

# Quality in the UW System



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## Quality Metrics

- Quality is easier to describe in relative terms rather than absolute terms
- From indicators to measures
- Efficiency vs. Effectiveness

The challenge is to identify measures for various indicators of quality,  
e.g. good teaching or faculty may be indicators of quality, but how are they measured?

Depending on the constituent, there may be more or less interest in  
EFFICIENCY e.g. access, persistence and graduation, than  
EFFECTIVENESS e.g. improving learning competencies, enhancing the learning environment.

## The Quality Matrix

Quality in the UW System

Stakeholder	Program Quality	Institutional Quality	System Quality
Public Employers Communities			
State Government Governor Legislature			
Federal Gov't			
Board of Regents			
Parents			
Students			
Faculty			
Accrediting Agencies			

There are multiple dimensions of quality,

That are evaluated by multiple stakeholder groups,

With various quality indicators for the different dimensions and groups.

What we promised in October was to seek input from various stakeholder groups on what they perceived to be the indicators of quality, and to identify key indicators of quality across stakeholder groups.

## Program Quality

- Newly proposed programs
- Continuing Programs
  - Rankings
  - Program Review and Accreditation

What we currently do to assess and assure quality:

Program Quality –

Newly proposed programs:

Program approval process looks at inputs and process, e.g. faculty and other resources, objectives, assessment.

Five year joint review looks at whether objectives have been met.

Continuing programs:

Campus program review – every 5 – 10 years

Program accreditation – for some programs, e.g. business, engineering, etc.

Rankings by various organizations.

## Institutional Quality

- Achieving Excellence Goals
  - Access
  - Academic support services to facilitate success
  - Campus environment fostering learning and personal growth
  - Efficient and effective utilization of resources
  - Additional institutional measures
- Rankings e.g. U.S. News and World Report

Institutional quality is assessed in the annual *Achieving Excellent* report, with four goals for institutions to address, and other institution specific measures.

Rankings using various quality measures.

# System Quality

## Achieving Excellence Goals

- Access
- Persistence and completion
- Learning competencies and critical thinking skills
- Ability to function in a dynamic world community
- Guided research, mentorship and citizenship
- Stewardship of resources

Annual *Achieving Excellence* report with 6 goals, each with multiple indicators and measures of effectiveness/efficiency.

Our challenge:

Short term: to assure that we don't sacrifice quality while we seek to protect access with diminished resources.

Long term: to work on the assessment of the more qualitative indicators of quality, the things that are difficult to count.

Christine: report on her study identifying quality indicators among different stakeholders, which we will follow up with efforts to refine the assessment of some of the more qualitative indicators of quality.

Frank: how we address the short term challenge of assuring we don't sacrifice quality while we seek to protect access in a period of diminished resources.

# Data Sources

## Focus Groups

- Student Ambassadors
- Faculty Representatives
- Academic Staff
- Provosts
- Alumnae
- Prospective Students/Families
- Community Groups

Data Source	Stakeholder	#	Data Source	Stakeholder	#
Focus Groups	Student Ambassadors, statewide	22	Meeting Notes	Education Committee of Board of Regents: discussing quality with Chancellors and others	12
	Faculty Representatives, statewide	9	Letter	Letter about quality from a Provost to President Lyall	1
	Academic Staff, statewide	10			
	Provosts, statewide	6	In-depth Interview	Parent of 3 UW System students (Madison, Stevens Point, Stout)	1
	Alumni 1) UW-Milwaukee 2) UW-Stevens Point, Marshfield, & Marathon County	18	Emailed Comments	Business leaders (Madison and Milwaukee areas)	3
				Alumnae (UW-Marshfield; UW-Parkside)	2
	Prospective Students/ Family Members (Missouri & Penn.)	4			
	Community Participants 1) Latino Community Members & Leaders (Madison area) 2) African American Community Leaders (Madison area) 3) Lesbian and Gay Community Leaders (Green Bay area)	28			
			<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>116</b>	

## Important Caveats

- ❖ Statements reported here are those of individuals or clusters of participants.
- ❖ Participants were not randomly selected; this is, by definition, a non-representative sample.

# Aspects of Quality: Overall

## Highest Priority

- Mission
- Access
- Faculty
- Teaching
- Climate
- Diversity

When I look at all the data together, there is a clear list of concepts that were very important to people but Stakeholders sometimes had different ideas about each of these concepts. For example, to some stakeholders access may refer to non-traditional students; while for others, it may refer to low income students or “my daughter/son,” or access to a specific campus rather than to the UW System.

Mission - generally that of an individual institution and its specific niche; quality is associated with its adherence to that mission

Faculty : passionate experts, current in diverse fields; productive scholars who create and disseminate new knowledge; credentials matched to institutional need; have “real world experience;” catalysts for intellectual growth; trained as advisors; involved in their communities; connected to current students, and available to alumnae. Active, engaged teaching style; sensitive in interactions with all students; and the knowledge and skill to teach from the perspectives of many cultures and viewpoints.

Teaching Quality education “is” exposure to great teachers; “only essential ingredient in a quality education.” Quality teaching combines theory with practical applications; and it’s a reciprocal process of teaching and learning.

Climate - students experience full inclusion in activities in and out of the classroom; inclusive structure to classroom activities, syllabi, course assignments and readings; consistent expectations for everyone; diversity questions are posed to all classmates, rather than to students who may be members of a population being discussed; mentoring offered to all & consistent with need and cultural heritage; and the special strengths and benefits of an institution are made available to all; faculty and staff understand & appreciate a wide range of cultures & help students develop similar competencies.

Diversity –exposure to human variation, including people from many walks of life and many cultures within and external to the United States; includes students, faculty and staff; quality education can only be accomplished if people are educated in an environment that reflects the world and that includes an appreciation for the intrinsic and educational value of differences; includes curricula that expose students to the cultures and thinking patterns of people in many parts of the world. Discussed by one participant as:

“ . . . the richness of the diversity in experiences, in thinking, in culture, in age, in gender, in ethnicity . . . because that’s a high indicator of quality for me, to be a part of . . . a university that can offer that kind of experience.”  
[Alumni focus group]

### High - but not highest – Priority Overall

Citizenship	Nurturing	Critical thinking/ Liberal arts	Outreach
Reputation	Advising	Respect	Student focus
Class Size			

## Balancing Complexity with Simplicity

One strategy –

Reanalysis by stakeholder clusters, i.e.,  
compare internal stakeholders to external  
stakeholders

This gives us a snapshot from two different perspectives

- while avoiding over-complexity that may be less useful in understanding  
people's perspectives.

## Internal Stakeholders

- Regents
- Chancellors
- Provosts
- Faculty Representatives
- Academic Staff
- Student Ambassadors

## External Stakeholders

- Alumnae
- Business Leaders
- Parent
- Prospective student families
- Community leaders/members

## Highest Priority

### Internal

- Mission
- Faculty
- Critical thinking/  
Liberal arts

### External

- Climate
- Diversity
- Access

Important point: virtually all concerns identified by those within the academy are shared by those external to the academy. The difference is primarily in priority. Institutional missions, faculty, and liberal arts top the “within” list, while climate, diversity and access are of utmost importance to external respondents, but neither group excludes any of these concerns.

A full report, based on these data is in process. It will detail the thinking of various participant groups, and some of the similarities and differences in thinking. But this gives you a sense of some general differences in perspective.

High – but not highest – priority

#### Within the Academy

Access  
Teaching  
Citizenship/community involvement  
System Leadership  
Institutional & UW System Reputation

#### External to the Academy

Student nurturance  
Teaching  
Faculty  
Student focus  
Institutional & UW System Reputation  
Advising  
Citizenship/community involvement

**Many of the items identified as quality indicators are monitored via the accountability report, for example:**

- Access
- Fostering Critical Thinking
- Preparation for a Diverse World
- Advising
- Fostering Citizenship Learning
- Out of Classroom Learning

## Improving Quality

Several of the factors identified as aspects of quality are addressed via major UW initiatives, for example:

- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Initiative
- Plan 2008
- Advising Task Force
- Climate Initiative
- Plan 2008
- Wisconsin Campus Compact

SoTL - highly praised by educators when I have presented this study.

•Strong belief that it improves and re-invigorates their teaching – even long-time teachers.

Advising Task Force - a statewide group helping institutions to enhance academic advising.

UW System Climate Initiative addresses:

AODA issues

Sexual Assault

Diversity

Classroom climate, e.g., Lumina Grant Proposal

*Plan 2008*: seeks to improve Educational Quality through increasing Racial and Ethnic Diversity at UW System institutions.

*The Wisconsin Campus Compact* assists students, faculty, and institutions in becoming better citizens.

## Ways to Improve Quality

- Hone institution-specific missions;
- Improve balance of faculty contribution: teaching/  
research / service
- Make more dramatic inroads toward increasing  
diversity;
- Provide supportive environment in and out of the  
classroom;
- Attend to class size in relation to quality instruction.

## Current Uses of the Data

- Clarify stakeholder thinking about liberal arts;
- Shape requests for external funding to improve campus climate;
- Provide mission related data to institutions;
- Assist Plan 2008 Coordinators with Phase II plans;
- Develop annual ACSS objectives.

Comments from participants have already been used to help UW System Administration understand how participants think about liberal arts education, and to shape requests for external funding to improve campus climate. Data will be provided to institutions to consider as they hone their mission statements. Comments will be made available to institutional coordinators of *Plan 2008* to assist in developing Phase II plans. The UW System Office of Academic and Student Services will use results of the study in developing annual objectives.

## In Sum

- Different constituents identify and prioritize different quality indicators.
- We can measure some aspects of quality at the system level; others must be addressed at the institutional level.
- UW has initiatives in place to address some priorities identified by participants.
- New approaches are needed to continue to improve quality.

Associate Vice President Frank Goldberg will now:

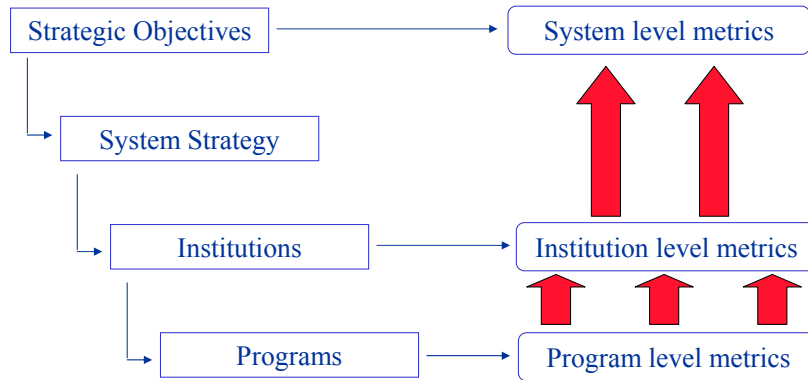
- Draw on some of these indicators;
- Match them with quantitative measures we now have available to meet our short term needs;
- And discuss implications of our examination of quality.

## Implications for Measuring Quality

- Quality is multifaceted and textured
- Quality is in the eye of the beholder
- Quality processes are important to stakeholders

- Earlier this year several Board members suggested that it would be useful to develop a small set of indicators to measure quality and track changes in quality over time.
- The research done by Christine can help inform this process. The following are implications of her work for developing these measures.
- Because quality is not a simple concept, it is difficult to measure and cannot be fully captured by numerical scores.
- Different stakeholders approach the issue of quality in different ways – what may be quality from one person’s perspective, may not be quality from someone else's perspective.
- Although the ultimate measures of quality are measures of outcomes, when asked what a quality education is, most respondents focused on the quality of inputs and processes.

## Strategic Context for Measuring Quality



- As both Ron and Christine have indicate, we are not starting from scratch.
- Program quality is assessed at the institutional level through the program review process and at the discipline level by a myriad of accreditation agencies.
- Institutional quality is currently measured in institutional accountability reports that are provided to the Board in February of each year. The 2003-04 edition of these reports will focus more directly on institutional quality measures that are tied to mission.
- System level quality is summarized each year in *Achieving Excellence* where the System reports on 20 quality measures.
- Importantly, this slide indicates that the set of measures that the Board chooses to use to track quality should be driven by the Board's strategic objectives.

## Quality Inputs & Processes Lead to Quality Outcomes

- Input Quality & Process quality are leading indicators of outcomes quality
- Leading indicators should:
  1. Be linked to quality outcomes
  2. Be measurable

- Restricted budgets most immediately impact the quality of inputs and processes. It is only after a period of time that outcomes begin to suffer.
- If we are committed to preserving quality outcomes, it is prudent to monitor the impact of budgets on inputs and processes.
- Once outcomes begin to deteriorate, it may be too late to make the policy adjustments needed to reverse the decline.
- The best indicators have:
  - A clear and understandable linkage between the indicator and the quality outcome.
  - Should be measured using quantitative metrics.

## Potential Leading Indicators

- Student-Faculty Contact
- Support Services for Students
- Campus Environment
- Access

Budget constraints impact inputs and processes first, and eventually impact outcomes.

- The ability to attract and retain outstanding faculty and the interaction between faculty and students are critical to quality teaching and learning, a core university mission.
- Student support services are essential to ensuring student success. By providing assistance to help students make good decisions, by engaging them in the intellectual and cultural life of the campus and by providing out of classroom learning experiences, student services improve the quality of learning.
- A safe and diverse campus environment with adequate facilities is essential for student retention and student success.
- Access for all populations including immediate high school graduates, non-traditional adults, and low income students is an indicator of the quality service being provided to the citizens of Wisconsin.

## Student-Faculty Contact

### Potential Measures:

- Student-faculty ratio
- Average class size
- % SCH taught by faculty

## Support Services for Students

### Potential Measures:

- # of academic advisors per 1000 undergraduates
- Student satisfaction with advising

## Campus Environment

### Potential Measures:

- Campus safety statistics
- Race/ethnic diversity
- Maintenance backlog

## Access

### Potential Measures:

- Access rate for immediate new freshmen
- Non-traditional student enrollment
- Access rate for low income students

## Next Steps

- Board of Regents considers and adopts measures as part of its planning process.