

*Rural College Opportunity:  
A Shasta and Siskiyou  
County Perspective*

**A Report to the  
University of California Office of the President  
& The McConnell Foundation**

**Patricia M. McDonough  
Karen A. McClafferty**

**Graduate School of Education & Information Studies  
UCLA**

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## SECTION I

### Background

In May, 2001 The University of California Office of the President (UCOP) informed us of an on-going conversation between themselves and the McConnell Foundation about concerns regarding the low four-year attendance rates of Shasta and Siskiyou Counties' high school graduates. Unlike urban students, these low attendance rates were not the result of low UC/CSU eligibility rates, so the problem was particularly puzzling. UCOP and McConnell Foundation requested us to undertake some institutional research in Shasta and Siskiyou Counties to aid in the development of a model that would best suit the college access needs and issues of these schools and students.

These two counties are in the far northern and central part of California; Siskiyou County actually borders Oregon. Shasta County is 3850 square miles; roughly the size of Delaware and Rhode Island combined. Siskiyou County is 6281 square miles; roughly the size of Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. Because of the large number of public parks and forests, federal and state public agencies manage over 60% of Siskiyou County land. These two counties are very rural and pose great geographical challenges because of the mountainous terrain and distances between towns. Between them Shasta and Siskiyou Counties have approximately 210,000 residents. Their school population is primarily poor White students with small numbers of Native American and Latino students.

Economically, Shasta and Siskiyou Counties have had difficult times of late, even though economic development is a major policy focus for both counties. With serious downturns in the formerly dominant timber industry, Siskiyou County now relies on a job market of government, services, retail and farm industries respectively. Experiencing a similar erosion of its former keystone industry, timber, Shasta County has sought a more stable economic base and currently relies on a job market of services, retail trade, and government.

However, recent unemployment trends shape many County residents' perceptions of opportunity. For Siskiyou County over the last five years, the unemployment rate has ranged from a high of 13.5% in 1996 to its low of 9.5% in 2000. For Shasta County over the last five years, the unemployment rate has ranged from a high of 9.9% in 1996 to its current low of 6.9% in 2000. Compared to a statewide unemployment rate of 4.9% these counties have experienced an economic depression, with Siskiyou County being harder hit.

### Data Collection

As we finalized plans for data collection, three overarching foci emerged: assessment of major obstacles to increased UC (and other four-year college) participation from these counties' graduates; current college culture conditions in the 15 high schools; and increased UC outreach and comparison of alternative, proposed models of increased UC outreach in the North State. The assessment of current college conditions included questions such as:

- What are the major obstacles to increased college enrollment for Shasta and Siskiyou County students at four-year colleges and universities, most especially UCs?

The assessment of major obstacles to increased UC (and other four-year college) participation from these counties' graduates included questions such as:

- What are the existing college advising resources in the schools?
- What is the current state of each high school's college culture?

The increased UC outreach and comparison of alternative, proposed models of increased UC outreach in the North State included questions of:

- How can UC personnel be used to best promote college attendance in Shasta and Siskiyou County schools?
- How can UC best utilize existing school resources to develop collaborative partnerships?
- One alternative for future UC involvement is a UC presence in every high school. A second alternative of future UC involvement is to have an outreach "center" or "hub" in Redding that would work with all of the high schools in the area to provide information and support related to college preparation and planning. Which would you prefer and why?

A final research focus was on the remoteness of some of the high school campuses. The complete interview protocol is in Appendix One.

Between May 7 -17, 2001, we made two multiple-day site visits to these counties and visited every high school in these two counties (save one that was unavailable despite several scheduling attempts and attempted phone interviews) and met with principals, assistant principals, and counselors for in-depth individual interviews (and three multiple subject interviews). Appendix Two is the list of schools. We taped and transcribed<sup>1</sup> all interviews, as well as took field notes, and collected documents for analysis. We analyzed all data and our findings are organized around the following three sections: major obstacles to increased four-year college attendance; college advising structures, cultures and resources; comparison of alternatives of a UC presence in every school versus a UC Regional Center for expanded UC Outreach.

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<sup>1</sup> One interview was unable to be transcribed because of technical difficulties with the tape recorder, however, we had extensive handwritten notes which we used for the data file.

## SECTION II

### Major Obstacles to Increased Four-Year College Attendance

#### The Costs And Financing Of College

Although four major obstacles were identified---including the costs and financing of college, geographic remoteness and the rural life, opportunities and influences of the local community colleges, and academic constraints---without question, the primary obstacle to higher rates of four-year college attendance is money. Every school and virtually every interviewee identified college costs and the financing of college to be daunting, to say the least. There were five sub-issues of money obstacles: perceptions of affordability, intimidating price tags, implicit cost-benefit analyses, cheaper competing alternatives in the form of local community colleges, and students' perceptions of community college life, financial obligations, and constraints.

Regarding perceptions of affordability, simply put one high school principal said "We have a lot of ... kids who just ... think they don't have the ability, either financially or academically [to go to college]." A high school counselor said, "the money seems insurmountable." Representative of another perspective on affordability, is the background context of Shasta and Siskiyou Counties' economic state. In the words of a counselor: "In this economic environment, parents believe they can not afford college."

The high school personnel we talked to frame students' and parents' expectations in their everyday lived realities and indicated that many students and their families experienced "sticker shock" when thinking about college costs. These school personnel believe that what is intimidating is the price tag, "It is not realistic to tell a family making \$25,000 to spend \$20,000 on college costs."

Another frame on the quite powerful impact of college financing on students' developing aspirations for four-year colleges includes an implicit cost-benefit analysis. Not only are four-year schools seen as not affordable but also the payoff is unclear, especially if these students want to return home after college. As one principal talked about it, "The motivational factor...is limited with these students. They don't see the college jobs here in town. They don't see that. They see blue collar jobs in town." That same principal went on to say "You're gonna spend four years paying, you better be getting a job that's gonna pay you when you get out. For families that are struggling financially, it's important."

Another principal felt that another aspect of money as an obstacle is that students are making money while they're in high school and from the vantage point of living at home, that money seems quite good, so they don't see the fiscal importance of college. A second issue related to student jobs is that even in Redding, the largest town in these two counties, there is no reliable, viable public transportation. Therefore, high school students see their older friends and siblings buying cars to get to the local community college. This purchase results in students being committed to car payments and then they are locked into a financial lifestyle that they don't see as compatible with transferring to a four-year college.

A final money obstacle is the comparison of UC fees and campus living expenses to the relatively negligible cost of community colleges. Living expenses while attending a community college would be minimal given that most of the students from these counties who attend community colleges commute from home.

### Geographic Remoteness And The Rural Life

A significant amount of time was spent by again virtually all respondents talking about the obstacle of what we are calling "the rural life." Introduced under the money section, this issue really deals with the fact that aspirations for a four-year college education mean leaving home and moving a significant distance away. There are no four-year colleges or universities in either of these counties, with the exception of a very small religious college with a limited curriculum. To go back to the geography of these counties, the shortest car ride to a four-year college would be 1.5 hours and the average car ride to a UC campus is four hours.

This geographical challenge raises a number of issues: first there is an issue of absolute and anxiety-producing unfamiliarity. For many students they don't want to leave the county because they don't know what other places or college campuses are like. Counselors and principals nearly universally reported that most of their students have never left the county and have no felt need to go to the more metropolitan areas of the state:

I had kids who had never been to San Francisco before. Never had seen the Golden Gate Bridge. Never had seen the Pacific Ocean. They hadn't been out of Shasta County. And so their world is basically this county - [it] is what they see.

Because they have never been out of county or had the physical and emotional experience of anyplace different than Shasta or Siskiyou County, these students do not even know how to visualize these different places like UC campuses or the cities of which they are a part. Aside from the fact that the students have to travel far distances to attend UC, they would also have to travel far distances to visit a campus. This lack of exposure impacts their UC aspirations and any other four-year college aspiration they might develop.

To further complicate matters one counselor talked about her students as having "gone through every aspect of life together and [they are] scared to go off on their own." Moreover, these students sometimes feel pressure from their friends to stay local or sometimes just decide that they are not ready to leave their existing social networks and familiar environments.

Second, many students simply prefer the rural lifestyle and therefore don't want to leave for college. Third, a counselor stated that in the very small schools, he believed that students are apprehensive about going away to college because they believe they won't receive the level of attention and care that they are used to.

We probably do our kids a disservice because we are so small. And it's just like an extended family, and we probably take care of them too much. ... reminding

them and pushing them and shoving and, you know, they don't get a lot of that when they go some place else.

This counselor was referring to how these students benefit a great deal from their small communities and the cultural expectation of one-on-one interactions. A related issue that was cited by other school leaders was the challenge of being used to a small scale: "the sophistication of the system...it just consumes and overwhelms them "especially the quarter system." They can't keep up with deadlines and they "get buried."

Many school personnel, in nearly all of Shasta County but especially in Redding, said that if there was a four-year college in their local community, students would go. Also, most of these conversations had as a historical backdrop the now-resolved issue of a 10th UC campus when Redding was under consideration.

### Opportunities And Influences Of The Local Community Colleges

It was impossible to discuss college access without discussing community colleges. Virtually every school leader discussed the strength of their relationships with at least one, if not several, community colleges. There often were strong personal connections with community colleges; school leaders or teachers often had spouses working at the community college. Finally, the community colleges are for all intents and purposes, the only game in town, or as one principal put it: "With our geographic location, we still have a junior college mentality." There also was a significant amount of discussion of cost-effectiveness, convenience and the tradition of the community college route for this community.

In several cases, the strength of the relationships between high schools and colleges was structural: the community colleges come to the high schools to automatically register graduating seniors. This default next step means that students don't even have to think in order to continue their education at the community college. It's all set up for them. Beyond any of the cultural influences propelling students toward their community college options, default structuring is a pretty strong college-choice force.

A potentially entrapping aspect of the community college option was voiced by a few school leaders who spoke of their students losing interest in high school once they realize that the community college will always take them. This phenomenon is best understood from one counselor's description of how community colleges are sometimes: "a double-edged sword because a lot of kids, as soon as they decide they're going to [XX community college name], they lose interest in [high] school." In other words, the certainty of a spot at the community college leads many students to let their grades slip, thereby making a four-year college an even more remote possibility.

Counselors and principals alike talked about the well-traveled path to community colleges with its many shining examples from the community, including sometimes, themselves. Students also were likely to hear and see the success of community college attendance from their own families. This familiarity and tangible connection meant it was easy for students to picture themselves attending. Some school leaders told us that students are also likely to experience community colleges as obligatory because they hear from their

relatives that community college "was good enough for me." However, in collecting our data we sometimes felt an almost palpable attitude of "it was good enough for me" from some school leaders. Moreover, there was no instance of school personnel telling us that family or teachers were fulfilling the same motivating function vis-a-vis four-year colleges in general or UC in particular.

### Academic Constraints

Certainly, many school leaders felt that there were also significant academic barriers to their students pursuing a UC education. Several principals and counselors expressed frustration at the difficulties they have had in getting their students into UCs, and more importantly, at understanding why their great students are not good enough for UC. They spoke of wanting to know more about selection processes. Other principals and counselors spoke of being uncertain about how to successfully get through the certification process for making courses A through G approved courses, as well as dealing with Eligibility in Local Context paperwork. Finally many counselors expressed frustration and dissatisfaction with the inability to get information, personal contacts, and assistance from UCs on an as-needed, case-by-case basis.

Another type of academic barrier had nothing to do with UC but rather stemmed from the size of the more remote schools and their curriculum. Several schools described setting a curriculum according to a very carefully choreographed dance of student need and availability of fiscal/human resources. However, each of them described perennial situations of being forced not to meet a handful of students' needs, i.e. not being able to offer Spanish III in order to offer a laboratory science class. These conditions meant that although some students could meet their A-G requirements, other faced a structural barrier to doing so.

In summary, we have identified four major obstacles to increasing Shasta and Siskiyou Counties high school graduates' participation in four-year postsecondary education, most particularly to their being able to dream, plan for, and accomplish entrance to a University of California campus. The major obstacles we identified included the costs and financing of college, geographic remoteness and the rural life, opportunities and influences of the local community colleges, and academic constraints. These obstacles are unintentionally and seamlessly integrated, and are so taken-for-granted, that they are accepted as a natural condition of North State life. Taken together, these factors make it highly unlikely that the rate of UC participation from these counties is likely to go up anytime soon without intervention.

## SECTION III

### College Advising Structures, Cultures and Resources

One very important caveat to highlight before describing the college advising structures, cultures and resources of these schools is the extreme variation across the 15 high schools. Some schools had strong counseling structures built from multiple counselors sharing the advising tasks, while other schools had the irreplaceable strength of an experienced and dedicated counselor who by sheer force of personality and multiple years of peak performance gave the schools strong college cultures.

The schools in the immediate Redding area typically had a counseling staff of about five, and they divided the caseload alphabetically. Most counselors were responsible for all aspects of counseling, though some schools had unofficial "experts" in things like scholarships. Many of the principals were aware that the counseling staff's time is taken up by crisis counseling and scheduling. One principal summed it up by saying the counselors "don't have the time to do the real college preparation with students-- making them aware of their abilities and making them aware of scholarships and grants that are available."

In a handful of other schools, although the need and dedication were there, the fiscal and human resources made it possible only to free up one to two counseling periods a day in a single teacher's schedule. In the words of one of those teachers: "It's just me, I'm the counseling department." In those schools, teachers were juggling testing responsibilities, crisis intervention, and college advising tasks. In the more economically depressed communities where government assistance to families sometimes reached over 70%, and drug abuse was widespread, oftentimes more of that teacher/counselor's time was spent calling Children's Protective Services than any college admission office. Moreover, those teachers were learning their role as a counselor or college advisor through on-the-job training.

For sure, the default college culture in these 15 high schools was a culture geared toward community colleges. As we mentioned previously, one principal stated: "we still have a junior college mentality." The community colleges are located in those communities, have worked hard at building strong ties and being committed partners, and the community colleges' and high schools' futures are inextricably tied together.

All 15 high schools seemed to be pushing for higher college going rates; most seemed to be focusing on the "middle kids" who weren't necessarily heading toward a vocational track, but have not been focused on college since birth either. In other words, there was an implicit tracking in all of the schools. As one counselor explained it:

We lose so many of our students. It's not realistic that they're going to be a freshman at UCLA. They're going to be fortunate to be a freshman at [XX community college name]. Now down the road they're still going to make it. ...but there's that group of students that we don't provide anything for.

Most graduates who go to college go to the local community college. Those that go to four-year colleges go to CSU Chico or Humboldt or UC Davis typically. Some graduates go

on to CSU San Luis Obispo (for its agricultural emphasis) or UC Santa Cruz or San Diego. A few go to southern Oregon state schools, though this seemed to be more common for the schools an hour or so north of Redding.

One oft-repeated component of these high schools' college culture unmet needs was developing parent workshops. Almost all school leaders saw parents as key allies in college aspiration development and preparation. The following is a quote from a school principal:

It's not a wealthy area. And most of our better-off families do send their kids to four-year. What we're not reaching is that group that probably could go and be successful. And, it's not a lack of knowledge. It's not a lack of awareness of what's out there. It's, kind of a lack of motivation and a lack of parents behind them. I think parents are the key. If, if your parents raise you with the expectation you're going to go to college, then usually you will go to college. And, if your parents aren't in the picture in your educational career, usually you're just gonna drift.

One research direction for this project was to gain an assessment of the current state of resources for college advising in Shasta and Siskiyou County high schools and to gain a sense for which sources were used most often and with what results. Two widespread and very valued college advising resources are the Internet and the existing UC counselor conferences. Virtually every high school uses both to great effect. Many schools routinely discussed their use of the Internet as an important information source. It seemed that the more remote the high school the more the Internet became a lifeline for not only information but also for virtual understanding of particular campuses, their programs, environments, etc.

In discussing the UC counselor conferences, school leaders strongly endorsed how valuable they are. Counselors described getting information that was valuable and gaining an understanding of how applications are reviewed which then allowed counselors to be able to explain to students how to better fill out their applications. Counselors were often most grateful for the interpersonal contacts in UC admission offices that the conferences provide. As one counselor described: "I've been to several UC sponsored college counseling conferences. ... There's always something to learn. There's always somebody to get in contact with." However, this counselor went on to explain that contacts have the limitation of a short shelf-life "You can always make liaisons that will help you. But if you don't use them very often, then you lose touch and then they move on to someplace else. So it's hard to keep these contacts."

Other school leaders often extolled counselor conference benefits quickly followed by bemoaning the limitations of such one-shot, information overload opportunities. A number of counselors described being overwhelmed by the amount of information, while other counselors talked about the volume of information at one time inhibiting their memory, "there's no way I remember all of it."

Other principals and counselors spoke of using college catalogs, current UC mailings, "Cal Notes," as well as newsletters and other information vehicles from ACT, the College Board, etc. Finally, a key resource for many schools with limited counseling resources are

their highly valued and generous colleagues at other high schools with long-time experience and full-time positions. Several counselors described colleagues who devoted considerable time to their training, who shared resources, and who were always available for a phone consultation.

In summary three important points can be made in reference to the college advising structures, cultures and resources in the 15 high schools of Shasta and Siskiyou Counties: 1) the principals and counselors are dedicated, caring, in touch with the needs of their students and families, and would welcome assistance; 2) there was extreme variation in school advising resources ranging from schools with five counselors to schools with a teacher freed up for one period to cover a full menu of school counseling tasks; and 3) the current college culture in each of these schools is "a junior college mentality."

## SECTION IV

### Increased UC Outreach

Whatever the means, Shasta and Siskiyou Counties want more of a UC presence in their schools, as well as in their students' postsecondary aspirations and lives. We can put it no more eloquently than one counselor who said: "Does UC know I'm here?" Moreover, both models of an expanded UC outreach in Shasta and Siskiyou Counties were roundly endorsed as providing desperately needed services and as making UC "less foreign."

#### North State UC Regional Center

The schools leaders that we interviewed were rather expansive in their comments and wishes for what a North State Regional Center could do for them, their students, and their communities. Several school leaders stated that a UC Regional Center would be especially useful because it would increase visibility---short of a 10th UC campus---and that would be a positive prospect for them. One school leader talked about North State folks needing to get to know UC better and that a center would allow them to "see it, feel it, touch it, know what it is and not have it just be some construct out there that they don't understand."

For the students, nearly everyone interviewed said that the ability to take students to a "local" UC center would make UCs a more viable college possibility for students because field trips "are very powerful...really good." Counselors and principals were adamant that a local UC office could help by providing "guest speakers, local alumni who can talk about leaving a small town, going to college, and returning home." A principal fervently hoped that a UC center would be able to permanently fund college visits because he felt that through campus visits students could get to an important understanding that UC students are ' like me.'

Principals and counselors exploded with ideas for how a regional center could be useful for parents. Most school leaders have an awareness of parents' needs in the college planning process but have had no ability to meet those needs. Counselors and principals would want a UC Regional Center to offer parent workshops on college planning to help families make curricular choices; workshops would enable parents to keep track of graduation requirements, units, meeting CSU/UC requirements, etc. Parent workshops and written materials on college financing, financial aid, and careers were also seen as a must. One counselor thought that since parents are so central to postsecondary aspiration development and maintenance that having and visiting a center "would really attract all the parents who have an inkling of [their kids] going to a four-year school."

Counselors and principals were able to provide a much more detailed list of what a UC Regional Center could do for their schools. Because of the long laundry lists of help that the school leaders felt they needed, one counselor thought a UC Regional Center might be "more useful for staff and students than parents or families."

One category of assistance was with UC paperwork. Several interviewees mentioned needing help with securing models of A-G course syllabi and needing assistance with the

process of certifying A-G courses. Another group of counselors talked about needing help with the Eligibility in Local Context paperwork. As one counselor described the forms and requirements, she said the: "Local context stuff drives me crazy." Yet another minor suggestion referred to the need for a "A big calendar with all of the important dates...even email reminders," so that the schools can keep themselves and their students on track with deadlines. Other suggestions for center services included virtual tours of UC campuses and distance education programs. A final but rather important and often suggested paperwork concern was having a technical assistance program at the Regional Center for checking transcripts to make sure that students stay on track for eligibility and competitive eligibility.

Another category of regional center services was professional development. One suggestion for an important staff development need was training for principals, because in a small school they "take on a counseling role. So the more information we have provided to us, then the better we can enable the kids." Other workshops suggestions were for counselors, teachers, principals, paraprofessionals on careers, financial aid, admissions decision-making (hands-on style), training institutes for new counselors and in-services for more experienced counselors.

A final category of assistance identified was much more broad-base connection and partnership oriented. One comment spoke rather powerfully to the issue: "closer access... [means that UC] could be more constantly available on our schedule." One principal suggested working together more would promote better UC familiarity and "raise [UC] relevancy and raise knowledge." A number of counselors suggested that having UC representatives who would "provide contact" and would facilitate answers to questions like someone to "phone up and discuss a kid's individual problems." Other suggestions were for more college fairs like the UC sponsored event last year, a University Express program, for UC representatives to attend local principals' meetings, and to be a source for identifying and securing guest speakers to come into classrooms.

One aspect of UC North State relations that bears mentioning before finishing positive suggestions is a continuing presence that would replace Forrest Brigham. Our understanding is that Forrest Brigham is a former UC employee who moved to North State in his retirement and who has subsequently been serving as a UC consultant to the schools. Almost to a person, everyone wanted "a Forrest Brigham." More on this in the section on a UC presence in every high school.

Minor concerns were raised that a center might be too intimidating, that UC would still need to understand student differences from high school to high school, and differences from town to town. The only two significant concerns had to do with the more remote campuses and their perceived abilities to access the services of such a center. Some school officials were concerned about the ability to get students and parents to a UC Regional Center and made two suggestions: 1) that there be organized and financially-subsidized field trips from remote towns, and 2) that the center have be open more than standard business hours so that parents could go on weekend and after work. Another concern was that for the more remote high schools one principal felt that "a center isn't going to help" while another principal shared that his "only hesitancy would be if we would ever see its services" given how far away they are from any central location.

## UC in Every High School

There was also widespread enthusiasm for a UC presence in every high school however that might be attained. One principal was clear about the need:

It's going to help us because our counselors are very -- they're overburdened. Anything that we can bring in that relieves some of that pressure, they can do a better job focusing on things they have to do other than that.

One apt suggestion was "a Forrest Brigham, but not spread out too far." What came out in our interviews over and over again was a personal, physical presence on high school campuses who "puts a face to the UC system and a face to the college-going concept for students," who, like Forrest, "pressed the flesh, used SAT scores to identify students, ...and directed them to right resources." Counselors described someone who "could be available for all aspects of college counseling," "another person who could help convince kids that college is possible," and who "could have several roles-meeting with kids one-on-one, meeting with counselors, and teaching about UC."

Several school leaders mentioned that a UC person in their schools would be an important symbolic signal: "one of the most powerful aspects is the people connection...a college recruiter." Another principal wanted UC recruiting to be more systematized and regular, like military recruiting or DeVry, both of whom are quite present on campus.

A principal was very clear about the student need for this person: "I want the UC folks to come here, and I want them to...meet the kids," while another principal affirmed "knowing the kids is important." Other school leaders mentioned the importance of UC "just being in the hallways once a month."

Another area of need that a UC presence in the high schools could meet is to identify not only the college-bound but "those sitting on the fence... the more access there is the greater the chance we have of raising the expectations of the kids. They're more motivated, they're more aware there's opportunities for them and they pursue them." An advantage a UC person would have over even the most experienced school counselor was that this person would bring up-to-date content and could "focus on different systems [UC, CSU, etc.] as a UC administrator not as a [high school] counselor or teacher"

School leaders raised a few minor cautions or worries with having a UC presence in every high school. The first worry sprang from not being sure they would either have a need for a full-time person or that they could believe they would have the opportunity to get a full-time person. Another counselor who felt stretched and unable to handle any new responsibility said the "person would need to be fully-trained and ready to go." Finally, one counselor felt that whomever got hired would need to be a UC person. He articulated:

"I've been in this job for a long time and I have some information. But boy, I don't know if I could really honestly do something like that...Just because I haven't been in the system itself.... There's just that knowledge base that I could never have."

One interesting "nonfinding" to us was that not one counselor or principal saw a UC presence in their school as a negative, a threat, or as something that would take away the more enjoyable parts of their jobs. These school leaders welcomed the additional assistance. Finally, we asked all school personnel if finding a physical space for such a person at their school sites would be a problem and everyone said that they either had the room or "would make it!"

In summary, the high school leadership of Shasta and Siskiyou Counties is very clearly delivering a message to both UCOP and the McConnell Foundation that they need, want, and will work hard to make successful any increased UC presence in the North State. The concepts of both a Regional Center and a UC presence in each and every high school were enthusiastically endorsed. The advantages of each of these concepts were detailed, and no disadvantages were offered although some limited cautions in approach were suggested. Much of the feedback on both alternatives suggested that some modified version of both could be quite useful in not only building a strong UC presence in North State but also in strengthening high school college cultures for bachelor's level attainment.

## **Conclusions**

Many of the issues mentioned by North State school leaders are unique to rural schools and their students, while other issues are common to many students as they leave home for the first time for college, or common to the needs and working conditions of many counselors and principals. In other words, many students get buried by deadlines when they first start college or see the costs of college as insurmountable. The relevant question in the North State might be how can UC better equip those high school counselors to deal with those concerns and encourage students to go to college anyway?

Other issues mentioned by North State school leaders are common to the needs and working conditions of many counselors and principals. For example, throughout the state and country, most counselors are handling scheduling and crisis intervention before they ever get to college advising.

One striking aspect of college going in the North State is how similar the plight of rural and urban schools are. We were struck by, as in urban schools, the significant problems of limited curricular options, limited school fiscal resources, and limited college advising infrastructure. In terms of the more symbolic inhibitors to the development of college dreams, the rural situation again seemed analogous to the urban poverty situations of little college exposure in the community, inability of students to picture a college option that seems both geographically and symbolically remote, and the debilitating aspects of communities in economic depressions and the thwarting of the aspirations of their youth. Finally, for both the urban and rural environments, going away to college seems to take on bigger issues of making a step that may well be irreversible in that college-level jobs mean, in all likelihood, not moving back home after college.

One major difference is that UC and others have been engaged of late in making major, concerted efforts to deal with the problems of the urban poor and has been equally absent in

the rural domain. We hope that this report helps to point to ways that UC can become more involved in at least these two rural counties.

# APPENDIX ONE

## INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- **In an average year, what percentage of the students in your school go to college?**  
**Probe:**  
Has that number stayed pretty constant over the last five years? Ten years?  
Are there particular "types" of students who go to college?  
Are you satisfied with that number or would you like it to be different?
- **Where do the students who leave to go to college typically go?**  
**Probe:**  
What colleges and universities seem to have the most success attracting your students?  
Why do you think those campuses attract students from your school?  
Have those campuses done anything to attract students from your school?
- **Why do you think more students from your school don't go on to college?**  
**Probe:**  
Are there resources you need that would help to increase the number who go?  
What are students' concerns about going away to college?  
What are parents' concerns about going away to college?  
When do students typically develop their aspirations to go to college?  
What role do parents play in influencing students' aspirations?  
What role do teachers play in influencing students' aspirations?  
What role do you believe you play in influencing students' aspirations?  
Who else influences students decisions about whether or not to go to college?
- **How is counseling set up at your school?**  
**Probe:**  
Does it primarily occur formally or informally?  
How many counselors are there?  
Do they each have specific responsibilities, or do they share the work?  
Is there a college counselor?  
What is his or her caseload?  
Does he or she see all students, or just some?  
Who decides which students will see him or her, and how?  
Are there other individuals outside of the counseling office who are involved with helping students plan for college?  
Who? What are their interactions with students like?
- **Do you feel like you know all you'd like to know about preparing students for college?**  
**Probe:**  
What else would you like to know?  
How do you know what you know? Where do you get your information?  
Are there others in the school who are "resident experts" on the subject?

Do students know who to go to when they need information?  
Do teachers know who to go to when they need information?  
Do parents know who to go to when they need information?  
Do parents know who to go to when they need information?

- **What interactions does your school have, if any, colleges and universities?**

**Probe:**

What campuses do you interact with?

In what ways?

Who, specifically, interacts with the campuses? With what office or people?

How did that/those relationship(s) evolve?

Have those campuses done anything to attract students from your school?

- **How would you describe your school's current relationship with the University of California?**

**Probe:**

How often do you interact with them?

How do you interact? (by phone, by email, in person)

Who are your key contacts at UC?

What types of services and/or resources does UC currently provide to you or your school?

What else would you like UC to do to enable more of your students to apply to and attend a UC campus?

- **How would you like for UC and/or other college and universities to be more involved with your school?**

**Probe:**

One possibility is to have an outreach "center" or "hub" in Redding that would work with all of the high schools in the area to provide information and support related to college preparation and planning.

What do you think of that idea? What do you see as the advantages? The disadvantages?

Would you prefer to have a center like that be focused only on the University of California, or would you prefer a partnership with other or different colleges?

What types of service, information, and resources would you like that center to provide?

How frequently would you like to interact with a center like that? In what manner (by phone, in person, etc.)?

Who from your school do you expect would interact with a center like that?

If there's time, probe on these additional ideas:

Another possibility is to send one or more staff person from your school to a yearly week-long conference at a UC campus. There, along with other educators from the Redding area, they would receive professional development and build relationships with UC Outreach staff. They would then return to your school prepared to share this

knowledge with your entire faculty and staff. What do you think of that idea? What do you see as the advantages? The disadvantages?

Has your school been involved in any distance learning ventures? What are your thoughts about building a relationship with the University of California and/or other colleges and universities via avenues such as teleconferences?

What do you think of that idea? What do you see as the advantages? The disadvantages?

## APPENDIX TWO

### Figure 1

### Schools

SCHOOL NAME	LOCATION
Anderson High School	Anderson
Burney Jr./Sr. High School	Burney
Butte Valley High School	Dorris
Central Valley High School	Shasta Lake City
Dunsmuir High School	Dunsmuir
Enterprise High School	Redding
Etna Jr./Sr. High School	Etna
Foothill High School	Palo Cedro
Happy Camp High School	Happy Camp
McCloud High School	McCloud
Mt. Shasta High School	Mt. Shasta
Shasta High School	Redding
Weed High School	Weed
West Valley High School	Cottonwood
Yreka High School	Yreka