

**SUNY Board of Trustees Resolution –
Implementation of Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment
June 2004**

Whereas the State University of New York is committed to core values of broad-based access and opportunity and to the highest standards of academic excellence; and

Whereas the State University must demonstrate to its Board of Trustees, College Council members and the Boards of Trustees of Community Colleges, executive and legislative officials and the citizens of New York that its students are acquiring a knowledge base of sufficient depth and breadth and are fully prepared to meet the standards for advanced study, the qualifications of professional careers, and the needs of contemporary society; and

Whereas the State University is committed to the principle of accountability and regularly and publicly reports on a wide range of key academic outcomes and related data that are statistically consistent with those used by state and national peers, public and private, including, for example, retention and graduation rates, grade point averages, degree completion data and academic cohort analyses, teacher certification pass rates, undergraduate selectivity (including SAT and other admissions scores), and research expenditures; and

Whereas the State University Board of Trustees' Resolution 98-241 establishing the University's General Education Requirement instructed the Provost of the State University to work with the leadership and faculty of the University's campuses to develop a means for assuring that demonstrable learning in specified General Education subjects is taking place; and

Whereas the Provost established, in the fall of 1999, an Advisory Task Force on the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes as a broadly representative committee including faculty, the presidents of the University Faculty Senate and the Faculty Council of Community Colleges, senior campus academic leadership and administrative staff, and students from across the University, and charged it with the responsibility to make recommendations regarding a process for assessing student learning outcomes and intellectual growth in General Education and the Major; and

Whereas the State University has now developed a nationally and internationally recognized program of comprehensive academic assessment, based on principles of good practice put forward by the American Association of Higher Education, as well as a set of supplementary principles that are particularly suitable to the State University; and has implemented key aspects of this initiative beginning with:

Fall 2001: A campus-based process to review all undergraduate majors on a five- to seven-year cycle with external review, with initial reports beginning June 1, 2002;

Fall 2002: A campus-based process to assess the knowledge and skills areas and competencies of the State University General Education Requirement on all campuses, with initial reports beginning June 1, 2003; and

Whereas there have been extended, collegial, and productive discussions between the Office of the Provost, the University Faculty Senate, and the Faculty Council of Community Colleges regarding strengthened campus-based assessment of General Education; now therefore, be it

Resolved that Trustees' Resolution 2003-65, adopted on June 17, 2003, be and hereby is, amended to read as hereinafter set forth to reflect the agreement reached in those discussions, and, be it further

Resolved that the Provost of the State University begin the implementation of strengthened campus-based assessment in the foundational areas of General Education adhering to the following principles:

- Campus assessment plans for General Education shall continue to be reviewed and approved by the General Education Assessment Review (GEAR) group;
- For each of the learning outcomes in Mathematics, Basic Communication (Written), and Critical Thinking (Reasoning), campuses shall include in their plans one of:
 1. A nationally-normed measure; or
 2. A locally-developed instrument that can be demonstrated to correlate statistically (i.e., have *concurrent validity*) with a nationally-normed measure; or
 3. A locally-developed instrument that is essentially equivalent to a set of standards and rubrics developed by a panel of distinguished SUNY faculty in each area and that has been reviewed and approved by GEAR. This panel shall be equally representative of state-operated campuses and community colleges and shall consult with campus faculty in the relevant disciplines. Campuses opting for this approach will be expected to periodically provide GEAR with samples of student work to be reviewed to ensure the ongoing validity and reliability of the measure as well as any scoring adjustments that may be required;
- Campuses may opt to determine the growth in learning achieved by undergraduates in these areas using a "value-added" approach, providing GEAR, for review and approval, with a description of the measures to be used and when they will be used, and an indication of how problems related to pre- and post-testing will be controlled;
- This academic assessment shall be accompanied by a measure of the level of student engagement in academic activities, as a way of providing a context for interpreting assessment data;
- The implementation process shall begin immediately and full implementation system-wide shall be in place no later than Fall 2006;
- The costs associated with the requirements and implementation of strengthened campus-based assessment shall be paid for by System Administration for state-operated/funded institutions and community colleges; and be it further

Resolved that the Provost shall regularly and publicly report on the implementation status of the SUNY Assessment Initiative, the results of our assessment efforts and the State University's longitudinal progress towards academic excellence. Assessment data shall be used by System Administration to appropriately demonstrate the State University's commitment to be publicly accountable and to support improvement in the teaching and learning process and the quality of undergraduate education; and be it further

Resolved that, in accordance with Section 6306(2) of the State Education Law, the State University Board of Trustees urges the boards of trustees of the community colleges operating under the program of the State University to adopt strengthened campus-based assessment of General Education consistent with the aforementioned principles.