

O'Bergh, Jon

From: Nancy Melton <Nancy_Melton@berea.edu>
Sent: Monday, December 22, 2014 9:12 AM
To: College Feedback
Cc: Theresa Lowder
Subject: College ratings

College feedback,

I have read with great interest the new proposal for college ratings.

I feel most of this data is already available for public observation so this wouldn't create too much of a burden to collect this data. But, I'm somewhat concerned when we are collecting information on *jobs after college in the category of Labor Market Success*, I would hate to see us add one more layer of work to already overburdened colleges to try to determine the earnings of recent graduates.

We appreciate your efforts to try to provide greater transparency to students and parents to find the best buy in colleges, but please don't add additional collection burdens. Thanks for listening.

Nancy Melton

Nancy M. Melton
Director of Student Financial Aid Services
Berea College
859.985.3313

O'Bergh, Jon

From: Melanie Tyner-Wilson <(b)(6)>
Sent: Sunday, December 21, 2014 9:29 AM
To: College Feedback
Subject: Re: Out of Office: Feedback on rating system

Many students with disabilities do not receive a high school diploma and are not eligible for college
In addition the access to employment is limited and this forces many students with significant disabilities to live in poverty

Melanie Tyner-Wilson
Lexington KY

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 21, 2014, at 9:24 AM, College Feedback <collegefeedback@ed.gov> wrote:

Thank you for your email to the U.S. Department of Education. We appreciate your interest in President Obama's plan to create a better bargain for the middle class by making college more affordable.

As you know, a college degree is the best investment students can make in their own future. Education beyond high school is the key to the middle class and a highly educated workforce is vital to our economic strength and success. But despite historic investments and reforms, attending a college has never been more expensive, and the ever-growing lack of affordability is making college increasingly inaccessible for Americans. To curb rising college costs, encourage colleges to improve, and empower students and families with the information they need to make informed decisions about which college to attend, President Obama has articulated an ambitious agenda for postsecondary education: 1) Pay colleges for performance; 2) Promote innovation and competition; and 3) Ensure that student debt remains affordable.

The Department is committed to an extensive public conversation about the President's agenda to make college more affordable. Your comments will help inform the Department's work on this important effort. Visit <http://www.ed.gov/college-completion> for more information.

Thank you for your interest.

O'Bergh, Jon

From: Melanie Tyner-Wilson <(b)(6)>
Sent: Sunday, December 21, 2014 9:24 AM
To: College Feedback
Subject: Feedback on rating system

This is a question
Will there be inclusion of data on how accessible the school is for students with disability?
By this I mean both Physically and intellectually accessible

Melanie Tyner-Wilson
Lexington KY

Sent from my iPhone

O'Bergh, Jon

From: WordPress <WEB@ed.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 22, 2014 11:07 AM
To: College Feedback
Subject: User Comment on New System of College Ratings

User Comment: How will you be able to differentiate between different programs? For example, even at a university like Harvard and University of Chicago, the majority of the students will be liberal arts graduates while a handful will be computer science majors. A blanket statement about post-graduate results without considering what the major is would obscure the distinction between different programs and result in the famous claim that the average college graduate makes \$40000 a year.

Constituency: Member of the Public

Other Constituency (if supplied):

User E-mail (if supplied):

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on ED.gov Blog (<http://www.ed.gov/blog>)

O'Bergh, Jon

From: WordPress <WEB@ed.gov>
Sent: Sunday, December 21, 2014 10:15 AM
To: College Feedback
Subject: User Comment on New System of College Ratings

User Comment: I am a teacher and parent, Earth Science teacher and Phi Beta Kappa liberal arts alum who is distraught about the "data-i-zation" of education. My students and colleagues are all reduced to data points under Race to the Top and other initiatives of this Administration (which I voted for twice, and which I otherwise adore). Now college selection is being subjected to the same reductionist approach. I got an excellent education at Brown— not an education degree or a science degree, but a BA in Environmental Studies. It was excellent not as evidenced by my current income, but by the whole way I live my life. That cannot be measured. I also got a great master's degree from a state university. Both degrees mean a lot to me because of my experiences with professors and other students, and because they were the right fit for me at the right time. No data could have replaced my own research. If the administration thinks so highly of the internet that it thinks that online courses are as valuable as in-person ones, then why can't it trust students to do their research and make decisions wisely?

All the emphasis on data and evaluation smacks of the influence of corporate greed: charter schools, crushing teachers and our unions, churning out workers who haven't engaged in liberal arts (no money in that) and who won't question their role in the status quo. If I sound like a conspiracy theorist, I am not, but I am a 16 year teaching veteran and this is what I see and it is heartbreaking. No one wants to talk about how poverty is the root of school and college failure; how parental income is the best predictor of socio-economic success. It's all about the economy, but not in the way that it is being portrayed.

I urge the Administration to radically scale back this scheme to rank colleges and instead spend money, staff, and effort on income inequality. You talk of not punishing schools and teachers at the K-12 levels, but believe me, it feels like punishment. In our rush to test students in everything all the time, we are forced to cut back on the unmeasurables (I had to fight to bring my students on a field trip to a National Park, because it wasn't labeled with enough state standards, for example). I beg you to talk to teachers and professors and reflect on your priorities. Think of how you yourselves were educated— what would you miss if you were a student today? I UTTERLY reject the notion that "kids are fundamentally different today"— 2 million years of evolution is not overturned by 20 years of the internet. If I judged my education by today's trends, I would say I wasted time and money and chose a low-paying career when I could have been a! millionaire. Reality is I wouldn't trade it for a million dollars.

I will continue to give all my students, rich and poor, all the love, fun, experiences, and guidance and all the other unmeasurables they deserve, unless, of course, someone judges me "ineffective" due to statistics instead of comprehensive knowledge of how education happens. I hope good college professors will do the same despite your efforts!

Constituency: Other (specify below)

Other Constituency (if supplied): Parent, Science Teacher, AB Brown U '93, MEd U MA Lowell '99

User E-mail (if supplied): mortonl@chelmsford.k12.ma.us

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on ED.gov Blog (<http://www.ed.gov/blog>)

O'Bergh, Jon

From: WordPress <WEB@ed.gov>
Sent: Saturday, December 20, 2014 6:08 PM
To: College Feedback
Subject: User Comment on New System of College Ratings

User Comment: The Federal government should not be involved in rating colleges at all. That is not the government's business. We then await the day when the ratings are politically tied and the rating politically motivated. There are many regions in our country and they are all very different. To try to rate the colleges discounts the cultural value of one institution against another by the government who cannot possibly comprehend this value. I completely reject this system and suggest you reject the President's request. This is a great waste of money and time.

Constituency: University Staff/Faculty

Other Constituency (*if supplied*):

User E-mail (*if supplied*):

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O'Bergh, Jon

From: WordPress <WEB@ed.gov>
Sent: Saturday, December 20, 2014 10:37 AM
To: College Feedback
Subject: User Comment on New System of College Ratings

User Comment: I have lost confidence in the Department of Education and Secretary Arne Duncan. This public comment period on the proposed college rating system is just another attempt to appear as if the public will have input into the Department of Education decisions. The Department of Education has consistently ignored the opinions of students, parents, teachers, and educational researchers in their decisions (from the various Race to the Top programs, changes in regulation of teacher preparation programs, etc.). The Department of Education continues to overemphasize outcomes on standardized test scores and encourages the further privatization of education. The current plan to rate colleges and universities is yet another ill-informed decision by the Department of Education. It should be completely scrapped. However, despite the lack of support from the public (as well as colleges and universities across the country), I am sure that the Department of Education will move forward on its plan while continuing to ignore the outcry by students, parents, and educators.

Constituency: Parent

Other Constituency (*if supplied*):

User E-mail (*if supplied*):

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on ED.gov Blog (<http://www.ed.gov/blog>)

O'Bergh, Jon

From: Nic Voge <nvoge@Princeton.EDU>
Sent: Saturday, December 20, 2014 10:26 AM
To: College Feedback
Subject: Form did not work on 12/20 @ 10:22 am

Comments I tried to upload are as follows:

Include a measure that uses student's achievement profile (SAT, AP and other scores, GPA, etc.) to project a student's GPA in the institution. Do students outperform or under-perform, on average, in comparison to model projections? This is a good measure of institutional performance and would help, in particular, first-generation, low-income and non-traditional students who are known to under-perform at some institutions due not to academic preparation, aptitude or ability.

Include a measure of the ratio of tenured, tenure track and secure faculty positions to students. Easily achieved and a good proxy of institutional health. Would also be an effective counter-force to bloating faculty-student ratios with less qualified, part-time adjunct positions.

Since the framework fails to account for (see below) information about student experience (and other factors) that is known to be crucial because of largely methodological limitations (not because they wouldn't improve the model) the framework and rankings need to find a way to, if not address those issues, ensure that institutions do not exploit the fact that these features are not reported. One way to do this would be to include a measure of "accuracy of publicity materials". If the institutions themselves do not accurately report materials on these--and other--dimensions, how can prospective students and their families expect to make accurately informed decisions given that many relevant factors are NOT addressed in the framework?

"For many reasons --including the desire for simplicity of the ratings system, institutional autonomy and differences, and lack of shared approaches and data --it seems preferable at this time to concentrate on the core data elements addressed above and to allow institutions to provide additional information to prospective students as discussed below."

USE COMMON CORE AND OTHER TEACHER RATINGS TO NORMALIZE STUDENT PREPARATION AND PERFORMANCE TO BETTER ASCERTAIN POTENTIAL. Students' preparation can be compared more precisely now that we have these standardized teacher measures, and they can and should be used in various ways. If we believe that teachers are impactful, students whose teachers in aggregate score higher than the mean should have their scores adjusted downwards to account for this benefit and those students whose teachers score below should have their scores adjusted upwards to account for poor instruction and better reflect their true potential.

Dominic (Nic) J. Voge || Associate Director
Undergraduate Learning Program
McGraw Center for Teaching & Learning || Princeton University
(609)258-6921 || <http://www.princeton.edu/mcgraw/us/>

O'Bergh, Jon

From: WordPress <WEB@ed.gov>
Sent: Saturday, December 20, 2014 9:52 AM
To: College Feedback
Subject: User Comment on New System of College Ratings

User Comment: I disagree with the proposal to use "high paying" jobs as a criteria For college ratings. Many jobs in the fields of art, education and social services do not pay well. Yet our country needs people in these jobs. A college should not be penalized because its graduates choose these fields.

Constituency: Member of the Public

Other Constituency (if supplied):

User E-mail (if supplied):

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on ED.gov Blog (<http://www.ed.gov/blog>)

O'Bergh, Jon

From: Robert M Payne <rpayne@sfasu.edu>
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2014 11:59 PM
To: College Feedback
Subject: Input on College Ratings issues

U.S. Department of Education:

Grade schools and high schools are under great pressure to pass students to the next level even if they have not learned the material. Thus a HS diploma has almost no value in the work world. Any rating/funding system that puts pressure on college teachers to pass students who have not fulfilled course requirements will similarly devalue the Bachelor's Degree and destroy the integrity of higher education.

I am a faculty member at a 4-year institution. We have a large number of low-income students who do not take our courses seriously. Others are just "attending" so they can get government money. When the difference checks are cut, they move out of the dorms.

I hope you will proceed with great caution!

**Robert Payne
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, Texas**

O'Bergh, Jon

From: Peter McGehee <(b)(6)>
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2014 8:53 PM
To: College Feedback
Subject: College effectiveness index

In agreeing that an indexed college effectiveness report may be of inestimable value to a prospective college student, and the students parents, it might also be done in such a way as to be biased and misleading.

Rating and indexing the effectiveness of a U.S. college is, as I'm sure you have already discovered, a daunting task fraught with potential mines and disasters. First, who should determine the rating issues; secondly, how are you going to determine and assign rating values; (consider that self-reporting by colleges will be highly prone to errors; someone will have to audit the college books to determine accuracy). Third, and perhaps most important, what is the expected value (knowledge) that a prospective student would gain from the indexed report. In other words, what is the goal of the report?

One way to measure educational effectiveness is cost vs. income, (project current income over 5 years vs. the cost of attaining the degree, to produce a ratio). Although certainly a valid measure, it ignores the fact that many people do not attend college to make a large income; some attend college to realize careers that are of deemed highly attractive and interesting. It seems then, that the college rating system must consider, the major (or some common list of majors) and the number of students who obtain employment (self or otherwise) in a given major, and, again, the income realized from this employment vs. educational cost.

One might also consider how long it takes a graduated (diplomaed) student to obtain full, gainful employment. This, along with giving the related major, would provide extremely useful information.

Lastly, one must consider majors that take more than four years to complete. In today's employment environment, many majors either take more than four years to complete (architecture, medicine, etc.) or do not provide a reasonable (living) income without continuing on through some graduate work, perhaps resulting in a masters degree.

It can be anticipated that a report containing the information above would be time consuming and costly, but to do otherwise might result in a report of very marginal usefulness.

Peter McGehee
Cypress, TX

(b)(6)

O'Bergh, Jon

From: Scott Seramur <(b)(6)>
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2014 6:07 PM
To: College Feedback
Subject: Comment on New System of College Ratings

As a college student who is going on attending a seventh university in route to obtaining a bachelors degree, I feel as I am over qualified in the matter of what makes a school excellent. Although the ability to obtain employment after graduation is important, I think the most important thing a student can gain from education is not solely a job, but rather the ability to critically think. With that being said, I think DOE ought to offer exit examinations to gauge comprehension outside of university. Such a device would serve the nation by allow the government to understand where the talent is located. Utilizing talent ought to be in the interest of National Security. We ought to do away with corruption and connections where employment is concerned, such things would only work to drive up the cost of education; whereby such a marker becomes a variable, based upon how much institutions can corrupt hiring practices. I'd rather employee be a smart person who has demonstrated comprehension retention and merits a degree than a stupid one who is well connected and the ability to use rote memory. The post educational exam ought to include concrete and abstract problem solving as well as other markers of intelligence.

Let us not cede Americas place in the world by allowing the educational environment to degrade with a poorly devised ranking system.

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Scott Seramur
(b)(6)
Mobile: (b)(6)
Direct: (b)(6)

"Understanding that sustainability is the ultimate issue will bring America face to face with the political challenge of forging a sustainable society during the next few decades. It is a challenge America can meet if we have the leadership and political will to do so." Gov. Nelson

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O'Bergh, Jon

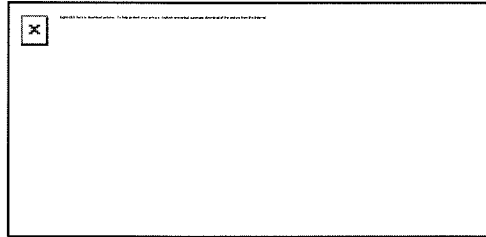
From: Steve Pew <(b)(6)>
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2014 3:28 PM
To: College Feedback; Steve Pew
Subject: How to offer comment on the College Ratings proposal

Difficult to find the proposal even with Google. Difficult to find a place to make comment.

Please advise
Thanks

Stephen Pew, Ph.D.

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O'Bergh, Jon

From: Borrero, Ruben <Ruben.Borrero@isac.illinois.gov>
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2014 2:57 PM
To: College Feedback
Subject: College Rating Framework

Hi,

I was wondering if it was possible to obtain data that assess college completion by different EFC brackets? It is a known fact that low-income students have a harder time completing college. Perhaps if the Department of Education creates some sort of metric to determine how well or how bad institutions are performing at this level, it will encourage those institutions that are not doing well in this category to allocate more resources towards low-income students.

Great initiative! Hope to hear from you guys soon.

Ruben A. Borrero
Outreach and Professional Development Specialist
800.899.4722, ext. 3838
Ruben.Borrero@isac.illinois.gov

