

Accreditation and Measures of Quality

A Presentation to the
California Association of Institutional Researchers (CAIR)

by

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First, Some Accreditation Basics...

Key Concepts in Accreditation

- Accreditation is **voluntary and institution-based**
 - Institutions formed regional commissions, set up standards, set up the Commission decision making body, and accepted responsibility for meeting standards and participating in revision of standards
 - Institutions agreed to be **self-regulating**
 - Institutions **agreed to accept** the findings and (where useful) the advice of the peer review process
- Federal government **criteria for financial aid** are imposed over/on accreditation processes

Accreditation Changes with Time

- Standards evolve, are reviewed and revised
- Institutional practices change (e.g., DE, unbundling, student success legislation)
- Evaluators gain experience and understanding, insights, and improve (or change) their practices
- National dialogue and debates fuel emphasis of some elements of standards (e.g., loan default, equity)
- Federal regulatory requirements change with new negotiated rulemaking, guidelines or legislation and accreditation changes in response

What is Institutional Quality?

- **The credentials awarded to students are highly regarded by those outside the institution – employers, other colleges and universities, students themselves**
- The institution is effective at achieving its purpose(s) – it can demonstrate it has done so
- The institution is efficient in providing an education to students – it doesn't waste students' or its own resources or time doing so

What Helps Ensure Educational Quality?

- **A defined mission and organizational focus on mission**
- Educational services and support services
- Honesty and Integrity in the institution's operations
- Qualified staff in all areas
- Faculty roles as teachers, designers of curriculum
- Functional governance focused on educational mission
- Adequate and well managed resources including financial and physical resources
- A culture and practice of assessment and improvement

Congressional Attention is on Outcomes

House Education and the Workforce Committee (Nov. 13, 2013),

- “we used to have a system based on access, but this has now changed. Reforms that drive the nation toward completion rates should be strongly considered. There are certain programs that are currently too open ended and hinder completion. Restructuring the financial aid programs to incentivize completion is important.”

(Representative Messer, R, IN)

Congressional Interests, *continued*

Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Committee (Nov. 14, 2013),

“The economic future and stability of the United States is dependent on making college affordable, accessible and results-oriented.”

Chairman and Senator Harkin, D, IA

National Demands for “Improvements”

1. Improvements in student learning, and in their accumulated and demonstrated knowledge and skills upon completion – i.e., student competencies
2. Improvements in the number of completers
3. Improvements in the completion of diverse populations
4. Improvements in affordability through efficiencies, reduction in costs.

Where are ACCJC Standards and Practices Headed?

Accreditation and Assessment of Quality

- Most of the Accreditation Standards are about good practices that lead to effective institutional performance, and they include many requirements that institutions engage in self-assessment for purposes of knowing how well the institution is achieving its own mission and goals
- Accreditation is moving from evaluation of process alone to evaluation of outcomes.

Institutions Must Demonstrate Achievement of Mission

Comprehensive Colleges often have at least three missions:

- Basic Skills/Pre-collegiate/Remedial Education to achieve student readiness for college level education
- Career and Workforce Education (initial and continuing)
- Liberal Arts and Transfer Education

For Each Mission

(in the Institutional Self Evaluation)

- College should provide clear statement of mission and sub-mission
- College should identify appropriate measures that allow it to demonstrate achievement of mission
- College should examine performance, evaluate it and make changes where it thinks it necessary
- All of this should be demonstrable to accreditation evaluation teams

Data Requirements of the Institutional Self Evaluation Report

1. Longitudinal data over five years:
 - Enrollment (as the baseline for understanding other numbers)
 - Data on student characteristics (gender, ethnic, age diversity; student education goals; enrollment patterns in different institutional programs)
 - Retention or persistence (measure of milestone achievement)
 - Data disaggregated by key subpopulations of institutional importance
 - Course, program and degree completion data
 - Licensing examination pass rates and/or job placement
 - Transfer
2. **Completion of student learning outcomes for programs and degrees, and evidence thereof**
3. **Institution-set standards for student achievement, and institutional performance data and analysis**

ACCJC Data Concerns

- Are colleges using data at the local level?
- Are colleges using both quantitative and qualitative data?
- Are colleges using data for decision-making?
- Are colleges using data for improvement?
- How does a college evaluate its own performance? Are its own standards reasonable?

Some Questions of Particular Interest to ACCJC

- Is the institution's student body representative of the county/region served by the college?
 - Racial composition (by gender) of student body compared to composition of high school graduates from institution's service area
 - And/or compared to racial composition of 18-34 year old population of the service area
- Are the student outcomes different across different student subpopulations (the equity issue)? How does your institution view these differences?

Student Achievement Outcomes

Student Progress

- Course Completion Rates (%)
 - Distance Education Compared to On Campus
 - Basic Skills
 - CTE
 - Transfer /GE
- Total College Completion Rates (%)
- Persistence Rate (%)
- Completion Rate – 30 credit units (% & #)
- Disaggregated Data for Student Subpopulations

Student Achievement Outcomes/Success

- AA/AS Degrees
- Transfers
- CTE Completion, Licensing, & Employment

Student Success (AA/AS)

- Associate Degrees
 - Number
 - % of Students with AA/AS goal
 - Comparison to:
 - Adopted Standard
 - Adopted Goal
- Disaggregated Data for Student Subpopulations

College Benchmarks and Goals

	2011/2012	2012/2013	Met Benchmark	Benchmark/Standard for ACCJC	Inspirational Goal
1. Successful course completion rate (%)	70%	70%	✓	70%	72%
2. Fall-to-fall persistence rate (%)	37%	40%	✓	37%	40%
3. Degree completion (total #)	319	342	✓	300	330
4. Transfer (total #)	237	Not available		275	300
4.a. UC/CSU Transfer #	158	169	✓	165	170
5. Certificate completion (total #)	280	337	✓	280	300
6. Licensure Pass Rate: Radiological Technology—National Exam	100%	100%	✓	100%	100%
7. Job Placement	NA	NA		NA	NA
8. Fall-to-spring persistence rate (%)	59%	61%	✓	59%	62%
9. Student success rates during their first year*	66%	65%		66%	68%
10. Success in GE	69%	70%		71%	73%
11. Success in DE	53%	63%	✓	53%	56%
12. Success in CTE	79%	77%		80%	82%
13. Success in Pre-transfer	57%	58%	✓	57%	59%
14. Success in Non-CBET ESL	63%	66%	✓	65%	67%
15. % of students placed in pre-transfer math that take pre-transfer math	48%	43%		65%	70%
16. % of students placed in pre-transfer English that take pre-transfer English	40%	34%		55%	65%
17. % of students place in pre-transfer reading that take pre-transfer reading	32%	26%		50%	55%
18. FTES (Total #)	4420	4402		4500	5000
19. LOAD (Year)	499	504		525	550

- 1 through 7 are required by ACCJC and US Department of Education.
- Green indicates making positive progress from previous year.
- ✓ indicates meeting the benchmark.

Student Degree Completion

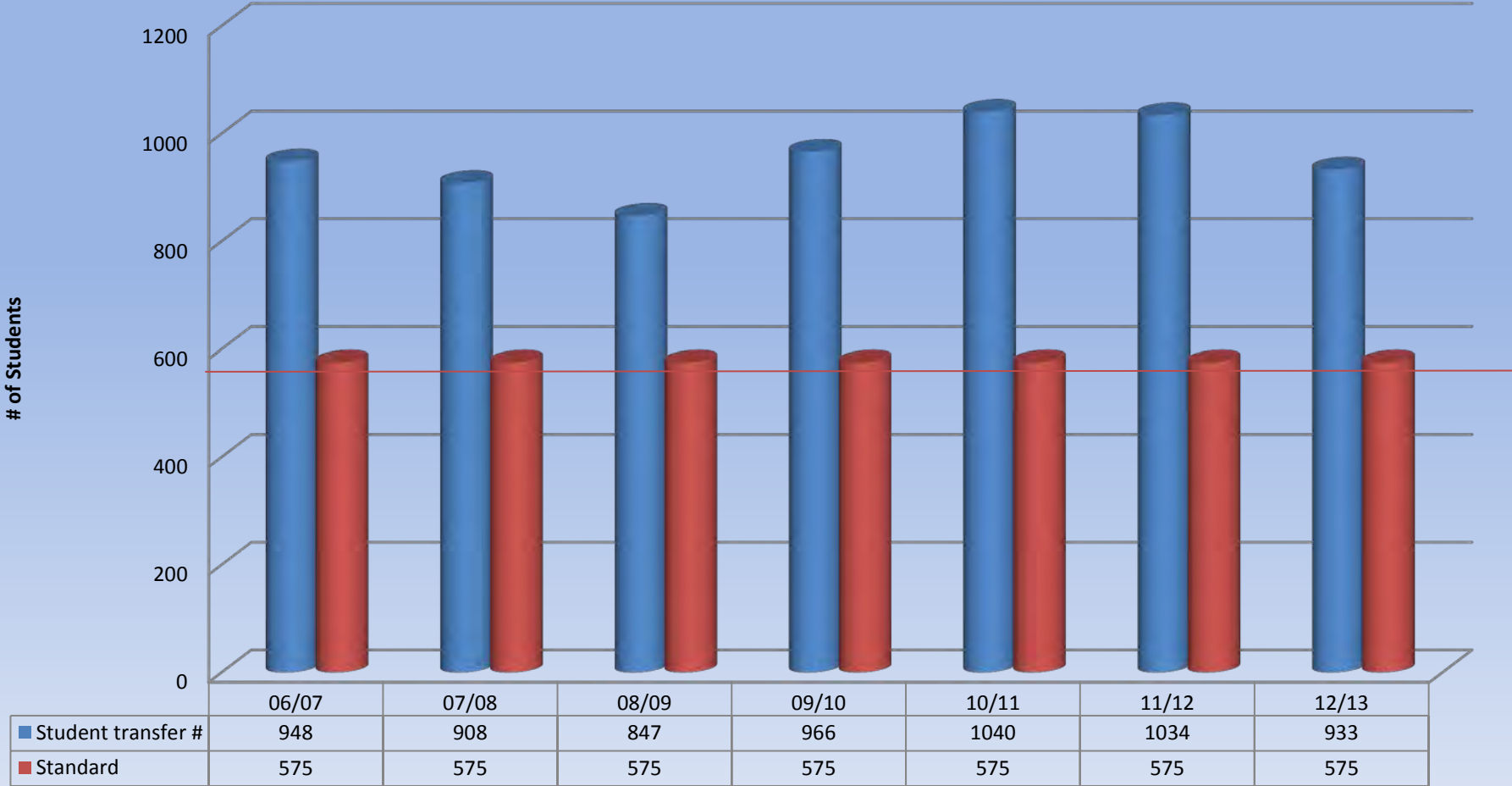


Student Success (Transfer)

- AAT / AST Degrees Available (# & %)
- Student Transfers (#)
 - U.C.
 - C.S.U.
 - In-State Private
 - Out of State
 - Total
 - Disaggregated Data for Student Subpopulations
- Student Transfer Rate (% with transfer goal)

Student Transfer Numbers

Student Transfer #

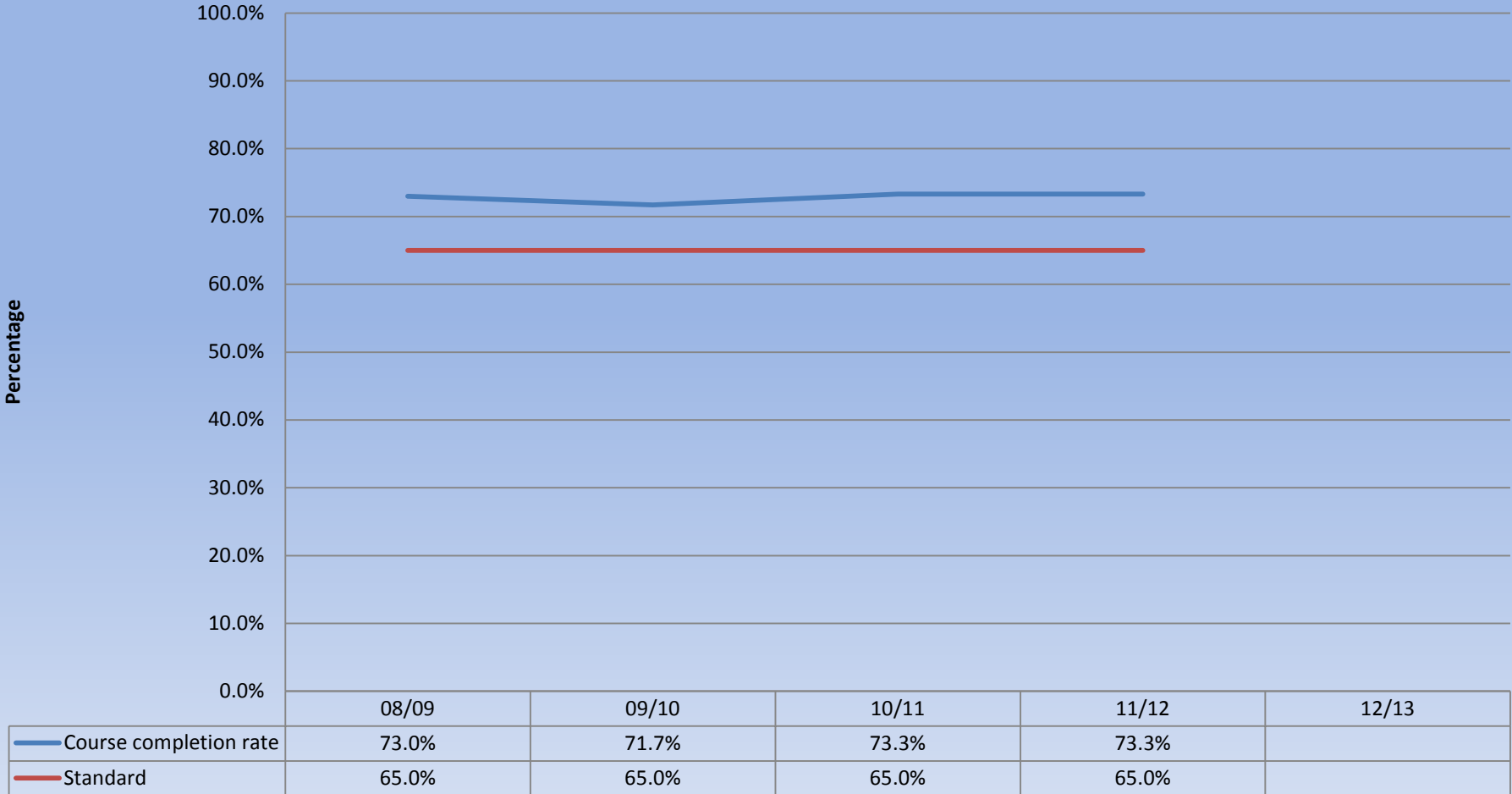


Student Success (Completion)

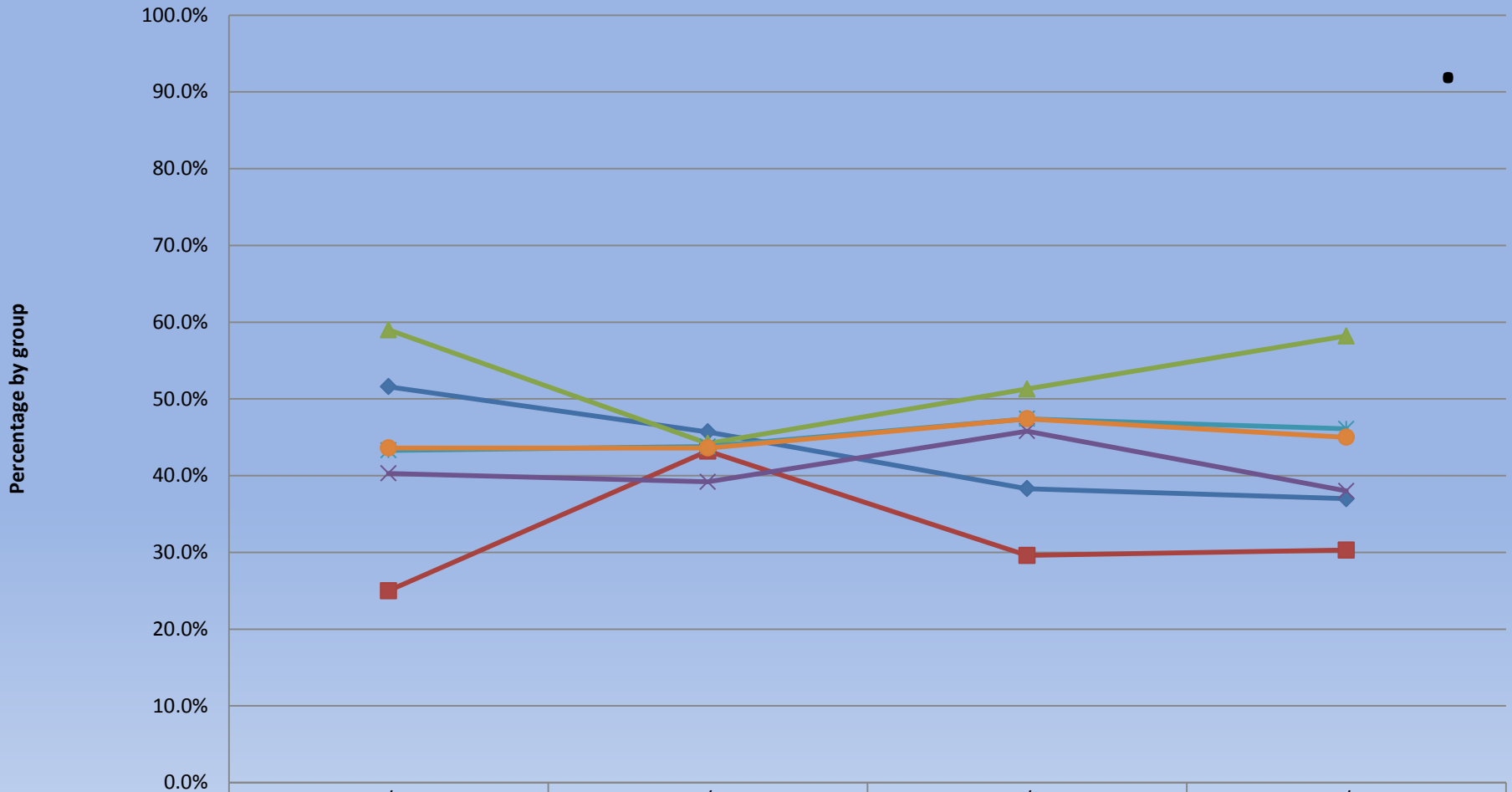
- Completion rate (%) reported to C/O
- CTE Completion Rates
- Licensure Pass Rates
 - By Groups
- Employment Data
- Disaggregated Completion Rates

Total College Completion Rates

Student Completion Rates



Disaggregated Student Completion Rates



	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
◆ African American	51.6%	45.7%	38.3%	37.0%
■ American Indian	25.0%	43.2%	29.6%	30.3%
▲ Asian	59.0%	44.2%	51.3%	58.2%
× Hispanic	40.3%	39.2%	45.8%	38.0%
* White	43.3%	43.8%	47.4%	46.1%
● Total College	43.6%	43.6%	47.4%	45.0%

Student Learning Outcomes (Competencies!)

Southern New Hampshire University

University of Northern Arizona

Western Governors University

Student Achievement and Student Learning

- Student Achievement measures are one aspect of Student Success but are not alone enough to assess educational quality
- Student Learning Outcomes address another aspect – they indicate what knowledge, skills and abilities student have gained as part of their educational programs (i.e., competencies) , and that they can demonstrate to employers and in further education

Accreditation and Student Learning Outcomes (*Competencies?*)

- Accreditation Standards require institutions
 - to define intended student learning outcomes for courses, programs and certificates, and degrees
 - Assess student learning that occurs
 - Use the result to make improvements
- Student knowledge, skills and abilities are of concern to the public, and to legislators
- Student competencies are being assessed as a means of awarding degrees at some institutions

Student Learning Outcomes Measures (Competencies)

- Course-level SLO assessment: # and % and examples of assessment results from program review
- Program-level SLO assessment: # and % and examples of assessment results in program review, % of students demonstrating program competencies
- Institutional SLO assessment: # and %, % of students demonstrating institutional competencies

From Assessment to Improvement

- Assessment, or measurement of student achievement and student learning helps an institution know how well it is fulfilling its mission.
- The federal and national emphasis is now on producing more college completers, so improvement of institutional outputs is needed

The Student Success Imperative

- Lumina & AACC, et al - ***Achieving the Dream*** - 2010
achievingthedream.org
- AACC (21st Century Commission on the Future) – ***Reclaiming the Dream*** – 2012
www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/21stcenturyreport/21stCenturyReport.pdf
- Gates & DoE – ***Completion by Design*** – 2010
www.completionbydesign.org
- CA CCs - ***Student Success Task Force*** – 2012
<http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/PolicyInAction/StudentSuccessInitiative.aspx>

Setting Standards for Student Achievement

USDE regulations require that Accreditors' standards effectively address the quality of an institution with respect to "success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution's mission, which may include different standards for different institutions or programs, as established by the institution, including as appropriate course completion, State licensing examination, and job placement rates." (Section 602.16(a)(1)(i))

Student Achievement Goals and Institutional Performance

1. The institution must set its own “standards” for student achievement, for the institution and the programs it offers
2. The institution must collect and assess data on how well it is meeting its standards, and plan improvements as needed
3. Accreditation evaluation teams must examine both the institution set Standards for reasonableness, and the institution’s performance against those standards
4. Accreditors must use institutional performance as a factor in deciding upon re-accreditation, and **demonstrate** that they are doing so

Selecting Measures for Setting Standards

- Federally suggested metrics
 - For Career and Technical education programs, licensure pass rate and job placement are very important to the federal government, but are there others?
 - For other education programs, completion rates, graduation, degrees and certificates are important, but are there others?
 - For all programs, data representing that student have learned and can demonstrate competencies are important
- What measures allow the institution to answer questions important to it? Are there other measures associated with equity or other goals?

How Does an Institution Set Standards for Student Achievement?

- Using baseline performance data (pick a year to use)
- Using and average of a certain number of recent years (3 years) **(5 – 6 years?)***
- Using performance data averaged among like institutions, or higher performing institutions, to set Standards
- Setting high expectations?

Some Questions

- What would be a reasonable Standard for course completion for a public community college? _____ %?
- What would be a reasonable standard for certificate completion for a public community college? _____ % after 3 years?
- What would be a reasonable standard for degree completion for a public community college? _____ % after six years?

Sample of Institution-Set Standards

In response to the recent ACCJC requirement, the following student achievement standards have been put in place in 2012.
*(*This is a public institution with open access)*

Institution-Set Standards for Student Achievement	Standard (Meet or exceed prior five year average)	Current Measure of Achievement Fall 2012
Course Completion	70.6 %	72 %
Retention	52.1 %	52.9 %
Degree Completion	801	909 (Academic year 2011-12)
Transfers to 4-Year Institutions	1,071	1,060 (Academic year 2011-12)
CTE Certificate Completion	91	131 (Academic Year 2011-12)

Some Questions

- Does a Standard of meeting or exceeding average of the last five years promote improvement?
- Does a Standard of meeting or exceeding average of the last five years yield more completers over time?
- Is the data presented as raw numbers (last three rows) useful or do you need to know more?
- If the college has 10,000 students enrolled, is the raw number data signaling quality? If it has 20,000, would you have a different conclusion about quality represented by the data?

Sample of Institution-Set Standards

Student Achievement Standards – in response to the recent ACCJC requirement, the following student achievement standards have been put in place in 2013. Actual performance for 2012 has been included for reference. (**This is a private institution requiring full time attendance.*)

	Institution Standard	2012 Performance
Student Course Completion	85 %	89.7 %
Student Persistence	85 %	87.9 %
Degree Completion*	60 %	90.9 %
Certificate Completion*	70 %	74.0 %

Sample of Institution-Set Learning Outcomes

1. Written and verbal communication in the student's chosen field of study
2. Problem solving typically required or characteristic of the profession
3. Internal and/or external customer service
4. Responsibility and accountability for independent and group work products
5. Using learning strategies as necessary to keep current in profession/lifelong learning
6. Using technology common to current business environment to improve individual and organizational performance
7. Behavior that reflects confidence, competence and professionalism

Digging Deeper into ILOs

- ILOs mapped to courses and programs
- Assessments designed and administered for all ILOs, in courses and programs and where appropriate, and at the introduction and mastery stages
- Data retained and summarized or averaged by program
- Summary data on learning outcomes presented in ISER

Evaluation Method or Tool	Achievement Target	Actual Achievement
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1. Written and verbal communication in the student's chosen field of study;	GE230 Demonstrate written and verbal competence in the field of economics.	Research Paper Target: 8 Refl. Par.	8.92 4.27	
	GE230 Apply the methods and materials of research to write papers on ethical topics and issues.	Research Paper Target: 8 Refl. Par. Target: 4	8.23 4.33	
	GE232 Demonstrate written and verbal competence in the field of ethics.	Research Paper Target: 8 Refl. Par. Target: 4	8.23 4.33	
	GE232 Apply the methods and materials of research to write papers on ethical topics and issues.	Research Paper Target: 8 Refl. Par. Target: 4	8.47 4.31	

SLOs in the Major

	Cosmetology	Achievement Target	Actual Achievement
	<p>C101 Demonstrate professionalism consistent with college expectations for all students.</p> <p>Monthly Core Task Worksheet Core Written Exam</p>	<p>100% 70%</p>	<p>100% 89%</p>
	MBCS		
	<p>MO123 Medical Terminology with A&P Correctly build, spell and pronounce medical terms related to each medical specialty</p>	<p>Final Exam 90%</p>	<p>86%</p>
	<p>M0130 Medical Office Practice Written communications: referrals and correspondence in the medical practice.</p>	<p>Exam #5 90%</p>	<p>79%</p>

Alternative Proposed Definition

A national rating system for colleges to serve as a basis for (all or some?) financial aid based on a national data set that facilitates college comparisons (currently, IPEDS; possibly National Student Clearinghouse in the future, or a federal unit record system)

- Affordability measured in tuition and fees costs, perhaps some relationship to post graduate income
- Accessibility to low income students
- Student Outcomes measured in completion of degrees and certificates

Future of Accreditation?

- To the degree it is actually useful to institutions, is likely to survive to facilitate student movement among institutions and to signal broad academic quality
- To the degree it is perceived as useful to the public, students, employers, likely to survive as a trustworthy and local certification of quality, and as background to national measures if they emerge (e.g., much as Pell eligibility varies but assumes accreditation)
- To the degree institutions, students, the public reject accreditation, it's likely to be replaced, but only eventually --- not very quickly

Questions? Discussion?

Thank you for this chance to talk!

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