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State Higher Education Executive Officers

Thirty Years of Academic Review and Approval by State Postsecondary Coordinating and Governing Boards

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About the Author

Dr. Robert Barak is a Professor Collaborator at Iowa State University where he teaches and conducts research on Higher Education. He retired in 2005 after 32 years on the staff of the Board of Regents in Iowa where here served in numerous capacities including Interim Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Academic Affairs and Research. He served for over 25 years as the staff person for the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education a voluntary coordinating body for all sectors of postsecondary education in Iowa. He has served as a consultant to 23 states, individual institutions, foreign counties and educational associations. He is currently writing a history of statewide coordination and governance of higher education in the United States.

Preface

A survey of the academic program review and approval activity of state-wide postsecondary coordinating and governing boards was concluded in 2006. This study is the latest in a series of survey/studies of state level program review and approval begun roughly thirty years ago by this author and colleagues. The boards selected for this survey were all members of the State Higher Education Executive Officers organization known as SHEEO. The author gratefully acknowledges the continued participation of the SHEEO and their staffs who exercise responsibility for academic program review and approval within their respective states, and to the SHEEO organizational staff for their generous assistance with these surveys.

Definition of Terms

This report provides a summary of the various state boards' responses to this survey as well as a comparison with previous studies of state-level program review and approval. One factor that did not change over the 30 years covered by this study was the wide variations in scope of authority, policies, procedures, organization, structure and environment of the various state entities responsible for postsecondary education. Consequently it was necessary to adopt a few generic terms to cover key elements. The term **"state boards"** is used throughout the report to refer to the various state wide coordinating and governing agencies, departments, commissions and boards for postsecondary education in the United States. For purposes of this study, the term "**academic program review"** refers to the assessment of *existing* academic programs, and the term **"academic program approval"** relates to the review/approval of *newly proposed* academic programs or in some instances the modification of existing programs. This distinction is necessary for purposes of analysis to distinguish between these two separate but similar activities by state boards. Only academic program reviews are included in this series of studies. Different boards often use these two terms interchangeably. The specific definition of what constitutes an academic **"program**" is determined by each of the respective boards and consequently there are a variety of definitions. The state board's responsibility for program review and approval could be the result of broad grants of statutory responsibility in the case of some boards (often the case for governing boards) or specific statutory responsibility for others. The boards subsequently adopt procedures and policies to implement the statutory authority. The references to the policies and procedures of the various boards noted herein may be either statutory or based on board policy.

Introduction

Various descriptive reports over the years have identified program review/approval as one of the three major responsibilities typically held by statewide higher education coordinating and governing boards along with planning and budgeting. Either implicitly or explicitly program review and approval were among the early intended functions of statewide boards from their inception and have grown and developed through the years along with the various higher education boards themselves. Beginning in the 1970s this author has periodically conducted surveys of state higher education board program review and approval activities [Barak 1976, Barak and Berdahl 1978, Barak 1979, 1982, 1984, 1986, and 1991] and provided various descriptive analyses of these activities [Barak 1977, with Engdahl, 1980, Barak 1981, 1982,

1983, 1986, with Miller 1986, with Breier 1990, and with Mets 1995]. The results of the current study are perhaps best introduced by reflecting on the findings of these earlier studies and later by comparative analysis with the current results.

The report is organized into three sections: (I) a brief introduction to the earlier surveys, (II) the current survey, and (III) a summary and conclusion.

I. Earlier Studies of Program Review and Approval: An Historical Perspective.

The Early Years
State government interest in assessing academic programs has a long history dating back to at least the late 1800's with the establishment of the first consolidated governing boards for higher education (sometimes referred to as "unified' or "consolidated" boards) such as South Dakota (1896), Florida (1906), and Iowa (1908) [Chambers, p.15] For example, Iowa's consolidated governing board was established in large part due to Legislative concern with "unnecessary duplication" and was given a mandate for program elimination. [Boyd, p.12, also see Chambers, p.15] Early surveys conducted by the U.S. Office of Education (the predecessor of the current U.S. Department of Education) in the 1930s often made mentioned of issues related to program quality and concerns with program duplication [Ells]. Some states, such as Oregon, even created a State Board of Higher Education Curricula, whose duty it was to determine what courses of study or departments, if any, should not be duplicated and to determine and define the courses of study to be offered [Leonard, p.43].

Formal program review and approval appear to have had their origins the 1940s with the establishment of the early coordinating boards, councils and commissions. Many of these early coordinating boards were established after Oklahoma's lead in establishing a coordinating board. Various program evaluation responsibilities were assigned to many of these new boards or added on in subsequent years [Chambers, Layton]. In one of the earliest comprehensive studies of statewide higher education coordination, Lyman Glenny noted that one of the major advantages of coordination was the program review and approval function which, was "preventing unnecessary overlap and duplication" of academic programs [Glenny, p.205].

By 1960 it was reported that all sixteen (16) of the existing consolidated governing boards and three (3) of the eight (8) existing coordinating boards had authority for program approval. Another four (4) coordinating boards had authority for only "review and recommendation only" [Martorana and Hollis].

Major Growth in the 1960s and 1970s

In a major study of statewide coordination in 1971, Robert O. Berdahl concluded that "all [coordination entities] must have the power to approve new programs" and "to recommend elimination of existing programs" [Berdahl, p.246]. Encouraged by such recommendations from Berdahl and others, the 1960s and particularly the 1970s were a period of major growth in the programmatic oversight responsibilities of statewide coordinating and governing boards. Some examples of these efforts included the program review and approval activities in Florida, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana and New York. The states of Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee all carried out quantitative reviews from 1974-78. In Virginia alone this activity resulted in the termination of 143 academic programs including 10 at the doctoral level. In Florida the reviews also included some qualitative factors in addition to quantitative factors [Mingle].

In 1978, the Education Commission of the States provided the first comprehensive analysis of state-level academic program review and approval [Barak and Berdahl]. This report covered the review and approval activities of the various states as well as an analysis of the policies and procedures used by the various boards. It was clear from this report that the scope of state program review and approval, the specific criteria (or indicators) used, as well as the practices, procedures and policies of the various state boards all varied widely [Barak and Berdahl, p.46]. While there was clearly no one model of review, there were a few somewhat common areas: the classification of responsibility and the major criteria used for the reviews.

For the purposes of analysis, the various state practices were classified as "no program review and approval," "assuring institutional compliance with a board review and approval policy," and "state board staff being the primary component of the review process" [Barak and Berdahl, p.46]. The review/approval "criteria" was another part of the study where at the macro level there was some commonality among the major criteria used by state boards. Broad groupings typically included are: cost, quality, duplication, need and relationship with institutional or state board planning [Barak and Berdahl, pp.25+]. The growth of program review at the state level paralleled and, in some instances, was a part of what drove the growth and development of the state-level boards themselves.

Some state boards required by policy and /or procedures that the institutions conduct periodic reviews of their academic programs as an alternative to reviews conducted by the state board

staff. It is not surprising that institutional program review in the 1970s was described as being "consonant with external pressures acting upon higher education for program review from the states in the form of legislative reviews or audits and reviews by state-level coordinating boards" [Conrad and Wilson p.9].

Continuing Growth in the 1980s
It was during the 1980s that interest in program review and approval at the state and institutional levels was at its peak. Typical of this new interest was Mississippi's board, which in 1981 acted to upgrade quality and eliminate unnecessary duplication by designating specific institutional missions, roles and scope. The board also implemented an academic program review procedure [Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, p.2]. Encouragement for such actions came from at least five national panels addressing the role of the states, and particularly state higher education boards and the need for program review and approval. All five were highly supportive of the need for systematic program review. In addition, a several state panels favored greater state board participation in the review process. The national panels included the Sloan Commission on Government and Higher Education, the National Commission on Higher Education Issues (AAHE), the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and the Education Commission of the States [Barak, 1984, pp.2-5].

Institutional program reviews proliferated in this period as reflected in a study by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), which showed that 82 percent of colleges and universities and most higher education boards had some form of program review [Barak, 1982]. The number of different kinds of reviews grew so quickly that colleges and universities frequently complained that there were too many reviews, which often included state reviews, accreditation reviews, institutional reviews and sometimes system-level reviews. Even though these different reviews frequently served different purposes, there was often considerable overlap and duplicative activities [Barak and Breier 1990, pp.119+].

A survey of state-level program review and approval in 1984 found three major trends. First, there had been an expansion of state higher education board activity and/or authority in program review and approval in a number of states. Second, the reviews had become more comprehensive and systematic in a number of states. Third, the reviews of existing programs in some states appeared to be increasingly linked to state-level planning and budgeting activities [Barak, 1984, p.5]. Three basic procedures for program review were identified: (1) states that actual conduct program reviews using state board staff and/or outside (out of state) consultants; (2) states that require the institutions to conduct the reviews and report findings; and (3) some combination of the other two procedures.

Number of State Boards Conducting Program Approval (i.e., New Programs) of at Least Some Academic Programs by Level of Authority and Sector as of July 1, 1983.

RECOMMEND ONLY

	Public		Independent	
2 YR	4 YR	Univ	All	Some
7	7	8	2	2

APPROVE

	Public		Independent	
2 YR	4 YR	Univ	All	Some
34	34	39	4	9

Number of State Boards Conducting Program Review (i.e., Existing Programs) of at Least Some Academic Programs, by Level of Authority and Sector as of July 1, 1983.

RECOMMEND ONLY

	Public		Independent	
2 YR	4 YR	Univ	All	Some
16	16	18	1	2

APPROVE

	Public		Independent	
2 YR	4 YR	Univ	All	Some
21	22	23	1	3

Growing Pains in 1990s

State board policies and even state statutes continued to be modified during the 1990s, often addressing issues such as "duplicative reviews," by combining various evaluative processes in some states. The 1991 survey report showed that three states experienced changes in statutory authority for program approval. Two of these changes resulted in an increased scope of responsibility and one was reduced. Twenty state boards reported that policies and procedures had changed. Fourteen of the 20 resulted in more stringent policies and two in less stringent policies. Additional problems in administering the program approval policies were also noted by some states including: issues related to the identification of "unnecessarily duplicative" programs

which continued to plague state board's and their staffs; the relationship of new programs to state and institutional planning; belief that the length of time required for program approval was considered to be "too long"; and the difficulty of lay boards making program decisions when political or emotional pressures are brought to bear. The growth in information/data systems during this period fostered new approaches to program review such as "productivity reviews" that would identify programs for further review, improvement, or termination [Barak, 1991, pp.8-14].

The 1991 study also identified growing problems and concerns with implementing program review. These problems and concerns included the costs of the reviews, time required to complete the reviews, resources required to support the review efforts, and the heavy workload associated with the use of outside consultants. In addition, state-level reviews were often negatively perceived by the institutions because of unfavorable recommendations that sometimes resulted from the reviews, institutional costs and the institutional discomfort resulting from program modifications and discontinuance [Barak, 1991, pp.26-28 also see Melchiori, 1982]. As a result of these problems experienced by
the state boards, staff felt a need to reduce costs and decentralize the reviews by giving greater review responsibility to the institutions [Barak, 1991].

Number of State Boards Conducting Program Review (i.e., Existing Programs) of at Least Some Programs at Some Institutions as of November 1991

34

Number of State Boards Conducting Program Approval (i.e., New Programs) of at Least Some Programs at Some Institutions as of November, 1991

45
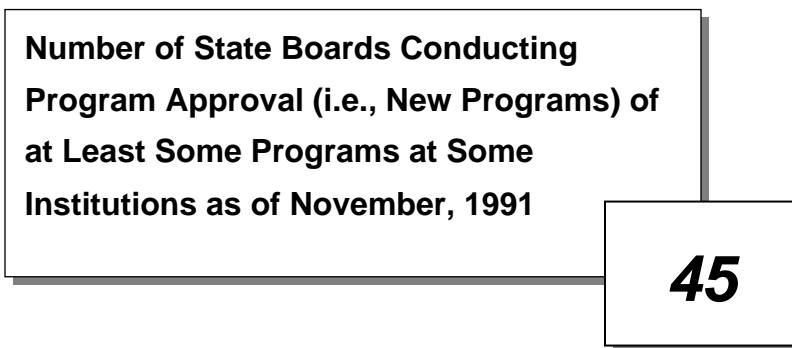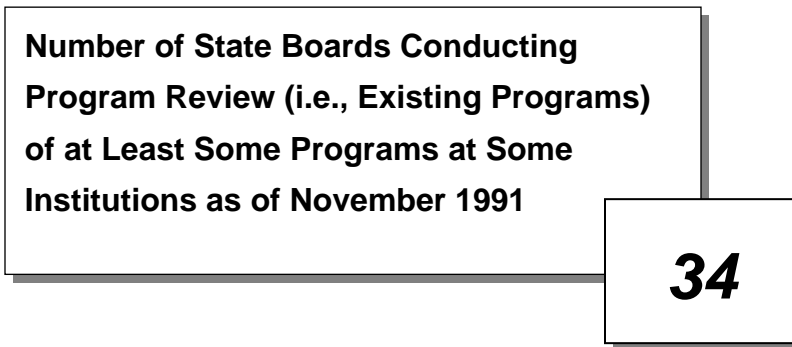
II. State-level Program Review and Approval Study 2006

The responses to the current study indicate that state board program review and approval policies and procedures continued to mature and adjust to changing circumstances. As problems and issues arose, policy and procedural changes were generally made, reflecting the dynamic nature of the state higher education boards and their authorized activities. It was interesting to note, however, that in at least one state, statutory changes that were both needed and desired were not sought out of concern that revisiting the authorizing legislation could "open Pandora's box."

Approval of New Academic Programs (i.e., Program Approval)
There continues to be no single common approach to program approval among the forty-eight (48) state boards responding to this part of the survey. Some boards do not assess any new programs. Some boards assess and/or approve all new program offerings at all degree levels (associate degrees through graduate level) at most institutions. Others assess and/or approve only some degree levels and only some of the institutions under their purview. As implied by the above, the review authority of some boards continues to be only "advisory" while others involve actual board (or designee) approval before implementation of new programs by the institutions. It should also be noted that state responsibility for the various institutional types is sometimes split between several boards such as those with responsibility for two-year and those involved with four-year institutions (e.g., Iowa) or those states where responsibility for public and independent institutions is separate (e.g., South Dakota). Essentially these same operational patterns were identified in the earlier studies. The number of state boards conducting program approval is the same as reported in the 1991 study.

Number of State Boards Conducting Program Approval (i.e., New Programs) of at Least Some Programs at Some Institutions in 2006.

45
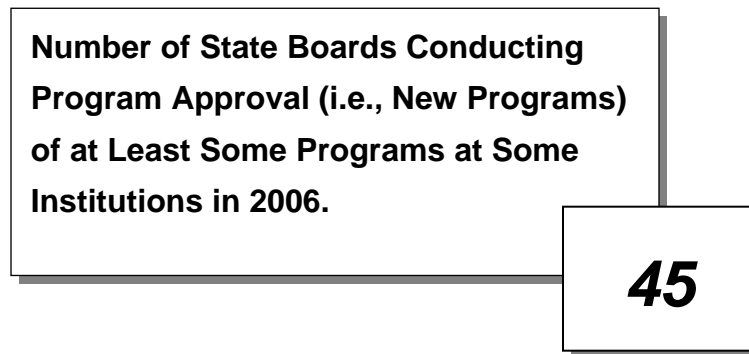
As noted in the 1978 study the specific areas subject to inclusion in the program approval policy vary widely among the states. A breakdown of the current specific approval areas for those boards that assess new programs is as follows:

> 45 boards approve/assess "majors."
> 18 boards approve/assess "minors."
> 21 boards approve/assess "concentrations" (within a program area).
> 21 boards approve/assess "options" (within a program).
> 35 boards approve/assess "off-campus/distance ed." programs.
> 28 boards approve/assess "expansion/contractions" of programs.

33 boards approve/assess program "name changes."
28 boards approve/assess "on-line" programs.
38 boards approve/assess program "terminations."
36 boards approve/assess program "mergers."
37 boards approve/assess "interdisciplinary" programs.
37 boards approve/assess "inter-institutional coop" programs.

Note: what exactly constitutes the terms noted in parenthesis varies by board.

In 1978 it was stated that "there were almost as many reasons and combinations of reasons for state board program approval as there are states" [Barak 1984, p.14]. The state boards currently report that they continue to serve multiple purposes. The number of particular purposes currently cited by states is noted below in the order of the frequency cited.

26 - Quality improvement/maintenance
22 - The need and/or demand for a program
18 - Consistency of mission/role
18 - Avoid duplication
14 - Effective use of resources
11 - Cost effectiveness
 5 - Consistency with plans (institutional and/or state)
 4 - Consumer protection
 3 - Accountability
 3 - Workforce needs
 3 - Maintain a coordinated system
 3 - Improve coordination
 3 - Improve/provide access

All but three states felt that these purposes were being adequately achieved by the board's program approval process and procedures. The three states that responded negatively felt that current efforts fell short of achieving the desired outcome. The elusive effort to eliminate "unnecessary duplication" was an area frequently noted as being ineffective. This was particularly interesting, given the long history noted earlier in this report of efforts to eliminate "unnecessary duplication" in the various states. It also speaks to the difficulty of eliminating existing programs.

The proposal requirements for new programs are very similar to those reported in the earlier studies. The various program proposal requirements currently used in these assessments of new programs and the number of boards using each requirement are noted below (some use more then one of these procedures):
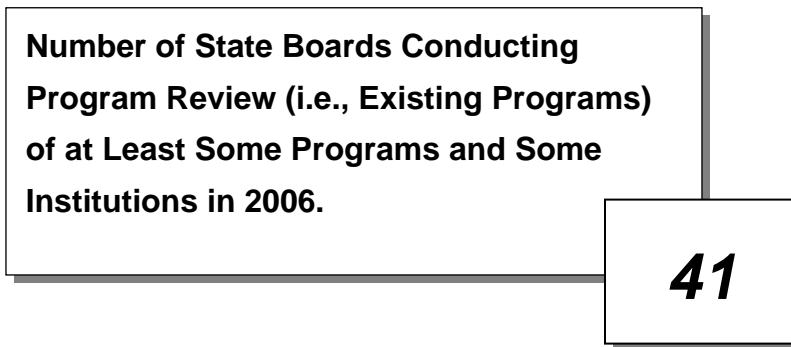
21 - Require a review of new program proposals by outside consultants.
28 - Require that the institution conduct a marketing study to determine need/demand.
28 - Require a "preliminary planning stage/step" (approval to plan is typical).
24 - Require a proposed program to be consistent with state workforce needs.
 5 - Boards (staff) participate in actual new program development.

46 - Require the proposed program to be consistent with institutional mission.
29 - Require a cost/benefit analysis.
33 - Require "qualitative standards" to be met by proposed programs.
17 - Require potential employer surveys.
24 - Require that the proposed program be consistent with the state board's plan.

A number of states indicated that changes have been made in the program approval policies, processes and procedures in the last five years. The vast majority of the changes can be categorized as routine adjustments to policies, processes or procedures. A very few states, however, have made changes of a more substantial nature, such as one state that no longer reviews new programs and one that now has authority to review a wider segment of programs and institutions. Twenty-nine states and/or boards indicated that they now conduct regular workforce studies to identify educational training gaps or needs. These are a relatively new addition to the program approval processes. Eighteen states indicated that some "major" changes are presently being considered in the procedures or scope of program approval. The number of states indicating an interest in change is unprecedented. A discussion of these current and proposed changes by state is included in Appendix A.

Review of Existing Programs (i.e., program review)
As noted earlier with program approval, state board policies, practices and procedures for the review of existing programs also vary widely among the states. These program review activities range from no reviews, to monitoring institutionally conducted reviews, to the actual conducting of the reviews. Thirty-three states indicated that the reviews require all programs covered by the controlling policy to be reviewed periodically (e.g. every five to seven years). Twenty–two states review on this periodic schedule and/or on the basis of various "triggers" such as low productivity, high cost, state need and duplication (sometimes referred to as "productivity reviews"). "Unnecessary duplication" continues to be an area of interest in state program review efforts.

Number of State Boards Conducting Program Review (i.e., Existing Programs) of at Least Some Programs and Some Institutions in 2006.

41

Forty-one state boards indicated that they conduct at least some reviews of some existing programs. The actual range of activities is shown in the roles these 41 states indicated that they play in the review process:

12 - Boards (or designees) select the consultants who review the programs.
25 - Boards (or designees) select the programs to be reviewed.
13 - Boards (or designees) participate in the site visits.

29 - Boards (or designees) prepare reports and/or recommendations.
25 - Boards delegate the actual conduct of the reviews to the individual institutions.
28 - Boards require periodic reporting of institutionally based reviews.
21 - Boards require student outcome assessments.

Thirty states indicated that their program review policies, practices and processes have changed in the last five years. Either the nature of these changes are minor, or they changed the board/institutional role in the process. Some state board's tightened or expanded the board's policies, processes, and procedures for the reviews. Some delegated some or all of the responsibility for the reviews to the institutions thus shifting from the category where the state board (or designee) conducts the reviews to one in which the institutions take on more or all the responsibility (and sometimes cost) for the reviews. Thirty states indicated that they had a Web-searchable academic program inventory/database. When viewed in an historical context such as this report, the use of technology is a relatively new phenomenon that now includes Web sites, electronic submissions, and, of course, data analysis. A summary breakdown of the nature of these changes by state is included in Appendix A. Twenty-five states indicated that "major" changes in the program review policies are being considered by the board or other policymakers. The numbers of states considering changes is unprecedented.

The major criteria used for evaluating existing programs are essentially the same as those provided in earlier surveys. The current broad categories of criteria used by the various states and the number of states using each are as follows:

32 - *Quality* indicators
26 - *Cost* indicators
25 - *Duplication* (usually defined as "unnecessary duplication")
27 - *Relationship to strategic plans* at the state and/or institutional level.
31 - *Employer need/demand* for the program (or graduates thereof)
28 - *Relationship to state workforce needs*
37 - *Student demand* for the program
12 - *Reallocation of resources*

The current purposes for the review of existing programs were reported as follows: improving program quality (either individually or collectively), improving student learning, improving teaching, improving overall accountability, and identifying weak programs for either improvement or elimination. In 1978, the purposes were essentially the same but also included financial, greater efficiency and consumer protection. Had we listed these for check-off instead of asking respondents to list purposes they would very likely have been included in the responses. Thirty-four states indicated that program review has been meeting the prescribed purposes. A close working relationship among budget allocation processes, strategic/master planning and program review is seen as critical to achieving these purposes, although many boards felt that this desirable goal has not yet been fully achieved.

Additional Survey Responses
In addition to the summary survey responses noted above, several additional survey questions asked the respondents to rank various other organizations as to the relevance of their role in

program review, approval, and academic planning on a scale (1=no role to 5=prominent roles). The responses are as follows:

	No Role			Prominent Role	
	1	2	3	4	5
State economic development agencies	19	9	11	5	0
Regional Workforce development councils	23	7	7	7	0
Governor's Office/Budget Office	19	14	6	3	1
Legislature/ Education Committee	17	15	8	3	1
Metro are cooperatives	23	7	9	3	0
Academic Officers Committees	1	0	3	6	5

The respondents were also asked to indicate (1=No Relevance to 5= High Relevance) the following factors on needs assessment or program review and approval decisions:

	No Relevance			High Relevance	
	1	2	3	4	5
Fiscal/budgetary constraints	2	1	9	12	19
De-regulation/market orientation	8	11	7	14	4
Greater accountability	5	5	10	15	9
Community needs or interests	3	1	14	16	17
Individual legislator interests	21	9	11	3	0
Local employers/workforce needs	3	2	9	14	14

State board narrative responses regarding current and proposed policy and procedural changes are attached as Appendix A.

III. Summary and Conclusion.

Early Mandates
Program review and approval activities of state boards responsible for higher education have evolved from early, vague legislative mandates to control program growth and eliminate "unnecessary duplication" into formal, usually comprehensive and systematic processes and procedures. The growth in review and approval responsibility has accompanied the growth in the number of state boards and their expanded authority since the early years of the Twentieth Century.

Growth-Expansion-Change
Between 1976 and 2006, a series of surveys of state higher education boards chronicled the growth of board program review and approval activities. Like most dynamic entities these activities have been modified to meet changing environments and circumstances and continue to do so today. The 1970s and 1980s were years of growth in the comprehensiveness and scope of the policies and procedures. New policies were put into place, and existing policies and

procedures expanded. Actual operational experience with the policies and procedures has frequently resulted in changes and modifications to improve overall efficiency and effectiveness such as changes regarding the new technologies, state workforce needs, outcomes-based reviews, and off-campus program offerings (see Appendix A, under "GA", "MA", "WA," "FL" and "MT" as examples, and see Bresciani 2006 for information on outcomes-based reviews). In some instances the policies and procedures originally adopted proved to be ineffective and/or costly resulting in alternative strategies being adopted (for example, see Appendix A under "NH"). In other instances state fiscal retrenchment strategies resulted in tradeoffs in which state board policies were dropped or modified in exchange for increased institutional autonomy (for example see Appendix A under "UT," and "WV"). Still others have been modified to fit a changing environment such as regards budget reductions and statutory changes (for example, see Appendix A under "SC" and "NM").

Much Still the Same
These recent changes notwithstanding, many of the basic elements of the policies and procedures used by state boards for both program review and program approval have changed little over the years. The general purposes, major criteria and basic process components used today by most boards are essentially the same as those identified in 1978 [Barak and Berdahl]. There are also still three basic approaches to state board program reviews: (1) reviews conducted by the state board staff including "productivity reviews"; (2) reviews conducted by the individual institutions with policy guidance and periodic reporting to the state board; and (3) some combination of the first two. What has changed in this regard is a shift toward institutional responsibility for program review as noted below.

Trends
If there is an identifiable trend among the states it is definitely toward "change." A relatively large number of state board survey responses indicated that their boards were considering changes in program approval and review policies (18 for program approval and 25 for program review). This seemingly very large number seeking, or actually implementing, changes seems to reflect either dissatisfaction with the current policies or the need for further modifications to meet changing needs. The survey responses (some of which are reported in Appendix A) and follow up conversations with staff from some of the states indicated that there were a variety of factors behind this interest in change and a very wide range of specific change issues.

The chart below, lists in the order of decreasing magnitude the changes in program review and/or program approval that have either been made in recent years or are under consideration by some entity in a given state. For convenience, the letters "PR" have been used for program review and "PA" for program approval.

Recent and Possible Changes:

1. Strengthening the relationship of PR/PA with overall strategic planning efforts (9 states)
2. Simplifying or improve efficiency of PR/PA processes (9 states)
3. Shifting some or all responsibility for actually conducting PR and/or PA to the institutions- while most retain a summary reporting responsibility to the state board (7 states)
4. Strengthening PR/PA processes (7 states)
5. Improving cooperation in program planning with other sectors/agencies (7 states)
6. Improving relationship of PR and/or PA with workforce and economic development (6 states)
7. PA and/or PR to electronic/web-based submissions (3 states)
8. Enhancing institutional involvement in PR and/or PA (3 states)
9. Improving utilization of PR results for decision making (2 states)
10. Improving PR with student learning outcomes (2 states)
11. Productivity review improvement (2 states)
12. Addressing "program duplication" (2 states)
13. Statutory changes in authority leading to elimination of PR/PA (1 state)
14. Statutory changes in authority leading to a strengthening of PR/PA (1 state)
15. Statutory changes in authority for approval on private institutions (1 state)
16. The addition of a "post-audit" review of new programs (1 state)
17. Reductions in budget that resulted in a curtailing of PR/PA (1 state)
18. PR/PA changes intended to improve accountability (1 state)
19. Providing training for institutions in PR (1 state)
20. Requiring accreditation of all programs (1 state)
21. Focusing on "standards based curriculum" (1 state)

The top six changes noted above reflect the more significant trends. The various changes toward combining the program reviews and approvals with comprehensive planning efforts of the state boards, institutions and other agencies were seen as enhancing their overall utility and while improving the planning efforts and inter-sector cooperation. A concern about the reviews becoming more bureaucratic and burdensome for all involved has led to the efforts to reduce these burdens while providing for greater levels of efficiency. The simplification of procedures was felt to be long overdue in some states. Similar problems have arisen with respect to institutional reviews.

The shift in the responsibility for the reviews from state level to institutional level had three rationales: (1) it was part of a larger effort to decentralize various responsibilities to the institutional level; (2) it was a cost-saving strategy for the state boards (conducting the reviews is expensive especially if done well); (3) some felt that faculty ownership in the reviews would be enhanced if the locus of the reviews was at the institutional level.

Costs and Benefits
In the 1978 report there was a section entitled "Costs and Benefits of Program Review" which stated that "we know of no studies which have carefully examined the costs and benefits of program review. In their absence, there is no small amount of controversy concerning the alleged

costs of program review and its alleged benefits" [Barak and Berdahl, 1978, p.83]. This statement is still true today. The alleged "savings" vary widely. The media in some states have trumpeted the number of existing programs eliminated and the resulting cost savings. Many state board staff however are very cautious about giving the impression that program review and approval can be easily translated into real dollar savings. For example, some programs that have not been approved or that were terminated, amount to "paper" programs where no real dollars savings are possible. In other states, the "costs" of an eliminated program have been shifted along with the faculty to other programs in a move that may improve efficiency but not result in actual savings. The inability to link academic programs to real budgets continues to be an obstacle in some states (and institutions). Program review itself can be a very expensive and time-consuming process depending on the process being utilized. Nonetheless, there is evidence that effective program reviews can be highly beneficial by focusing attention on needed academic reforms, emphasizing student learning outcomes, by improving program effectiveness with modifications to programs and organizational structures, by providing greater levels of accountability, and improving consumer protection.

Perhaps the greatest cost benefit is in connection with the review of new programs where years of state program approval have resulted in a much reduced level of unnecessary duplication of programs at least in some states. The use of institutional mission, role and scope statements, the emphasis on state-level and institutional strategic planning and the requirements related to workforce and economic development have all helped improve the effectiveness of program approval. It is much easier to eliminate program duplication by disapproving a proposed program than it is with an existing program with commitments to faculty, staff, equipment, budgets and loyal alumni. As several survey responses noted, lay board members are far more unlikely to act affirmatively on existing program termination than on newly proposed program disapprovals.

A definitive and objective national evaluation of state-level program review and approval is probably not very likely, given the complex and politically charged atmosphere in which most state boards operate. There have been several performance audits of some state boards, such as in Alabama which have included program review and/or approval and these have been generally positive [A Committee to Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, p.24-25]. The facts regarding its growth over the years and the continued practice of program review and approval by almost all state boards seems to be evidence of its value.

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APPENDIX A

Individual State Board Responses to Recent and Proposed Changes in Program Review and Approval

(Combined Narrative Survey Responses to selected survey questions -- Part I.1, Part II.3, and Part III.6)

AL-The Alabama Commission on Higher Education has had approval authority of new units of instruction since the 1970s. In the early 1990s, the Commission moved to a more formal review of existing programs and a greater emphasis on accountability. Post implementation conditions were included in each new program approval along with "phase out" clause. No changes in program review in the last five years. Legislation has been introduced concerning new program approval but has not passed.

AK- In 2000 regulation was added requiring career training to track placement rates for job specific training programs. This complimented rates already collected from all authorized postsecondary schools in Alaska. Rates provide information to consumers and a determining factor in renewal of authorization decisions. In 2002 Regulation was added requiring accreditation for all institutions offering degree programs. The purpose was to ensure more relevant and consistent standards for higher education. In 2004 a new grant program was developed using workforce shortage data to determine priority of grant awards. Currently, consideration is being made to revise regulations to incorporate standards-based curriculum requirements for all vocational programs by reference to a national system of skill standards.

AZ- The state never had a state-wide organization which addresses postsecondary academic planning. The Arizona Board of Regents governs only the three public universities. The Board approves only new programs for these three universities and a Board policy requires review of existing programs on a seven-year cycle. A similar Board for community colleges was abolished in Nov. 2003. The universities and the community colleges participate in a transfer articulation system, which was strengthened in 1996 by legislative mandate requiring that the two entities work together to address statewide educational needs. With respect to new program approval the Regents, under their Changing Directions initiative, granted greater differentiation to the universities. They are currently completing the University System Redesign initiative which will create more differentiation among the campuses of the universities. Implementation for the change would justify reviewing the program approval and review processes.

AR- The program review process was revised in 1998 to allow for institutional review of existing programs with submission of a biennial report summary indicating significant findings and the timeline for program improvement. No further review is required for programs to meet Arkansas Department of Higher Education degree productivity guidelines and hold specialized accreditation. Low productivity programs are subject to further review by agency staff and out-of-state reviewers. New program approval policy requires that new options and degrees developed from existing courses and degrees (and programs offered at off-campus locations and by distance technology) only require Agency Director approval. Under consideration as a part of the

Program Review process is a requirement for institutions to submit self-study documents based on agency guidelines. No further changes are under consideration for the program approval process.

CO- As a result of the implementation of SB 04-189, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's involvement in academic program review and approval is limited to "role and mission" review. In other words, the state no longer considers such factors as enrollment, economic, social, workforce, or other related factors in program approval. The Program Review is also fairly limited. These changes are a result of the Colorado Legislature's interest in expanding public higher education's entrepreneurialism and limiting state regulation. No further changes are planned.

CA- The California Postsecondary Education Commission does not undertake reviews of existing academic programs. New programs are approved by the agency. Recent legislation creates a nexus between postsecondary education and state workforce developments.

CT- The Board of Governors through its administrative arm, the Department of Higher Education, approves new programs but does not review existing programs. Continuing efforts to refine and strengthen regulatory standards for all institutions in the state are underway. In the last two years, for example, working together as a community of interest, public and independent colleges and universities are working to define the purpose and structure of general education in Connecticut, the appropriate role of the faculty, and nature and role of public libraries. This is part of the commitment by the Board of Governors to affirm educational quality and create an appropriate educational foundation for all institutions. In addition, the Board of Governors through the Department continues to work with various statewide policy groups to address economic challenges facing the state. The Board of Governors through the Department continues to review all the Board's quality standards for licensure and accreditation.

FL-The Florida State University System academic program review process is undergoing revisions by Board of Governors staff in consultation with university personnel. The existing process, as directed by a 2004 Policy Guideline, provides direction for a seven-year cycle (2000-2007) that is approaching completion. The new BOG regulation for academic program review is under development and will advance a process and procedures for 2007-2014 program review cycle.

The goal of new regulation is to simplify the submission of university program review products to the BOG and improve the utilization of review summaries to inform System-level discussions. Rising costs, trends toward more local autonomy, and increased emphasis on the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes necessitated the development of a new process of program review that recognized these factors. Accordingly, the new process and procedures are being designed to provide state-level personnel with information they need to inform policy decisions and strategic planning while allowing institutional personnel to structure the academic program review process to best meet their needs, to provide information for fiscal and programmatic decision, and to ensure continuous improvement of programs.

In brief, the proposed regulation describes a process and procedures for 2007-2014 program review cycle in which each university will update its program review policies and procedures and develop a new schedule for submission of program review summary reports for all degree programs. Program review summary reports for every program review that is conducted during the 2007-2014 cycle will be electronically submitted using a Web-based template (under development) to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs during the year in which the summary reports are scheduled for submission.

The process for approving new academic degree programs similarly changed in response to the devolution of much authority to the institutional level. Local boards of trustees have authority to approve programs on the baccalaureate, masters, and advanced masters/specialist level. After programs are so approved, System-level personnel review the programs to make sure that they are in compliance with statutes and rules regarding such issues as limited access, common prerequisites, and credit hours to degree.

Doctoral and professional degree programs are approved by the Board of Governors after they are approved by the local board of trustees. They are presented to the Board after rigorous and detailed analysis by Board staff. This analysis includes the examination of need and demand, institutional readiness and sufficiency, cost and relationship to the institutional mission, its strategic plan, and the Board of Governors' own strategic plan. No further changes are being considered at his time. However, it is expected that there will be some revision to the program approval process.

GA- New academic programs must be reviewed by the System Office and approved by the Georgia Board of Regents. The process of new academic program approval originally required a preliminary proposal followed by a formal proposal. During the 2003-2004 academic years, the preliminary proposal was scaled down to a succinct letter of intent (LI) that highlighted specific areas, including a review of the fit of the program to the institution's mission, student demand, state need, estimated program cost, additional facilities needed, and a brief description of the curriculum.. The LI was designed to raise and resolve significant questions prior to the effort needed to develop a full proposal. The formal proposal is still required. In 1997, the Board of Regents approved a new policy framework called "Comprehensive Planning," which linked academic program planning, workforce planning, enrollment management, and capital priorities planning. This policy allowed the Regents, through the System Office, to initiate program development. To date the System Office has not used this authority.

Existing programs are previewed periodically according to System guidelines. Programs that fall below defined thresholds of productivity in enrollment or degrees granted are reviewed in the next academic year, triggering an earlier review of quality, productivity, and viability than would be normally scheduled. The process of triggered reviews of existing programs will continue unchanged for the near future. Possible changes to the process of review of new programs are under discussion with consideration being given to the definition of access (in terms of distance, driving time, time/place dependence). Differentiating between necessary and unnecessary duplication of programs is becoming more difficult as resources become tighter. Balancing institutions' needs and state needs will also become more challenging.

HI- The University of Hawaii Board of Regents policy on program review requires that every program is reviewed every five to seven years. Each campus is responsible for developing their own procedures for program review. The community college of the UH system had adopted a new policy in October, 2005 related to program review that identifies a common format for use by all seven CCs. A new component is that the reviews and resulting plans are to be used in decisions regarding resource allocation at the college and system levels. No changes are planned for program review at this time. With respect to program approval, a committee is reviewing results on each campus.

ID- Adopted a requirement for eight year academic plans in 2004. No other changes are being considered at this time.

IN- The Indiana Commission for Higher Education now approves some new programs in an expedited fashion. These programs are still placed on the agenda, but, with less delay, less information, and grouped together so they can be approved as a group if there is no objection. No other changes are being considered at this time.

IL – The Illinois Board of Higher Education is currently undertaking a review of the program approval and review processes in light of the changing nature of the higher education landscape. Particular emphases are on non-traditional delivery methods, proprietary institutions, and follow-up on program reviews with major issues. Recommendations for changes in the process, if any, are expected in spring 2007. Six statewide goals, the Illinois Commitment, provide the foundation for institutional and program approval for public universities. The emphases include workforce development; collaboration with K12 education; improving access and diversity; college affordability; enhancing program quality; and improving effectiveness and efficiency.

IA- The Board of Regents recently initiated a review of the program review and approval processes for the purpose of simplifying and expediting the program review process. The changes are intended to elicit more meaningful information for policy decision making.

KS- In 1998 The Kansas Board of Regents authorized review of all academic programs of the six state universities at least once every eight years. In 1999 the Kansas Legislature through SB 345 shifted coordinating authority for 30 postsecondary institutions to the Board of Regents. Virtually all of these institutions conduct program review and report to their Board of Trustees or board of control. The Regent's program review is being reviewed during the 2005-2006 with recommendations being submitted to the Board upon its completion.

KY-Postsecondary education system was reformed in 1997 via "House Bill 1". The reform effort created the Kentucky Community and Technical College System and clarified the roles and missions of the universities. The University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville are designated research universities with the ability to award doctorates. The remaining public universities are comprehensive universities. The Council on Postsecondary Education was strengthened in its policy-making authority. CPE approves all new academic programs and reserves the authority to terminate any academic program. The Council does delegate certain programming authorities to the individual boards of trustees for certain program areas—but this is limited.

Program productivity reviews occurred every other year since 2000 (2000, 2002, and 2004). We intend to ask our Council to extend the time span to once every five years. The purpose is to allow more time for alterations to programs to "take hold" and to simplify the five-year average calculations between reviews. Being planned with respect to program approval is the addition of a website for institutions to post intentions to offer courses/program off-campus at satellite locations. This should reduce the "turf" issues and surprises.

LA- There were no recent substantive changes in program review and program approval nor are any changes anticipated in the near future.

MA- With respect to public institutions in the past decade, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education adopted the following academic program-related policies: Program Productivity Policy (1999); Growth by Substitution (aka "Add One Drop One") (1996); Strategic Mission Implementation Plans (1998); Expedited Program Review (2000). *Program Productivity* required the elimination of academic programs that produced fewer than a target number of program graduates annually. More than 70 under-producing programs were eliminated from the system during the five years following implementation of the policy. *Growth by Substitution* required an institution to drop an existing program with equivalent resources in order to add a new program. *Strategic/Mission Implementation* action plans called for institutions to describe new academic programs deemed as priority programs and provide a needs assessment for such programs. *Expedited Review* allowed institutions with programs included in their BHE approved Strategic/Mission Implementation Plan to arrange the external review of the program. BHE fast-tracked consideration of programs submitted under the expedited review approach and exempted them from the Growth by Substitution policy. Consideration is being given to a web-based application process and requiring submission of a business plan with new program applications.

With respect to independent institutions, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission of Higher Education (CIHE) –approved institutions with a minimum of two academic programs within a degree category and level may add a new program in that approved categories/levels by forwarding a letter of notification along with a completed curriculum form to the Chancellor of the Board of Higher Education (2001). New programs that fall under other categories/levels not included under the above provision are subject to the full review process. Consideration is being given to the use of technology as a part of the review process and there are plans to require all-electronic submissions.

ME- The following applies to the University of Maine System. A recently adopted policy for program approval requires that the Chief Academic Officers recommend approval of Intent to Plan in a two-step process. The first step will grant or deny a recommendation for approval to deliver the proposed program within the institution's region; the second step, if requested, will assess statewide needs and corresponding interest and expertise on the seven campuses in order to determine how best to provide statewide delivery of a needed program by a single campus or by several campuses working cooperatively. There are no current plans to change the program approval and review policies at this time.

MN- The following applies to the newly created Minnesota State College and University system. In 1995 a program approval policy was approved. Under this policy all new programs were presented to the Board of Trustees (BOT) for approval. In 2000 the BOT changed the policy to delegate approval of new programs to the Chancellor or designee. A policy on program review was developed and added in 2002. It has two parts: 1) Institutions are to have a policy and procedure for review, and review all programs on a regular schedule and submit a written summary of the reviews to the Office of the Chancellor. 2.) The Office of the Chancellor is to conduct reviews of clusters of programs at a statewide or regional level. The first state-wide reviews were of graduate programs and the need for polytechnic education. Another round of reviews with law enforcement programs is the next topic. Future consideration is being given to fully implementing new planning tool. No other changes are anticipated for program review and approval at this time.

MD- No recent substantive changes in program review and approval were identified nor are such changes anticipated in the near future.

MS-There were no recent substantive changes in program review and approval nor are such changes anticipated in the future.

MI- Program review and approval as defined here are not conducted and no changes in this policy are being considered at this time.

MO-With respect to *program review,* the chief academic officers (CAOs) at public four- year institutions were invited in October to study current campus-based practices in order to improve the process of review of existing academic programs. The process in effect at the time examined the following criteria: Centrality to mission, relevance to statewide needs/goals, productivity, and quality of graduates. In May 2003, a state Auditor's Report (no.2003-40) identified external academic program review and cost effectiveness as key elements to include in existing program review. In October 2003, state regulations associated with campus based review of existing academic programs for pubic four-year institutions were postponed to provide MDHE staff and opportunity to work with CAOs in redesigning both the substance of and approach to campus-based review. Academic audits were considered as a potential substitute. Discussion of changes has been put on hold due to changes in commissioner and governor and due to limited financial resources. Changes in *program approval* are under consideration as part of a broader public policy framework. Also included are Missouri partnerships with out of state institutions for the delivery both in and out of state, review and approval of online and hybrid technologically delivered programs, and fine tuning the intent of current policies associated with delivery of programs off-campus (four-year) and out of district (two-year).

MT- More emphasis has been placed on the economic impact and workforce development needs of the State, and the role of new programs might play in meeting those needs (especially in the area of health care). The Board has also endorsed a "career clusters" concept to deliver workforce programs in several fields. With respect to program review the Board is considering a policy that would place responsibility for review on the campuses themselves, rather than having the Board trigger the review; mandate that all programs be reviewed during a seven-year cycle, and that results of the review be shared with the Board annually; focus the review on both the

quality and size of the program; tie the Board review schedule to programmatic accreditation visits as much as possible to avoid duplication of effort. Although [currently] all of the campuses are expected to perform their own internal review of programs, they do not report the results of those efforts to the Board. Under the current policy the governing Board plays the role of the heavy in program review in Montana, even though the Board has said repeatedly that it doesn't want to micromanage the System. The new process will shift the responsibility for good, quality and responsive review to the campuses.

NE- The review guidelines of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education were updated in November 1997. In 1999, following the completion of the first cycle of reviews (i.e. all programs had been reviewed at once; the Commission's review process was streamlined to focus on programs that do not meet productivity thresholds. This does not however exclude other programs from review. A slight change in policy in 2005 was made to reduce the amount of routine evaluation required of Commissioners. Rules were changed to provide an approval process for private postsecondary career schools to offer a baccalaureate degree. A policy audit, which could result in additional policy changes, is in the planning stage.

NV- Response not provided.

NH- In 1997, the process was streamlined to provide more autonomy with the institutional presidents. Now, only new academic degree programs or deletions go to the Board of Trustees for approval. The presidents have sole purview over additions, deletions or changes related to academic program minors or options. Consideration is being given to including a requirement that institutions submit an "Intent to Submit" form before they present a full new program proposal to make each institution aware of new programs at a sister institution and to avoid duplication and better meet state needs.

NJ- No changes have been reported.

NM- Legislation enacted during the 2005 session creates a new cabinet level Higher Education Department. This legislation includes the following new language: "Effective July 1, 2005, all new state funded baccalaureate, graduate and professional degree programs shall be offered by public four-year educational institutions and all new associate degree programs shall be offered by public postsecondary educational institutions after a timely and through consultation with and review by the department." This language expands the involvement of the department review and approval process beyond existing authority to approve all graduate degrees (and associate degree programs at community colleges.) Further changes my result as the new department begins to operate. Consideration is being given to a proposal by the graduate deans to simplify the process for review and approval of graduate program certificates and concentrations.

NY- No substantive changes were identified in the purposes, uses, authority for or involvement in program review and approval.

NC- Program review and approval policies and procedures were streamlined. The UNC has conducted productivity reviews every two years for many years as part of the long-range planning process. No further changes are being considered at this time.

ND- The May 2000 North Dakota Higher Education Roundtable report recommended that the system adopt a new definition for duplicate programs so that programs were only to be considered duplicate (and therefore undesirable) if they were competing for the same group of students. Before the report a key function of the system academic review process was to avoid duplication, almost at any cost. Otherwise there were no major policy changes in the last five years. In practice the reviews are expected to be more closely tied to the Roundtable's recommendations related to state needs, student and employer demand.

OK- No substantive changes in policy for program review and approval have been made in recent years. With respect to Program Review of existing programs, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education is providing more direct assistance and training to faculty and administrators as they prepare self-studies and plan for site visits for technical programs. No specific changes are being planned; however, there are discussions on improving the program review process.

OR- In 1997 the Oregon Legislature reconfigured the postsecondary approval process for non-public colleges. Oregon-based, regionally accredited schools were in essence exempted from state program approval that "substituted" Northwest accreditation for state standards. HOWEVER, this language was challenged on the grounds that it unfairly differentiated among colleges based on their home location and that it violates state prohibitions on the state delegating its licensing authority to a private body. Agency legal counsel has concluded that the distinction is allowed because the agency ultimately decides whether standards of the Northwest Association are being met. A statutory change in 2005 set basic standards for religious-exempt schools and prohibited them from issuing doctorates. Also considerations are being given to ways of handling a dozen unaccredited religious schools that the State Attorney General says can't be exempted any more. Also consideration is being given to differentiating somewhat between regionally accredited, nationally accredited and unaccredited colleges, probably in the length of the review cycle rather than in substantive standards.

PA- The Pennsylvania Board of Governors revised the policies and adopted new procedures for program review and program approval. The Program Review policy was revised to include more information on assessment of program goals and the use of data to improve the program. No new changes are being considered at this time.

RI- By Board policy, institutions are now drafting and approving student outcomes for all programs, including exit outcomes for developmental education. Assessment tools and benchmarks will be set to ensure that student exit programs with expected knowledge and skills. The work is to be completed in 2008. The resulting standards will be aligned with high school exit standards in math and English and with business expectations through a new P-K-16 council. All board regulations and accompanying procedures were reviewed in 2004 and changes were approved by the Board. In essence, some program approval procedures were streamlined to allow programs to begin more quickly. The Board also instituted a policy to review and act upon programs that have had low completion rates for three consecutive years.

SC- Agency budget reductions resulted in the elimination of academic program review and most energy was directed for the last decade or so in developing a performance funding system established by the Legislature. In reacting to the reconstituting of the coordinating board in 1995, which weakened it by placing three institutional trustees on the board, program approval policies were loosened, with deregulation occurring for program changes, certificates, bureaus, centers, and institutes and the process of approval condensed into a 4-5 month cycle. Program reviews have been conducted rarely because of budget constraints, although we have had some funding restored by a recent act of the legislature. We have maintained our three-way partnership with NCATE, however, and have just completed a two-year review of all public education programs in the state. It is possible that current board interest in program duplication may result in changes in the future.

SD- Board of Regent's policies in 2002-2005 resulted in revised process and forms for program and curriculum requests. A Governor's initiative in 2004 provided funding for research centers chosen by a panel appointed by the Governor. Board policy in 2004-5 provided for PhD programs associated with research centers that could be proposed directly to the Regents rather than through a program development process on the campuses. No additional changes in program review and approval are being considered at this time.

TN- The review and approval policy for new academic programs has been in place for four years, but is still subjected to minor adjustments, as required. These policies were developed in collaboration with the two governing boards: The Tennessee Board of Regents and the University of Tennessee System. The process begins at the campus level with Letters of Intent to Plan that are submitted to the governing boards. Once approval is granted at the governing board level, Letters of Intent are forwarded to the coordinating board with their endorsement. With approval Letters of Intent by the coordinating board, institutions are then authorized to develop proposals. Proposals are developed in collaboration with the governing board and in some cases with the coordinating board.

Completed proposals include, consistency with the mission, documentation of no unnecessary duplication, student and employee need and demand, support resources, articulation, evaluation and accreditation plans, curriculum design, faculty, admission and retention standards, cost/benefit and a five-year budget that is self supporting and/or identifies sources of funding. External consultants selected jointly by the governing and coordinating boards are required to review proposed graduate programs. Upon completion of the pre-approval process, proposed programs are submitted for approval at the quarterly meetings of the governing boards, and then transmitted to the coordinating board for consideration during January and July meetings.

The post-approval monitoring process begins on the date of implementation. New academic programs approved by the Commission must be monitored following their initial approval. Programs meeting benchmarks remain in the monitoring cycle for five years at the baccalaureate level and above and three years for pre-baccalaureate programs following approval.

At the fall quarterly meetings, the Commission provides the Post Approval Monitoring Reports for programs that are within the three- or five-year monitoring cycle. The criteria for reviewing programs are based on goals established in the approved program proposal. The goals include,

but are not limited to enrollment and graduation ratios, program costs, progress toward accreditation, library acquisitions, student performance, and other goals set by the institution and agreed upon by the governing and coordinating boards.

If deficiencies are noted during the monitoring cycle, the commission requests information to explain the deficiencies and specific plans for corrective action or recommend programs for termination. Additional time may be granted to extend the monitoring period, if additional time is needed and requested by the campus or governing board.

TX- Measures and standards have been added to the program review process and some procedures improved. Processes for program approval for new bachelor's and master's programs are being considered and the plan is to do existing programs at the program level for all sectors.

UT- In 1998 the responsibility for program review was shifted from the Board of Regents to the individual campus Board of Trustees. The reviews are then summarizes for the Regents. No additional changes are under consideration.

VT- The Vermont State Colleges revised its academic program review policy in 2000. The most significant change was moving from a review of all academic programs at a single college to a review of disciplines across the five colleges on a five-year cycle. The VSC also established an annual enrollment review of all programs that can trigger additional review based on low-enrollment criteria. No additional changes are being considered at this time.

VA- New program approval was revised in 2002 to distinguish between complete "new" programs and spin-offs of existing programs. Also increased focus on "need" for new programs. Program review standards (minimum requirements) were raised in 2003. No new changes are under consideration.

WA- The Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board is moving through an updating process in response to legislative requirements passed in 2004. A state and regional needs assessment system will be used in program planning, review and approval. We are also adding new emphasis on program locations so as to better address issues around the size and shape of higher education. Legislation is anticipated that will permit two-year institutions to request approval to offer applied baccalaureate or baccalaureate degrees. A web accessible academic data base is being developed. Program review guidelines were updated in 2001 to streamline the process. Consideration is being given to some major revisions in the program review and approval area.

WV- Statutory changes in 2001 gave institutional governing boards more authority for program review and program approval. The Commission now receives only program summaries rather than full reports. The Commission does have authority to conduct special reviews (e.g. low productivity reviews). No major changes are being considered by the Commission. Pending legislation may exempt the two largest universities from submitting program proposals for state-level approval.

WI-No recent major changes in policy and procedures have occurred. A working group is looking into a number of potential policy efficiencies that include academic program review and approval.

WY- Many aspects of the program review process have been merged into the academic planning process and no additional changes are under consideration at the University of Wyoming. The Wyoming community colleges are considering rule changes to ensure the notification and networking of results. When new programs are being considered, each college will be allowed to use the results of its own internal program approval process when the program is presented to the Commission for approval.

11/24/06

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