

SECTION I

PART M POLICY AND GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAMS BY STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS REQUIRED BY 23-13-101

1.00 Introduction

Colorado's state-supported higher education system has shown a continuing interest and appreciation of assessment as a tool to improve its institutions. The General Assembly, as part of its revisions to higher education's statutes, included an accountability program for higher education and assigned certain responsibilities to the governing boards and their institutions, and the Commission on Higher Education for implementing the program. Specifically:

The governing boards and institutions shall carry out the direction of this article [Higher Education Accountability] under the policy direction of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The Commission shall report annually to the governor and the general assembly on the development and implementation of this article.

The statute 23-13-101; contains the detailed expectations of the General Assembly for the higher education accountability program; it is attached.

2.00 Objectives

The Commission on Higher Education, and state-supported institutions and their governing boards recognize the importance of accountability in higher education. The overall purpose of the accountability program is to ensure the public that Colorado's state-supported institutions are accountable for providing quality education "efficiently through the effective use of institutional resources of time, effort, and money." The accountability program objectives are to ensure that:

- 2.01 institutions of higher education are accountable for undergraduate student improvements between entrance and graduation;
- 2.02 student improvements are publicly announced and available;
- 2.03 institutional goals and objectives are developed with a high degree of public involvement;
- 2.04 institutions clearly express their expectations of performance to students; and
- 2.05 student improvements are achieved efficiently.

2.06 Institutions of Higher Education are accountable for retention and graduation of students including minority students.

3.00 Accomplishment of Objectives

The above listed objectives, drawn directly from 23-13-101, will be accomplished by:

3.01 Submission by each higher education governing board for Commission approval, in accordance with the provisions of H.B. 1187, and the provisions of this policy, and accountability program for each institution that it governs. Governing board proposals must be submitted by December 1, 1988. It is recognized that the accountability programs are evolutionary and revisions may be necessary. Major revisions to accountability programs must be approved by the Commission in advance of their implementation.

3.02 Implementation by the respective institutions of the governing board and Commission approved programs. Each institution will report, through its governing board, to the Commission on the results of implementing its accountability program. Reports to the Commission must be submitted by October 1 of each year. The first report is due October 1, 1989.

3.03 Annual report by the Commission to the Governor and the General Assembly on the development and implementation of the accountability statute. This Commission report will be submitted by January 1 of each year and will contain, as provided by statute, Commission decisions "to retain a sum not in excess of two percent of the appropriation for any institution which has not implemented or is failing or refusing to some degree to implement any part of the higher education accountability program or fails to comply with the policies and standards of the Commission in regard to the program."

Essentially, Commission recommendations will be based on its judgment about whether institutions have implemented their Commission approved accountability programs (see 3.01).

4.00 Process for Submission of Accountability Plans to the Commission

To assist the Commission in carrying out its responsibility to provide policy direction to the accountability program, the Commission staff will analyze governing board approved proposals, and make recommendations on them to the Commission. It is the Commission's intention that this be a formative process which assists governing boards and institutions to develop rigorous accountability programs. The Commission staff may be consulted at any time in the development of an accountability program.

4.01 Governing board staffs must submit existing institutional goals and objectives for
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undergraduate education for their institution to Commission staff by June 1, 1988. The Commission staff will provide comments on these goals and objectives to the governing boards.

- 4.02 Five (5) copies of a governing board approved proposal for an institution's accountability program should be submitted to the Commission. Proposals should be organized according to the outline in the next section of this policy, "Content of Proposals for Institutional Accountability Programs."
- 4.03 Upon receipt of a governing board approved proposal, Commission staff will review it for completeness, according to the outline in "Content of Proposals for Institutional Accountability Programs." Commission staff then, based on its own analysis, and, in some cases that of outside consultants commissioned by staff, will work with the proposing governing boards to resolve any issues that are raised. All reviews done by outside consultants will be sent to the proposing board as well as to the Commission.
- 4.04 The Commission will act on institutional accountability programs as submitted by the respective governing boards no later than the March 1989 Commission meeting.

5.00 Content of Proposals for Institutional Accountability Programs

To ensure that the Commission's accountability program responsibilities are met, each proposal submitted to the Commission will include the following:

- 5.01 Description of the process used in developing the proposal

This section should include a complete description of how the institutional accountability program was developed, and what groups, both internal and external to the institution, participated. Consistent with statute, institutions should describe how the public at large was involved in developing the proposal.

- 5.02 Institutional Goals and Objectives for Undergraduate Education

This section should contain a statement of the institution's goals and objectives for undergraduate education. The objectives should be written in such a way that a demonstration of their attainment is possible. Section 4.01 includes the process requirements for developing goals and objectives.

- 5.03 A Statement of Expected Student Performance as it Relates to the Goals and Objectives of Undergraduate Education

This section should contain a list of the institution's expected student outcomes described in terms of knowledge, intellectual capacity and skills. Other dimensions of student growth such as self-confidence, persistence, leadership, empathy, social responsibility, and understanding of cultural and intellectual differences may also be included.

5.04 Improvements in Student Knowledge and Skills Between Entrance and Graduation

This section should contain a description of how information on student improvement from entrance to graduation will be assessed, used and reported.

5.05 Completion and Retention

This section should contain a description on how the institution plans to collect and report student completion and retention information.

5.06 Evidence of After-Graduation Performance

This section should describe how evidence to demonstrate after-graduation performance in such areas as employment, professional advancement, and achievement in graduate/professional school is to be collected and reported.

5.07 Student/Alumni Satisfaction

This section should contain a description of how information on student/alumni satisfaction with their education will be assessed and used.

5.08 Dissemination Plan

This section should describe how the institution plans to disseminate information gathered in its accountability program in addition to reporting to the Commission annually.

5.09 Cost Description and Source of Funds

Cost estimates for implementing the accountability program and how it will be funded should be included in this section.

5.10 Affirmative Action Requirement

Plans should specify how minority student data will be disaggregated and reported.

6.00 Reporting and Program Revisions

To assist the Commission in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities, the following provisions should be followed:

6.01 Each institutional proposal should contain a section describing the format of its annual accountability report to the Commission.

- 6.02 The Commission staff will comment on each annual report to the governing board. At this time, Commission staff may also suggest accountability program revisions to the governing board.
- 6.03 Program revisions proposed by institutions/boards must be approved by the Commission (see 3.01).
- 6.04 After the first year cycle, plans must be amended to include minorities both internal and external to the institution, in the planning and dissemination process. If the affirmative action elements are not included in the December 1, 1988 submissions, governing boards must submit their amended plans by June 1, 1989 for Commission approval.