

August 2, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: State University Campus Presidents

FROM: Provost Peter D. Salins

SUBJECT: Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment Funding

As you know, System Administration and SUNY campuses have been working extremely hard to implement Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment (SCBA), as directed in the SUNY Board of Trustees' June 2004 resolution. During the past several months, my staff members have been developing a plan for funding SCBA and allocating resources to campuses for this purpose fairly and efficiently. This plan projects costs across the first two cycles of SCBA (i.e., 2006-09 and 2009-12) and encompasses the following activities: professional development, administration and scoring of rubrics and of nationally-normed tests, and the administration and scoring of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).

This is how we envision the system funding support associated with each component of SCBA:

Professional Development

Based on recommendations from the Assessment Recording Task Force and the Faculty Development Task Force as well as input from campuses, a major activity of SCBA for 2006-07 will be professional development for faculty involved in the assessment process. Specifically, System Administration and the General Education Assessment Review Group (GEAR) will organize a comprehensive series of regional workshops that focus on the administration and scoring of the SUNY rubrics for Critical Thinking, Basic Communication [Written], and Mathematics. In addition, some funds will be set aside during the out-years for other appropriate forms of professional development (e.g., conferences, workshops on specific aspects of SCBA).

Administration and Scoring of Rubrics

Beginning in 2006-07 and continuing throughout the out-years, campuses will receive funding for administering and scoring rubrics in the assessment of Critical Thinking, Basic Communication [Written], and Mathematics, using the schedule campuses provided when they submitted their SCBA plan.

While it has been challenging to determine the best way to allocate resources for this purpose, I believe we have developed a fair and reasonable approach based on the following assumptions:

1. Most campuses are administering their rubric-based assessments in a course-embedded fashion, with individual faculty members scoring student artifacts as part of the student's grade.
2. Under GEAR guidelines, campuses are required to assess 20% of students enrolled in a particular student learning outcomes area and to have a second reader conduct reliability checks on 20% of student artifacts.
3. The most equitable way to fund the rubrics is on a "per student" basis, referring to the number of students campuses are actually assessing.

I have recommended that, in the funding of the rubrics, campuses receive \$65 per student artifact that requires a reliability check. To illustrate, a campus that has 1,000 students enrolled in general education Mathematics courses at the time of the Mathematics assessment would be expected to assess 200 of those students and to conduct reliability checks on 40 of those students, meaning its allocation from System Administration would be \$2,600 for that outcomes area.

Prior to the Fall 2006 semester, each campus intending to use rubrics for SCBA will receive from the Office of Academic Affairs a summary confirming the number of students we believe the campus will be assessing for each of the three outcomes areas as appropriate, based on the first round of campus-based general education assessment, and the anticipated allocation for the first SCBA round.

Nationally-Normed Tests

As indicated in earlier communications from my office, in order to attain the best pricing from ACT, we have to ask campuses using the ACT CAAP for Basic Communication and/or Critical Thinking to administer these tests in the same academic year. For the first round of SCBA, both these measures will be administered in 2007-08, while during the second round the ACT CAAP for Critical Thinking will be conducted in 2009-10 and the ACT CAAP for Basic Communication will be conducted in 2010-11. Campuses that have indicated they will use these tests should revise their assessment schedules accordingly.

For Mathematics, we continue to attempt to identify an acceptable nationally-normed test for SCBA, and will share that information with campuses as soon as it is available. In the meantime, campuses wishing to use such a measure should schedule these assessments for 2008-09 and 2011-12.

Prior to the Fall 2006 semester, each campus intending to use nationally-normed measures for SCBA will receive from the Office of Academic Affairs a summary confirming the number of students we believe the campus will be assessing for each of the three outcomes areas as appropriate, based on the first round of campus-based general education assessment. As announced in earlier communications, System Administration will coordinate this process with ACT and will pay ACT directly for the administration and scoring of the ACT CAAP tests.

NSSE/CCSSE

As indicated in the implementation schedule (see Table 1 in attachment), the NSSE and CCSSE will be administered every three years, with the first administration of the NSSE scheduled for 2007-08 and the first administration of the CCSSE scheduled for 2008-09. As announced in earlier communications, System Administration will coordinate this process with NSSE and CCSSE and will pay NSSE and CCSSE directly for the administration and scoring of these tests.

In summary, we should all be proud of the steady progress we have made in the implementation of Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment, and I am especially pleased to be able to announce System Administration's funding commitments to this endeavor. I continue to appreciate the cooperation and general good will that I have encountered when meeting with campus administrators, faculty, and staff as we all work to make the transition to this next phase of the SUNY Assessment Initiative. Please direct specific questions about Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment and its implementation to Assistant Provost Patricia Francis, at Patricia.Francis@suny.edu or (518) 443-5644.

Attachment

Copy: Chief Academic Officers
Mr. Wieszalis
Dr. Reiser

Table 1

SCBA Implementation Schedule, 2006-2012

Item	Year					
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Professional Development	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rubrics	X	X	X	X	X	X
ACT CAAP (CT)		X		X		
ACT CAAP (BC)		X			X	
Nationally-Normed Test (Math)			X			X
NSSE		X			X	
CCSSE			X			X

Note. "X" indicates that activity will take place during the designated year.