MINUTES OF MEETING

NATIONAL POLICY BOARD
ON HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

September 8-9, 1994
One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC


Association board representatives in attendance: Jacquelyn M. Belcher (AACC), Roger R. Blunt (AGB), Samuel Williamson, Jr. (NAICU), Michael F. Adams (NAICU).

Others in attendance: Vincent Ferrandino, Harland Bloland, David Carter, Donald Stewart, Richard Ferguson, Archie LaPointe, Kay McElroy, David Merkowitz, James Harvey, Jane Wellman, Mary Beth Kait, Diana Cecil, John Vaughn, Jennifer Wingard.

Introductions and Announcements

The meeting of the National Policy Board (NPB) was called to order at 9:00am on September 8, 1994. James Rogers chaired the meeting on September 8, and Robert Atwell chaired the meeting on September 9. All participants were welcomed and introduced.

James Rogers announced that the regional accrediting directors and commission representatives had met on the previous day, September 8. They discussed items on the NPB agenda, and decided that the regional agencies will develop proposals related to: (1) accreditation of distance learning, (2) cross-regional accrediting activities, and (3) international education.

Common Accreditation Standards

David Carter, chair of the Accreditation Standards Committee, presented drafts of eligibility requirements and accreditation standards that could be adopted by the regional accrediting
commissions. He explained that the committee had developed standards to assess learning outcomes as recommended by participants at the Wingspread Conference, although more standards may be needed in order to more fully address the uniqueness of "electronic institutions" or education in foreign countries.

James Rogers reported that the regional directors had unanimously decided to recommend to their commissions that the proposed eligibility requirements should be adopted verbatim in all regions, and the accreditation standards should be used as a template against which the new organization could evaluate the regional accrediting standards as part of the recognition process. (One of the accrediting directors emphasized that something important is happening in the accrediting community -- they are saying that they are willing to put themselves in the hands of somebody who is not directly a part of that community -- and they should get credit for it!)

During the meeting, there was extensive debate about the pros and cons of also recommending verbatim adoption of the accreditation standards in all regions, either now or at a later time. The NPB finally reached consensus and they unanimously adopted the following resolution:

*The National Policy Board on Higher Education Institutional Accreditation recommends the following policy statement to guide the proposed new Higher Education Accreditation Board.*

To be recognized by the Higher Education Accreditation Board, any applying institutional accrediting entity will assure that:

(a) it applies the eligibility requirements developed by the NPB (see draft in Attachment 1, page 8) and

(b) its accreditation standards conform to the common core standards (see draft in Attachment 2, page 11).

Members of the NPB also suggested that desired characteristics of college and university graduates listed on page 3 of the Wingspread Report could be used as a preamble to the accreditation standards.

**New Organization**

The NPB reviewed several proposals for a new organization. There was considerable NPB discussion about the following components of the proposals: (1) the purpose of the new organization, (2) the powers, responsibilities, and composition of its Board of Directors, and (3) the role of the accrediting commissions in the organization. The NPB decided to propose specific recommendations for those areas and to seek input from accrediting commissions, institutions, and others during fall and spring meetings.
The NPB unanimously approved the following resolution:

*The National Policy Board on Higher Education Institutional Accreditation recommends the proposed framework for the new national organization (see Attachment 3, page 19).*

The NPB also recommended that: (1) the organization be named "Higher Education Accreditation Board" and (2) funding be provided by institutions through designated fees collected by the accrediting agencies and passed on to the new organization.

The NPB acknowledged that more details about the organization would have to be added and bylaws must be developed. A plan for the transition from the NPB to the new organization also must be developed. However, it was considered premature to do so until decisions had been made about the recommended general framework for the organization at the next meeting of the NPB.

**Public Disclosure**

Charles Cook discussed a proposal for increasing information to be made available to the public about accreditation and accredited institutions. This increased public disclosure would require new responsibilities for accreditors and institutions.

*The NPB endorsed the public disclosure report in principle and requested that the recommendations in it be presented for public comment (see Attachment 4, page 21).*

At the next meeting of the NPB, it will consider the public comments and develop a final set of recommendations for the new organization relative to information that should be available to the public from accrediting commissions and accredited institutions.

**Public Information Strategies**

Throughout the meeting, NPB members stressed the urgency to inform and seek input from college/university presidents and others about the NPB proposals, i.e., (1) common eligibility requirements and accreditation standards, (2) the proposed new organization, and (3) public disclosure of accreditation information.

David Merkowitz discussed a strategy to provide information and seek comment from institutions and others, which included: (1) continued press releases, (2) development of a special report on accreditation to be prepared by James Harvey that will be used to facilitate discussions, and (3) discussions at the six fall regional accreditation meetings, four
fall association meetings, and two February association meetings. There was some
discussion about additional regional meetings, but the NPB decided that the already
scheduled meetings were sufficient.

The NPB endorsed the proposed public information plan. It requested that the special
report on accreditation be prepared as soon as possible and that a draft be reviewed by
the Executive Committee prior to publication. It also was recommended that NPB
representatives request to be on the agendas of other related associations and
organizations.

Recognition of Accrediting Agencies

In various discussions throughout the meeting, the NPB declared its intention to establish
a process to "recognize" accrediting agencies that meet criteria established by the new
organization. The NPB made clear its intention for this recognition to include specialized
accrediting agencies, and possibly some institutional accrediting agencies, that accredit
colleges and universities. All recognized agencies would be expected to function in the best
interests of the institution as a whole, and they would be asked to help the NPB develop a
definition of what that includes and suggest recognition criteria. Presidents and chief
academic officers may be invited to participate in the process.

As discussed previously, it is expected that some of the recognition criteria for institutional
accrediting agencies will include adoption of common eligibility criteria and assurance that
regional accreditation standards conform to the common accreditation standards. The NPB
acknowledged that different, but equally rigorous, standards would need to be developed for
specialized agencies seeking recognition.

Howard Simmons discussed a proposal to engage in a planning process that would include:
(1) discussions with a variety of affected organizations and accrediting agencies, (2)
development of proposed standards and procedures for recognition, (3) opportunities for
public comment, and (4) development of a recognition program for the new organization.

The NPB endorsed the proposed plan of action to engage in a planning process to
develop a recognition program by October 1995, and the Board encouraged Howard
Simmons and Billie Stewart to commence discussions with accreditors and others as
soon as possible (see Attachment 5, page 24).

Wingspread Conference and Focus Groups

Kay McClenny reported on the Wingspread Conference (June 1994) and focus groups
(July-August 1994) that the Education Commission of the States (ECS) co-sponsored in order to provide a public voice to the NPB as it develops changes in accreditation. Both activities included college and university administrators and faculty, public policy makers, and business and philanthropic leaders. Students were included in two focus groups.

She noted that external participants believe that outcomes should be the definer of quality in higher education, while the higher education groups were reluctant to even engage in conversations about quality. Most participants (1) see the role of accreditation as "warranting" what the institution says about the outcomes it defines, (2) want agreement on the basis of a baccalaureate degree, (3) stress the importance of public disclosure, and (4) want more than a pass/fail accreditation. The NPB agreed that accreditation needs to be improved and strengthened. However, the NPB believes that more is being done to address quality than the public knows about, that accreditors have not done an adequate job of communicating about it, and that there should be more public participation in the accreditation process.

*The NPB recommended that ECS pursue ways to engage college and university presidents in conversations with public policy and corporate leaders about issues related to quality in higher education.*

**Restructuring the Triad**

Jane Wellman reported on the proposal that she had developed with James Appleberry and David Warren to address problems with Part H of the Higher Education Amendments. The committee recommended that changes in accreditation should be included in a comprehensive legislative proposal that also includes recommendations for the State Postsecondary Review (SPRE) and the federal eligibility and certification sections. However, they cautioned against allowing the NPB's recommendations for deregulation to be folded into administration proposals to cut back on student aid.

The NPB agreed that the following five areas for change are priorities: (1) accreditation should be a private process, (2) the role of accreditation is to assure educational quality and institutional viability, (3) the review and monitoring of compliance with Title IV is a federal responsibility, (4) federal oversight of accrediting agencies should be limited to the application for recognition, and (5) federal authority over accreditation standards should be eliminated.

*The NPB endorsed the committee report and recommended that strategic decisions about how to move forward should be delayed until after the November 1994 elections. The NPB agreed that Jane Wellman should continue to recommend refinements in the agenda in consultation with the government relations staff of the associations and representatives of the regional accrediting agencies.*
Outcomes Assessment

Because of increased pressure to require more assessment of learning outcomes in accreditation, the NPB invited the testing companies to discuss the latest developments in outcomes assessment. Richard Ferguson (President of the American College Testing Program), Donald Stewart (President of The College Board), and Archie LaPointe (Director of the Center for Assessment at the Educational Testing Service) led a very informative discussion.

Richard Ferguson said that assessment has less to do with technology and more with how it is used by institutions. He discussed several issues that the NPB should consider as it develops accreditation requirements for assessment, i.e., the need for (1) common terminology in assessment, (2) using multiple methods and types of assessment, (3) consideration of how the resulting data is to be used, (4) careful interpretation of data, (5) attention to reporting, using, and communicating the results of data, etc.

Donald Stewart said that assessing outputs should not exclude also assessing inputs; there is a close connection between what higher education can produce and what it has to produce it with. He also cautioned that assessment must be part of an ongoing process of academic review leading to institutional improvement. All the speakers indicated that although adequate technology is available to begin assessing, there needs to be additional technology to complete the picture.

Archie LaPointe agreed that it is better to focus on institutional improvement rather than national or state statistics. He provided information about the joint efforts of The College Board and ETS to identify assessment and evaluation instruments and provide information about their content or purpose, appropriate level, cost, scoring, and results. Current methodology allows institutions to: (1) look at entering freshmen, predict the rate of growth that might be reasonable, and measure progress; (2) measure general outcomes of higher education; (3) talk about content and skills, and measure value added by pre- and post-tests; (4) measure themselves against like institutions (either by Carnegie category or smaller groups of institutions); (5) compare various departments (e.g., physics, biology); (6) measure themselves in terms of growth of critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills; (7) use student questionnaires to determine what they bring to the process; and (8) use faculty questionnaires to determine how they are training, educating, and developing student talent.

Transition to the New Organization

Robert Atwell recommended that the NPB should aim toward its termination by June 30, 1995, and spend the intervening time gathering public input about the NPB proposals, meeting to change course if needed, and facilitating a transition to the new organization. While the NPB agreed with the direction of that recommendation, there was some
skepticism about the reality of having a new organization operational and providing NPB support in its initial stages by June 30.

The NPB recommended a target date of June 30, 1995, to effect a transition from the NPB to a new organization. However, at the next meeting of the NPB, (1) the termination date may be reconsidered based on information received during the fall and spring meetings and (2) it will develop a plan to assist the new organization as it begins operations.

Next Steps for the NPB

The NPB discussed the next meeting and interim actions regarding funding and decision making. The following decisions were made:

The NPB will meet again in March for two days in a retreat type setting to: (1) consider input from the fall and spring meetings, (2) develop detailed plans for the new organization, and (3) plan for the transition from the NPB to the new organization. The American Council on Education will bill the NPB member organizations for another quarter’s dues to finance the NPB until the next meeting.

The NPB Executive Committee will continue to make decisions that are necessary before the March meeting of the full NPB.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30pm on September 9, 1994.

Minutes prepared by

Billie Stewart, Consultant

Attachments:

1 - Proposed Eligibility Requirements for Regional Accreditation
2 - Proposed Accreditation Standards for Regional Accreditation
3 - Framework for Proposed New Organization
4 - Proposed Recommendations for Disclosure of Accreditation Information
5 - Proposed Plan to Develop a Recognition Process
PROPOSED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
FOR REGIONAL ACCREDITATION

ER#1  AUTHORITY
The institution is authorized to operate as an educational institutional and award degrees by an appropriate governmental organization or agency as required by each of the jurisdictions or regions in which it operates.

ER#2  MISSION
The institution’s mission is clearly defined and adopted by its governing board consistent with its legal authorization, and is appropriate to an institution of higher education.

ER#3  GOVERNING BOARD
The institution has a functioning governing board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for ensuring that the institution’s mission is being carried out. Its membership is sufficient in size and composition to fulfill all board responsibilities.

The governing board is an independent policy-making body, capable of reflecting constituent and public interest in board activities and decisions. A majority of the board members have no contractual, employment, family or personal financial interest in the institution.

ER#4  CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
The institution has a chief executive officer who is appointed by the governing board and whose primary responsibility is to the institution.

ER#5  ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
The institution has sufficient staff to provide the administrative services of the institution.

ER#6  OPERATIONAL STATUS
The institution is operational with students actively pursuing its degree programs

ER#7  DEGREE DESIGNATION
The institution offers degrees with designations appropriate to the content, length, and level of the programs offered.

ER#8  EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
The institution’s principal degree programs are congruent with its mission, based on recognized field(s) of study, and are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994
PROPOSED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS  
(Continued)

ER#8 ACADEMIC CREDIT

The institution awards academic credits or uses units based on credit hour equivalency.

ER#9 EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Educational objectives for programs offered by the institution are clearly defined and published, and the institution engages in regular evaluation of its programs to determine if those objectives are met.

ER#10 GENERAL EDUCATION

The institution defines and incorporates into all of its undergraduate programs a substantial component of general education.

ER#11 FACULTY

The institution has a core of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution, and sufficient in size to support all of the institution’s educational programs.

ER#12 STUDENT SERVICES

The institution provides for all of its students appropriate student services and development programs consistent with student characteristics and its institutional mission.

ER#13 ADMISSIONS

The institution has adopted and adheres to admission policies consistent with its mission that specify the qualifications of students appropriate for its programs.

ER#14 INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

The institution owns or otherwise provides access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and all of its educational programs.

ER#15 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The financial resources of the institution are sufficient to support its mission and educational programs.

ER#16 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The institution regularly undergoes and makes available an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or an appropriate public audit agency.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994
PROPOSED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
(Continued)

ER#17 INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

The institution is engaged in systematically evaluating how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes, including assessment of student learning and documentation of institutional effectiveness.

ER#18 PUBLIC INFORMATION

The institution publishes in its catalog or other appropriate places accurate and current information that describes purposes and objectives, admission requirements and procedures, rules and regulations directly affecting students, programs and courses, degrees offered and the degree requirements, costs and refund policies, grievance procedures, academic credentials of faculty and administrators, and other items relative to attending the institution and withdrawing from it.

ER#19 RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION

The institution provides assurance by the governing board that it adheres to the eligibility requirements, accreditation standards and policies of the Commission, and that it agrees to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994

10
PROPOSED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
FOR REGIONAL ACCREDITATION

NOTE: While all standards and their sub-sections function as indicators of quality within an institution, those sub-sections highlighted with an xxx designation represent specific items predicated on the institution’s ability to demonstrate an outcome of some sort that bears directly on the issue of educational quality.

STANDARD ONE: MISSION/PURPOSE

The institution has essential statements of mission and goals that define the institution, including its educational activities, its students, and its place within the higher education community.

1.1 The institution includes in its official publications, such as the institutional catalogue, its mission and goal statements adopted by its governing board.

1.2 The institutional mission and goal statements include objectives for which accomplishment can be documented and made public.

1.3 Institutional mission and goals inform decision-making at the institution.

1.4 The institution evaluates and revises its mission and goal statements on a regular basis.

STANDARD TWO: INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The institution demonstrates honesty and truthfulness in its representations to its constituencies and the public; in its pursuit of truth and the dissemination of knowledge; in its treatment of and respect for its faculty, staff and students; and in its relationships with its accreditation association.

2.1 The institution represents itself accurately and consistently to its constituencies, the decision-making public and prospective students through its institutional catalogues, publications and statements.

2.2 The institution subscribes to, exemplifies, and advocates high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and in all of its dealings with students, faculty, staff, external agencies and organizations, and the general public.

2.3 The institution, in keeping with its mission, demonstrates through its policies and practices an appropriate understanding of issues of equity and diversity.

2.4 The institution demonstrates through its policies and practices its commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

2.5 The institution fully and accurately discloses to the association information that the association’s policies and practices may require.

2.6 The institution regularly evaluates and revises as necessary its institutional policies, practices, and publications to ensure integrity in all its representations about its mission, programs and services.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994
STANDARD THREE: GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The institution has a governing board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution. The institution also has an administrative staff of sufficient size to enable the institution to achieve its goals. The institution’s administrative and governance structures ensure appropriate roles for faculty, students, and staff, and facilitate candid communication among the institution’s constituencies.

3.1 The size, duties, responsibilities, ethical conduct requirements, structure and operating procedures of the governing board are clearly defined and published. The board acts in a manner consistent with them.

3.2 The governing board appoints and evaluates the chief executive officer and confirms appointment of other major academic and administrative officers.

3.3 The governing board approves the institutional mission statement, academic programs, degrees, certificates, and diplomas.

3.4 The governing board establishes broad institutional policies, and delegates to the administration and faculty responsibility to administer and implement these policies.

3.5 The governing board includes adequate representation of the public interest.

3.6 The governing board regularly evaluates and revises as necessary its policies, practices, and performance to ensure to its constituencies that it carries out its responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner.

3.7 The institution is organized and staffed to reflect its purposes, size, and complexity and to provide effective and efficient management.

3.8 The duties, responsibilities, and ethical conduct requirements of institutional administrators are clearly defined and published. The administration acts in a manner consistent with them.

3.9 Administrative officers are qualified by training and experience to perform their responsibilities and are evaluated systematically and regularly by the institution.

3.10 The institution ensures that the faculty has a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance.

3.11 In multi-campus systems, the division of responsibility and authority between the system office and the institution is clear; and system policies and procedures are clearly defined and equitably administered. Policies, procedures, and practices are evaluated on a regular basis and are revised as necessary.

3.12 The institution clearly states and publicizes the role of students in institutional governance.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994

12
PROPOSED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
(Continued)

STANDARD FOUR: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The institution offers collegiate level programs that culminate in identified student competencies and lead to degrees in recognized fields of study.

4.1 GENERAL STANDARDS

4.1.1 The institution demonstrates that its degrees and programs, wherever and however they are offered, support the mission of the institution.

4.1.2 The institution provides sufficient human, physical, and financial resources to support its educational programs and to facilitate achievement of the goals and objectives of those programs wherever and however they are offered.

4.1.3 The institution uses degree designators consistent with the program content, degree objectives, and student mastery of knowledge and skills including, where appropriate, career preparation competencies.

4.1.4 The institution ensures the quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness of all of its courses and programs wherever and however they are offered.

4.1.5 All undergraduate and graduate programs have a coherent design and are characterized by appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, synthesis of learning, and use of information and learning resources.

4.1.6 Instructional delivery systems and modes of instruction are compatible with the mission and goals of the institution, and are appropriate to the needs of its students.

4.1.7 The institution provides evidence that all off-campus, continuing education (credit and non-credit) and other special programs are integral parts of the institution and are designed, approved, administered, and periodically evaluated under established institutional procedures.

4.1.8 When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements for enrolled students so that they may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.

4.2 UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

4.2.1 All undergraduate degree programs are designed to provide students a significant introduction to the broad areas of human knowledge, their theories and methods of inquiry, and focused study in at least one area of inquiry.

4.2.2 The institution documents the technical and professional competence of students completing its vocational and occupational programs.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994
PROPOSED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
(Continued)

4.2.3 Undergraduate education ensures competence in oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and technological literacy.

4.2.4 The institution requires of all undergraduate programs a component of general education that is published in clear and complete terms in its general catalog and that includes criteria for its evaluation.

4.2.5 The institution has clearly articulated policies for the transfer of credit. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution ensures that the credits accepted for general education are comparable to its own general education courses. Where patterns of transfer from other institutions are established, efforts are undertaken to formulate articulation agreements.

4.2.6 The institution designs and maintains academic advising programs to meet student needs for information and advice, and adequately informs and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function.

4.3 GRADUATE EDUCATION

4.3.1 Programs of study at the graduate level are guided by well defined and appropriate educational objectives and differ from undergraduate programs in greater depth of study and increased demands on student intellectual or creative capacity.

4.3.2 All graduate and professional programs are based upon an undergraduate education that includes a substantial and coherent general education component.

4.3.3 The institution ensures resources beyond those expected for undergraduate programs are available to support graduate programs.

4.3.4 The institution offering doctoral programs ensures that the level of expectations, curricula, and resources made available are significantly greater than those provided for master’s and baccalaureate level programs.

4.4 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

4.4.1 The institution’s processes for establishing and evaluating its educational programs are clearly defined, encompass all of the institution’s offerings, are conducted on a regular basis, and are integrated into the institution’s overall planning and evaluation. The processes recognize the central role of faculty in developing, implementing, and evaluating the educational programs.

4.4.2 The institution uses the results of its assessment activities to improve its educational programs.

4.4.3 The institution provides evidence that its program reviews lead to the improvement of the teaching and learning processes at the institution.

4.4.4 The institution identifies and publishes the expected learning outcomes for each of its undergraduate and graduate programs. It demonstrates that students completing degree programs, no matter where or how they are offered, have achieved those stated learning outcomes.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994

14
PROPOSED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
(Continued)

STANDARD FIVE: INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

The institution's information and learning resources and services are sufficient to support the institution's programs in whatever format and wherever they are offered.

5.1 Institutional information and learning resources, including its own, and any equipment needed to access the holdings of libraries, media centers, computer centers, and other repositories are sufficient to support the courses, programs, and degrees offered wherever they are offered.

5.2 Learning resources and services are readily accessible to all students and faculty. Appropriate educational equipment and materials are selected, acquired, organized and maintained to help fulfill the institution's purposes and support the educational program.

5.3 The size and professional qualifications of the learning resource staff employed by the institution are sufficient to provide appropriate assistance to users of the library, media centers, computer centers, and other learning resources.

5.4 The institution provides sufficient and consistent financial support for the effective maintenance, security, and improvement of its information and learning resources.

5.5 If the institution depends on other institutions for information and learning resources support for its educational programs, it documents that the resources and services are adequate, easily accessible, and utilized.

5.6 The institution periodically and systematically evaluates the adequacy and utilization of its learning and information resources and services and makes appropriate changes as necessary.

STANDARD SIX: FACULTY

The institution has sufficient qualified faculty, full-time and part-time, to support its educational programs and services wherever they are offered and by whatever means they are delivered.

6.1 All faculty possess academic and/or professional qualifications appropriate for their assignments.

6.2 The faculty includes adequate numbers of individuals whose full-time commitment to the institution is sufficient to assure the accomplishment of teaching and other responsibilities essential for the fulfillment of institutional mission and goals.

6.3 Faculty participate in academic planning, curricular development and review, academic advising, and institutional governance.

6.4 Consistent with institutional mission and goals, faculty are engaged in research, scholarship, and creative activity.

6.5 The institution has an orderly process for recruiting and appointing all faculty; faculty personnel policies and procedures are published and provided to faculty.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994
PROPOSED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
(Continued)

6.6 The institution regularly evaluates the performance of all faculty in order to assure that they are carrying out their instructional and other responsibilities.

6.7 The institution clearly defines the role and scope of part-time and adjunct faculty in a manner compatible with the mission and goals of the institution and the effective delivery of its academic programs.

6.8 The institution provides faculty with appropriate opportunities, consistent with the institutional mission, for continued professional development and improved instructional effectiveness.

6.9 The institution fosters and protects academic freedom for all faculty.

STANDARD SEVEN: STUDENTS

The institution recruits and admits students appropriate to its programs. It fosters a supportive learning environment and provides services necessary its students to achieve their educational goals.

7.1 The institution publishes admissions policies consistent with its mission and appropriate to its educational programs, and uses admissions practices that are consistent with those policies.

7.2 The institution provides to all prospective and enrolled students current and accurate information about its educational programs, its admissions policies and graduate requirements, social and academic policies, refund policies, and grievance procedures.

7.3 The institution identifies the learning needs of its student population and provides services and programs for meeting them. The institution regularly evaluates and revises as necessary its student services and programs to ensure that it is meeting the identified needs of its students.

7.4 The institution supports a co-curricular environment that fosters intellectual, and personal development for all of its students, and encourages civic responsibility.

7.5 The institution, in keeping with its mission, gives conscious attention to the ethnic, socio-economic, and religious diversity among its students while evidencing a strong regard for their rights and responsibilities.

7.6 The institution provides reliable and accessible student services to its students no matter where the student is enrolled or by whatever means the educational programs are offered.

7.7 The institution periodically and systematically evaluates the appropriateness, adequacy and utilization of student services and uses the results of the evaluation as a basis for improving the student services program.

7.8 The institution assures that its intercollegiate, intramural, and recreational programs are consistent with and supportive of the institution's mission and goals.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994
PROPOSED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
(Continued)

STANDARD EIGHT: INSTITUTIONAL FINANCE

The institution has adequate financial resources to support its programs and services, and demonstrates financial stability sufficient to assure their continuing support. The institution manages its financial affairs with integrity.

8.1 The institution’s financial documents, including its audit and budget, demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support institutional programs and services.

8.2 The institution’s financial management system creates appropriate control mechanisms and provides dependable information for sound financial decision-making.

8.3 The institution practices effective oversight of institutional finances, including management of financial aid, externally funded programs, services and research, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments. The institution regularly evaluates its financial management and uses the results of the evaluations as a basis for revisions in its financial management system.

8.4 The institution ensures that its financial plan and planning efforts support its institutional goals and are linked to other institutional planning efforts.

8.5 The institution ensures that its fund raising efforts and auxiliary activities support the programs and services of the institution, are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, and are conducted with integrity. Fund raising activities are evaluated on a regular basis and the results of the evaluations are used as a basis for revisions in the fund raising efforts and activities.

STANDARD NINE: PHYSICAL RESOURCES

The institution has sufficient physical resources to support its institutional purpose and goals.

9.1 The institution’s physical resources are adequate to support its educational programs and services wherever and however they are offered.

9.2 The management, maintenance and operation of all institutional physical facilities are adequate to ensure the continuing quality of the facilities necessary to support the programs and services of the institution.

9.3 Physical facilities at all site locations where courses, programs, and services are offered are constructed and maintained in accordance with legal requirements to ensure access, safety, security and a healthful environment.

9.4 Physical resource planning and evaluation support the institutional goals and are linked to other institutional planning and evaluation efforts.

9.5 Computer resources and laboratories are adequate to support the institution’s educational and administrative needs.

DRAFT, September 8, 1994

17
PROPOSED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
(Continued)

STANDARD TEN: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
The institution, appropriate to its mission and its purposes as a higher education institution, develops and implements a broad-based and integrated system of evaluation and planning to determine institutional effectiveness and uses the results for improvement.

10.1 The institution develops and implements procedures to evaluate the extent to which it achieves institutional goals.

10.2 The institution engages in systematic and interrelated planning for and evaluation of its activities, including teaching, research, and public service.

10.3 The institution uses the results of its systematic evaluation activities to improve its instructional programs and institutional services and activities.

10.4 The institution integrates its evaluation and planning processes to identify institutional priorities for improvement.

10.5 The institution clearly defines its evaluation and planning processes and involves appropriate constituencies in them.

10.6 The institution provides the necessary resources for effective evaluation and planning processes.

10.7 Institutional research is integrated with and supportive of institutional evaluation and planning.

10.8 The institution systematically reviews its institutional research efforts, its evaluation processes, and its planning activities to document their on-going effectiveness.

10.9 The institution uses information processes from planning and evaluation to communicate matters of quality assurance to the public.
FRAMEWORK OF PROPOSED NEW NATIONAL ORGANIZATION (HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION BOARD)

A. PURPOSES

1. Ensure quality in higher education through periodic recognition and evaluation of accrediting associations.

2. Establish and maintain common standards of good practice among member entities.

3. Ensure the integrity and autonomy of non-governmental accreditation.

4. Promote public trust in higher education accreditation.

5. Encourage, sponsor, or conduct research related to assessment, accountability, and measurement of quality to provide for the continuous improvement of the accreditation process.

6. Serve a governmental relations and public relations role on behalf of higher education accreditation.

B. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD

1. Recognize accrediting entities in higher education.

2. Develop recognition standards, policies, and practices.
   a. Evaluate accrediting entities.
   b. Determine enforcement sanctions, as appropriate.

3. Adopt annual budget, levy fees, provide for staffing and operations, and manage the financial affairs of the organization.

4. Establish policies with regard to inter-accrediting entity activity, including the adjudication of disputes.

5. Establish policy regarding accreditation of international education programs.

6. Conduct master planning for accreditation.

7. Provide leadership to the accrediting community.
C. NUMBER AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. The Board will consist of 21 members; 11 will be public members; at least 7 others will be institutional chief executive officers and 3 members may be chosen from other constituencies within higher education.

2. The public members should be (1) influential persons with an informed, broad-gauged community point of view, (2) widely representative of the professions, business, and labor, and (3) able to contribute a fresh, outside perspective to accrediting issues. Some, but not all, of the public members should be experienced college and university trustees and regents representing major research, private, and two-year institutions.

3. The chief executive officers should represent various types of community colleges, colleges, and universities and be from the various regions of the country.

4. Consideration will be given to gender, ethnicity, and geography in the appointment of members. No individual currently employed by a state or federal agency may be appointed to the Board of Directors.

5. The Board will appoint one advisory committee, made up of directors and chairs of regional accrediting agencies, and may appoint other advisory bodies, such as one made up of faculty members, as needed.

D. OFFICERS OF THE BOARD, TERMS, AND DUTIES

1. The officers of the Board of Directors will be a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

2. The officers will be elected by the members of the Board of Directors and serve terms of one year.

3. The Chair of the Board of Directors will be any member elected by the Board.

4. A president of the new organization will be named to serve as chief executive officer and will serve at the pleasure of the Board.
PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISCLOSURE OF ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

Suggestions For Change. What follows are some suggestions to increase available information about the quality of accredited colleges and universities. These are not detailed proposals, but rather bare outlines of things that might be done.

New Responsibilities For Accreditation

Each accrediting commission should make publicly available a summary of its qualitative findings regarding individual institutions following each evaluation.

Rationale. Existing accreditation documents which speak to quality -- self-study and team reports -- being designed for other purposes, are not responsive to public disclosure demands for useable information about institutional quality. A third instrument is needed.

This document, which should be no longer than one or two pages, could have the following content:

- a brief description of institutional purposes
- summary evidence of the accomplishment of those purposes
- institutional strengths and weaknesses relative to the institution's ability to accomplish those purposes
- a perspective on future plans to strengthen the institution
- an institutional response

Each accrediting commission should inform trustees of the results of accreditation reviews giving particular emphasis to institutional quality and its improvement.

Rationale. Trustees are the primary representatives of the public interest in American higher education. Some of the regionals communicate actions taken directly to at least the board chair of individual institutions; other do not. This recommendation affords the public interest important additional protections.

The regional accrediting community as a whole should issue a public report on a periodic basis giving evidence about the achievements and problems of American higher education.

Rationale. If there is a need for information about individual institutions, there is also a need for reliable information in the aggregate about the quality of the enterprise. The likely targets would include policy makers and the media who could be well served by such report. It should be substantive, candid, and accessible.

DRAFT, August 25, 1994
PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
DISCLOSURE OF ACCREDITATION INFORMATION
(Continued)

The regional accreditation community, through the successor organization to COPA, needs to fashion mechanisms to encourage greater understanding of and confidence in its activities.

Rationale. While it is unreasonable to think that undertaking this activity would solve accreditation's credibility problem, advocacy is part of the solution. This should be primary to the mission of the successor organization to COPA.

New Responsibilities For Institutions

Colleges and universities should make information publicly available on a regular basis regarding their effectiveness in terms of student outcomes.

Rationale. It is not practical nor appropriate for the accreditors to serve as sole source for more disclosure. Furthermore, greater disclosure by institutions themselves is in keeping with accepted notions of their public responsibilities.

It is fair to say that institutions do a good job describing the opportunities they make available to students. What they don't do is provide information on how successful their students are in taking advantage of those opportunities. There are a variety of reasons for this, but if colleges and universities wish to enhance the confidence placed in them, they need to be serious about collecting and using evidence regarding the achievement of their educational goals. Three options suggest themselves. In each case, these could become accreditation requirements, akin to disclosing information about resources. Though it is possible to make all of some of these voluntary, an approach which is somewhat intriguing.

Option One. Each institution should develop and make publicly available on a regular basis information about the findings and conclusions it has reached through its assessment activities related to student outcomes.

Rationale. This is an open-ended approach and would build upon the common requirement among the regionals that institutions engage in the assessment of their effectiveness but would provide little specific direction as to what must be assessed or the methodology to be used. This option would prescribe no particular content beyond the broadest general outline.

Option Two. Each institution should develop and make publicly available on a regular basis information giving evidence as to the degree it is achieving its educational goals.

Rationale. This second technique is tied closely to stated institutional purposes. While qualitative or quantitative screws could be tightened or loosened through specified content, the approach here would endeavor to recognize the uniqueness of institutions and afford a significant degree of flexibility, which would result in useful information about individual institutions.

DRAFT, August 25, 1994
PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISCLOSURE OF ACCREDITATION INFORMATION  
(Continued)

Option Three. Each institution should develop and make publicly available on a regular basis information on the extent to which its graduates demonstrate achievement of a set of commonly agreed-upon goals for the undergraduate experience.

Rationale. There is an general expectation that an undergraduate degree is supposed to mean something in terms of the skills and intellectual capacity of graduates, regardless of where it is earned. For example, all would agree that college graduates ought to be literate. Under this proposal, once those common expectations were defined (no small task), it would be up to the institution to demonstrate how and the degree to which its graduates have fulfilled them.

Process. As noted, the recommendations made here are purposefully sketchy. It seems unlikely that a workable and acceptable solution to the public disclosure dilemma could be achieved around the National Policy Board table. If the Board is serious about doing something meaningful about public disclosure, there is a need to place the task on another table. That is, there needs to be a broadly participatory process which would take some or all of the ideas expressed above, or other possibilities, and develop more detailed proposals for change which would, in turn, be considered by each of the regionals. Obviously, a common approach is the desired, maybe the only acceptable goal. Furthermore, while proceeding cautiously, it is no less important to move deliberately and with dispatch.

DRAFT, August 25, 1994

23
PROPOSED PLAN
TO DEVELOP A RECOGNITION PROCESS

Developing a new type of "recognition" for accrediting entities (institutional and specialized) requires planning, creativity, and the collective wisdom of a variety of people and groups. Therefore, the NPB and the subsequent new organization will engage in a planning process to establish an appropriate "recognition" function by October 1995. The following activities and times are suggested:

October, 1994 - January, 1995

1. Howard Simmons and/or Billie Stewart will meet with small groups of individuals who would be affected by a new "recognition" process:
   - representatives from CORPA, ASPA, and other possible nongovernmental recognition groups for the purpose of (a) affirming the continuing need for non-governmental recognition of accrediting entities and identifying its role and function, (b) identifying areas in which there are similar or competing agendas, and (c) discussing ways to cooperate
   - representatives from accrediting agencies that might be eligible for such "recognition" by the new organization to determine their interest
   - representatives from the USDE to explore what could be included in a nongovernmental "recognition" process that might lead to reduced federal recognition
   - other associations (e.g., associations in the Higher Education Secretariat)

January - February, 1995

2. Prepare a report for the NPB with recommendations for the new "recognition" program.

March, 1995

3. Submit the report and recommendations to the NPB for its endorsement in principle.

4. NPB appoints the new organization’s Board of Directors or a special committee charged with responsibility for developing specifics of the new recognition program.

DRAFT, September 9, 1994
March - April, 1995

5. The new Board of Directors or appointed committee drafts the structure for a "recognition" program, including proposed eligibility and recognition criteria.

May - June, 1995

6. Circulate a description of the proposed recognition program and recognition criteria to the larger higher education community, accrediting agencies, other recognition bodies, federal and state agencies, associations, and others for comment.

July - August, 1995

7. Consider all comments and develop final plans for the recognition program.

September, 1995

8. Widely distribute the final plans for recognition.

9. Establish all mechanisms necessary to implement the recognition program within the new organization.

10. Make arrangements with CORPA regarding the relationship of the accrediting agencies and associations to that organization.

October, 1995

11. Begin receiving new applications or grandfather accrediting agencies into the new organization.