

MINUTES

Senate Committee on Educational Policy

February 11, 1988

Present: John Clark (chair), John Clausen, Jean Congdon, Roland Guyotte, Marla Johnson (staff), Steve Joul, Ian Maitland, Robert Meyers and Gene Piche, Aron Pilhofer.

Guests: Sandra Flake, Student Academic Support Services Committee (SASSC).

The Minutes from the January 26th meeting were approved.

SCEP Meeting Times

John Clark proposed that SCEP meetings be held every other Thursday from 3:15-5:00 p.m. for the remainder of the year and also for the next academic year, and that availability during this time be a condition for serving on SCEP beginning next fall. He will check with the Senate to make sure there is no conflict with their scheduled meetings.

SASSC Recommendations

Sandra Flake presented additional SASSC comments concerning the plus/minus grading issue and requested that SCEP reconsider the statement of policy on the length of time in which an "I" becomes an "F". SASSC unanimously supports a one quarter time period for this conversion. The importance of using the University contract procedure to facilitate removal of incompletes was stated. It was recommended by SCEP that departments assume more responsibility to notify students of the University policy on incompletes through course syllabi and bulletins.

Considerable discussion focused on the merits of extending the time period in which an "I" is converted to an "F." Concerns addressed situations in which a student experiences serious personal problems; contends with an unfamiliar bureaucracy as a transfer student to the University; applies for a job with an "F" still on his/her record; information about grade status is incorrect or unavailable.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the policy statement of SASSC in which an "I" (representing a contract between instructor and student defining how and when work will be completed) would convert to a grade of "F" after one quarter. Students would have the option of asking the instructor to resubmit an "I" where it has been changed to an "F." The motion was eventually withdrawn and a poll of members was taken in which SCEP members present favored by a vote of 5 to 4 a time limit extension from one to two quarters. John Clark announced that he would consult with Richard Jones, SASSC Chair, about the specific action required of SCEP.

Classroom Hour/Credit Ratio

The question of whether this issue should be considered by SCEP was noted. It was decided to table discussion on this matter until the Administration policy is clarified regarding the change to a semester system and its effect on the timing for a credit/-hour change. John Clark will confer with administration officials and report on his discussions at the next meeting.

Study Abroad Proposal

The draft proposal for the Study Abroad program was tabled as Assistant Vice President Kvavik was not present. John Clark will appoint a small subcommittee to review the document and identify any discussions or actions which SCEP should take.

FOCUS Document

John Clark will also appoint a small subcommittee of SCEP to examine the Academic Priorities document to suggest any actions which SCEP should take. This group will report at the next meeting. Copies of the Academic Priorities document will be available at the next meeting, or by calling Marla Johnson at 625-0362.

Educational Outcome Indicators

The question of what kinds of measurements besides graduation rates should be used by the University as an indicator of how well we are doing was mentioned. This item as well as the two preceding ones will be on the agenda for the next SCEP meeting.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

CONFLICT AND CHANGE PROJECT: Theory and Practice
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February 8, 1988

TO: Members of SCER
FROM: John Clark *John Clark*
RE: Support Materials for Thursday's Meeting, 3:15-5:00
Room 606, CMU, Campus Club

Attached are several support documents for agenda items "near" and "far." If at all possible, please have read them by meeting time. I will also have a proposal drafted concerning the credit-to-classroom hour ratio for the meeting.

- A. Grading Policies (a re-submission to the Senate).
- B. The Robinett report on quarter-to-semester which is suddenly back with us, and might serve as a model report for the credit-to-classroom hour ratio issue.
- C1 and C2. Recent reports which attend the issue of educational outcomes which has been on a previous agenda and will (and should) return.

See you Thursday!



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Department of Entomology
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St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

A

January 28, 1988

To: John Clark, Chair, SCEP

From:  Richard Jones, Chair, SASSC

Re: Grading Policies

Enclosed is a copy of additional comments that SASSC has prepared for the plus/minus grading issue that is currently tabled in the Assembly. These comments will be forwarded to the clerk for inclusion in the February 18th Assembly meeting docket.

Also enclosed is a statement of policy on incompletes. SASSC sent this issue to SCEP last year and SCEP sent it back to us for reconsideration of the lengths of time before an I converted to an F. After further discussion, including a visit from Andy Collins, SASSC unanimously feels that the one quarter wait is sufficient. Reversion of I's to F's does not take place when students drop out of school.

If SCEP approves this policy it should go to the Assembly as soon as possible. Currently the records office is holding all I's without reversion. The longer we wait before a policy is enacted, the greater the impact of the change will be.

RLJ/dr
Enclosures

SASS Policy on Incompletes

Prior to the conversion of the A/N grading system to the A/F grading system, an I converted to an N if a grade was not assigned at the end of the next quarter in residence. This conversion actually took place about midway of the subsequent quarter. For example if a continuously enrolled student received an I for fall quarter that was not made up by the end of the winter quarter, the I was converted to an N about midway of the spring quarter unless the records office received a notice from the instructor to the contrary. SASS believes that the same policy should be used for the A/F system.

SASSC and SCEP agree that I's should convert to F's. Under University policy, an I grade represents a contract between instructor and student that defines how and when the work is to be completed. I's are not intended to be permanent marks on the record. If that were the case, the I would become an escape for unsatisfactory performance.

SASSC also believes that the timing of I conversion should remain the same. Extending the conversion further will increase the number that fall into another year. TA turnover, professors leaving, students transferring, etc., are difficulties that make it important for a student to make up an I grade immediately. It is not doing the student a favor to allow excess time for the I removal.

In cases where an I has converted to an F, the student can request the instructor to resubmit an I grade.

In summary, SASSC believes that a policy that converts I's to F's after one quarter is a positive influence to encourage completion of incomplete contracts before things become stale or the players change. It is not a policy that forces a student to receive an undeserved F.

Grading Policy Additional Comment

The Student Academic Support Services Committee considered plus/minus grading at the request of the College of Liberal Arts. The committee had the benefit of materials and arguments used in forwarding the CLA request. The committee then surveyed faculty (527) and students (892). Surveys were mailed to one half of the fall quarter 1986 teaching faculty and 85% were returned. Surveys were systematically distributed to students on the St. Paul campus during grade distribution for Fall 1986 and to students in Minneapolis during Winter 1987 registration. Student returns were 88%. The questionnaire presented the 11 point plus/minus system and asked the responder if he/she preferred the current system, the proposed plus/minus system or no preference. Responses were: Students - 34% for current system, 55% for plus/minus system and 10% no preference; Faculty - 24% for current system, 72% for plus/minus system and 4% no preference. All data was collected by college and the means were adjusted by college size. Complete copies of the survey results are on file with the senate clerk.

Faculty are concerned about the integrity and resolution of the grading system as well as the reinforcing quality and fairness of specific grades. Students are concerned about the impact of more specific grades on GPA and overemphasis on grades.

The Assembly tabled this issue last quarter and requested information about the impact of the change on GPA's. It is impossible to get accurate information of this nature. A study of schools that have changed systems only provides information on GPA's movement over time - a movement that occurs with or without grading changes. Conversion of plus/minus systems to our system and observing the results falsely assumes that faculty grade assignments are not effected by the system in place. Nevertheless, the committee reviewed our only available experience - Duluth, which uses the plus/minus system. Duluth GPA's were recalculated after dropping the pluses and minuses. The mean GPA of 6,246 students in Spring quarter, 1987 (the last data available) was 2.694. After dropping pluses and minuses, the mean was 2.705. An in-depth look at effects on grade distributions among Liberal Arts students showed an increase in the number of 4.0 GPA's after conversion to our system (from 3.1% at Duluth to 7.4% without plus/minuses). This was due to deletion of the A minus.

The committee discussed some variations of the Duluth system including the assignment of an A plus (4.3). The records office could incorporate 4.3 in the GPA calculation but still limit the overall GPA to 4.0. The committee believes that if a change is to be made, adoption of a system common to all campuses is advantageous.

The committee believes that the adoption of a plus/minus system will allow more accurate recording of student performance evaluations.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Office of the Provost and
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C1

January 28, 1988

TO: David J. Berg, Assistant Vice President, Management Planning
and Information Services
Darwin D. Hendel, Research Associate, Academic Affairs
Jeanne T. Lupton, Special Assistant to the Vice Presidents for
Student Affairs and Academic Affairs
Keith N. McFarland, Dean, General College
Jack C. Merwin, Chair, Department of Educational Psychology
James B. Preus, Coordinator, Student Support Services
Flo Wiger, Special Assistant to the Vice President for Academic
Affairs

FROM: John Wallace, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Indicators of Quality in Undergraduate Education

A few weeks ago Rick Heydinger suggested to me that the University ought to be able to go to the Legislature and say, "We are committed to improve the quality of our performance in all parts of our mission. Here is what we mean. Here are the indicators of quality on which we would like to be judged." For various reasons this issue may not come up in this session of the Legislature. It is almost certain to come up in the next biennium. I am asking the group to whom this memo is addressed to get together to brainstorm about the issue.

As a basis for discussion, I would like to set out a few suggestions of areas or topics on which indicators might be developed.

1. Ethnic composition of undergraduate population.
2. Percentage of entering freshmen who satisfy the preparation requirements.
3. Number of National Merit Scholars in the freshman class.
4. Retention rates, especially between freshman and sophomore years.
5. An indicator that would get at some composite of course availability and graduation rates.
6. Senior faculty teaching at various levels, especially in the lower division.

7. An indicator that would get at the amount of wasted motion, e.g., the frequency with which students withdraw from courses in which they have registered.
8. An indicator that would get at fit between class size and the class' learning goals.
9. Indicators that get at the qualities of mind of our graduates: habits of critical thinking, analysis, reflection, commitment to responsibilities of citizenship, sense of values.
10. Scores of our students on Graduate Record Examinations and other postgraduate admissions tests.
11. Proportion of seniors who know a faculty well enough to ask him or her for a letter of reference.
12. Cost data: expenditure per student; proportion of expenditure that goes into direct service to students in instruction, advising, library resources, computing resources.

Some caveats. (1) The indicators suggested here address undergraduate education only. A full response to Rick Heydinger's question will address the other parts of the University's mission: graduate education, research, service. (2) There is, in principle, an asymptote or limit problem: on some indicators we may be doing as well as we possibly can, given the resources available to us. The above list does not try to anticipate or solve this problem. (3) It is tempting to introduce an element of comparability with peer institutions. The above list leaves this as a topic for future consideration.

Once we decide on a set of indicators (if we were ever to do so), there remains the crucial question of what we will do with reports on the indicators. The Academy Planning Committee had a simple suggestion that is relevant here: the Provost should work with the deans to set annual goals for quality improvement in each college. This issue also needs further consideration.

My assistant, Janine Hockin, will be in touch with you to arrange a meeting in the near future.

JW:ap

c: Kenneth H. Keller, President
Roger Benjamin, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Richard B. Heydinger, Vice President for External Relations

C2

Quality Assessment Preliminary Draft

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 1987, the Minnesota Legislature established the Task Force on Post-Secondary Quality Assessment and directed it to study the goals of quality assessment and ways to use quality assessment to improve post-secondary education. This preliminary report to the legislature describes the work of the task force to date, outlines plans for next steps, and makes recommendations concerning funding for future activities.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

Increased interest in the quality of American education, which began in the early 1980s with numerous national reports on elementary and secondary education, has moved to higher education. Several major national reports published by such groups as the National Institute of Education, the National Endowment for Humanities, the Association of American Colleges, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching have criticized the effectiveness of American higher education. All these reports suggest that not enough is known about the achievements of the average college graduate. The reports have recommended that higher education institutions work toward increasing the involvement of their students and faculty in the educational process, toward establishing higher expectations, and toward assessing results more frequently and in a variety of ways. A second catalyst in the quality movement nationally has been an increasing focus on education as a means to improved economic development. American colleges, universities, and technical schools have been viewed as a key to improved American competitiveness in the world market.

Many educators do not agree that the quality of post-secondary institutions and students is declining. Statements which criticize the quality are often difficult to refute, however, because of the lack of specific data on how well students are meeting the educational goals of an institution. In many cases, the educational goals have not been clearly stated.

THE MINNESOTA CONTEXT

Minnesota has developed one of the most extensive networks of post-secondary education opportunities in the nation, with 64 public campuses, over 30 private colleges and professional schools and several dozen private vocational schools. The student financial aid system is also among the best in the nation; last year, more than 66,000 students received state scholarships and grants totaling over \$64 million. This attention to both geographic and financial access has resulted in a participation rate that is among the highest in the nation. Approximately three-fourths of all high school seniors go on to post-secondary education within five years of graduation. In recent years, non-traditional students also have been returning to school in ever increasing numbers.

While Minnesota is recognized nationally for ensuring access to post-secondary education, there also is a general perception that the quality of Minnesota institutions and their graduates is above that of most states.

Because of the lack of a crisis in higher education, as was the case in many of the first states to incorporate state mandated assessment programs, and the tradition of decentralized, grassroots approaches, Minnesota has approached quality assessment in a deliberative manner. Minnesota has developed many programs that have set the stage for further quality assessment activities.

One example is mission differentiation. Many experts state that assessment design efforts should begin only after the mission and goals of higher education

are clear. In Minnesota, the post-secondary education systems have made significant progress toward collectively refining and delineating their respective missions.

In elementary and secondary education, the Minnesota Department of Education has developed statements of learner outcomes in most subject areas. Building on the work of the learner outcomes project, the Higher Education Coordinating Board convened a task force to develop a statement regarding college level skills and the standards by which college level work can be differentiated from remedial or developmental work. These standards were adopted by the Coordinating Board and the governing boards of the post-secondary systems. The Board, with the assistance of a task force, also developed associate degree standards that incorporate some statements of outcomes. A third task force developed a set of outcomes for teacher education programs that will serve as a framework for redesigning curriculum. These statements of outcomes and standards for measuring them can be used as the basis for designing and choosing assessment tools and for reconstructing curriculum.

In addition to the state-level projects, individual systems and campuses are working on a variety of approaches to outcomes assessment. Some of these approaches are described elsewhere in this report.

THE MANDATE

The 1987 Minnesota Legislature established a task force on post-secondary quality assessment. The task force was given the mandate to:

- o Determine the goals of quality assessment.
- o Study and select strategies and mechanisms for the state to use in achieving these goals.
- o Consider ways to use the assessment in improving post-secondary education.

- o Establish a pilot assessment project within each of the public post-secondary systems.
- o Submit a preliminary report to the legislature by February 1, 1988.
- o Submit a full report of its activities, findings, and recommendations to the legislature by February 1, 1989.¹

THE TASK FORCE

The 17 members of the Quality Assessment Task Force represent each of the six private and public post-secondary systems, the state Department of Education, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and post-secondary students. Coordinated by HECB staff, the task force membership expires June 30, 1989.

The task force met seven times prior to submitting this preliminary report to the legislature. The task force reviewed the legislative mandate with Greg Dahl, chief Senate author of the legislation. Kathleen Kies, deputy executive director of the Coordinating Board, discussed the task force's charge. At subsequent meetings other speakers included:

- o Wayne Erickson, manager, instructional services, Minnesota Department of Education, who spoke on the state's Coordinated Model for Educational Improvement;
- o Task force member Alice Thomas, who discussed the evaluation model used at St. Olaf to develop a quality assessment program;
- o Joe Steele, American College Testing Program, and Neal Samors, Educational Testing Service, who discussed their assessment instruments;
- o HECB staff member Melissa Anderson, who reviewed various types of assessment instruments;
- o Task force member Michael Field, professor of English and director of the University Center for Professional Development, who described assessment efforts at Bemidji State University;
- o Task force member Jack Rossmann, professor of psychology at Macalester College and chair of several North Central accrediting teams, who discussed a monograph on assessment that he wrote with Elaine El-Khawas at the American Council for Education; and
- o Carol Boyer, senior policy analyst, Education Commission of the States, who presented information on assessment activities in other states.

1. Laws of Minnesota for 1987, Chapter 401, Section 33.

Based on these presentations, review of the assessment literature, and our own experiences and knowledge, we spent much of our time discussing assessment goals, principles and guidelines, efforts in other states and in Minnesota, K-12 efforts, instruments, and pilot projects. This preliminary report summarizes our findings and describes our future plans.

Chapter II describes some of the research and literature we reviewed. In addition, an annotated bibliography is included at the end of the report.

Chapter III describes assessment activities in other states and some selected campuses. It also contains information about current and planned assessment activities in each of Minnesota's four public post-secondary systems, the private colleges and proprietary schools.

Chapter IV presents our preliminary findings, including a set of principles we believe should guide future assessment efforts. Potential problems are also discussed.

Chapter V includes our recommendations for the pilot projects, requests funding for the continue work of the task force and for the initial cost of the pilot projects and briefly describes our plans for the task force during the next year.

CHAPTER II: THE RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

We found an extensive body of literature on quality assessment in higher education. It can be divided into three categories. The first includes articles, books, and more often, reports critical of the quality of undergraduate education in America. Involvement in Learning, Washington, D.C., NIE (1984), was done by the Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education. It lists a series of indicators pointing to the fact that the quality of undergraduate education in the United States has declined and suggests assessment as a means for improvement. The second is William Bennett's To Reclaim A Legacy: Report of the National Endowment of the Humanities, Washington, D.C., NEH (1984). In it he argues that today's college graduates receive an inadequate education in the concepts of Western Civilization and are especially shortchanged in the humanities. The third was produced by the Association of American Colleges in 1985. Entitled, Integrity in the College Curriculum, it charges that the baccalaureate degree has become meaningless in American education and that the faculties of the colleges and universities must restore it to the position it once held. In response to the three, Derek Bok, the president of Harvard, wrote "Toward Education of Quality," Harvard Magazine (1986), in which he admitted that problems do exist in higher education but could be remedied by the institutions themselves if they reformulated their goals and determined student progress within them. Acknowledging a difficulty in measuring educational goals, he called for the development of more sophisticated instruments to test their achievement. According to Bok, assessment could be the path toward excellence in American higher education.

A second category includes books and articles that focus on the process of quality assessment as it concerns state legislatures and affects colleges and universities. Examples include: Alexander Astin, Achieving Educational

Excellence, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass (1985), and two works by Peter Ewell, The Self Regarding Institution: Information for Excellence, Boulder, Colorado, NCHEMS (1986), and "The State Role in Assessing College Outcomes: Policy Choices and Probable Impacts" and Task Force on Quality, Governors' 1991 Report, Washington, D.C., National Governors' Association (1986). All three describe the broad policy issues and roles for institutions and states in quality assessment. Included in this group also are Carol Boyer, Peter Ewell, Joni Finney and James Mingle, "Assessment and Outcomes Measurement: A View from the States," AAHE Bulletin (March 1987); Edward Morante, Sharon Faskow and Irene Menditto, "The New Jersey Basic Skills Assessment Program: Part II," Journal of Development and Remedial Education, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1984); and Trudy Banta (ed.), Performance Finding in Higher Education: A Critical Analysis of Tennessee's Experience, Boulder, Colorado, NCHEMS (1985).

A third broad category includes material which specifically defines the technical aspects of assessment and explain how assessments should be conducted in higher education. Chief among these are: Robert Pace, Measuring the Outcomes of College, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass (1979); and Georgine Loacker, Lucy Gromwell, and Kathleen O'Brien, "Assessment in Higher Education: To Serve the Learner," found in Assessment in American Higher Education, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (1985).

To date, no creditable longitudinal research has been done on the effects of assessment. The data that exist are fragmentary and specific. The effects of the phenomena of quality assessment are still too new to properly measure. Evidence, however, about the probable impact of state mandated assessment is emerging from a number of sources. First, seven states (Florida, Tennessee, Georgia, South Dakota, New Jersey, Maryland, and Colorado) have legislated or otherwise established outcomes assessment efforts; while only two of these--

Florida and Tennessee--are of long duration, lessons about the implementation of such programs are emerging constantly. Second, some institutions have implemented locally-designed, comprehensive assessment programs on their own initiative over the past two years. While few of these efforts have a long history, they share common patterns of impact. A second "wave" of institutions is designing such programs, either in response to emerging state initiatives (or the expectation that these will develop) or to new regional accreditation criteria that stress collection and use of information on institutional effectiveness. Finally, higher education has experienced reform efforts that are structurally similar to state-mandated assessment programs. These include formal statewide processes for program approval and review, cost studies, and the professional accreditation process. Evidence of institutional response to such initiatives provides another resource for estimating the probable impact of proposed statewide assessment programs.

CHAPTER III: ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Activities in Other States and Campuses

Throughout the country there is no single approach to quality assessment. Some institutions and states have been comprehensively assessing their post-secondary students and institutions for up to a decade or more. Assessment always has been a part of education, from testing in the classroom to accreditation. But recently attention has been focused on measuring more aspects of education in more ways, not only to prove, but to improve, what is being done. Unlike previous attempts that often focused on inputs--the number of National Merit Scholars, the number of volumes in a library, or the number of Ph.D's among the faculty -- the current assessment movement focuses on outcomes of the educational process.

According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS), in a survey of the 50 states, two-thirds have formal assessment initiatives. According to the survey, more than half of the responding higher education executive officers see their state board's role as actively encouraging, promoting, or facilitating institutional initiatives by: (1) mandating assessment or including it in an existing program; (2) convening conferences and seminars on assessment; (3) financing the initiatives; (4) giving technical assistance, such as referrals or study groups; and/or (5) developing multi-institutional initiatives in areas of statewide interest or those beyond the purview of a single institution, such as teacher education or testing high school students. This contrasts with one third who see their role as minimal, and another 10 who see their role as actively defining and implementing assessment programs.²

Although most states either are working toward comprehensive assessment of their students and institutions, or already doing it, the approaches differ

2. Footnote

widely. Not all approaches have been successful; in fact, some have largely been failures, and have been abandoned. Some have been controversial in their methods, their objectives, and their implementation. In some cases it is difficult to say how assessment programs have fared because there has been no assessment of quality assessment. None are finished; all continue to be improved, adjusted, and evaluated. We have studied the assessment programs in other states and at other universities and colleges and offer here a few examples, a few possibilities, but no endorsements.

In the mid-1970s, Northeast Missouri State University and Alverno College responded to the need for assessment on their campuses. But they did so in very different ways. Both programs took many years to develop, implement, and adjust.

In the early 1970s Northeast Missouri State changed from a normal school to a comprehensive regional university. Administrators and faculty wanted to measure the effect of the new mission on students' educational and personal growth. The university developed a detailed data base on its students including their educational and personal backgrounds, their activities, and their performance on standardized tests. The goal is to look at students over time and assess the extent of their growth. The resulting information has been used in curricular reform.

Alverno College, a small, private, liberal arts college for women in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, began its program in 1973. Faculty generated a set of eight intellectual skills all students should possess upon graduation--communication, analysis, problem solving, valuing, social interaction, taking environmental responsibility, involvement in the contemporary world, and aesthetic response. Each student is tested in the eight skills throughout her education using written, oral and experiential exams. Unlike Northeast Missouri State University, Alverno College avoids using standardized tests; faculty are largely

responsible for designing the tests and judging students' performance. Students use the results to chart their progress, and faculty use them to evaluate students.

Among statewide programs, the earliest and best known are those in which the state government imposed programs on institutions. These states were responding to alarm at the low level of literacy and basic skills possessed by large portion of their students. There was also little other than K-12 assessment programs to use as precedent. The ECS survey found that 10 states have adopted or are going to implement programs in which the state designs the program, for example, choosing instruments and determining cut-off scores. However the study noted that few of these are new.

In 1979, Florida mandated that all students entering undergraduate program had to attain a score at or above the 40th percentile on the ACT or SAT to be admitted. In 1982, the legislature mandated that all students pass the state College Level Academic Skills Test before getting their associate degree or moving into the upper division of four-year schools. In 1985, the legislature again mandated a test for incoming students for placement. The state department of education also requires students to complete a specified amount of coursework in the humanities, algebra and English. Florida intended to ensure that every student who needed remediation got it. An unintended effect was a decline in minority enrollment. Recently, the state has improved minority enrollment at some campuses.

In 1977, New Jersey implemented a Basic Skills Assessment Program. The basic skills test is used for placement of students and as a measure of entering freshmen's proficiencies in reading, writing, and mathematics. All incoming students are required to take it. Results since 1978 show the majority of students lack basic proficiencies in all three areas. In 1985, the state imple

mented the College Outcomes Evaluation Program to assess general education goals, such as critical thinking, and to monitor student retention, satisfaction and job placement. A sample of students is assessed at the beginning of their program, in the middle and at graduation. While some aspects of the College Outcomes Evaluation Program are defined statewide, others are left to the discretion of individual institutions. The state has not yet determined whether to use statewide instruments and performance criteria.

In 1984, South Dakota adopted the Regents Assessment Policy to improve academic and co-curricular programs. The Board of Regents, which governs the state's six colleges and universities, was eager to implement statewide testing and decided to forego campus and faculty discussion to avoid delay. The regents required each institution to administer the ACT test to second semester sophomores and the ACT COMP, also a general education test, to a sample of freshmen who were then tested again after two years. An attitudinal survey was administered to freshmen as they entered and later in their program. Most students also were required to take a standardized test in their major before graduating. None of the tests required a passing score. The goal was to measure how much "value" was "added" to students, how much they had grown educationally, between entering and leaving South Dakota post-secondary institutions. By assessing students at two points in their education, educators hoped to capture students' growth in the changes in their test scores and survey responses.

In their haste to assess college and university students, the Board of Regents failed to anticipate the degree of reluctance and resentment faculty and students would feel. The program was initially paid for through student fees, which students resented. Faculty and administrators resented the Board for imposing testing and feared results would be used to cut programs. Other problems arose because of inadequate staff and motivation to analyze test results,

expensive and misused standardized tests, and lack of discussion and debate. South Dakota recently rejected this mandated system and moved to a more campus-based assessment program. For example, freshmen testing is now strongly recommended rather than required, and institutions are likely to use samples of students rather than test each student.

Tennessee's assessment initiatives combine campus-based and statewide programs. Board of Regents campuses test incoming freshmen to screen and place them. Remedial education is provided to those who need it. Likewise, all graduating students take a general education test. Every five years each graduate in every major is tested. In 1984, the state also set institutional benchmarks, such as scores on the ACT and the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), and program completion rates.

Since 1977 Tennessee's post-secondary institutions also have participated in the Performance Funding Program whereby institutions are eligible for up to five percent more funding by using assessment techniques to improve performance in five areas. Assessment is largely concentrated on general education, using the ACT test and the ACT COMP to measure growth, and on specialized education, using standardized or locally developed subject area tests. Institutions are encouraged to design and implement assessment activities and integrate them into other campus programs. The state board, however, selects the instruments for assessing general education outcomes and job placement.

The Education Commission of the States' survey noted that 15 states emphasize institutions developing their own assessment plans. Utah is one of these states. In 1986, Utah established a policy intended to promote accountability and quality. While the state provides institutions with guidelines, each institution is responsible for designing and implementing its own program according to its mission. Among areas suggested for assessment are skills, value-added

indicators, students' educational experiences and perceptions, transfer students, and job placement.

Virginia also chose to leave the design and implementation of assessment programs up to individual institutions. Fifteen institutions and the community college system are developing plans. James Madison University is the state's pilot site. It is developing a set of assessment techniques that other institutions can modify as needed, including value-added, comprehensive, and standardized tests.

In 1985, the Colorado Legislature passed a bill restructuring higher education. Among its provisions was one mandating that each institution design and implement an assessment program to "demonstrate improvements in students' knowledge, capacities, and skills between entrance and graduation" by 1990 or risk losing up to two percent of its appropriations. Similarly, Missouri has given each post-secondary institution a year to put together an assessment program in keeping with its mission, ignoring the experience of colleges such as Northeast Missouri State University where such programs took several years to develop.

Every state develops its quality assessment programs under different circumstances. Some states traditionally devote much time and money to higher education, others do not. Some states have more control than others over their post-secondary institutions. In some states, as in Minnesota, post-secondary institutions traditionally assume much autonomy. Some states, unlike Minnesota, have had to contend with low literacy rates and large numbers of ill-prepared students. Some states feel their post-secondary institutions need much improvement, while others believe their institutions are largely excellent.

All these factors affected the kind of assessment programs states chose to implement. After reviewing the states' quality assessment efforts, we concluded

that different contexts, different needs and environments lead to different approaches. Minnesota cannot simply adopt another state's entire program. A wiser course would be to pick and choose among the many approaches for those that best fit our context, our needs and our environment.

Activities in Minnesota

The task force began its study of assessment activities in Minnesota by discussing the different programs found on their campuses and by sharing information on the variety of procedures that they used to measure outcomes.

As the task force developed an understanding of assessment activities in the state, it observed that ideas about assessment differ from institution to institution based on mission, traditions, size, the funding available, and the idea of what should be assessed. An illustrative, but not inclusive, sample of their findings is as follows:

University of Minnesota

Because of its complexity and diversity, the University of Minnesota has begun addressing the state's concerns about assessment by collecting data on the number and types of assessment initiatives already in place on its campuses, measuring the quality of education at the departmental level, creating an awareness about assessment among faculty, staff and students, and planning for the future.

This process began in September, 1987 under the auspices of the Office of the Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs when letters were sent to faculty involved in assessment initiatives asking them to share descriptions of their current projects. The data received will be connected with other existing projects and summarized to give the University a clearer view of what is being done. Concurrently, academic departments were requested to inventory the quality of their programs to see where they might be improved.

Discussions about assessment are being fostered throughout the campus to explore the variety of approaches available. To this end, two activities took place during the fall quarter. The first was a course (Assessment Quality in Higher Education) offered to faculty and students throughout the term; and the second, a day-long conference (Using Assessment Centers in Higher Education) presented November 9 at the Hubert H. Humphrey Conference Center. Other activities are being planned.

Finally, efforts are also underway to survey baccalaureate candidates in all the colleges on the Twin Cities campuses for their perceptions of the quality of the undergraduate education they received at the University; and a research design is being constructed to gain experience in using newly developed standardized tests that measure broad-based learning outcomes within the University's unique context. Both will be administered this spring.

Minnesota State University System

Institutions comprising the Minnesota State University System have reported several assessment activities. Several use the ACT-College Outcomes Measures Project which is designed to assess the effectiveness of the general education curriculum. One campus has employed Astin's Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP). Most use alumni surveys and instruments that measure the satisfaction of graduating seniors and aspects of their academic programs. Nearly all campuses give attention to student achievement on national examinations and review passing rates for licensing examinations.

In addition, all campuses are reviewed by external evaluators every five years. In that process students, alumni, and faculty are questioned on the quality of their curriculum, programs, the instruction, and the services they receive and are asked for recommendations toward improvement.

Finally, at one state university students' academic records and transcripts are kept as statements of learning rather than as course numbers and letter grades. This means that each course is directed toward specific learning outcomes upon which students are evaluated by the instructor to assess learning at the classroom level and learning resulting from non-classroom experiences.

Private Colleges

The issues of assessment is being discussed widely among administrators, faculty, and trustees of private colleges with many establishing committees to address the issue.

A review of these institutions indicates that information is gathered in a variety of ways on basic cognitive skills (primarily at entrance) for use in meeting student needs in placement and advising. Information about attitudes and higher level cognitive skills also is collected and used for program improvement. In addition to questionnaires which ask students to evaluate all aspects of their college experience and periodic reviews of academic departments, most colleges document the outcomes of their graduates related to the degrees earned, job placement, and satisfaction with the instruction and education that they received. One college periodically evaluates samples of transcripts to review patterns in course taking while another has developed an institution specific evaluation model based on its unique mission, the intents of its inputs and outcomes and a set of the indicators and types of information needed to measure effectiveness.

Community Colleges

(Information not yet received from them)

Area Vocational Technical Institutes

The Minnesota technical institutes use two strategies to assess the quality of their instruction. The first is called the Minnesota Vocational Follow-Up System which has been used since 1971. Administered to all technical institute students it is that system's major instrument for assessment. It provides information on the input and interactions of the institutes as well as their outcomes. The data collected describe the characteristics of the students enrolled, the status of those who leave the system, and contain student and employer evaluations of the training received one year after graduation.

Part of the data provided by the Vocational Follow-Up System focuses on outcomes while another part provides information about placement, employer's satisfaction, and student's satisfaction. The outcome information is descriptive not explanatory, and only serves as a signal for effective or ineffective combinations of inputs, with various instructional and student service processes. A complete assessment strategy which has improvement as its goal needs to incorporate more and different data.

The second strategy used by the technical institutes to assess effectiveness is the five year accreditation review by the State Board of Vocational Technical Education. During that process the technical institutes extensively use the data collected to measure the quantitative aspects of inputs and interactions and develop an action plan for improvement based on them.

Private Proprietary Schools

The private proprietary post-secondary institutions which serve students oriented to specific occupational goals historically have been locked into a straight line system of accountability and assessment. It consists of training to meet the needs of employers who ask for specific occupational skills and who hire on the basis of their attainment; and training to meet unique licensing and

accreditation standards not generally applied to other sectors of education. Schools that are members of the Minnesota Association of Private Post-Secondary Schools (MAPPS), evaluate graduate, faculty and administrative performance, textbooks, resources and student performance to ensure competency and quality.

In addition, a variety of entrance requirements are demanded of the students by the agencies that license, register, or accredit the skill they are seeking to achieve. These are administered for placement as they enter the proprietary school.

CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

Some Guiding Principles

Based on the literature, the experience in other states and on campuses in Minnesota, we concluded that several guiding principles will help the task force in future deliberations and also can assist policy makers, administrators, and faculty as they discuss and develop assessment policies and practices.

The first principle relates to the dual purposes of assessment: first, the improvement of teaching and learning, and second, accountability to the state, the consumers and to the goals of the institution. While both purposes are important, we believe that improvement is clearly the most important.

Outcomes assessment programs should result in improved student learning and the process is not complete until the results have been used for institutional improvement. As said, "Outcomes assessments is fundamentally a curriculum issue rather than a measurement issue."³

These two purposes, improvement and accountability, can conflict with one another and often require different approaches. The purpose of the assessment in all cases should guide the approach used. Because of the importance of this principle and our legislative mandate, we have devoted a separate section to the dual goals of quality assessment.

Other important principles include:

Multiple and varied measures are more desirable than a single standardized exam. As Ted Marchese, vice president of the American Association of Higher Education, succinctly puts it, "Beware the single (test) score!" Multiple measures are needed in order to capture the complexity of learning that occurs during a student's education experience. Broad-based measurement guards against

3. Footnote

misinterpreting a single statistic of finding; a range of measures is more likely to reveal the true nature of an object.

Keep the number of assessment dimensions to a manageable number. While a single test score is to be avoided, it is also important that institutions not try to capture every aspect of the college experience in the assessment process, especially at the outset. Assessment policies should be developed with realistic expectations of fulfilling the stated goals. One rule which has been suggested is that, "The data collected should be extensive enough to be useful but modest enough to be manageable." (AGB Report, Sept 87, p.3.)

Assessment policies and practices should go beyond examining basic skills and minimum competencies, especially if the instructional program of the institution is broader. While we believe that each system and campus must establish the educational goals it wishes to assess, in our dialog with the systems we will encourage them to follow this principle. We envision an outcomes assessment program as including goals related to cognitive knowledge and skills, the so-called higher order skills that integrate cognitive and affective skills and knowledge, work and life skills, citizenship, and complexity of thinking and degree of self directedness.

Faculty involvement in, and support of, all aspects of the program is essential. External, top-down pressures often meet with skepticism and resistance. If the main purpose of assessment is program improvement, then those responsible for shaping the curriculum must be involved in the procedures used to assess the effectiveness. Quality assessment efforts will be sustained if the faculty have an understanding of, and commitment to, the process.

Data collected should build upon existing data and should reflect the campus master plan. For that reason the data generated by different campuses/systems will differ from those at another campus. Many campuses are doing many

activities that can be classified as "outcomes assessment". In a survey of campuses early in 1986, three-fourths of the respondents indicated that they will be implementing some form of assessment during the coming year (Campus Trends). Much of what is being done, however, is fragmented. While it is a good start, a comprehensive outcomes assessment program must be coordinated, requiring planning and campus-wide activities.

There are substantial costs, both in time and money, especially in the early stages of an assessment program. Resources for a planning team, for extended contracts for faculty, for hiring consultants, attending conferences and work shops, for faculty development, for collecting data, purchasing or creating assessment instruments, and for analysis of the results are necessary. Assessment results should yield dividends that justify the state or institution's investment.

Outcomes assessment yields information to decision makers about the quality of the curriculum. Key decisionmakers, including state policymakers and system officials and governing boards, should receive information about the quality and effectiveness of programs. Information should be clear and specific, but often the complexity of the goals will result in data that are more ambiguous.

Assessment policies should include provisions for analysis of the effects of the assessment upon students, institutions and the teaching and learning process. Care must be taken, for example, to insure that the goals of access and equity are met. In some states like Florida, there is evidence that minority students' pass rates on the Florida CLAST exam are below those of majority students. Assessments results, however, can be used to identify educational programs and experiences that have assisted students in attaining the educational goals of the institution.

Students must see value to outcomes assessment. The most important purpose for assessment is the improvement of the educational experience of the students. This purpose should be communicated to students. In addition, students should be involved and student goals must be considered. Some students attend a post-secondary institution to receive a broad liberal arts education, while others have goals more related to gaining skills for employment.

PROBLEMS

In addition to the principles, the task force has also identified some areas that warrant caution. We will explore these potential problems during the next year and will comment more fully on them in our final report and recommendations in February, 1989. We would, however, briefly note the following cautions:

Not enough time nor results have accrued on the majority of the outcomes assessment approaches being used to assess their quality and validity. Initiatives in most state or campuses are still in an early phase; it is simply too early to know if the approaches work. We would therefore caution policy makers or educators to take a "wait and see" approach to some of the plans being implemented.

Assessment, especially the evaluation component, can be a very technical undertaking. The technical aspects of test creation, validity, and reliability as well as the setting of "acceptable" scores or the predicting of how students might perform on one instrument, based on their performance on another instrument, are difficult issues, especially for those of us not expert in psychometrics. The "value added" approach is one example of an approach whose limitations must be described carefully. One testing expert describes the problem as follows:

The trend toward administering assessments to either each individual student or to a sample of students upon entering college and then again as rising juniors or graduating seniors provides useful information but frequently uncertain and imprecise information. This approach has been popularly referred to as value-added assessment and at the moment is the most widely used college assessment practice. The difference between students' entering performance and the performance two or four years later reflects the overall effectiveness of the curriculum and purportedly indicates the amount of student growth. While this can be a very efficient and valuable approach to obtaining information about student progress of individuals or groups of students, it also has some severe limitations that are frequently overlooked.⁴ Among the limitations Nettles lists are:

- o Group level analyses often fails to account for attrition within the group over two or four years of college, and the recomposition of the group due to students who transfer into the institution.
- o Repeated items and/or exercises yield results, part of which may be explained by familiarity due to prior administration and part due to knowledge gained.
- o The changes in student abilities may be partially or entirely due to students' experiences other than the college curriculum.
- o Long gaps between measurements make it impossible to determine at which points during the curriculum certain developments in critical thinking or other types of development occur.
- o The before-and-after difference scores on which estimates of student gain are based are beset by problems of unreliability and regression effects that make interpretation hazardous.

Care must be taken when using standardized tests. There is a danger that the test will not accurately reflect the curricular priorities of the institution or that "the assessment tail will wag the curriculum dog" (Lee Shulman, AAHE Denver Conference, June 1987.)

Quality Assessment Goals

After review of the literature on quality assessment, examination of other state's efforts at quality assessment, and discussion about how these models might or might not fit Minnesota, we concluded that while accountability is an

4. Mike Nettles, "The Emergence of College Outcomes Assessment," Working Draft, March 1986.

important and legitimate function of assessment, program improvement must be the highest goal.

Traditionally assessment has been used for two purposes: improvement of teaching and learning, and accountability. Assessment has long been used as part of instruction. Tests have been given to assess both students and curricula. Such evaluation could then be used to improve instruction. Assessment for accountability traditionally has emphasized demonstration of effective education: Are students acquiring the required skills and knowledge? Are graduates prepared to take advantage of job opportunities? Is money being spent effectively?

Accountability has been defined in the literature as (1) fulfilling institutional missions and (2) demonstrating that this has been done. However, accountability means different things to different publics, and there are several publics to which higher education is accountable. The state government wants to be assured that appropriated money is being used efficiently and properly. This includes information about access, research, and student performance. Students want to know how likely they are to succeed, how well programs fit their needs, and how competent and effective faculty are. Employers want knowledgeable and skilled employees. All want higher education to impart values and behavior to students that will benefit them and society. To some extent, each of these publics is concerned with all these questions.

Such questions provide answers about who and what is used to achieve certain educational goals, or outcomes. Assessments of inputs, such as faculty, libraries, and curricula, and of outcomes, such as knowledge and attitudes, are descriptive, not explanatory. Skills tests, attitude surveys, inventories, and other measures describe what goes into educating students and what the results of that education are, but they are not linked by the educational process. They

say nothing about how goals are reached (or not reached). Institutions often assess inputs at one end and outcomes at the other and miss the process in the middle.

If improvement -- improvement of students, faculty, curricula, facilities, administration, services, teaching -- is the goal of assessment, information about the educational process is essential. A test of outcomes may reveal that students are not acquiring sufficient knowledge of mathematical principles or cannot communicate effectively, but without an assessment of where in the educational process things are going wrong, there is no way to address failings accurately and effectively. Institutions know only that some combination of inputs has not been effective. They lack the data to tell them in what ways the libraries, the faculty, or the curricula have failed the students.

Once an institution has determined its educational goals, factors that can be accepted as indicators of achievement, measures of these indicators, and has collected the information, the next step is to analyze it and use it to expand strengths and improve weaknesses. Assessment of inputs, processes, and outcomes should lead to improvement. Assessment is a time-consuming, arduous and expensive task; simply gathering information without using it is wasting an opportunity for improvement and evading the responsibility to do so.

A further benefit comes as a result of the assessment process. Done with sincerity and integrity, assessment for improvement and accountability enables and encourages faculty, administrators, students and legislators to confront issues of mission, curricula, and instruction, and opens channels of communication. Those involved in the process begin to focus on the long-term goals of educational programs and their evaluation. Assessment facilitates discussion and introspection.

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Assessment Instruments

The task force looked at several instruments in use (a summary chart of such instruments appears in Appendix X?). Instruments for educational assessment vary widely by purpose and by administration. They range from quizzes given in individual college classes to nationally distributed achievement tests. This section presents a brief survey of the kinds of instruments currently available for assessing the quality of undergraduate education.

The choice of an appropriate instrument depends on many contextual factors. As assessment programs differ by level, so assessment instruments vary in focus and approach. Techniques of assessment geared to a course or program, for instance, would probably prove inadequate at the institution or state level, and vice versa. An assessment instrument must be chosen to complement and support the overall assessment effort. To this end, it must reflect the mission and purpose of the program under consideration. The administration of the instrument should be compatible with the approach used in the program. For example, a skill test might be appropriate for a vocational education class such as drafting, whereas a survey might be needed for assessment of a school's student support services. Finally, the intended uses of the assessment results need to be taken into account when an instrument is chosen, since instruments can provide a wide variety of outcome measures.

Some assessment instruments are designed to evaluate undergraduate achievement in a broad sense. Among the general examinations designed for outcomes assessment are the American College Testing Program's College Outcome Measures Program and the Educational Testing Service's new Academic Profile. Both measure students' skills in such areas as reading, writing, critical thinking and quantitative analysis. Both allow either group or individual scores to be reported. Other examinations, such as Florida's College Level Academic Skills Test and the Georgia Regents' Test, also measure general academic outcomes but are designed to assess a student's preparation for upper-division (junior and senior) courses.

Various assessment instruments test student achievement in specific subject areas. The Educational Testing Service's Major Field Achievement Tests, now being developed, illustrate this instrument type. They are designed to test a student's achievement in his or her academic major. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Subject Tests, on which the Major Field Tests are based, also measure field-specific achievement. While the GRE is intended primarily for those students who wish to enter graduate programs, it has been used as an undergraduate outcomes assessment instrument. Likewise, the College Board is promoting the use of its College-Level Examination Program for assessment, though the tests were originally designed for "credit by examination" for specific introductory college courses. Other tests, such as the Communication Competency Assessment Instrument, developed at the University of Wisconsin, Parkside, evaluate a student's proficiency in a particular skill. This instrument measures a student's ability to communicate in the education environment.

Placement examinations, designed for matching students to appropriate college classes, can also be thought of as assessment instrument. The New Jersey College Basic Skills Placement Test is among the best-known of these

instruments. Placement tests are often developed by individual institutions for their own course sequences. Others, such as the California State University English Placement Test, have systemwide use. In some cases, disciplinary-based academic organizations, like the Mathematical Association of America, design placement examinations. The College Board produces Computerized Placement Tests which assess basic skills in reading and mathematics.

Not all assessment instruments are examinations of student skill or achievement nor are they new tests. Some instruments are designed to evaluate non-cognitive aspects of students' development. They may, for example, attempt to measure students' leadership abilities or interpersonal skills. The American College Testing Program's Alumni Survey gives an institution's graduates the opportunity to assess the contribution of their undergraduate education to their personal growth and career success. The College Student Experiences Questionnaire, distributed by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles, attempts to measure various aspects of student involvement while in college, such as participation in college programs, use of college facilities, time spent on academic work, and satisfaction with the college environment. Other alumni surveys, such as those used by the Minnesota Vocational-Technical System, assess the quality of post-secondary education with reference to subsequent employment and employer expectations.

Assessment instruments vary not only in purpose but also in administration. Some, like the College-Level Examination Program tests, are computer-scored and multiple-choice. The Georgia Regents' Test, among others, combines machine scoring with essays graded by teams of professors. The College Outcome Measures Program combines written and oral examinations, whereas the Communication Competency Assessment Instrument is an entirely oral test. The College Board's Computerized Placement Test is an interactive computer program which adjusts the

questions asked until it determines the student's level of comprehension from the pattern of correct and incorrect answers. Surveys, whether computer-scored or open-ended, are yet another approach to outcomes assessment. Some academic programs make use of comprehensive examinations or senior seminars for their majors as assessments of students' overall achievement within a specific discipline.

The choice of an instrument depends on the purpose or focus of the assessment. A wide variety of instruments is available, but their design and intended use are major factors in their applicability, appropriateness, and value in specific contexts. Practical matters such as the method of administration and the cost of the instrument may also influence significantly the choice of instrument.

CHAPTER V: RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Pilot Projects

In order to try various approaches to quality assessment, the task force supports the establishment of one or more pilot projects in each public system and encourages the private colleges and proprietary schools to participate.

The task force is concerned about the timelines in the legislation concerning establishment of a pilot project in calendar year 1988. We believe a pilot must grow out of the system goals. It is vital to have faculty, administrative, and student support for any assessment plan. A team composed of faculty, administrators and students should make up the planning team. They should seek input from others on campus. The planning stage will require resources both in time and money. Therefore, we suggest that each system be awarded a planning grant of \$50,000 for Fiscal Year 1989. These funds could be used for external consultants, extended professional contracts, staff development, purchase or development of instruments, or other related expenses. The \$50,000 will not cover all the costs of the pilot; each system will need to reallocate additional resources. In addition to the \$300,000 for the system pilot projects, we also support the Coordinating Board request for \$60,000 for the operation of the task force during the 1989 fiscal year.

We believe each system should propose one or more pilots to the task force. While we want the pilots to be useful to the system and therefore would encourage individuality, we will have some guidelines for the pilots, which we will establish in consultation with the systems. For that reason we encourage the legislature to appropriate funds to the Higher Education Coordinating Board which will act as a fiscal agent for the task force. Upon favorable task force review, the funds will be released to each system for use in the pilot.

Should no funds for the task force or the pilot sites be made available fiscal year 1989, we recommend that the mandate for establishment of pilot projects be (removed/delayed?). We have come to this conclusion with great reluctance because we believe strongly in quality assessment. We also believe that the approach outlined in the legislation and our embellishment of it is sensible.

Without funding, however, for our continued operation and a modest planning grant for the pilot projects, it will be impossible to continue the course we have charted and move beyond this initial stage. We wish to emphasize that we are not giving up all quality assessment--only the cooperative approach involving the task force, Coordinating Board, and the post-secondary systems in proposing and designing pilot projects. We will encourage the systems to voluntarily engage in quality assessment efforts and believe that they will do so.

What is likely to be missing, however, from each system's or campus' activity, would be the broader perspective and context that the Task Force on Quality Assessment was charged to provide.

Beyond the current biennium, additional funds will be needed to implement the pilot and evaluate the results and then to disseminate the information to other campuses for their involvement. While a precise cost for such activity is difficult to estimate at this time, we believe the costs are significant. We also believe that funds should specifically be targeted for assessment activities, either by the legislature or by the systems themselves.

Future Direction/Plans

In the months to come the task force intends to work on several areas: The task force will engage in a dialogue with the post-secondary education systems concerning their mission and goals. The task force will establish a cooperative relationship among the task force, the systems and the Higher Education Coordinating Board to assist systems in defining student outcomes and ways to assess

those outcomes. The task force will continue to identify the relationship between the goals of quality assessment and the public policy interests of the state.

Appendix _____

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Task force found the following definitions helpful in our discussions. We have borrowed heavily from other sources as noted.

ACCOUNTABILITY

"The state of being held responsible for carrying out one's obligations." (From World Book Dictionary, 1982.)

"Being accountable includes both effectively discharging an obligation and being answerable in that regard. Thus, the concept of accountability embraces issues of both performance and communication." (From Accountability in Higher Education: Meaning and Methods, Dennis Jones and Peter Ewell, 1987.)

ASSESSMENT

"...involves making an informed judgment about a person, a program or some other item of interest." (From A Position Paper on Quality Assessment, New Jersey Department of Higher Education, January 12, 1987).

"...looks for distinguishing elements in a person's performance and relies on varying contexts to assure that as much complexity of a person's ability is elicited as possible...a synonym for program evaluation...emerges often in contrast to testing and connotes a concern with broader educational outcomes than knowledge...the connotations have emphasized multiple performances and breadth of abilities." (From "Assessment in Higher Education: To Serve the Learner," Georgine Loacker, Lucy Cromwell, and Kathleen O'Brien in Assessment in American Higher Education: Issues and Contexts, Clifford Adelman, Ed., 1986.)

Assessment usually refers to the overall synthesis of information about a student, program or other object generally produced by several data gathering efforts. At times it is used synonymously with evaluation." (From task force member, Jack Merwin, working draft of chapter in book, _____.)

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

"A process that: 1) tries to determine what students actually achieve in the educational process; and (2) links educational objectives to some measures of student achievement." (From Thinking About Assessment: Perspectives for Presidents and Chief Academic Officers, Jack Rossmann and Elaine El-Khawas, 1987).

EVALUATION

"Evaluation has been defined in several ways. Stufflebeam, et al say it is "the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for

judging decision alternatives." All definitions implicitly or explicitly include determining worth or value as a major component. While testing, assessment, measurement and observation are processes for obtaining information about students, it is the added element of placing values on information that makes the overall process one of evaluation." (Merwin)

TEST

A test is much more than a piece of paper or a set of questions. Cronbach says it is, "A Systematic procedure for observing a person's behavior and describing it with the aid of a numerical scale or a category system." (Merwin)

QUALITY

"Historically, the term has connoted unbridled excellence. In this sense, quality is an absolute - a single, unwavering, uncompromising standard, a universal by which all baccalaureate programs can be evaluated. But today, quality is also a relative phenomenon. More than ever before, the education community recognizes the diversity - differences in people, schools and programs....In this respect, quality is a measure of the best a particular institution can achieve. It is a standard that necessarily varies from college to college....All baccalaureate programs should achieve both standards of excellence: they must have a certain universal quality and a certain individual quality. Neither in itself suffices." (From Arthur E. Levine, 1982.)

"The concept of quality embodies elements of both merit and worth; that is, a high (but not necessarily superior) level of attainment is required that also has utility or worth for those who take part in the experience." (From Indices of Quality in the Undergraduate Experience, George Kuh, 1981.)

Appendix _____

Assessment Instruments: Selected Examples

<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Focus</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Form</u>	<u>Presently in Use at:</u>
1. ETS Academic Profile	Academic skills in context of general education	Mid-college	Computer-scored with optional essay; 1 or 3 hours	Pilot year: 1
2. ACT College Outcome Measures Program	Outcomes of general education	College	Several different forms including objective tests and involvement surveys	University of Tennessee
3. Georgia Regents' Test	Reading and writing	Mid-college	Reading and essay test; 2 hours	Georgia's University System
4. College Level Skills Test (CLAST)	Computation, reading, writing, skills	End of sophomore year	3 computer-scored tests plus essay; 3.5 hours	Institutions Florida
5. College Student Experiences Questionnaire (Robert Pace)	Quality of effort students put into using college facilities; student satisfaction	College	Computer-scored survey; 1 hour	UCLA, Michigan State, Buckne Macalester, Carleton, Bel Grinnell
6. Communication Competency Assessment Instrument (CCAI)	19 competencies for communication in an educational environment	Mid-college	oral; 30 minutes	Hamline Unive
7. Major Field Achievement Tests	Outcomes of undergraduate education in specific disciplines	College seniors	50-160 questions; 1-2 hours	Pilot year:
8. College Level Examination Program (CLEP)	Course credit by examination	Lower division	Multiple-choice; 90 minutes	University of Wisconsin at Claire, South Texas State University

9. ACT Alumni Survey	Impact of College as reported by graduates	Alumni	Computer-scored survey	Louisiana State University Shreveport, St. Francis in Penn., Wake Community College in Illinois
10. Follow-up Questionnaire; Employer Questionnaire	Training in relation to employment	Completers after one year	Surveys	MN AVTI System
11. California State University English Placement Test; Entry Level Math Test	Diagnostic/placement	Entering students	Multiple-choice plus essay; 4 hours	California State Universities
12. Early Assessment of High School Students (Ohio State)	Diagnostic; geared to future placement	High school juniors	Computer-scored multiple choice	High schools Ohio
13. Computerized Placement Tests (College Board)	Placement	Entering students	Interactive computer test; 15 minutes	Central Piedmont Community College; Cape Cod Community College; Saratoga Evergreen Community College District
14. New Jersey College Basic Skills Placement Test	Placement	Entering students	Multiple-choice plus essay; 3+ hours	Public colleges New Jersey; private colleges New Jersey