

Dear Colleagues:

First, I want to thank those of you who have voiced support for the current, proposed plan. Last week, our colleagues from the Community Colleges passed a resolution which accepts the new proposal with some modifications. Since the Faculty Council overwhelmingly rejected the previous version, this is an indication of the fact that our colleagues are supportive of the significant changes which are contained in the new proposal.

The new Strengthened Campus-based Assessment Proposal evolved by directly addressing faculty concerns. I thought you might be interested in a side-by-side comparison of the faculty concerns and proposal components. These are presented below.

<b>Concerns: Faculty are opposed to</b>	<b>Proposal Components</b>
The public reporting of assessment data. This could embarrass and harm institutions.	The proposal contains language which will prevent public dissemination of assessment data for individual campuses. In addition, the diversity of the externally referenced measures, make public comparisons virtually meaningless.
The standardization of the curriculum. We value diversity and feel that is one indicator of a great university.	Out of 12 General Education learning areas, only three will be assessed using externally referenced measures. These areas are writing, critical thinking, and mathematics. The approaches available to campuses for the external referencing of these areas are both flexible and varied.
Another layer of assessment. Campuses in good faith developed a campus-based assessment plan. One more layer is not necessary.	The existing campus-based plan will only be revised. There will <u>not</u> be a second System-based layer.
Value-added assessment. Assessment is expensive enough without having to double the cost by assessing twice.	Value-added assessment (two measurements of the same learning area given at different points in time) will be optional.
Another unfunded mandate. Campus budgets are already stretched to the limit. We simply do not have the resources to add another assessment layer.	The costs of the purchase and administration of nationally-normed measures – as well as the National Survey of Student Engagement or the Community College Survey of Student Engagement – will be paid for by System Administration.
High stakes assessment.	The proposal does not contain any examples of “high stakes assessment” (e.g. a minimum level of achievement that a student must demonstrate in order to advance).
Campus budgets being tied to assessment results.	Campus budgets will not in any way be linked to assessment results.

The new proposal will be discussed and voted up or down during the April 22-24, 2004 Spring Plenary meeting of the University Faculty Senate in Syracuse, NY.

Best wishes,

Joe Hildreth, President