

A “college-for-all” system is born

Washington's first junior college started in 1915 in Everett when 42 students began a one-year college program on the top floor of Everett High School. By 1941 eight junior colleges were operating in Washington, all locally administered and locally funded, with a combined enrollment of 1,000 students.

State support for two-year colleges was provided for the first time by the 1941 Legislature. The act restricted the number and location of junior colleges to counties having either a public or private four year institution. In 1945, junior colleges and vocational technical institutes were made a part of their local school districts and supported through their funding.

In 1961, the restrictions against expansion of community colleges were removed by the Legislature and junior colleges were designated as “community” colleges. The financing of community colleges was separated from local school districts in 1963, and in 1967 the Legislature adopted the Community College Act of 1967.

The structure of the community college system changed again in 1991 when, as part of the Work Force Training and Education Act, the Legislature amended the Community College Act of 1967 and re-designated it as the Community and Technical College Act of 1991. That Act provided for a state system of community and technical colleges separate from both the public secondary schools and four-year institutions. **The act requires colleges to “offer an open door to every citizen, regardless of his or her academic background or experiences, at a cost normally within his or her economic means.”**

CTC system funding—then and now

In 1991, when the CTC system was formed, the state's share of two-year college system's budget averaged 85.3 percent. Today, the state's share of the CTC system's operating budget averages 54.8 percent.

State funding as a percentage of state and tuition funding has declined from 77 percent in 2000 to 60 percent in 2012 and is predicted to fall to approximately 58 percent by 2013.

Tuition in 1991 was \$945 per year for a full-time student (15 credits per quarter). In 2000, tuition had reached \$1,641 and, today, annual, full-time tuition is \$3,552.

CTC's serve three primary missions:

- Transfer preparation, providing the first two years of a bachelor's degree.
- Training (or re-training) for jobs in today's economy.
- Basic skills for those who need to learn English and/or need to prepare for college-level coursework.

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One System. 34 Colleges. Unlimited Possibilities.