



June 2007

California Postsecondary Education Commission

Public Higher Education Performance Accountability Framework Status Report

At the March 2007 meeting, the Commission received a progress report and a work plan for completing its accountability framework measure reports by December 2007. This report updates the Commission on progress to date.

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The Commission advises the Governor and the Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. Its primary focus is to ensure that the State's educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities. More information about the Commission is available at www.cpec.ca.gov.

Commission Report 07-10

Background

In March 2005, the Commission adopted a report recommending development of a Higher Education Accountability Framework. After extensive research and consultation with an advisory committee of postsecondary stakeholders, in June 2006, the Commission received a report, recommending that the framework be developed incorporating four goals:

- Reasonable and Equitable Higher Education Opportunity for Prepared Students
- Affordable and Accessible Higher Education
- Student Success in Higher Education
- Public Benefit

The report also recommended the use of 17 specific performance measures to assess progress toward meeting the four goals. A fifth goal for administrative efficiency was identified for future inclusion in the framework.

The Commission was also presented with a work plan that anticipated the release of a working paper on each of the 17 accountability measures, with the intent to issue a final report with conclusions and recommendations in 2007.

In December 2006, the Commission received the first three performance reports measuring the success of students in California's public universities to earn timely degrees, persist in their progress toward four-year degrees, and transfer from community colleges to State public universities.

At the March 2007 meeting, the Commission received three more of the 17 performance indicator reports and a summary report assessing how well California's public college students are succeeding.

Also at the March 2007 meeting, the Commission received a progress report and a more detailed work plan for completing all the accountability measure reports by December 2007. This report updates the Commission on progress towards completing the 2007 accountability reporting process.

June 2007 Commission Meeting

At the June 2007 Commission meeting, two reports assessing public higher education's contribution to California's economic, civic and social well-being were presented for consideration. The first report assessed the contribution of public colleges and universities to educational attainment and emerging higher education challenges that policymakers and higher education institutions need to address. The second report assessed the role of public higher education in raising California per capita income. To prepare these reports, the Commission partnered with business economists at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) to compile necessary census, degree-earning and workforce data as well as to prepare recommendations for policy options to improve the contribution of public higher education in these areas.

A report assessing degree-earning and workforce needs was planned for presentation to the Commission at the June 2007 meeting. However, as the Commission staff and the researchers at CSUN worked with the data for this report, it became evident that a complete assessment could not be completed in time to meet the June meeting time frame. As a result, this report along with a summary report assessing the overall contribution of public higher education to California's economic, civil and social well-being will be submitted at the September 2007 Commission meeting. Accountability reports will also be presented assessing public college and university affordability and accessibility.

Other Activities

In addition to work on the accountability measure reports, the Commission's legislative staff continued to work with key legislators and other postsecondary stakeholders to promote the adoption of legislation to enact in statute a higher education performance accountability system for California. In particular, the Commission has worked with Senator Jack Scott to help craft legislative language for SB 325 to accomplish this goal.

Commission staff also conducted a meeting of the Accountability Technical Advisory Committee on May 1, 2007, to review lessons learned in preparing the initial accountability measure reports and to gather input from stakeholders on ways to improve the Commission's accountability framework.