



***CSU, Chico's Context  
for  
Assessment for Improvement  
and  
Assessment for Accountability***

**May 2008**



# A TEST OF LEADERSHIP

## Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education

A Report of the Commission Appointed by  
**Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings**

Pre-Publication Copy September 2006

# RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Every student in the nation should have the opportunity to pursue postsecondary education. We recommend, therefore, that the U.S. commit to an unprecedented effort to expand higher education access and success by improving student preparation and persistence, addressing non academic barriers and providing significant increases in aid to low-income students.

2. To address the escalating cost of a college education and the fiscal realities affecting government's ability to finance higher education in the long run, we recommend that the entire student financial aid system be restructured and new incentives put in place to improve the measurement and management of costs and institutional productivity.

***Policymakers and higher education leaders should develop, at the institutional level, new and innovative means to control costs, improve productivity, and increase the supply of higher education.***

3. To meet the challenges of the 21st century, higher education must change from a system primarily based on reputation to one based on performance. We urge the creation of a robust culture of accountability and transparency throughout higher education. Every one of our goals, from improving access and affordability to enhancing quality and innovation, will be more easily achieved if higher education institutions embrace and implement serious accountability measures.

***We recommend the creation of a consumer-friendly information database on higher education with useful, reliable information on institutions, coupled with a search engine to enable students, parents, policymakers and others to weigh and rank comparative institutional performance.***

***In addition to this new consumer-oriented database, more and better information on the quality and cost of higher education is needed by policymakers, researchers and the general public.***

***Postsecondary education institutions should measure and report meaningful student learning outcomes.***

Accreditation agencies should make performance outcomes, including completion rates and student learning, the core of their assessment as a priority over inputs or processes. A framework that aligns and expands existing accreditation standards should be established to (i) allow comparisons among institutions regarding learning outcomes and other performance measures, (ii) encourage innovation and continuous improvement, and (iii) require institutions and programs to move toward world-class quality relative to specific missions and report measurable progress in relationship to their national and international peers. In addition, this framework should require that the accreditation process be more open and accessible by making the findings of final reviews easily accessible to the public and increasing public and private sector representation in the governance of accrediting organizations and on review teams. Accreditation, once primarily a private relationship between an agency and an institution, now has such important public policy implications that accreditors must continue and speed up their efforts towards transparency as this affects public ends.

4. With too few exceptions, higher education has yet to address the fundamental issues of how academic programs and institutions must be transformed to serve the changing needs of a knowledge economy. We recommend that America's colleges and universities embrace a culture of continuous innovation and quality improvement by developing new pedagogies, curricula, and technologies to improve learning, particularly in the area of science and mathematical literacy.

5. America must ensure that our citizens have access to high quality and affordable educational, learning, and training opportunities throughout their lives. We recommend the development of a national strategy for lifelong learning that helps all citizens understand the importance of preparing for and participating in higher education throughout their lives.

6. The United States must ensure the capacity of its universities to achieve global leadership in key strategic areas such as science, engineering, medicine, and other knowledge-intensive professions. We recommend increased federal investment in areas critical to our nation's global competitiveness and a renewed commitment to attract the best and brightest minds from across the nation and around the world to lead the next wave of American innovation.

## Examples of Student Learning Assessments

### The Collegiate Learning Assessment

Among the most comprehensive national efforts to measure how much students actually learn at different campuses, the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) promotes a culture of evidence-based assessment in higher education. Since 2002, 134 colleges and universities have used the exam, which evaluates students' critical thinking, analytic reasoning, and written communication using performance tasks and writing prompts rather than multiple choice questions. Administered to freshmen and seniors, the CLA allows for comparability to national norms and measurement of value added between the freshman and senior years. Additionally, because the CLA's unit of analysis is the institution and not the student, results are aggregated and allow for inter-institutional comparisons that show how each institution contributes to learning. For more information, visit [www.cae.org/cla](http://www.cae.org/cla).

### The National Survey of Student Engagement and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement

Administered by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and its community college counterpart, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), survey hundreds of institutions annually about student participation and engagement in programs designed to improve their learning and development. The measures of student engagement - the time and effort students put into educational activities in and out of the classroom, from meeting with professors to reading books that weren't assigned in class - serve as a proxy for the value and quality of their undergraduate experience. NSSE and CCSSE provide colleges and universities with readily usable data to improve that experience and create benchmarks against which similar institutions can compare themselves. With surveys from several million students already compiled, these instruments provide a comprehensive picture of the undergraduate student experience at four-year and two-year institutions. Results from NSSE and CCSSE, which are publicly reported, can provide institutions and external stakeholders data for improving institutional performance, setting accountability standards, and strategic planning. For more information, visit <http://nsse.iub.edu>.

### The National Forum on College-Level Learning

The National Forum on College-Level Learning has been called "the first attempt to measure what the college educated know and can do across states." Piloted in 2002 across Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina, the study collected data on student learning using multiple assessment instruments already in use or widely available such as the National Adult Literacy Survey, the Collegiate Learning Assessment (for four-year colleges) or WorkKeys (for two-year colleges), and graduate admissions exams. Results from these assessments provide states comparable information on how their colleges and universities contribute to student learning and identify challenges such as performance gaps and inconsistent teacher preparation. Comparable assessment also allows states to identify best practices, providing information useful in creating policy and programs that will improve the states' intellectual capital. For more information, visit <http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/centers/collegelevellearning>.

## Changing Context of Higher Education in California

*Excerpts from*

### **HIGHER EDUCATION COMPACT<sup>1</sup>**

Agreement between Governor Schwarzenegger,  
the University of California, and the California State University  
2005-06 through 2010-11

This Compact is based on the value of the UC and CSU to the State of California and its citizens. To ensure these institutions are well positioned to serve the State's students and industry, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger commits to a long-term resource plan for UC and CSU that addresses base budget allocations, enrollment, student fees and other key program elements for 2005-06 through 2010-11. In exchange for this long-term stability, UC and CSU commit to focusing their resources to address long-term accountability goals for enrollment, student fees, financial aid, and program quality. To allow appropriate monitoring of progress toward these goals, UC and CSU commit to **providing student and institutional outcome data** in numerous program areas including program efficiency, utilization of system wide resources, and student-level information.

#### **Student and Institutional Outcomes**

UC will continue its efforts to achieve improved student and institutional outcomes and will place a high priority on providing needed classes so that students are able to graduate in four years or less. Similarly, the CSU will continue efforts to improve outcomes and will place a high priority on providing needed classes to reduce the time to degree.

The Administration places a high priority on student success as well as other mission related measures and seeks to foster greater student and institutional accountability through the inclusion of performance-based outcomes. In order to accomplish this, the Administration, in consultation with UC and CSU, will seek to remove barriers to these goals

As with the K-12 system, accountability for these outcomes should be highly visible and public. This will require that timely and reliable data be collected to provide a strong foundation for sound decision-making in these matters. Therefore, the UC and CSU each agree to provide a comprehensive single report to the Governor, Secretary of Education, the fiscal committees of the Legislature, the Legislative Analyst's Office and the Department of Finance by October of each year on the following measures that compare performance for each item for three prior years and the most recently completed academic year:

#### ***Efficiency in graduating students***

- Number of undergraduate degrees awarded;

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<sup>1</sup> The full report may be obtained at <http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/calreports.html>

- Number of graduate and professional degrees awarded, including detail on degrees awarded in fields that are high priorities for meeting state workforce needs (mathematics, engineering, computer science and other science fields);
- Average time-to-degree for undergraduates;
- Total number and percent of graduating undergraduates who have accumulated excess units required for their degree, as determined by the segments, and the average number of excess units accumulated by these students;
- Persistence and graduation rates for freshmen and California Community College (CCC) transfer students;
- Number of undergraduates admitted as freshmen who leave in academic difficulty;
- Number of undergraduates admitted as (CCC) transfer students who leave in academic difficulty.

***Utilization of systemwide resources***

- Student-to-faculty ratio;
- Instructional activities per faculty member;
- Percent of total State-funded salary and benefit expenditures dedicated to direct teaching staff;
- Rate of change in total State-funded staff salary and benefit expenditures for instructional staff, administrative staff, and other student and public service staff;
- Faculty honors and awards;
- Information on technology transfer, including progress in achieving industry-university partnerships, number of patents, total annual income generated by UC-held patents, the proportionate split of those revenues between the University and third parties, and UC's annual patent-related legal costs (UC only);
- Federal, private, and other support for research (UC only);
- Total State-funded expenditures and staff levels for the President's and Chancellor's Office, together with rates of change from the previous year.

***Student-level information***

- Total enrollment (both headcount and FTE), by class level;
- Number of new CCC transfer students enrolled (headcount and FTE);
- Number of new freshmen enrolled (headcount and FTE);
- Number and percent of new freshmen and CCC transfer students who were admitted by exception;
- Progress on achieving course articulation agreements with CCCs;
- Number and percent of undergraduates who did not meet the UC entry level writing requirement for reading comprehension before entering UC.
- Number and percent of undergraduates who did not meet the math and English placement exam requirements before entering CSU.

# Access to Excellence

## **A California State University Strategic Plan to Succeed Cornerstones**

### **GOAL 1: ACCESS WITH SUCCESS**

The first set of goals cluster around student access and success to the CSU. They address four dimensions of access and success: overall attainment (the proportion of the population completing college degrees); degree productivity (improving graduation rates for all student groups); affordability (maintaining affordability to low income students); and **quality of educational results (value-added measures of learning appropriate to the degree)**. Embracing **these goals and the related outcome measures** requires that the CSU commit to an agenda of growth and continuous improvement, and to acknowledge responsibility for contributing to improvements in performance in P-12 and community college preparation in addition to success within the CSU.

### **GOAL 2: MEET NEEDS FOR ECONOMIC AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT**

The second set of goals centers around the CSU's performance in meeting state needs for improving the quality of civic and democratic life, and in contributing to economic development- through workforce preparation, meeting employer needs in critical areas, environmental sustainability, research and development, and expanding international programs.

### **GOAL 3: SUSTAIN INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE**

The final set of goals speaks to institutional management, and to the leadership needed to sustain capacity for excellence by investing in success and quality. They address needs for resources for enrollment growth, for quality in faculty and staff, for better use of data-based experimentation to improve performance, and for continued use of evidence-based advocacy to advance the university's state and national reputation.

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<sup>2</sup> The most recent draft of Access to Excellence may be viewed at [http://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/system\\_strategic\\_planning/](http://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/system_strategic_planning/)

## **GOAL 1: ACCESS WITH SUCCESS**

### **Quality of educational experience and results**

- All campuses participate in regular systems of assessment-driven accountability for results, through participation in Voluntary System of Accountability or other equivalent mechanisms
- Conduct regular assessments of employer satisfaction with CSU graduates; incorporate feedback into campus and system evaluations of learning effectiveness
- Refresh general education learning goals, to incorporate goals for international literacy, civic capacity, and improved workforce skills

## **GOAL 3: SUSTAIN INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE**

### **Improve evidence-based advocacy about state needs for CS U capacity and excellence to public audiences**

- Strengthen messaging about CSU's capacity to meet state needs for baccalaureate production in cost effective ways
- Document cost-effectiveness of investments in CSU, through value-added assessments of learning and achievement attained for public investments
- Conduct regular assessments of public opinion about the CS U and its effectiveness; incorporate assessments into public communication efforts

## VSA: Voluntary System of Accountability

*Board of Trustees Meeting, November 13, 2007\**  
(Committee on Educational Policy)

“The Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) is unprecedented in modern American higher education. ...

... the CSU because of its well-established practices of accountability to all ... constituencies, is in position to provide leadership in this important national effort. The CSU is committed not only to participate fully, but to provide leadership to the developing initiative.”

### *Voluntary System of Accountability*

The VSA project is the result of a partnership between the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC). During Spring of 2006, the associations ... outlined a mechanism through which public higher education could become more accountable for student learning and student development while providing additional information to students and families to aid them in the college selection process.<sup>3</sup>

### *CSU Commitment to VSA*

- **Student Progress and Success**  
Data on enrollments and graduations to National Student Clearinghouse by fall 2008; Student progress and success rates reported on Portrait by fall 2009.
- **Student Engagement**  
Each campus will administer the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) at least once every three years; results on Portrait no later than fall 2009.
- **Student Learning Outcomes**  
Each campus will administer Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) to freshmen and seniors for two years beginning 2007-2008.
- **Public Good Contributions**  
(Degrees Awarded; Bachelor Degrees by Race/Ethnicity; Access and Completion; Net Tuition; Loan Debt of Bachelor's Degree Recipients.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.voluntarysystem.org/>





TODAY DECIDES TOMORROW



- [WASC Accreditation](#)
- [WASC Review Process](#)
- [Institutional Proposal](#)
- [Capacity and Preparatory Review \(CPR\)](#)
- [Educational Effectiveness Review \(EER\)](#)
- [Data / Evidence Portfolio](#)
- [Review / Visitation Reports](#)
- [WASC Resources](#)
- [Other Resources](#)
- [WASC is Coming . . . . Are We Ready?](#)**

- [WASC Blog](#)
- [Site Index](#)

## WASC is Coming . . . . Are We Ready?

**In 299 days 18 hours 29 minutes and 36 seconds**

*the WASC visitation team is on campus*

*March 4-6, 2009*

The new WASC accreditation process involves three integrated and sequenced stages to support and promote educational and institutional effectiveness: Stage 1: The Institutional Proposal; Stage 2: the Capacity and Preparatory Review; and Stage 3: the Educational Effectiveness Review.

CSU, Chico has successfully completed the first two stages and is now preparing for its Educational Effectiveness Review. Chico's report will be delivered to WASC on December 11, 2008. A site visit is scheduled for March 4-6, 2009.

### What you can do to prepare. . .

- As a [Faculty Member](#)
- As a [Staff Member](#)
- As a [Student](#)
- As a [Unit Manager](#)

### What we are doing to prepare. . .

The WASC Steering Committee and project team leaders have made / are making campus presentations to educate, inform, consult with and engage campus constituents in topics related to educational and institutional effectiveness.

- [WASC is Coming! Again!](#)



[CSU, Chico EER Visit Team Roster](#)

[CSU, Chico EER Visit Per Proposal](#)

[CSU, Chico](#) | [President](#) | [Academic Affairs](#) | [Student Affairs](#) | [Business & Finance](#) | [Advancement](#) | [Academic Senate](#) | [WASC](#)

Office of the Vice Provost for Planning, Resource Allocation and Evaluation ([PRAE](#))  
California State University, Chico  
Contact the webmaster: [jmays@csuchico.edu](mailto:jmays@csuchico.edu)

Search WASC Site

<http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/wasc/>

# **CSU, Chico Educational Effectiveness Report**

## **Introduction**

### **Theme 1: Nature of Student Engagement at a Residential Campus**

- a. The Chico Experience
- b. The Chico Diversity Scorecard
- c. The Efficacy of Chico's Alcohol Education Programs
- d. The Effectiveness of the First-Year Experience Program

### **Theme 2: Refinement of the Academic Program Review Process**

- a. Outcomes-Based Academic Program Reviews
- b. The Effectiveness of Chico's General Education Program

### **Theme 3: The Innovative Use of Technology**

- a. A Meta-Analysis of Chico's Learning Productivity Projects
- b. Use of Technology in Large Enrollment GE Venues

### **Theme 4: Towards Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability**

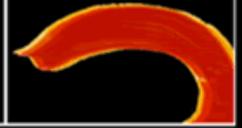
- a. Strategic Alignment of University, Divisional and Unit Plans
- b. Towards a University Performance Scorecard
- c. The Chico Knowledge Management Initiative

### **Concluding Essay: Today Decides Tomorrow**

## **Appendices**

<b>Key Descriptive Terms →</b> ↓ <b>ELEMENT &amp; DEFINITION</b>	<b>INITIAL</b>	<b>EMERGING</b>	<b>DEVELOPED</b>	<b>HIGHLY DEVELOPED</b>
<b>Learning Outcomes:</b> <b>A.</b> Are established, referenced in publications, cited and used by faculty and advisors:	For only a few programs and units; only vaguely (if at all) for GE; not referenced in publications; only a few faculty know and use for designing curriculum, assignments, or assessment	For many programs and units, and most GE aspects; beginning to be referenced in basic documents; beginning to be used by some faculty as reference for design of curriculum, assignments, and assessment	For all units (academic & co-curricular), and for GE; cited often but not in all appropriate places; most faculty cite; used in most programs for design of curriculum, assignments, and assessment	For all units (academic and co-curricular), and for GE; cited widely by faculty and advisors; used by all faculty to design curricula, assignments, and assessment
<b>B.</b> Outcomes are assessed:	Occasionally, using surveys and self reports; seldom using direct assessment; rarely leading to revision of pedagogy	Occasionally, principally using surveys; beginning to move beyond self reports toward some direct assessment; seldom leading to revision of pedagogy	Periodically, sometimes using authentic and performance-based methods; may lack documentation; pedagogy is occasionally reviewed and revised	Regularly; using multiple methods, including authentic and performance-based; pedagogy systematically reviewed and revised based on assessment data
<b>C.</b> Learning is demonstrably achieved:	At levels that may not be up to standards; concerns that standards set by institution are too low for a baccalaureate-level institution	For most students at levels set by the institution; faculty are beginning to discuss results	For all students at or above levels set by institution; results discussed periodically by most faculty	For all students at or above levels set by institution; results are discussed regularly and deliberately by all faculty
<b>Teaching and Learning Processes:</b> <b>A.</b> Curricula & pedagogy are:	Not visibly aligned with outcomes; few programs have evidences of achievement beyond mere completion of designated courses	Beginning to be aligned with established learning outcomes, with achievement demonstrated in some areas beyond mere completion of designated courses	Broadly aligned with learning outcomes; in most programs, student achievement beyond the mere completion of designated courses is demonstrated in most areas	Highly visible, fully aligned with learning outcomes; in all programs, achievement beyond mere completion of designated courses is demonstrated at both the program (comprehensive) & course levels
<b>B.</b> Curricular processes are:	Rarely informed by good learning practices; few curricula reviewed, mostly without reference to evidences of student learning	Informed in a few instances by good learning practices; some curricula reviewed and improved but with little reference to evidences of student learning	Informed in many cases by good learning practice; reviewed and improved by relevant faculty; often based on evidences of student learning	Regularly informed by good learning practice (such as employing assessment-as-learning), consistently the result of scholarly reflection by relevant faculty based on evidences of student learning
<b>Organizational Learning:</b> <b>A.</b> Indicators of educational effectiveness are:	Not effectively in place	Found in some areas; dissemination of performance results is beginning; no reference to benchmarks	Multiple, with data collected regularly, disseminated; some performance benchmarks set and used for comparison	Multiple, with data collected regularly, disseminated widely, compared to program benchmarks in all programs
<b>B.</b> Program Review is:	Rare, if at all, with little or no useful data being generated	Occasional, in some departments or units, with the results being infrequently used to suggest process improvements	Frequent, in most divisions or units, with results being used at the departmental level to reflect on effectiveness	Deliberate, systematic, and institution-wide, with results being broadly disseminated and used to improve the processes
<b>C.</b> Faculty, staff, and institutional leaders are:	Not visibly committed to a culture of evidence except in isolated cases	Supportive at top levels only, or sporadically and unevenly, for the development of a culture of evidence	Supportive of a culture of evidence at top levels, by most mid-level personnel, and some faculty and staff	Visibly committed to creating and sustaining a “culture of evidence” in planning at all levels
<b>D.</b> Performance data are:	Not in evidence in any decision processes or used for improvement in any programs	Beginning to be considered in making improvement decisions at institutional level and in some program levels	Frequently considered by decision-making bodies at all levels, but with few documents of data use or outcomes	Consistently obtained, used and documented by decision-making bodies for program improvement at all levels
<b>E.</b> In reference to accreditation processes, the institution is:	Apparent indifference to Commission actions or expectations and/or failure of leadership to resource and expect such implementation; little, if any, momentum	Hesitant or partial implementation of prior Commission actions, some concerns whether momentum can be sustained after Commission review	Has taken formal actions and/or begun processes to implement prior Commission actions in most programs; momentum and impact need to be verified	Promptly and fully incorporates prior Commission actions, showing forward momentum and a positive trajectory in virtually all programs and units
<b>Overall:</b> The institution can best be described as follows:	Committed to some aspects of Educational Effectiveness; if other areas are not addressed, continuing reaffirmation of accreditation is threatened	Promising commitments to Educational Effectiveness in most areas; significant number of areas noted for improvement	Mostly well-established commitments to Educational Effectiveness; some areas for improvement	Operates at an exemplary level in addressing its Core Commitment to Educational Effectiveness





- ❖ What will the EER team be asking about evidence of student learning:
  - Is the evidence valid?
  - Is the evidence reliable?
  - Does the assessment cover the intended outcomes?
  - Does the assessment cover knowledge and skills taught throughout the program?
  - Is the assessment cross-checked or validated?
  - Is faculty-conducted assessment done by a group of “calibrated” faculty members?
  - Are there multiple measures of student learning?
  - Is there more than “self-report” assessment?
  - Are the results of assessment analyzed, disseminated and discussed?
  - Are the results used to improve student learning?
  - Are the results used to improve assessment processes or tools?

**For further details see** [http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/wasc/docs/pdf/A\\_Guide\\_to\\_Evidence.pdf](http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/wasc/docs/pdf/A_Guide_to_Evidence.pdf)

## CSU, Chico Planned Poster Sessions

**March 4, 2009:** Poster Session of University Accomplishments organized by Strategic Priority

**March 5, 2009:** Poster Session on Assessment of Student Learning organized by Academic Program

