



# A Survey of Mental Health Practices in California Community Colleges

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October 1, 2009



# Introduction

- “Increased numbers of students who need mental health services have overwhelmed our colleges and universities to respond”, Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (2007)
  - Tragedies like Virginia Tech have colleges seeking ways to promote well-being for these students, Redden (2008)
  - Colleges want to offer a safe environment for all students and provide support services to meet the unique needs of students with psychological disabilities, Anthony (2000)



# Purpose of the study

- The purpose of this study is to:
  - Better understand the challenges of students with psychological disabilities in college
  - Identify support services that are in use in institutions of higher education to assist students with psychological disabilities
  - Examine the CA Community Colleges to build services in mental health



# Reason for the study:

- Locally the community colleges in CA have been concerned about campus safety and the possible violence from students with psychological disabilities
- Statewide the increase in the number of students with mental health needs has been a topic of discussion with the Board of Governors for the CA Community Colleges
- The implementation of Proposition 63, the Mental Health Act, has created funding for mental health support in higher education in California Community Colleges



# Additional reasons for the study

- CA Community College Chancellor's Office has been asked by the Department of Mental Health to survey the system and identify the services that are in place in the field of mental health
- Hiring delays at the state level, created a vacancy in personnel at the CCCCO that could meet this request
- Most of the community colleges in CA do not have residency programs and therefore support in Health Services and therefore Mental Health Services may not be a priority



# Population to be studied

- The CCCCO Surveyed 110 Community Colleges
  - Lead personnel in 3 departments at each college; accessed by state list serves developed by CCCCO
    - General Counseling
    - Health Services
    - Disabled Students Programs and Services
    - Mental Health Services



# Research Questions:

- What supports and services are students with psychological disabilities receiving on the California Community College campus?
- What services do administrators, faculty or staff think are needed on the college campus to support students with psychological disabilities?
- Are services for students with psychological disabilities in California Community Colleges comparable to services for students with psychological disabilities in the four-year institutions in the United States?
- What recommendations for practices can the California Community College campus implement in order to provide effective mental health services?



# Proposed Methodology

## ■ Quantitative Methods

- Using already collected data from a statewide survey that was developed by the CCCCO and this researcher and distributed in April, 2009 – June, 2009
- Survey is similar to the National Survey of Counseling Center Directors; a survey that has been used for 28 years with 250-300 four-year colleges in the United States to identify trends in mental health
- There were 192 participants in the survey



# Statistical Analysis

- Descriptive statistics of frequencies
- Correlations and Chi-squares to analyze trends and relationships
- Comparisons of specific questions on CCCCO survey with NSCCD survey questions that are similar



# Data Analysis & Management: Software

- Survey Monkey was used to collect the data
- Microsoft Excel was used to manage the research data provided
- SPSS was used for the survey analysis



# Value of study to practitioners

- The results of this study will be used to improve awareness of support services that are in place in CA community colleges for students with mental health needs
- This data will be used to establish criteria for future *requests for proposals* with statewide Mental Health funding in the CCCCO