

Are There Examples of Post-Secondary Institutions that Have Improved Their Performance as a Consequence of Using Accountability Information?

Overview

The purpose of this question scan was to locate literature devoted to examples of successful implementations of accountability information to improve outcomes within post-secondary institutions.

Searches conducted within four relevant databases using a variety of applicable search terms and phrases yielded 178 potentially relevant articles. Subsequent application of inclusion and exclusion criteria reduced this number to 39. A search of Canadian government, professional, trade, and student organizations germane to post-secondary education revealed one additional document pertinent to the question.

The question is narrow in that it seeks examples of successful and effective implementation of accountability information as demonstrated by measured outcomes. Much of the literature devoted to issues of accountability and outcomes includes models for operation, and general perceptions and opinions of the costs and benefits of accountability and measured outcomes in the field of post-secondary education. Few articles actually provide specific examples of measured successes.

Observation

Quantitative: 6 articles - Under this heading is research using experimental, quasi-experimental or large scale descriptive studies such as surveys or questionnaires. Most are comparative studies analyzing institutions that have implemented strategies to increase student performance. For example, Grimes (1999) discusses the successful implementation of accountability information by 22 dental-hygiene programs, and notes that outcome data is used by program directors to enhance the strength of funding proposals. In their study, *Assessing the Comparative Efficiency of Higher Education Institutions in the UK by Means of Data Envelopment Analysis*, Athanassopoulos and Shale (1997) state six of 45 universities reviewed were “performing satisfactorily across alternative efficiency tests.”

Qualitative: 14 articles – Included in this category are descriptive case studies, interviews, critiques and evaluations of programs. Few articles are devoted solely to descriptions of successful programs. Most discuss and critique models of accountability which have been established within post-secondary institutions. Many of the studies indicate discussion of benefits of accountability and performance measurement (e.g. Black & Duhon, 2003; Freeman, 1995; Hudgins, 1995; McNeil 1999; Minear 1999), while others also signal problems and recommendations for improvement (King & Mather, 1997; Koretz, 2002; Ruppert, 1995).

Editorials: 3 articles - These articles are typically opinion papers advocating a particular position predominantly based on theoretical principles. Of the three studies identified here, two were accompanied by abstracts which indicated an exploration of program

improvements resulting from accountability measures and outcomes. Settoon and Wyld (2004) consider the successes and challenges of implementing continuous improvement strategies in educational settings, focussing on the experiences of author's academic department. Kells (1990) critically analyzes performance indicators and recommends "a more developmental system retaining positive aspects of performance indicators and encouraging program improvement".

Reports: 16 articles - Included in this category are government and institution reports. All originate from the United States, with the exception of one from Scotland (Sizer, 1993) and two from Canada (Ontario Ministry of Education & Training Task Force, 1993; Daigle, 2001). Two themes run through the reports: (1) the impact of accountability information on institution outcomes; and, (2) how accountability information helps institutions to identify areas that require improvement.

Daigle (2001), in *Moving Toward a Competency-Based Human Resources Process: A Prize-winner for the University of Calgary*, outlines the successful outcomes of the competency-based process. Evaluation of the program demonstrated "76% of the feedback processes were good to excellent quality and 80% of pay recommendations were linked to performance outcomes". Other studies indicating successful implementation of accountability information are Creech (2000); Front Range Community College (1999); Illinois Community College Board (2001); Miller (1993).

The foci of analysis in other studies, such as New Jersey State Commission on Higher Education (2004); Loaker (1991); Illinois State Board of Higher Education (2003); are how the use of accountability information helps identify areas in need of improvement, and lessons learned from various institutions.

Grey Literature: 1 article - Grey literature is located within government, professional, trade and student organization websites devoted to post-secondary education, and may subsume any of the above genres. The specificity of the question limited the amount of grey literature located to *Nova Scotia Department of Education: Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2003-2004*.

Summary

The majority of the documents included in this scan were descriptive in nature. Much of the available literature analyses and critiques the use of accountability information and performance measurement and/or the models of implementation. There are however a significant number of articles that identify institutions or practices which demonstrate successes:

- Front Range Community College (Colorado) implemented a process resulting in "significant increases in community partnerships"; increased expenditures for staff development; increased enrolments in telecourses or non-traditional enrolment; increased minority student enrolment (except for Hispanic students); and a 97% student satisfaction rating for instruction;
- Mok (2005) looks at the changing roles of government and higher education governance in Hong Kong within the wider policy context of restructuring higher

- education to reflect the expanding “popularity and prominence of information technology” and its influence on research and learning;
- Burke and Minassians (2002) summarize “results of an opinion survey of governors’ aides, legislative chairs of education committees, higher education finance officers, and campus institutional researchers on the use, effects, and future of performance reporting”;
 - Hudgins (1995) uses Midlands Technical College in South Carolina in the identification of 19 indicators of effectiveness;
 - The Illinois Community College Board’s 2001 *Results Report* provides examples of “individual and collective accountability” supporting state-wide goals in post-secondary education; and,
 - Loacker (1991) summarizes “lessons from the 18-year experience of Alverno College in Milwaukee (Wisconsin) with assessment for the improvement and verification of student learning.”

There does not appear to be vast amounts of evidence-based research, especially independent research, devoted to examples of the successful use of accountability information to improve institutional outcomes. Rather, much of the literature critically analyzes the conceptual notions, purposes, and influences behind accountability, in addition to making recommendations on how to improve the process.

Feasibility

The specificity of the question may produce difficulties in conducting a Systematic Review. There appears to be extensive literature devoted to the use of accountability and outcome measures in post-secondary education institutions. A broadening of the question will assist in the capture of literature which may assist in informing policy in this area.

Appendix A: Included References

References - Canada

Accountability report released (from an Ontario Ministry of Education & Training task force).(1993). *University Affairs*, 34(8), 25.

Bowman, R., & Snowdon, K. (1997). *Quiet Please: Indicators at Work*. Canada; Ontario: This paper examines the development and use of performance indicators in higher education, focusing on the experience of Queen's University (Ontario). It reviews factors influencing the development of performance indicators, such as the growing concern for accountability in public higher education and the university community's apparent inability to develop and communicate what are regarded as effective accountability mechanisms of its own. The paper goes on to examine the role of indicators in the planning and policy process, including the improvement of educational quality and the perception of the university. It reviews the role of indicators in developing an accountability framework, something that Queen's University has done to help assess progress toward key institutional goals. The paper notes that the role of indicators in government relations includes communicating the successes and shortcomings of institutions to inform government administrators, elected officials, and the general public. Implications for institutional research include the improvement of organizational effectiveness and accountability.

Daigle, Barb. (2001). Moving toward a competency-based human resources process: a prize-winner for the University of Calgary. *Education Canada*, 40(4), 14. The project was designed and implemented internally over a period of five years in four phases: the pilots; the implementation of competency-based job profiles and feed-back processes; the design and implementation of competency-based, pay-for-performance for management and professional staff; and the negotiation and implementation of competency-based broad pay bands for unionized support staff. Each phase included wide consultation across the University to build consensus and commitment. The basis of the competency-based processes is the development of job profiles which define accountabilities and competencies for each position. Once these profiles were completed, management and professional staff provided performance feedback and pay recommendations for each employee. This process was completed by August, 1999. A subsequent evaluation showed that 76% of the feedback processes were of good to excellent quality and 80% of pay recommendations were linked to performance outcomes. The outcomes in terms of productivity gains for the University are increased clarity of roles and accountabilities (for example, a reduction in ambiguity in roles and accountabilities between academic administrators and their management and professional staff), individually designed development plans, and identification of star performers for succession planning and mentoring.

- Nova Scotia. (2004). *Nova Scotia Department of Education: Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2003-2004*. Retrieved October 13, 2004. From http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/businessplan/accountability_report_2003-04.pdf
This Accountability Report provides information on departmental activities undertaken to achieve the departmental goals, priorities and outcomes identified in the *Nova Scotia Department of Education 2003-04 Business Plan*. The report is structured into three main sections. The first section reviews the departmental goals and priorities for 2003-2004 and provides commentary on departmental accomplishments over the course of the year. The second section reviews the financial results, and the final section provides detailed information on the outcome measure and progress toward achieving departmental targets for these measures. Changes to the Department's outcome measures have been highlighted.
- Shale, D., & Gomes, J. (1998). Performance Indicators and University Distance Education Providers. *Journal of Distance Education, 13*(1), 1-20.
Discusses problems with using performance measures for distance education that are meant for traditional education, based on experiences at the Open University/Open College of British Columbia and Athabasca University in Alberta (Canada). Considers performance indicators and accountability, and suggests indicators more appropriate for distance education.
- Skolnik, & L, M. (1994). University accountability in Ontario in the Nineties: is there a role for a provincial agency? *Ontario Journal of Higher Education, 1994*, 108.

References - USA

- Banta, T. W., & Others. (1996). Performance Funding Comes of Age in Tennessee. *Journal of Higher Education, 67*(1), 23-45.
A survey of 23 college and university coordinators who conduct assessment activities and report findings in connection with Tennessee's 15-year performance funding initiative reveals strengths and weaknesses associated with 10 indicators of institutional performance. Reasons for the program's longevity, designed to serve accountability and improvement purposes, are advanced.
- Banta, T. W., & Borden, V. M. H. (1994). Performance Indicators for Accountability and Improvement. *New Directions for Institutional Research, (82)*, 95-106.
Five criteria for judging college or university performance indicators (PIs) used to guide strategic decision making are outlined. The criteria address: purpose; alignment of PIs throughout the organization or system; alignment of PIs across inputs, processes, and outcomes; capacity to accommodate a variety of evaluation methods; and utility in decision-making.
- Black, H. T., & Duhon, D. L. (2003). Evaluating and Improving Student Achievement in Business Programs: The Effective Use of Standardized Assessment Tests. *Journal of*

Education for Business, 79(2), 90-98.

Having made "continuous improvement" the theme of its accreditation process a decade ago, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) is poised to make "assurance of learning" the current focus of the faculty/student exchange. In this article, the authors discuss how to use standardized assessment tests appropriately and constructively for compliance with this requirement. They provide an overview of accountability in higher education and then focus on assessing student achievement and development. They use results from the Educational Testing Service's Major Field Test in Business to illustrate verification of test reliability and validity. Finally, they suggest ways that standardized test results can be used for evaluating and enhancing student performance.

Bragg, D. D. (1995). Assessing postsecondary vocational-technical outcomes: what are the alternatives? *Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 20(4), 15-39.

For many years evaluation of vocational-technical education has been influenced by federal policy, leading to the traditional use of outcomes such as program completion and job placement. Today, calls for reform create the need for heightened attention to accountability and greater interest in alternative assessment methodologies. Utilizing descriptive research, this study examined the outcomes assessment policies and practices employed by a purposive sample of two-year postsecondary institutions. Findings show that postsecondary institutions thought to be innovative in implementing outcomes assessments were measuring a wide variety of outcomes, including outcomes not traditionally associated with vocational-technical education such as transfer success. Traditional assessment methods were used most often; however, newer alternative methods such as portfolios, peer assessments, and capstone (senior) projects were being used or developed. A wide array of internal and external groups were thought to contribute to how postsecondary institutions conceptualize new outcomes assessment systems. Implications were identified for the development of comprehensive assessment systems that can describe the effectiveness of the entire postsecondary curriculum with vocational-technical education being an important part of the story.

Burke, J. C. (1999). Fund the Performance Not the Promise. *Trusteeship*, 7(5), 28-32.

Urges governing boards at public colleges and universities to support budgeting for performance as a means of assuring public accountability while protecting academic autonomy. Considers performance incentives, the role of performance indicators, the distinction between performance funding and performance budgeting, possible problems, and the role of trustees. Provides examples of South Carolina's performance measures.

Burke, J. C. (1994). The Proof Is in the Performance. *Trusteeship*, 2(3), 25-29.

The State University of New York's chancellor and trustees devised an annual performance report to show constituents that they value accountability. The use of performance indicators would indicate how well the multicampus system meets its goals and provides data to enhance requests for more state funds and less regulation.

- Burke, J. C., & Minassians, H. P. (2002). Policymakers' Reactions to Performance Reporting. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, (116), 59-77.
Summarizes results of an opinion survey of governors' aides, legislative chairs of education committees, higher education finance officers, and campus institutional researchers on the use, effects, and future of performance reporting.
- Creech, J. D. (2000). *Linking Higher Education Performance Indicators to Goals. Educational Benchmarks 2000 Series*. U.S.; Georgia: Southern Regional Education Board.
This report tells what has been learned about reporting on higher education performance in the last 10 years and describes the kinds of information being used to inform policymakers and the public about higher education in the member states of the Southern Regional Education Board. The report provides examples of how the information is linked to states' goals for higher education and is being reported, and it illustrates how the information can help develop state and institutional policies and practices that are likely to achieve goals for higher education. There is more and better information available for making judgments about higher education now than there was 10 years ago. There are several reasons why it is important that the public know more about higher education performance and the return on investment from higher education. For one thing, the public increasingly insists on accountability for all of state government. In addition, competition for funding forces colleges and universities to show their efficiency and effectiveness. Higher education must also demonstrate its value to students, business and industry, and the public to gain the support it needs. Higher education performance indicators and report cards are most valuable when the information results in improvements in campus operations and student learning and the information contributes to public understanding and better policymaking at the state level.
- Freeman, T. M. (1995). Performance Indicators and Assessment in the State University of New York System. *New Directions for Higher Education*, (91), 25-49.
The development of a complex, highly computerized system of performance indicators by the State University of New York provides the means to monitor internal progress, report to a skeptical public, and compare the system's performance with a national sample of institutions. The system is described here, and the performance indicators and data sources are charted.
- Front Range Community Coll., Westminster, CO. (1999). *Front Range Community College Quality Indicators Report, Academic Year 1997-98*. U.S.; Colorado:
This self-study was conducted at Front Range Community College (Colorado) and completed under the provisions of the Colorado 1996 Higher Education Quality Assurance Act. The report is divided into six sections, one for each required accountability indicator: (1) Business Partnerships and Satisfaction; (2) Faculty and Staff Development; (3) Providing Access to Education through Flexible Scheduling, Technology and Other Means; (4) Enhancing Campus Diversity; (5) Student Satisfaction with Academic, Administrative and Student Services; (6) Responsiveness to Community Needs. Overall, the following comments may be

made from the information for the academic year 1997-98: (1) the college continued to experience significant increases in community partnerships; (2) expenditures for staff development increased more than \$85,000 since 1996-97; (3) enrollments increased in telecourses or non-traditional enrollment, but compressed courses declined in total course offerings; (4) minority student enrollment at the college exceeded its service area availability of minority college age students, except for Hispanic students; (5) student satisfaction with instruction received a 97% rating; and (6) career planning/guidance and course advising continued to show a decline in the level of satisfaction.

Grimes, E. B. (1999). Outcomes Assessment in Dental Hygiene Programs. *Journal of Dental Education*, 63(6), 470-478.

A survey of 22 dental-hygiene-program directors found that programs routinely and effectively assess student outcomes and use the information for program improvements and to demonstrate accountability. Both policy and faculty/administrative support were deemed important to implementation. Time constraints were a major barrier. Outcomes-assessment data have also been used as leverage for program-enhancement funding requests.

Hudgins, J. L. (1995). *Using Indicators of Effectiveness To Demonstrate Accountability of Community Colleges*. U.S.; South Carolina:

The institutional effectiveness movement has emerged on the higher education agenda because of increased global competition, decreased funding levels, and a loss of public confidence in higher education. While the movement's emphasis on outcomes-based accountability has been integrated into state mandates, accreditation processes, and educational association agenda, colleges have been only minimally successful in integrating assessment into their organizational cultures. In addition, data is still being used to focus on the negative rather than to provide feedback and efforts to tie assessment to funding have been generally unsuccessful. To achieve institutional effectiveness, institutions of higher education must focus on the following efforts: (1) develop more partnerships and utilize the collective resources of higher education; (2) improve communications with elected officials and policy makers; (3) involve faculty as partners in this process; and (4) address academic integrity and collective responsibility step by step. Since 1986, Midlands Technical College, in South Carolina, has been committed to the process of institutional effectiveness. Efforts at the college have included the development of a planning and management model that focuses on the evaluation of mission attainment, the adoption of critical success factors, the identification of 19 indicators of effectiveness, the development of standards and benchmarks to measure progress, and the use of a "report card" to keep trustees and the community informed of progress.

Illinois Community Coll. Board, Springfield. (2001). *Results Report, Fiscal Year 2001*. U.S.; Illinois:

In Illinois, 39 community college districts and one multi-community college center provide access to nearly one million students each year. The Illinois Community

College System developed this strategic plan, the "Promise for Illinois," to outline the role community colleges should play in building a strong future for the state and its residents. This report for fiscal year 2001 provides continuing evidence of the individual and collective accountability the colleges and the state board demonstrate through their use of both human and fiscal resources to provide programs and services that support the statewide goals for higher education. Information is provided for each of six statewide goals that (1) relates the priorities and pledges that form the "Promise for Illinois," as well as college priorities to these goals; and (2) identifies common and individual college initiatives and actions and state-level initiatives that support the goals. These six goals are defined as: economic growth, teaching and learning, affordability, access and diversity, high expectations and quality, and productivity and accountability. Each college reported two best practices, one academic and one administrative, that support one or more of these six statewide goals. Detailed descriptions of these best practices are included in the appendix.

Illinois State Board of Higher Education, Springfield. (2003). *Assessing Progress toward Meeting the Goals of "The Illinois Commitment": Performance Indicators, 2003 Annual Report*. U.S.; Illinois:

This is the first report on the performance indicators adopted by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in February 2003 to assess progress toward the six goals of "The Illinois Commitment." This initiative is a work in progress that will be implemented and refined over multiple years. This first report focuses on the statewide and "common" institutional indicators for which data are currently available. Data about these indicators indicate that Illinois colleges and universities are facing a growing and more diverse student population. Increasing enrollments and changing demographics will challenge higher education institutions in coming years. Higher levels of education are required in the "knowledge economy," and the demand will place pressures on the higher education system to respond. The educational capacity of Illinois exceeds that of the national average on many measures, but more effort is needed to further enhance educational participation and attainment levels. Funding constraints of recent years have contributed to tuition increases that fuel both affordability and fiscal accountability concerns. Greater reliance on student loans and a widening of the affordability gap for low-income students may hinder a student's access to, and choice among, higher education opportunities. Policy implications are discussed for each of the goals of the Illinois Commitment: (1) economic growth; (2) partnerships with P-12 education; (3) affordability; (4) access and diversity; (5) quality; and (6) productivity and accountability. Appendixes list effective practices reported by institutions and data sources and definitions and provide institutional data.

Kells, H. R. (1990). The Inadequacy of Performance Indicators for Higher Education--The Need for a More Comprehensive and Development Construct. *Higher Education Management*, 2(3), 258-270.

The proposed use of performance indicators for evaluating higher education institutions in a number of countries is critically analyzed, particularly regarding

their use for institutional and program rankings and comparisons. A more developmental system retaining positive aspects of performance indicators and encouraging program improvement is recommended. Examples are given.

King, R. A., & Mathers, J. K. (1997). Improving schools through performance-based accountability and financial rewards. *Journal of Education Finance*, 23, 147-176. A study examined performance-based school rewards and related interventions and sanctions. Participants were 82 influential individuals in policy development and implementation in the states of Indiana, Kentucky, South Carolina, and Texas and 16 people in policy centers, national offices of professional associations, and government agencies outside the four states. Results suggested that performance-based accountability systems advance reform agenda with the result that rewards and sanctions show desired incentive effects. However, results also suggested that intrinsic desires to improve student learnings have a stronger influence than extrinsic rewards, banners and the publicity linked to state-level recognition are valued more than monetary rewards, and avoidance of negative publicity and sanctions is a greater motivator of change than promised rewards. Consequences of high-stakes accountability systems and large-scale performance-based school finance strategies can be both positive and negative. Policy recommendations for improving performance-based accountability systems are presented.

Koretz, D. M. (2002). Limitations in the Use of Achievement Tests as Measures of Educators' Productivity. *Journal of Human Resources*, 37(4), 752-77. Test-based accountability rests on the assumption that accountability for scores on tests will provide needed incentives for teachers to improve student performance. Evidence shows, however, that simple test-based accountability can generate perverse incentives and seriously inflated scores. This paper discusses the logic of achievement tests, issues that arise in using them as proxy indicators of educational quality, and the mechanism underlying the inflation of scores. It ends with suggestions, some speculative, for improving the incentives faced by teachers by modifying systems of student assessment and combining them with numerous other measures, many of which are more subjective than are test scores.

Loacker, G. (1991). *Designing a National Assessment System: Alverno's Institutional Perspective*. U.S.; Wisconsin: Lessons from the 18-year institutional experience of Alverno College in Milwaukee (Wisconsin) with assessment for the improvement and verification of student learning are summarized. Principles are described that should inform a national assessment system with the dual purposes of improvement and accountability by incorporating the following key elements: (1) public abilities /outcomes and developmental performance criteria; (2) multiplicity of performances across varied contexts; (3) feedback and opportunities to interpret information received; (4) relation to instruction; (5) analysis of patterns of change over time; (6) provision for research and evaluation; (7) a context that supports assessment; and (8) a supporting conceptual framework of explicit educational values, assumptions, and principles; an articulated assessment theory; and an articulated psychometric theory. These

elements are considered in light of the Alverno College assessment program. Designers of a national system should attempt to include these essentials to assure improvement in education. One three-page figure outlines the Alverno system. A 99-item list of references is included. Five appendices give additional information about assessment at Alverno. Reviews by E. M. Greenberg, M. A. Miller, and M. L. Tenopyr of this paper are provided. The author's response to these reviews is included.

Maryland State Higher Education Commission, Annapolis. (2004). *Performance Accountability Report, 2004: Maryland Public Colleges and Universities. Volume 1*

The Commission staff reviewed the institutional performance accountability reports submitted by each public college and university and prepared a consolidated report. This report appears in two volumes. Volume 1 contains the following: (1) an overview of the history and major features of the accountability process; (2) the assessment of the Commission regarding the outcome of the year's accountability effort by the public campuses; (3) an examination of cost containment activities at the public campuses; (4) the responses of the public colleges and universities to questions raised by the Commission about their progress toward benchmarks on selected indicators and objectives; and (5) one-page profiles for each public college and university containing a short campus description and data and benchmarks on key indicators.

McNeil, J. J. (1999). A university and charter school collaboration born out of great need. *Education (Chula Vista, Calif.)*, 119(3), 438-46+.

Educational Leadership UTA is a school administrator preparation program at The University of Texas at Arlington and the Renaissance Charter School is a public charter school that functions as a microcosm of an entire school district. At first, they responded separately to the major problems embedded in the American society's demand for educational improvement and accountability. Together they found that their collaboration greatly enhances the mission of both entities and provides valuable administrator preparation for all program participants. Outlined are some of the societal demands that confront their respective educational enterprises and descriptions of their respective programs.

Miller, M. A. (1993). *The Purposes of Assessment Revisited*. U.S.; Virginia:

This paper examines Virginia's campus-based assessment process in the areas of curriculum improvement, academic management, accountability, and reporting. While there is considerable variation among institutions, assessment has demonstrated a moderate to substantial impact on most campuses in the area of curriculum improvement. There is evidence that the process has resulted in the redesign or modification of major programs and a recent trend toward combining assessment with program review. There is a concern, however, that the assessment process used at the management level to make negative decisions (e.g., program elimination) may jeopardize the objectivity with which faculty approach the task. The assessment process, it is argued, must not only address institutional accountability in terms of efficiency but must also contain indicators that reveal

improvements in the quality of the outcomes of that education. Only with this double approach can higher education institutions convince the general public of the value of their investment in higher education. Finally, a recommendation is made for changing the assessment process so that assessment reporting would first involve the submission of an assessment activity summary for review, followed by a presentation by appropriate institutional officers during which reactions to the assessment would be given, follow-up information requested, and advice given for program improvement.

Minear, D. J. (1999). Educational Excellence Through Partnerships in Florida.

Metropolitan Universities: An International Forum, 10(2), 49-56.

Details Florida's accomplishments and challenges as policymakers and educators focus on increasing student achievement through higher student and teacher standards, assessment, and accountability mechanisms. Already recognized for its articulation procedures, Florida continues to improve and expand partnerships and agreements between and among educational sectors. (Author/MSE)

New Jersey State Commission on Higher Education. (2004). *New Jersey's Colleges and Universities 7th Annual Systemwide Accountability Report*

The New Jersey Commission on Higher Education is responsible for statewide planning, coordination, and advocacy for higher learning in our state. In conjunction with these responsibilities, the Commission publishes an annual systemwide accountability report on higher education in New Jersey designed to identify priorities and inspire dialogue for future change and growth. In addition, the Commission is involved in developing a long-range plan for higher education in New Jersey. This year's system wide accountability report follows an established practice of assessing annual progress based on student-centered outcomes or results. It is a statewide performance report, reflecting what students get out of higher education, as well as what resources the state and others put into it. Among its principal findings are these: (1) Total enrollment has increased by more than 35,500 students since 1997. Approximately 42% of the total undergraduate and graduate/professional school student enrollment growth since 1997 occurred between fall 2001 and fall 2002; (2) Over the course of the past decade average annual tuition and fees for New Jersey colleges and universities have increased at rates higher than regional and national averages; (3) New Jersey ranks third in the nation on the percentage of full-time undergraduate students receiving need-based grant aid, and sixth in financial aid of any kind as a percentage of total state higher education funding; (4) Students are taking increasingly longer to complete the academic degree programs in which they enroll. Students generally need more than two years to earn an associate degree and longer than four years to complete a baccalaureate program; (5) The total number of faculty at New Jersey higher education institutions increased by approximately 35% between fall 1995 and fall 2001. Part-time faculty increased by 76% during this period, while full-time faculty rose by about 9%; and (6) A 20% gap between the graduation rates of black and Hispanic students and those of whites and Asians has persisted for eight years.

New Jersey State Dept. of Education, Trenton. Div. of Vocational Education and Career Preparation. (1990). *New Foundations: A Base for Excellence in Vocational Education. New Jersey Vocational Needs Assessment Project 1989-1990*. U.S.; New Jersey:

The New Jersey Vocational Needs Assessment Project was designed to determine the needs of industry and business for those areas where public vocational education serves as the primary training agency. Information was obtained from school questionnaires and employer questionnaires and interviews. References to six critical issues were most frequently expressed: (1) competencies for employment need to be identified; (2) minimum standards need to be established and used as a base for "credentialing" programs in vocational education; (3) fiscal support of programs should be directly tied to accountability; (4) more extensive involvement of business and industry in the planning and delivery of educational programs would be beneficial to all parties; (5) vocational education services should be marketed more extensively; and (6) cultural diversity must be addressed. Responses regarding the top 15 items of concern are given in percentages on a chart and a bar graph. (The document includes summaries of 10 national reports from government agencies, research institutes, and private organizations. A bibliography of 14 New Jersey references and 28 national references is included.)

O'Neal, M. R., McLean, J. E., Pankratz, R., & Craig, J. (2000). *Evaluation of the Renaissance Project for Improving Teacher Quality*. U.S.; Alabama:

This paper describes the evaluation of the Renaissance Project for Improving Teacher Quality. The Renaissance Group is a national consortium of 16 colleges and universities committed to improving teacher education. Ten of these institutions, in collaboration with their schools of arts and sciences and their partner schools, have engaged in the 5-year project to reform their teacher education programs. The project includes a comprehensive evaluation component that responds to the unique character of each program. The study includes performance data from teacher candidates and partner school students; teacher candidate ratings by higher education and partner school faculty; classroom observations within teacher education and partner school classrooms; surveys and interviews with teacher candidates, higher education and partner school faculty, and business partners on project accomplishments; demographic data; document analysis; and site visits. Year 1 accomplishments include developing a system to track candidate performance at admissions, pre-student teaching, exit, and first year; developing a mentoring team model with adaptations for each site; identifying local business partners; and developing a dedicated project Web site. Three appendixes present: the overall 5-year project objectives and progress indicators; year 1 project activities and evaluation tasks; and a description of the project.

Rahn, M. L., & Holmes, P. (1999). *Accountability Systems: Performance Standards and Assessment*. *Centerpoint*, (4)

This monograph provides a status report on issues related to accountability, including standards and assessments, data systems, and the role of incentives for schools, teachers, and students in improving student achievement. Using information

gathered from the literature and interviews with state administrators of vocational education, this paper provides a picture of the progress made to date and points to future challenges. It was discovered that, despite some initial trepidation about the 1990 Carl D. Perkins Vocational-Technical Act (Perkins II) accountability requirements, each state has developed its own system of performance measures and standards and devised some sort of implementation plan. All but two states have gone well beyond the Perkins II requirements for accountability in vocational education at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The public's demand for excellence for all students has been the driving force behind standards-based, systemic reform. However, reaching consensus around what defines excellence has been difficult from state to state, much less nationally. In recent years, the development of student standards has extended beyond traditional academic areas to areas such as general workplace readiness, industry core, and job-specific skills. The research on accountability has established the importance of the following items in developing standards-driven assessment in academic, vocational-technical, and work readiness programs: broad public engagement in the design and implementation of assessments; strong political leadership; and incentives for students, teachers, and schools. More research and development in the area of incentives and consequences are needed.

Ruppert, S. S. (1995). Roots and Realities of State-Level Performance Indicators Systems. *New Directions for Higher Education*, (91), 11-23.

The state policy implications of using higher education performance indicators for accountability purposes are examined, based on the experiences of 10 case study states (Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, New York, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin) and others that have initiated such efforts. Specific issues that must be addressed are identified. (Author/MSE)

Settoon, R. P., & Wyld, D. C. (2004). The Leader of the Band: The Pivotal Role of the Academic Department Head in the Pursuit of Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Business Education. *College Student Journal*, 38(3), 339-348.

Administrators of business schools across the country are coming under increasing pressure to demonstrate accountability in many ways, from curriculum to faculty development. As such, department heads are being asked to formalize processes and assess outcomes for purposes of continuous improvement". Toward this end, it is vitally important for department heads to continuously scan the environment and reevaluate their programs in an effort to ensure that their degree programs, planning processes, and initiatives carry out the department's mission. Providing an impetus to strong leadership are recent trends in academia, including new modes of content delivery through Internet courses, weekend executive programs, and a new emphasis on creating partnerships with external constituencies, including industry and international universities. In this article, a roadmap - heavily influenced by AACSB (1999) standards - is presented for academic department heads. Based on the successful transformation of the authors' academic department, the article demonstrates both the roadmap for change, as well as discussing the challenges that

must be addressed in instituting such a continuous improvement process in the academic environment.

Twomey, J. L., & Others. (1995). *SPRE and the NMSU-A Integrated Assessment and Strategic Planning (IASP) Process: What We've Learned and Where We're Going*. U.S.; New Mexico:

In September 1994, the New Mexico Commission on Higher Education issued standards for the State Postsecondary Reporting Entity (SPRE). To comply with these standards, New Mexico State University-Alamogordo (NMSU-A) decided to use its integrated Assessment and Strategic Planning (IASP) process, developed during a pre-accreditation self-study in 1993. In developing the IASP, the college decided that planning and assessment should be closely based on its mission and purpose statements, while the design and implementation of the IASP included faculty, staff, and student involvement. Since its original implementation, the IASP has led to revisions of syllabi and course content, more effective counseling services for at risk students, reallocation of campus financial resources, and greater attention towards issues related to the Americans with Disabilities and Student Right to Know and Campus Security Acts. To respond to the new SPRE standards, the IASP committee developed the SPRE Compliance Matrix, listing significant outcomes and accountability measures associated with external entities. The matrix has served as the basis for developing outcomes assessment data instruments, research questions, implementation schedules, and operating procedures. The IASP process has proven to be very effective in driving positive change at NMSU-A. (The SPRE Compliance Matrix is appended.)

Viadero, D. (2005). Second Look at Tougher Accountability Yields New Results. *Education Week*, 24(36), 12.

A recent study by two researchers at Stanford University has found that the long-term achievement picture in states with high-pressure testing systems in place may be more complicated than was suggested by the results of a study they carried out two years previously. That earlier study indicated that students' math scores were rising faster in states that had put stronger pressure on schools and students to raise academic achievement than in states with weaker school accountability programs. However, the new study found that, in most states with high-pressure testing systems in place, the mathematics improvements the previous study had documented in the late 1990s tapered off from 2000 to 2003.

References – Other Geographic Areas

Athanassopoulos, A. D., & Shale, E. (1997). Assessing the Comparative Efficiency of Higher Education Institutions in the UK by Means of Data Envelopment Analysis. *Education Economics*, 5(2), 117-134.
Examines the comparative efficiency of higher education institutions in the United Kingdom, responding to governmental concerns for accountability, value for money,

and cost control. Tests concepts of cost and outcome efficiency, using data-development analysis, to gain further insights into universities' operations. Applying this methodology to 45 universities revealed a subset of 6 institutions performing satisfactorily across alternative efficiency tests.

Atkinson-Grosjean, J., & Grosjean, G. (2000). The Use of Performance Models in Higher Education: A Comparative International Review. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 8(30)

Used a comparative international format to examine the way performance models are applied in higher education in the United States, England, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, and the Netherlands. The theoretical framework draws on understandings of performance measures as normalizing instruments. Discusses the new conceptualizations of accountability for universities.

Mok, K. H. (2005). Fostering Entrepreneurship: Changing Role of Government and Higher Education Governance in Hong Kong. *Research Policy*, 34(4), 537-54. The rise of the knowledge economy has generated new global infrastructures with information technology playing an increasingly important role in the global economy. The popularity and prominence of information technology not only changes the nature of knowledge but also restructures higher education, research and learning. It is in such a wider policy context that an increasing number of institutions of higher learning are being established with new missions and innovative configurations of training, serving populations that previously had little access to higher education. Apart from accommodating a larger number of students, higher education institutions are required to improve their administrative efficiency and accountability in response to the demands of different stakeholders like government, business, industry, and labour organizations, as well as students and parents. The present article sets out in this wider context to examine how and what strategies universities in Hong Kong have adopted to promote entrepreneurial spirit and practices by encouraging academic staff to venture in industrial, business and commercial fields. In addition, this article examines how universities in Hong Kong reform their curricula to make students more creative, innovative and international. More specifically, this article reflects upon the role of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR, hereafter) in promoting entrepreneurship, with particular reference to the interactions between the government, the private sector and the tertiary education sector in promoting a vibrant and dynamic economy.

Sizer, J. (1993). *Quality Assessment in Scottish Higher Education 1992-93. Annual Report*. United Kingdom; Scotland: Scottish Higher Education Funding Council. This first evaluation in a Scottish national program of higher education quality assessment reports on evaluation of programs in the fields of economics and electrical and electronic engineering. Section 1 contains background information about legislation establishing the evaluation program, quality assessment and quality audit, the role of the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC), and the aims of the assessment. Section 2 outlines the SHEFC approach to quality

assessment and provides a definition of quality that emphasizes fitness for purpose. This section also details the framework components which include: aims and curricula; curriculum design and review; teaching and learning environment; staff resources; learning resources; course organization; teaching and learning practice; student support; assessment and monitoring; students' work; and output, outcomes and quality control. The assessment process, which included institutional self-evaluations and site visits, is also described. Section 3 details the 1992-93 quality assessment process. Section 4 presents the findings of that process for the two "cognate areas" of economics, and electrical and electronic engineering. Section 5 discusses the quality rewards. Section 6 briefly describes efforts and plans to evaluate the assessment process. Appendixes contain terms of reference and names of staff and assessment team members.

Appendix B: Excluded References

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