Building Next Generation Accountability Frameworks and State Policies: Lessons from LEAP

WICHE Commissioners Meeting
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Liberal Education & America’s Promise

Excellence for Everyone as a Nation Goes to College

“A COLLABORATION BETWEEN EDUCATORS, STUDENTS, POLICYMAKERS, AND EMPLOYERS”
LEAP At Five-Year Mark:

• 300+ individual institutions in Campus Action Network;
• LEAP States Initiative: California State University, Oregon, Wisconsin, Virginia, Utah, North Dakota;
• 2000 Institutions Using LEAP VALUE Rubrics for Assessment of Cross-Cutting Outcomes;
• National Leadership Council (inc. educators, policy leaders, business leaders) and Presidents’ Trust (college and university presidents)
LEAP Promotes:

**Essential Learning Outcomes**
A Guiding Vision and National Benchmarks for College Learning and Liberal Education in the 21st Century

**High Impact Practices**
Helping Students Achieve the Essential Learning Outcomes

**Authentic Assessments**
Probing Whether Students Can APPLY Their Learning – to Complex Problems and Real-World Challenges
LEAP Responds to New Reality: The World is Demanding More

There is a demand for more **numbers** of college educated workers.

There is also a demand that those educated workers and citizens have higher levels of learning and knowledge, and some new and different skills and abilities.
Increasing Demand for Educated Workforce

By 2018, 30 million new and replacement jobs will require some college or above.

Note: Brown indicates jobs requiring high school or less and Blue indicates jobs requiring some college or more. Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
The Growing Demand for Higher Order Skills

Source: Council on Competitiveness, *Competitiveness Index*
Narrow Learning is Not Enough

The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes

• **Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World**
  Focused on engagement with big questions, enduring and contemporary

• **Intellectual and Practical Skills**
  Practiced extensively across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

• **Personal and Social Responsibility**
  Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

• **Integrative Learning**
  Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems
National Surveys of Employers on College Learning and Graduates’ Work Readiness

AAC&U commissioned Hart Research Associates (in 2006, 2007, and in late 2009) to interview employers (C-level suite executives and, in 2009 additional human resource professionals) whose companies report that hiring relatively large numbers of college graduates

Findings are summarized in the following reports:

**How Should Colleges Prepare Students to Succeed in Today’s Global Economy?**  
(AAC&U, 2007)

**How Should Colleges Assess and Improve Student Learning? Employers’ Views on the Accountability Challenge** (AAC&U, 2008)

**Raising the Bar: Employers’ Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn** (AAC&U, 2010)

See: [www.aacu.org/leap/public_opinion_research](http://www.aacu.org/leap/public_opinion_research)
Raising The Bar

Employers’ Views On College Learning In The Wake Of The Economic Downturn

Key findings from survey among 302 employers Conducted October 27 – November 17, 2009 for

Association of American Colleges and Universities
Employers’ Expectations of Employees Have Increased

% who agree with each statement

Our company is asking employees to take on more responsibilities and to use a broader set of skills than in the past

- 91%

Employees are expected to work harder to coordinate with other departments than in the past

- 90%

The challenges employees face within our company are more complex today than they were in the past

- 88%

To succeed in our company, employees need higher levels of learning and knowledge today than they did in the past

- 88%
Employers’ Top Priorities For Student Learning Outcomes In College

% saying two- and four-year colleges should place MORE emphasis on helping students develop these skills, qualities, capabilities, knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill/Quality</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective oral/written communication</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking/analytical reasoning</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge/skills applied to real world settings</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze/solve complex problems</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect choices and actions to ethical decisions</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork skills/ability to collaborate</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to innovate and be creative</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts/developments in science/technology</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Areas of Learning Needing Increased Emphasis

% saying two- and four-year colleges should place MORE emphasis on helping students develop these skills, qualities, capabilities, knowledge

- Locate/organize/evaluate information: 68%
- Understand global context of situations/decisions: 67%
- Global issues: 65%
- Understand & work with numbers/statistics: 63%
- Understand role of U.S. in the world: 57%
- Knowledge of cultural diversity in US/world: 57%
- Civic knowledge, community engagement: 52%

Source: “Raising the Bar: Employers’ Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn” (AAC&U and Hart Research Assoc. 2010)
Key Capabilities Open the Door for Career Success and Earnings

“Irrespective of college major or institutional selectivity, what matters to career success is students’ development of a broad set of cross-cutting capacities…”

Anthony Carnevale, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
Essential Learning Outcomes
Important for Work, Life, and Citizenship

Societal Benefits of Increasing College Graduates and Their Achievement of Liberal Education Outcomes:

- local economic development
- workplace creativity and productivity
- larger tax base; lower social welfare expenses
- broader and deeper civic engagement
Enlightened Leadership From Policymakers and Educators Needed Now More Than Ever

History Has Important Lessons--
See:
The “principal goals” of higher education are “to bring to all the people of the Nation:
• Education for a fuller realization of democracy in every phase of living;
• Education directly and explicitly for international understanding and cooperation
• Education for the application of creative imagination and trained intelligence to the solution of social problems. ...”
Key Policy and Assessment Challenge

• How to increase the numbers of graduates while also increasing the skills, knowledge, and cross-cutting capacities of those graduates?

• How to connect higher education policy to larger vision of global and democratic aims of education?

• How can we assess students’ achievement of the full set of essential learning outcomes—knowledge, skills, responsibilities, integrative and applied learning?

• How can we avoid incentivizing the wrong practices?
High Impact Practices—Supporting Completion and Learning

★ First-Year Seminars and Experiences
★ Common Intellectual Experiences
★ Learning Communities
★ Writing-Intensive Courses
★ Collaborative Assignments and Projects
★ Undergraduate Research
★ Diversity/Global Learning
★ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
★ Internships
★ Capstone Courses and Projects
Educational Research Documents Positive Impact of High-Impact Practices

High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to them, and Why They Matter
by George D. Kuh
(AAC&U, 2008)

Five High-Impact Practices: Research on Learning Outcomes, Completion, and Quality
by Lynn Swaner and Jayne Brownell
(AAC&U, forthcoming 2010)
High-Impact Practices: What The Evidence Shows

• Increase engagement, time on task, and integrative skills

• Correlated with levels of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction

• Correlated with higher GPA, higher retention rates, greater satisfaction rates

• Student learning outcomes—increased critical thinking, communications, and ethical reasoning

• Impact for all students; greater impact for less well-prepared students and students of color.
One Example—Learning Communities Have Positive Impact On:

- Grades
- Persistence
- Ease of college transition
- Academic engagement
- Intellectual development
- Integrative thinking
- Writing and reading skills
- Engagement with diverse viewpoints
- Rates of civic engagement
On-Time Graduation and High-Impact Practices: Findings from a CSU Campus

Figure 4. Impact of Participation in High Impact Practices on Percentage of Senior NSSE Respondents Graduating on Time by Racial & Ethnic Background

Employers Assess the Potential Value of Emerging Educational Practices

% saying each would help a lot/fair amount to prepare college students for success

84% Expecting students to complete a significant project before graduation that demonstrates their depth of knowledge in their major AND their acquisition of analytical, problem-solving, and communication skills (62% help a lot)

81% Expecting students to complete an internship or community-based field project to connect classroom learning with real-world experiences (66%)

81% Ensuring that students develop the skills to research questions in their field and develop evidence-based analyses (57%)

73% Expecting students to work through ethical issues and debates to form their own judgments about the issues at stake (48%)

Source: Raising the Bar (AAC&U, 2010)
The Bad News—Not Enough Students Get These Practices

Learning communities—17%
Undergraduate research—19%
Service learning—36% first year; 46% seniors
Senior capstone experience—32%

Sources: *High-Impact Educational Practices* (AAC&U, 2008)
We Know What Works, but…

We aren’t using effective practices with all students
Seeking Workable and Efficient Solutions

• Educational and support practices that work for all students, including underprepared students;
• Practices that increase learning and retention
• Practices that teach content and skills in integrative ways (allowing reduction of credit accumulation)
• Assessment practices that both measure and deepen learning—and that students take seriously
“It really matters very little if students can perform well on multiple-choice tests. We need more of them to be able to communicate, analyze, think critically.”
Wayne Johnson, Hewlett-Packard
• Funded by FIPSE and State Farm Insurance
• 12 Leadership Schools with E-portfolios and interest in Rubrics for assessing work in portfolios
• Development of 15 rubrics by teams of faculty at 200 institutions
• Publication of Rubrics in Spring 2010; 1000+ institutions now using them
• Publication of Reports on development of e-portfolios and creation and use of rubrics
The Power of Rubrics and E-Portfolios as Tools for Both Assessment and High-Impact Learning

- Rubrics to help guide student expectations and faculty judgments of their work over time and at milestone moments;
- Places individual faculty judgment within national shared experience; national benchmarks
- Can build up from course level to institutional reporting needs AND down from general to specific program/course context
- E-portfolios to gather students’ best work, encourage self-assessment, and allow for mining of samples for assessment purposes
ELOs become Rubrics

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Written communication
- Oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- Reading
- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning
- Integrative learning
Next Generation Policies

• Must measure both grad rates and learning outcomes calibrated to new economic and civic demands (outcomes rather than just outputs);

• Must avoid increasing through-put at expense of learning (e.g. 3-year degrees for all; credit banks; awarding general degrees to “super” seniors);

• Avoid policies that encourage lowering of standards or avoiding serving minority/first-generation students
Next Generation Policies

• Could collect data on high-impact practices;
• Collect data on clarity of learning outcomes and incentivize clarity of outcomes (Tuning, Lumina DQF);
• Could fund/reward expanded access to high-impact practices especially for underserved students;
• Could measure and reward institutions that have all students doing senior capstone/integrative experiences;
• Could encourage gen ed and transfer policies that account for learning and not just seat-time.
Other Lessons from LEAP

• Faculty are key to improved learning outcomes; must play a role in developing meaningful assessments
• Cross-cutting outcomes are important and must be developed across both general education and the major
• Coherent vision and clear communication from top to bottom can have huge impact
• Employers are key allies
It is my wish that this be the most educated country in the world, and toward that end I hereby ordain that each and every one of my people be given a diploma.
VALUE Publications and Web Resources


Electronic Portfolios and Student Success: Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Learning, by Helen L. Chen and Tracy Penny Light

Rubrics online at: www.aacu.org/value/rubrics
LEAP Publications Geared to Students

What Will I Learn in College? What You Need to Know
Now to Get Ready for College Success, by Robert Shoenberg

Why Do I Have to Take This Course? A Student Guide to
Making Smart Educational Choices, by Robert Shoenberg

www.aacu.org/publications
www.aacu.org/leap

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