



# *High Quality Learning: Alternatives for the Accountability Dashboard*

Peter T. Ewell

National Center for Higher Education Management Systems  
(NCHEMS)

MnSCU Board Meeting

July 21, 2010





## *What We Want to Discuss This Morning*

- The Delicate Balance Between Reporting Comparative Learning Outcomes and Supporting Evidence-Based Improvement at MnSCU Campuses
- What Other States are Doing in this Area
- Short-term and Long-Term Options for a Learning Outcomes Measure for the Accountability Dashboard





## *Two Different Approaches to Examining the Quality of Collegiate Learning*

- **Accountability-Based:** Learning Outcomes Measures *Added onto* Instruction to “Check Up” on the System in the Aggregate
- **Scholarship and Continuous Improvement:** Learning Outcomes Assessments *Built Into* the System to Simultaneously Assure Standards and Provide Feedback on Collective Performance





# The Two Approaches Compared

	<i>Continuous Improvement</i>	<i>Accountability</i>
<b>Strategic dimensions</b>		
Purpose	Formative (improvement)	Summative (judgment)
Orientation	Internal	External
Motivation	Engagement	Compliance
<b>Implementation</b>		
Instrumentation	Multiple/triangulation	Standardized
Nature of evidence	Quantitative and qualitative	Quantitative
Reference points	Over time, comparative, established goal	Comparative or fixed standard
Communication of results	Multiple internal channels	Public communication, media
Use of results	Multiple feedback loops	Reporting



## *What Other States/Systems are Doing*

- Regulating Student Flow (SD, CUNY “Rising Junior” Testing)
- Assessing Comparative Institutional Performance (WV CLA)
- Performance Funding (TN Schedule)
- “Institution-Centered” Mandate with Periodic Public Reporting (VA)
- Harnessing Accreditation





## *Successful Measures Should...*

- Help Board and Stakeholders Judge Progress and Pursue Continuous Improvement
- Be Easy to Understand and Evaluate
- Avoid Negative Incentives
- Recognize and Account for Student Population Differences Across Institutions
- Be Able to Accommodate the Dashboard Format
- Be Able to Be Implemented Quickly and Cost Effectively





## *Short-Term Alternatives (2011-2012)*

- Publish Results of Accreditation Reviews
- Narrative Reports on Local Assessment Results
- Develop an Alumni Survey
- Harness National Assessment Awards
- Use Existing Exam Results (Graduate Admissions)
- Publish NILOA Survey Results by MnSCU Sector





# *Publish Accreditation Reviews*

## **Advantages:**

- Requires No Additional Work

## **Disadvantages:**

- Very Infrequent Reporting (7-10 Years)
- Inconsistent Quality of Information and Not Comparable Across Institutions
- Format Not Suitable for the Dashboard







# *Narrative Reports by Institutions*

## **Advantages:**

- Allows Existing Institutional Assessment Approaches to Operate Undisturbed

## **Disadvantages:**

- Not Comparable Across Institutions and Hard for Lay Audiences to Understand
- Institutional Reporting Burden
- Format Not Suitable for the Dashboard






# *New Alumni Survey*

## **Advantages:**

- Alumni Testimony Valuable and Particularly Credible to Higher Education Stakeholders
- Format Suitable for the Dashboard

## **Disadvantages:**

- No Widely Used Standard Surveys to Provide Benchmark Comparisons
  - Significant Expense Involved
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# *National Assessment Awards*

## **Advantages:**

- Credible Third-Party Judgment of Performance
- Format Suitable for the Dashboard

## **Disadvantages:**

- Only a Few Awards Given Each Year
- Focused on the Assessment Process, Not Actual Learning Results






# *Graduate Admissions Exams*

## **Advantages:**

- Data Already Collected and Benchmarked to National Standards
- Format Suitable for the Dashboard

## **Disadvantages:**

- Few MnSCU Seniors Take Them
  - Those that Do Take Them are Probably Not Typical
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# *The NILOA Survey*

## **Advantages:**

- Data Already Available and Easily Augmented
- National Benchmarks Available
- Format Suitable for the Dashboard

## **Disadvantages:**

- Incentives for Institutions to Inflate Results
  - Focuses on Assessment Processes Not Actual Learning Results
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## *Longer-Term Alternatives (After 2013)*

- Use VSA/VFA Once Fully in Place
- Certification by the New Leadership Alliance
- Carl Perkins Technical Skill Attainment Measures
- Standardized General Collegiate Skills Tests
- VALUE Rubrics Applied to Existing Student Work






## *VSA and VFA*

### **Advantages:**

- MnSCU Universities Already Participants
- Testing Measure Suitable for the Dashboard

### **Disadvantages:**

- VFA Not Yet in Place and Uncertain Timeline
  - Universities are in VSA, But are Not Currently Using the Same Tests
  - Testing Based on Small Numbers of Students
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# *New Leadership Alliance Certification*

## **Advantages:**

- High-Credibility Third-Party Judgment
- Testing Measure Suitable for the Dashboard

## **Disadvantages:**

- Not Yet in Place, but Probable within Timeframe
  - Only Recognizes High End Performance
  - Focuses on Assessment Processes Not Actual Learning Results
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# *Carl Perkins Technical Skill Attainment*

## **Advantages:**

- Direct Measures of Learning Outcomes
- Testing Measure Suitable for the Dashboard

## **Disadvantages:**

- Not Yet in Place (2013 at earliest)
- Only Suitable for Technical Fields





# *Standardized Tests of General Skills*

## **Advantages:**

- A Range of Tests Exist that are Suitable for the Dashboard
- Included in VSA (and Probably VFA)

## **Disadvantages:**

- Expensive to Implement
- Student Motivation Has Been a Problem
- Faculty Opposition to Standardized Testing





## *What Standardized Tests are Available?*

- Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)
- ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP)
- ETS Proficiency Profile
- ACT “Work Keys” Assessments





# *Use VALUE Rubrics on Student Work*

## **Advantages:**

- Student Work Already Exists and Students Motivated to Perform
- “Faculty-Friendly” Assessment Approach Tied to Instructional Improvement

## **Disadvantages:**

- Validity/Reliability Concerns
- Would be Expensive to Implement Well





# *Summary of Recommendations*

## **Short Term:**

- NILOA Survey Results
  - Disaggregate by Sector
  - Re-Administer Survey to MnSCU Institutions

## **Long Term:**

- Fully Implement VSA/VFA on a System Basis
  - Use Same Examinations in Each Sector
  - Immediately Charge a Committee to Work on This
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