

NJ College Promise



New Jersey College Promise....

Four Goals in the Public Interest

How to Achieve Them and Measure Success (Highlights and Examples)

The year-long, New Jersey College Promise effort has led to the development of four inter-related goals on productivity, affordability and governance. The goals draw liberally from the suggestions and recommendations of the New Jersey College Promise Advisory Council which met three times in 2007-2008, focus groups conducted by ASCU, and deliberations of the ASCU board, as well as the contents of a November 2007 joint report from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems entitled: *Good Policy, Good Practice*. Each goal contains suggested approaches for the nine New Jersey state colleges and universities and for the State of New Jersey. Metrics are also suggested to measure implementation and progress. *Note: these are highlights of Advisory Panel deliberations prepared by Richard Novak, panel facilitator, Vice President for Public Sector Programs and Executive Director of the Center for Public Trusteeship and Governance of the Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C.*

GOAL ONE: Send More New Jerseyans to New Jersey Colleges; Make College More Affordable

Big ideas: Extend capacity, especially for emerging student populations. Shorten the amount of time it takes for students to achieve a degree—improving average four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates—in ways that are consistent with individual institutions’ varying missions and thereby producing more annual graduates, including those of lower incomes. Recognize obstacles to these goals that institutions can address, apart from other “external” variables such as a lack of adequate high school preparation and family economic circumstances.

Example approaches encouraged for institutions:

- ◆ Identify areas where delegation of staff resources could be used to increase support for those students at risk of dropping out (particularly freshmen students) or not graduating on-schedule
- ◆ Implement four-plus-one programs to achieve both baccalaureate and graduate degrees in five years, or pilot accelerated combined-degree programs in select areas
- ◆ Enable students, where feasible, to get the courses they need to graduate on or ahead of time through distance learning or institutional partnerships
- ◆ Consider development of models of tuition policy that address changes in family disposable income or other approaches to provide predictability over four years to entering freshmen

- ◆ Partner with schools to increase dual enrollment options for high school students and county college students seeking college-level credit and participate in statewide initiatives on college readiness standards

Examples of what some institutions are doing already:

New Jersey City University, aided by a recently awarded \$2.7 million U.S. Department of Education Title V grant, has been gearing up a major effort to help its highly diverse student body overcome the academic, social, cultural and economic barriers to academic success. Most NJCU students are the first in their immediate families to attend college. This student support effort recognizes that many of the students enrolled at the University have significant family and employment responsibilities. Goals include higher grades, increased graduation rates and completion of workforce-critical math and science courses and programs.

Ramapo College, this fall, is introducing a refurbished Adult Learners Program, offering individuals the opportunity to complete a degree, pursue a new one, or enroll in specific courses for career advancement.

Montclair State University has many combined degree programs including BS/MS 5-year programs, a dual master's program that can be completed in 2-3 years, and BS/doctoral programs in the health fields in conjunction with Rutgers and UMDNJ that can be completed in 6-8 years.

Montclair State University worked closely with the Prudential Company and state government on statewide high school reform effort that resulted in recommendations to increase high school graduation standards, to help curtail the need for remedial courses and help increase the likelihood of timely college degree completion.

The College of New Jersey has a collaborative, 7-year medical degree program with UMDNJ.

The College of New Jersey started the EOF Promise program to ease financial burdens and other pressures on students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Results: 96% freshman to sophomore retention rate (2004 cohort)

Example approaches encouraged for the State of New Jersey:

- ◆ Encourage widespread Advanced Placement courses in all high schools and transfer agreements
- ◆ Support initiatives to improve college access, accountability, affordability and timely completion of degrees and help colleges meet needs in high demand fields, through strategic allocations of state resources

Possible Metrics:

- ◆ Statistically significant improvements in 4-year, 5-year and 6-year graduation rates of incoming freshman cohorts, especially in the 4-year rate
- ◆ Evidence that lower income students are reflected in higher completion rates

GOAL TWO: Increase overall institutional academic, administrative, and campus operations productivity; use savings not only to improve services but to reduce increases in tuition

Big Ideas: Accelerate and institutionalize management “best practices” with other institutions and business, and collaborate to make the New Jersey state colleges and universities among the most productive globally, which will assist in addressing state needs and priorities

Approaches encouraged for institutions:

- ◆ Collaborate with other institutions in the offering of high-cost but necessary programs such as nursing
- ◆ Begin to seriously explore alternative delivery of undergraduate courses, including:
 - Reengineering delivery of large enrollment, lower division courses utilizing technology (beginning with one institution to engage the National Center for Academic Transformation)
 - Leveraging technological advancements for savings and greater effectiveness
 - Collect sound institutional data on costs and productivity to facilitate sound decision making (e.g., marginal cost analysis, peer analyses, other cost studies)
- ◆ Collaborate on programs, administration and facilities to realize economies of scale, embark on new cooperative ventures, and leverage productivity enhancements
- ◆ Create new partnerships with business and industry and to address both higher education and critical workforce needs

Example of what some institutions are doing already:

The College of New Jersey has implemented a comprehensive energy audit conservation program and is committed to becoming “carbon neutral.”

The College of New Jersey, through a federal NSF grant, is helping disadvantaged students in K-12 stay on a science-oriented trajectory especially in biology and chemistry. It is also working with high schools to promote careers teaching in cities through its Urban Teacher Academy.

Montclair State University, years ago, identified a set of national peer institutions and has been gathering and using comparative data from these institutions with its own empirical information.

Richard Stockton is planning a teacher education collaboration with Cumberland County College. The college already has scores of articulation agreements and dual-degree partnerships with other New Jersey institutions of higher education.

Richard Stockton College has made myriad improvements in energy efficiency, having saved millions of dollars already, including through a state of the art geothermal HVAC system. It is now working with consultants on ways to reduce property management and construction costs.

Ramapo College recently launched the Center for Innovative and Professional Learning supporting postgraduate professional education, workforce development and alternative learning.

Ramapo College is now instituting unit-by-unit needs assessments and priority setting precisely aligned to its overall strategic goals-- to ensure that sound planning drives the institution's budget.

Approaches encouraged for the State of New Jersey:

- ◆ Design state policies that would reward institutions
 - that collaborate on course and degree offerings
 - for overall graduates (degree production)
 - for graduating at-risk students
 - for producing graduates in high-demand fields
 - for overall productivity improvements
- ◆ Deregulate in areas that are expected to improve cost control
 - assumption of workers compensation risk management by the institutions
 - increase flexibility and cost-saving options regarding campus construction

Possible Metrics:

- ◆ Reductions in tuition as a percentage of New Jersey family disposable income
- ◆ Progress made on NCHEMS productivity/cost scales and progress made in a global context

GOAL THREE: Strengthen public trust by demonstrating effective governance
--

Big Ideas: Further define the benefits of institutional autonomy in fulfilling a commitment to opportunity, prosperity and public trust – in service to New Jersey.

Approaches encouraged for institutions:

- ◆ Demonstrate how they are fiscally accountable, accountable for public service, and accountable for making progress on their mission-related goals
- ◆ Assume a leadership role statewide in urging and facilitating college preparation for students from all walks of life
- ◆ Conduct regular board education and orientation that keep New Jersey College Promise objectives near the top of the agenda

Example of what some institutions are doing already:

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey was among the first group of public colleges in the nation to sign up for the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) in conjunction with federal recommendations to show progress on accountability and college outcomes data. Stockton's particularly high graduation rates are among these outcomes.

The College of New Jersey is also an early implementer of VSA . Its excellent graduation rates are among the outcomes listed in the VSA.

The College of New Jersey has created the Center for Institutional Effectiveness to better assess institutional performance and student outcomes.

All nine institutions are highly compliant with the best practices based on Sarbanes Oxley, the federal accountability law applicable to publicly-traded companies: e.g. employment of external auditors, adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles; policy protecting “whistleblowers.”

Approaches encouraged for the State of New Jersey:

- ◆ Eliminate unproductive state regulation and oppose shifts to higher regulation schemes (e.g., enable public-private sector partnerships, more flexibility in trustee selection)

Possible Metrics:

- ◆ Opinion polls taken before and after indicate heightened public trust of state colleges

GOAL FOUR: Use New Jersey College Promise’s earned recognition to build a constituency and elevate the state colleges and universities to a higher priority on the state’s public policy agenda

Big Ideas: Broaden public support for investment in public higher education and New Jersey’s future.

Approaches encouraged for institutions:

- ◆ Document institutional productivity gains and communicate them frequently to the press, public, and policymakers and integrate productivity gains into the larger institutional and accountability agenda
- ◆ Have systematic communications with employers for feedback on how graduates are doing and on the skills needed for future

Possible Metrics:

- ◆ Collected and reported employment gains of recent state college and university graduates with New Jersey employers
- ◆ Graduates in the workforce six months and 24 months after graduation.

Example: 81% of the 2006 graduates of The College of New Jersey indicate that they are working in New Jersey.