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**Abstract**

This study addresses the nature of government policy toward community colleges in the 1990s and the responses of institutions to these policies. This is an examination of Canadian and U.S. community colleges in two Canadian provinces and three U.S. states as well as analysis of government policy in two countries, at the federal, state and provincial levels. Government policies are viewed as directing community colleges toward economic goals, emphasizing workforce training and state economic competitiveness as outcomes, compelling colleges to improve efficiencies, increase productivity, and to become accountable to government and responsive to business and industry. Government responses to economic concerns at the provincial and state levels resulted in economic development policies applicable to community colleges. Institutional responses among community colleges, evident in behaviors such as marketization and productivity and efficiency, altered college missions, resulting in the pursuit of economic ends by these institutions. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)