larger share of total state appropriations are less likely to adopt a promise program (Kunkle, & Taylor, 2025).

- **Labor Market Research**

- Increasing state minimum wages results in a decrease in community college enrollment that persists for at least five years post-wage increase (4%). However, no changes are observed in the attainment of associate degrees and certificates (Schanzenbach et al., 2024).

Suggested Resources

- Kunkle, K., & Taylor, B. (2025). Statewide community college promise programs: An even history analysis. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 49(12), 769-782. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2024.2386672>
- Law, R., Floyd, D. L., & Listermann, K. J. (2025). Resilient stretching: How community college leaders navigated fiscal decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic era. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 49(4-5), 307-322. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2024.2429672>
- Li, A. Y., Billings, M. S., Gándara, D., & Hu, Xiaodan. (2025). Promise programs and the allocation of institutional expenditures at community colleges. *Community College Review*, 53(2), 192-225. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00915521241300150>
- Romano, R. M., & Palmer, J. C. (2023). Funding adequacy and the community college. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2023(2023), 165-172. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20595>.
- Schanzenbach, D. W., Turner, J. A., & Turner, S. (2024). Raising state minimum wages, lowering community college enrollment. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 1-29. https://doi.org/10.1162/rest_a_01457
- Sparks, D. (2025). Dollars to degrees: How Pell Grant aid impacts community college student outcomes. *Community College Review*, 53(3), 374-403. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00915521251322524>
- State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO). (2025). *State higher education finance: FY 2024*. https://shef.sheeo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/SHEEO_SHEF_FY24_Report.pdf.

Community College Baccalaureate, I

- Twenty-four states authorize community college baccalaureate degrees, and 187 community colleges currently award baccalaureates (CBBA & Bragg & Associates, 2024).
- Most frequent programs conferring CCB Degrees: Business, Health Professions, Education, Nursing, and Computer & Info Sciences (CBBA & Bragg & Associates, 2024).
- CCBs blur sector boundaries, challenging traditional mission distinctions in higher education (Love & Turk, 2024).
- State leaders should provide financial support and incentives for community colleges and public universities to cooperatively design specialized, workforce-driven baccalaureate programs, leveraging faculty expertise from both sectors (Love & Turk, 2024).
- Transparent processes for proposing, evaluating, and approving CCB programs should be established to minimize duplication and enrollment conflicts (Love & Turk, 2024).
- State support should extend beyond CCB programs to promote collaboration on access, transfer, articulation, and meeting broader public needs (Love & Turk, 2024).

Community College Baccalaureate, II

- The adoption of CCB programs is not associated with a decrease in associate degree production (Ortagus et al., 2020).
- Community colleges tend to rely more on tuition and fees and less on public funding overall once they offer CCB degree programs (Ortagus & Hu, 2020).
- Increases in (institutional) grant aid may be required to ensure CCBs remain financially accessible (Wright-Kim, 2024).

Suggested Resources

Community College Baccalaureate Association: <https://www.accbd.org/knowledge-center/>

Cuellar, M. G., & Gándara, P. (2021). Promoting access and equity for underrepresented racial minorities? An examination of policies and practices in community college baccalaureate programs. *Community College Review*, 49(1), 52-75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552120964877>

Love, I., & Turk, J. M. (2024). Competing, coordinating, or collaborating: Perspectives on the community college baccalaureate within the context of mission differentiation. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 48(12), 758-772. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2023.2236050>

Ortagus, J. C., Kramer, D., A., Canché, M. S., & Fernandez, F. (2020). The impact of community college baccalaureate adoption on associate degree production. *Teachers College Record*, 122(1), 1-36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146812012200108>

Wright-Kim, J. (2024). Spending at baccalaureate-granting community colleges: A focus on institutional aid. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 48(1), 22-36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2023.2201925>

Wright-Kim, J. (2023). The impact of offering baccalaureate degrees on institutional enrollment in community colleges. *Community College Review*, 51(1), 3-29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00915521221125500>

Culturally Responsive Structures

- **(re)Imagining Structural Transformation**

- Culturally responsive structures are unattainable without confronting structural racism and inequities embedded across our education systems (Lozano et al., 2025).
- State level funding models and federal financial support prioritize efficiency and competition over equity, which reinforces structural oppression (Fisher & Landford, 2025).

- **Are we Centering Student Voices in Our Structures?**

- Culturally responsive structures depend on validating and amplifying the lives and experiences of every student, especially racially minoritized students.
- Students' voice can be a profound contributor to their counternarratives to leverage students' cultural assets for curriculum design, advising practices, and vertical transfer policies (Hartman et al., 2025; Lozano et al., 2025).

- **Redesigning Structures for Cultural Responsiveness Rather than Efficiency**

- Efficiency-driven policies which include performance-based funding and meritocratic transfer incentives disproportionately disadvantage community colleges and service marginalized student populations (Fisher & Landford, 2025; Hartman et al., 2025).

Culturally Responsive Practices

- **Centering Students Cultural Identities in the Curriculum**

- Integrating readings, research topics and guest lecturers that reflect students' racial, cultural, and intersectional identities is pivotal to their sense of belonging within the classroom (Gaxiola et al., 2025).
- Pedagogies rooted in radical love, truth-telling, ethnic studies and liberation reaffirms students' identities and resists deficit-narratives (Gaxiola et al., 2025).

- **Affirming Student's' Identities Through Undergraduate Research**

- Research opportunities like the SEMILLAS Research Fellowship Program (SRFP) provides students with opportunities to disrupt hegemonic research practices and affirms students experience in research (Horg-Aaron et al., 2025).
- Programs like SRFP engage students in critical reflexivity enhances student's academic self-efficacy and reinforces students' aspirations beyond vertical transfer (Horg-Aaron et al., 2025).

- **Critical Race Mentoring for Men of Color**

- Critical Race Mentoring is a research-to-practice framework that centers the social identities, lived experiences and aspirations of Men of Color. It aims to promote their development, well-being, and educational trajectories: Centering Race in Mentoring Relationships, Affirming and Validating Students' Intersectional Identities, Changing the Narrative, Developing, Supporting and Engaging Counterspaces, Providing Holistic Support, Ruptures (Martinez et al., Forthcoming)

Suggested Sources

- Fisher, K., & Lanford, M. (2025). Leveraging Critical Race Theory for Meaningful Systemic Change in Community Colleges. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2025(209–210), 21–29. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20661>
- Gaxiola Serrano, T. J., Martinez, A., & Solórzano, D. G. (2025). Ethnic Studies Education in Community Colleges as Racial Microaffirmations for Students of Color. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2025(209–210), 43–52. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.70010>
- Hartman, C., Serrata, C., & Viramontes, J. D. R. (2025). Equitable Transfer Pathways: A Call to Action Through Critical Race Theory. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2025(209–210), 11–19. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.70005>
- Horg-Aaron, C., Vasquez, M. C., & Huddlestun, D. (2025). Disrupting, Affirming, Reflecting: How Critical Race Pedagogy Shapes Undergraduate Research for First-Generation and Racially Minoritized Students. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2025(209–210), 71–80. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.70017>
- Lozano, Y., Tevis, T. L., Boatwright, J., & Hoffman, D. (2025). The Utility of CRT: Analyzing Systemic Issues in Community and Technical Colleges. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2025(209–210), 31–41. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.70006>

Intercollegiate Athletic Reform

- Economic Shifts (NIL Policies and Antitrust Rulings)
 - NIL and revenue sharing are shifting more focus to revenue-generating athletes
 - NCAA roster limits and scholarship flexibility reduce NJCAA transfer opportunities
 - Federal reform proposals (SCORE Act, College Athletics Reform Act) may standardize rules, but widen the NCAA-NJCAA gap
- Diego Pavia v. NCAA
 - Antitrust lawsuit challenging that NJCAA seasons should not count toward NCAA limit
 - Preliminary injunction in 2025, NCAA issued blanket waiver while it appeals
 - Extending NJCAA eligibility could clog roster spots at competitive NCAA schools
 - Treats community college athletics as "less than" college
 - Could redefine NJCAA-to-NCAA pipeline and make NJCAA more attractive for development
- Governance Gaps (NJCAA vs NCAA Policy Frameworks)
 - NJCAA athletes need 2.5 GPA vs 1.8-2.0 GPA for 4-year transfers
 - No NCAA APR retention points for NJCAA starters
 - Stricter NCAA limits on outside competition for NJCAA transfers

Suggested Sources

- Smith, D. A. (2025). The Evolution of the NCAA's Antitrust Challenges: NIL, Revenue Sharing, and the Professionalization of College Sports. *Journal of Education Finance and Law*, 50(1), 70-95.
- Ortega, G., & Grafnetterova, N. (2025). The Community College Athletic Pathway: An Examination of Community College Athletes to an NCAA Division I Institutions. *Community College Review*.
- Holden, J. T., Edelman, M., Baker III, T. A., & Shuman, A. G. (2022). Reimagining the governance of college sports after Alston. *Florida Law Review*, 74, 427.
- Romano, R. (2025). Consider potential impact of Pavia case on eligibility. *College Athletics and the Law*, 21(11), 7-7.

ISU Community College Dissertations

- Baloghová, Honoria (2025). The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Assessment Practices at Community Colleges in Iowa: Perceptions of Assessment Leaders Among Administrators and Liberal Arts and Sciences Faculty. <https://dr.lib.iastate.edu/items/a854827e-00de-486b-b7c9-788c56f2eb83>
- Richmond, Ashleigh (2024). An Evaluation of the Student Achievement in Reading Program in Iowa. <https://dr.lib.iastate.edu/items/306be85c-4614-4452-bab2-23f56a77117c>

Questions and Discussion

Locating and Using Research for Your Needs

Where to look
What to look for
Special issues

Research Resources

- **Sample peer-reviewed journals:**
- *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*
- *Community College Review* (peer-reviewed journal, not the blog of the same name)
- *Innovative Higher Education*
- *Journal of Applied Research in the Community College*
- *Journal of College Student Development*
- *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*
- *Journal of Higher Education*
- *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*
- *Journal of the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition*
- *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*
- *NASPA Journal*
- *New Directions for Community Colleges*
- *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*
- *New Directions for...* (multiple with varying emphases: *Higher Education; Student Services; etc*)
- *Research in Higher Education*
- *The Review of Higher Education*
- ***This is not an exhaustive list.**

Helpful resources for literature, research, and current topics:

- American Council on Education: <http://www.acenet.edu/Pages/default.aspx>
- American Association of Community Colleges: <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/>
- Association of Community College Trustees: <https://www.acct.org/>
- American Association of State Colleges & Universities: <https://aascu.org/>
- Community College Research Center (CCRC): <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu>
- Education Commission of the States: <https://www.ecs.org>
- Iowa Department of Education: <https://www.educateiowa.gov>
- IDOE - Higher Education & Post-Secondary Readiness: <https://educate.iowa.gov/higher-ed>
- National Institute for (CC) Staff and Organizational Development: <http://www.nisod.org>
- NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education): <https://www.naspa.org>
- The League for Innovation in the Community College: <https://www.league.org>

Free Daily or Weekly News Updates Impacting Higher Education

Primary Sources:

- Diverse Issues in Higher Education
- Inside Higher Ed
- The Chronicle of Higher Education
- Community Colleges for Iowa: <https://www.ccfioriowa.org/links/newsletter/iowa-community-colleges-newsletter/>

Multiple additional sources:

- ACCT newsletter
- AACC newsletter – Community College Daily
- American Council for Education
- Education Dive: Higher Education
- Educause Review
- Eduwire Daily Update
- Daily Lumina News
- University Business Daily
- Edweek Update
- Innovation Daily
- Gallup News
- Education Commission of the States
- ccnewsnow.com
- ecampusnews.com
- SHEEO Policy Headlines
- NISOD Weekly Digest

Thank You!

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- Slides can be found at:

