

## State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Agenda Item

**Item:** #7.d – Action on New Policy on the Assessment of Student Learning

**Date of Meeting:** May 18, 2010

**Presenter:** Dr. Joseph G. DeFilippo  
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**Most Recent Review/Action:**

No previous Council review/action

Previous review/action

**Dates:** March 16, 2010

**Action:** Council revised its existing assessment guidelines by removing the requirement that institutions assess the six Virginia core content areas in terms of “value-added.”

**Background Information/Summary of Major Elements:**

At its March 16, 2010 meeting Council considered a resolution to remove the requirement that institutions do “value-added” assessment of student learning from its current assessment policy. The general purpose of the resolution was to accommodate the Council of Presidents’ request that Virginia assessment requirements be made more efficient in relation to reporting on assessment that is done for accrediting bodies, in particular the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). While Council acted to remove the value-added requirement, staff were requested to study the possible implementation of a completely revised approach that would more thoroughly align Commonwealth policy with accreditation requirements, in particular with regard to reporting requirements and to the scheduling of assessments relative to the timing of institutional accreditation reviews. SCHEV subsequently convened an ad hoc working group of institutional staff in Richmond to develop a new policy. As a result of this meeting, together with subsequent online discussion and review with the Instructional Programs Advisory Committee (IPAC), a new policy is proposed here for Council consideration.

The proposed policy, Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on the Assessment of Student Learning, is included as an appendix to this agenda item. It includes the following main elements:

- citation of SCHEV Duty #10 on assessment from the Code of Virginia;

- retention of the six Virginia core areas of undergraduate learning, as per prior Council policy;
- principles that articulate the responsibility of institutions to design an assessment program that expresses the values of their missions and to document assessment results and the use to which they are put for improving education;
- SCHEV responsibilities for receiving institutional assessment plans, facilitating feedback, and making assessment results publicly available;
- procedural flexibility that allows institutions to design a schedule that aligns with the timing of accreditation reviews.

Over the course of a single cycle of assessment, it is expected that the proposed policy will reduce the number of institutional reports to SCHEV from (up to) eighteen to two. It is proposed that the new policy take effect immediately.

**Materials Provided:**

- Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on the Assessment of Student Learning

**Financial Impact:** There will be a lessening of costs for institutions and SCHEV.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** N/A

**Resolution:**

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia adopt the Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on the Assessment of Student Learning, effective immediately.**