



The National Trend Toward Assessment: The Likely Impact on Grantees from Postsecondary Institutions

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Where can faculty, chairs, and institutions have an impact on federal requirements for accountability and assessment?

- **What has already been decided?**
- **What will likely be decided within the next year?**
- **What will likely be decided over the next few years?**

GPRA –
Govt. Performance & Results Act, 1993

HEOA – Reauthorization of the
Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008

PART Process –
Program Assessment Rating Tool, 2004

Multi-year Program Assessments
Conducted by Independent Consultants

Grant/Project-level Assessments

GPRA – Govt. Performance & Results Act, 1993

These are very general guidelines that hold federal agencies accountable for achieving program results. The Act requires public reporting of results.

Some agencies are ahead of ED in responding to the GPRA mandate to assess programs.

GPRA has been around for 16 years. So Congress has come to feel that we should have better assessment data by now.

HEOA – Reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008

In the 2008 reauthorization of the HEOA, Congress wrote in some very specific assessment requirements for some new and existing programs.

For example, the HEOA requires the Secretary of Education to assist Title VI grantees in developing a student survey to determine postgraduate employment, education, and training. It requires that this survey be administered every 2 years.

The **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009** passed by the House on 1/28/2009 includes 250 million dollars for the Institute of Education Sciences. These funds:

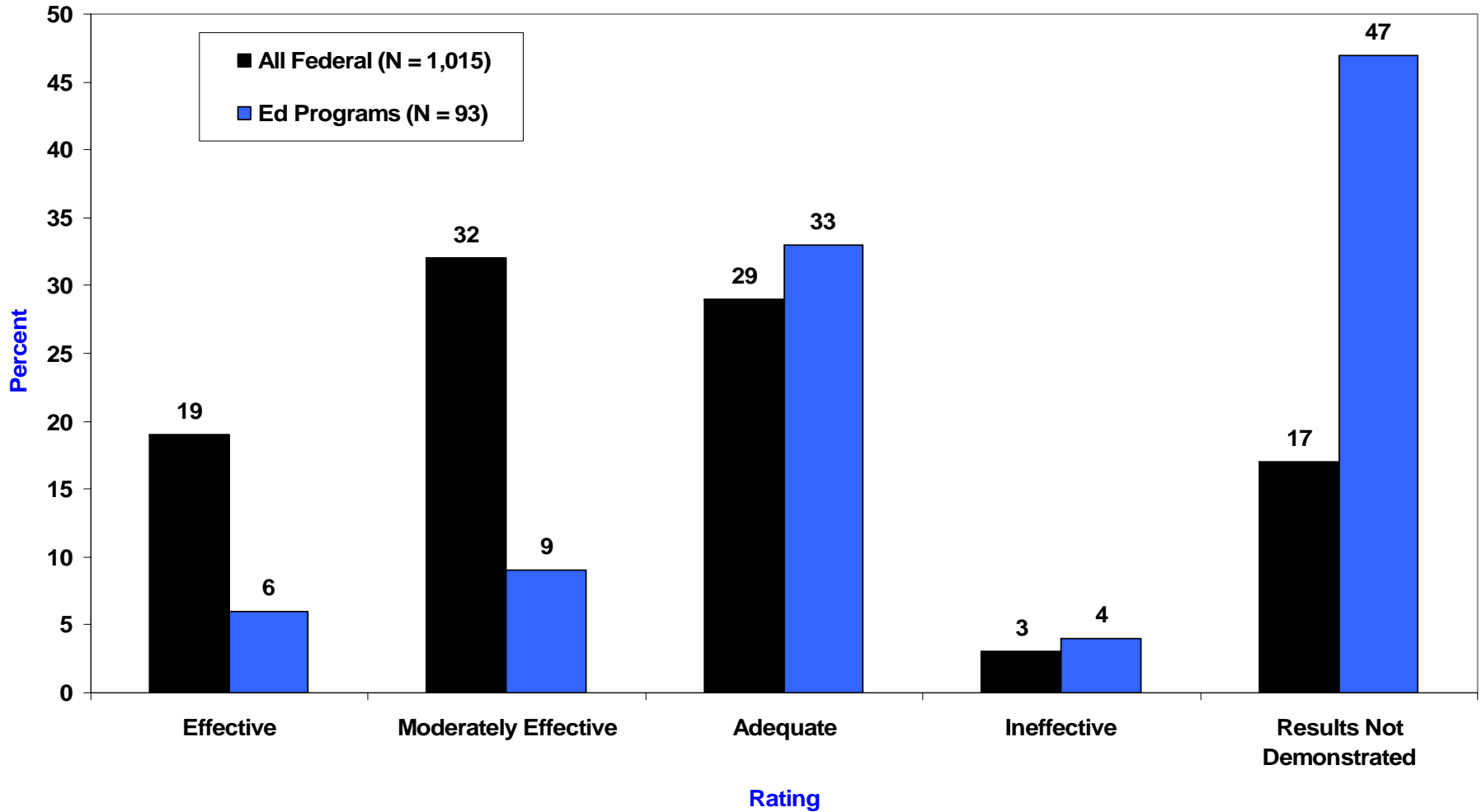
may be used for Statewide data systems that include postsecondary and workforce information, of which up to \$5,000,000 may be used for State data coordinators and for awards to public or private organizations or agencies to improve data coordination.

PART Process –
Program Assessment Rating Tool, 2004

This is a major tool used by ED's Budget Services to assess programs. Budget Services makes recommendations to Congress as to how much money should be allocated to specific programs within ED.

The Bush White House created and focused on PART measures.

PART Ratings as of 2/4/2009
(Source: www.expectmore.gov)



The Obama Administration has promised to appoint a Chief Performance Officer whose task will be to eliminate waste and improve efficiency.

The administration has said that it will work with federal agencies to set performance standards and it will hold agency managers accountable for progress.

It has also said that this process will be more open to public scrutiny than it has ever been via agency websites and www.recovery.gov .

Common ED PART Measures

Increased Access

Increased Retention Rates

Increased Graduation Rates

FIPSE's PART Measures

% Reporting Institutionalization

% Reporting Dissemination of Results

Large and/or expensive programs which have received the PART rating of “results not demonstrated” are the logical place for the new administration to focus their scrutiny.

This *may* mean coming up with more logical and relevant performance measures. It *may* mean creating a new assessment system.

Multi-year Program Assessments
Conducted by Independent Consultants

Assessment measures are multi-faceted and tailored to fit individual programs.

This work may move “in-house”.

ED currently has only a handful of trained program and project evaluation staff to work with consultants to design these assessments and review the results.

Grant/Project-level Assessments

ED's Problem: Most project directors do not apply for grants out of a desire to test new modes of learning.

Most project-level assessments we receive consist of an accounting of monies spent, activities completed, and perhaps a student satisfaction survey.

In the future will control groups and comparison groups be required?

What is the Dept.'s policy on Research on Human Subjects clearance?

Where can faculty, chairs, and institutions have an impact on federal requirements for accountability and assessment?

The executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, educational associations, and university administrators are currently engaged in a discussion over whether the federal government can regulate/monitor/assess postsecondary education.

Gains in STEM fields, English, and Foreign Languages are relatively easy to measure.

STEM fields have more widely dispersed advocates within the federal government (NSF, NIH, etc.) and the support of business.

Schools of Education have influence because the methods of effective teaching are their subject matter. In addition, many of the ED employees who hold Masters degrees hold them in the field of education.

Learning gain in social science fields is harder to measure.

There are a number of longstanding methodological fights within each discipline and across the social science disciplines which impede the formation of alliances over innovative educational projects.

But I am concerned that fields that stay on the sidelines will find that as assessment tools are designed and implemented, the knowledge and skills that they teach will become marginalized. This has already been a criticism of NCLB in K-12 education.

AAC&U's LEAP:

Liberal Education and America's Promise

Meta-rubrics developed in consultation with faculty, educational associations, and employers.

Partner Organizations

American Academy for Liberal Education

American Council of Learned Societies

Associated Colleges of the Midwest

Associated New American Colleges

Association for General and Liberal Studies

Council of Colleges of Arts & Sciences

Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges

Project Kaleidoscope

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Virginia Tidewater Consortium for Higher Education

12 Core Test Schools. Approximately 50 Partner Schools.

AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes

(A work in progress.)

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical And Natural World

Focus: Engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring.

AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes

(A work in progress.)

2. Intellectual and Practical Skills, including:

- Inquiry and analysis,
- Critical and creative thinking,
- Written and oral communication,
- Quantitative literacy,
- Information literacy,
- Teamwork and problem solving.

AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes

(A work in progress.)

3. Personal and Social Responsibility, including:

- Civic knowledge and engagement –
local and global,
- Intercultural knowledge and competence,
- Ethical reasoning and action,
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes

(A work in progress.)

4. Integrative and Applied Learning, including:

Synthesis and advanced accomplishments across general and specialized studies.

This would be demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems.



ED Assessment Staff Need Your Help to:

Locate proven assessment tools which will assist grantees in measure learning outcomes.

Locate experimental, but promising, new assessment tools.

Locate simple, inexpensive assessment tools that faculty at large public institutions can use.

Why should you become involved?

There is a very small group of trained evaluators working within the Dept. of Education. Most are career federal employees with little or no teaching experience.

By communicating ideas and suggesting resources to one person, you actually have a good chance of informing and influencing people who will be called upon to formulate policy.

If you work with us, formally or informally, I believe we will all come up with a better set of *realistic* measures that will satisfy the White House, Congress, the public, academia, business, and federal agencies.



The **E.U.-U.S. Atlantis Program Competition** is ongoing and has a March 23rd deadline for applications.

We expect to announce the **Comprehensive Grant Competition** in late February with an April 30th deadline. These grants are for 3 years with a total award amount of up to \$600,000. per grant. We expect to award between 32-75 of these grants this year.

FYI – we have had almost no applications from social science departments in the past few years.

Visit www.ed.gov/fipse for a description of these programs, application packages, and abstracts of past awards.