FINAL REPORT

Task Force on the Implications of the Evaluation of Faculty Productivity and Teaching Effectiveness
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Task Force on the Implications of the Evaluation of Faculty Productivity and Teaching Effectiveness was charged in 1999 by ASA Council to determine whether faculty productively measures (including outcomes assessment measures) used by institutions of higher education and various external agencies "threaten the freedom of faculty teaching and research." The Task Force was asked further to examine the ways in which productivity-reporting requirements affect faculty, to report on "best practices," and to make any recommendations for appropriate ASA action to the Council.

The report produced by the Task Force highlights the contextual factors that help to explain the increased emphasis in the United States on the evaluation of faculty productivity and the assessment of student learning outcomes including a series of social movements to adapt corporate models to the university and to consider teaching as scholarship. In addition, the Task Force stresses that discussions of faculty productivity are greatly complicated by definitional issues. The Task Force draws a critical distinction between the productivity of individual faculty members and the productivity of larger entities such as departments or colleges. They also distinguish between faculty productivity and student outcomes. Studies of aggregate productivity are complicated by numerous quantitative measures of the "production of students." While the gathering of data on individuals in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service has a long history, disputes continue about how to measure these aspects of productivity. Faculty annual activity reports are the most common way to measure these types of productivity. These measures are then aggregated and provided to administrators. When an aggregate is the unit of analysis, faculty productivity can be measured by asking faculty members to complete activity reports that indicate how work time has been used over a given period of time (usually an academic year).

The Task Force found that faculty activity reports raise few red flags for faculty, who see them as a bureaucratic annoyance. However, how such data are aggregated and used by deans and other decision-makers becomes important: departmental "productivity" can guide resource allocation decisions within institutions, and some states have tied appropriations to performance indicators. While some faculty and chairs complain about a lack of connection between productivity data and actual resource allocation decisions, the Task Force cautions that it would be naïve to ignore the potential consequences of productivity measurement for faculty, departments, and institutions. To the extent that these measurements of faculty productivity become part of decision-making systems, they have implications for the substantive nature of the discipline (e.g., creating pressures to focus on training students in areas where students get jobs, encouraging research in areas where grants are plentiful, discouraging teaching in small, writing-intensive, critical courses).

Recognizing that discussions of faculty productivity have led to systems of post-tenure review on many campuses and that discussions of the evaluation of productivity and use of productivity data continue in administrative and legislative circles, the Task Force

provides a series of recommendations—abbreviated here—to minimize the misuse of productivity data.

1. The same standard of productivity should not be applied to all disciplines.
2. Caution should be exercised in comparing institutions with differing missions, histories, funding bases, and student bodies.
3. Faculty should be made aware of the types of data that are being collected on them and of the ways in which the data are being reported and used.
4. General discussions of data collection, data quality, and data use should not be divorced from institutions' existing systems of faculty governance and control and faculty need to be ready to organize collectively in opposition to pressures which undermine their ability to control and organize curricula, pedagogy, and research as they see fit given their disciplinary expertise.
5. Faculty—with their considerable methodological expertise across many disciplines—also need to be involved in the technical discussions of how data are to be measured, whether at the departmental, institutional, or system levels.
6. Multiple measures of productivity are inherently preferable to single measures.
7. Non-numeric data need to be incorporated into discussions of productivity so that both context and the quality of efforts are given full weight.
8. The time demands on faculty for data collection need to be kept to a minimum.
9. Junior faculty, in particular, need to be protected from bearing the undue weight of changing pressures for faculty productivity.

The Task Force recognizes that faculty are likely to be familiar with efforts to assess student learning outcomes since outcomes assessment is mandated by all of the regional accrediting bodies in the United States and by some state boards as well. At present, however, there is considerable unevenness in the application of outcomes assessment practices. Further, while a majority of departments in the ASA's 2000 survey of Baccalaureate and Graduate Departments found assessment methods "useful," there are many individual faculty who, at best, tolerate assessment and who are troubled by the burden of work involved. The Task Force discusses the ways in which outcomes assessment is distinct from the measurement of faculty productivity, yet notes that new linkages that are being forged between these two processes.

Given that assessment is becoming more widespread, the Task Force suggests some general principles that can be used to guide departments and to distinguish between good and bad assessment practices. In sum:

1. Assessment activities need to be separate from personnel decisions.
2. Punitive resource allocation decisions need to be separate from assessment.
3. Departments and faculty must be in charge of the assessment process—from conceptualization through to interpretation.
4. While it is reasonable to ask departments to report on what they are doing and the changes they have made, assessment data must be owned by departments.
5. The assessment process should be decentralized, with departments having the discretion about the framing of learning goals and the collection and interpretation of assessment data.

6. The faculty governance system in place on a particular campus should control the assessment process.
7. A number of faculty must be involved in assessment activities within departments. The most useful component of assessment is the "conversation among faculty" that it encourages.
8. Resources must be available to do the work of assessment and to support faculty development so that departments are not expected to use their existing operating budgets to subsidize assessment activities.
9. The reward structure in place on campuses must give credit to faculty involvement in assessment activities.
10. Assessment is often most successful when it is integrated into existing activities, rather than being seen by faculty or students as an "add on."
11. The time horizon for completing assessment should be long-term rather than short-term—especially if resources are at stake.
12. Attention must be given to the quality of measurement. Consequently, discussions must focus on issues of reliability and validity, and the use of multiple measures is essential.
13. Understanding the context in which data are gathered is important. Qualitative data can be especially useful to highlight context and may provide insights about student learning which are difficult to garner with quantitative data.
14. Efforts must be made not to compare disparate departments or colleges.

The Task Force believes that sociologists have key research and conceptual skills that qualify them to be active contributors to discussions about both faculty productivity measurement and outcomes assessment. To encourage more active involvement by sociologists in both on-campus and national discussions, the Task Force makes the following recommendations—presented here in condensed form—to the ASA Council.
1. This report in its entirety should be distributed to members of the ASA Council, to ASA staff, to department affiliates, and to the individuals who agreed to be interviewed by task force members. A link to the report should be available on the ASA's web site, the report should be summarized in *Footnotes*, and a session on this report should be presented at the 2004 annual meetings.
2. While efforts to measure faculty productivity and to engage in outcomes assessment have not led to the dire consequences some have predicted, the ASA should maintain vigilance in these areas by using *Footnotes* and the Chairs Workshop at the annual ASA meetings to solicit feedback on a biannual basis about whether these kinds of data gathering activities are creating academic freedom and other problems for faculty and departments.
3. ASA staff is encouraged to meet periodically with their counterparts in other learned societies to monitor the ways in which these data gathering activities are impacting faculty and their professions and should share resources and host joint workshops when time and place allow.
4. The ASA should continue to provide resources to departments to assist especially with assessment efforts (e.g., ASA's "teaching and academic resources," academic workplace workshops and regular sessions at meetings, DRG experts).

5. The ASA should encourage the regional and state associations to hold workshops and sessions on assessment issues.
6. While recognizing the need for editors to maintain control of their publications, the ASA should encourage *Teaching Sociology, Sociology of Education,* and *VUES* (the newsletter of the section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology) to give attention to assessment issues.

INTRODUCTION

The Task Force on the Implications of the Evaluation of Faculty Productivity and Teaching Effectiveness originated from concerns about a variety of national trends in higher education. These include efforts to measure faculty productivity and workload, performance-based budgeting, post-tenure review, and outcomes assessment. Some have expressed fears that some or all of these trends represent real threats to traditional faculty roles and to academic freedom. These trends are often seen as representing a collision of interests between faculty, on the one hand, and administrators or corporate interests, on the other. Others argue that at least some of these practices promise to improve faculty performance and enrich the experience of students in higher education (Nedwek and Neal 1994).

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

Several contextual factors help explain the current emphasis on evaluating faculty productivity and assessing teaching outcomes. First, the critique of learning outcomes and curricula provided by the Association of American Colleges (1985) encouraged many schools to revise their general education curricula. Subsequent curricular revisions helped deepen students' experience within majors, extend interdisciplinary approaches, enhance critical thinking, promote greater cross-cultural awareness, and underscore basic competencies. The AAC encouraged schools to develop concrete learning outcomes and measures for assessing them. Other groups subsequently issued critiques of higher education that included calls for more comprehensive outcomes assessment (National Governors' Association 1990; Wingspread Group on Higher Education 1993).

The heightened emphasis on the teaching role of faculty members is a second relevant contextual factor. Boyer (1990) took the lead in this movement, arguing that the scholarship of teaching and learning ought to be valued equally with other forms of scholarship: discovery, integration, and application. This attention to teaching paralleled the increased interest in learning, and outcomes assessment in higher education became synonymous with assessing learning and teaching.

Additionally, faculty members have become more cognizant of how outcomes assessment affects student learning (Erwin 1991), a third contextual factor. Many faculty members wish to document that role. Assessment results can help improve teaching and program planning. Barak (1991) argues for the integration of program assessment and institutional planning–a merged response to external and internal forces–and feels that this approach will maximize curriculum change. Similarly, Chalkley, Fournier, and Hill (2000) argue that quality teaching, assessment, and faculty accountability are interrelated and should be pursued within disciplines and departments. But outcomes assessment can also engender resistance among faculty because it conflicts with a long-held academic norm: faculty members alone are responsible for program development and teaching. Because outcomes assessment typically is generated and controlled administratively, it poses a potential threat to the power and autonomy of faculty members.

The changing economic, political and institutional contexts of higher education have also been important factors. There have been important shifts in both the number and kind of students pursuing higher education. A growing percentage of the college-age

population now attends post-secondary institutions, and predictions are that this trend will continue (Levy 1998). Universities also face growing competition from other "knowledge" providers. In addition to straining existing university resources, this also creates new challenges, such as the expansion in the numbers of college students with weaker academic backgrounds and growing demands to treat students like "customers" and departments like "profit centers." These changes are likely to affect faculty roles. Some observers argue that it is also likely to intensify scrutiny of faculty productivity and learning outcomes and the growth of demands that faculty direct more of their efforts to institutional, rather than individual, priorities (Diamond and Wergin 2001).

Accountability demands by legislators and other stakeholders (Burke and Serban 1998) reflect another contextual factor leading to an emphasis on outcomes assessment. The National Governors' Association (1990) called on states to define clearly their educational goals and hold institutions of higher education accountable to those goals. The push for assessment results, in part, from worries that "Johnny can't read" (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983) and from concerns that the focus on student completion of discrete courses militates against the integration of knowledge and skills across the courses in a program (AAC reports on liberal learning). Questions have been raised about whether faculty is really dedicated to teaching rather than research productivity (Sykes 1988), and these concerns are exacerbated by the view that grades have been inflated and do not reflect the quantity of learning. As a result, over two-thirds of the states have mandated assessment processes to document student performance (Ewell 1998). Outcomes assessment became a primary strategy for assessing teaching and learning (Nedwek and Neal 1994), and some schools use outcomes assessment results to attract students (Boyle and Bowden 1997).

In the context of tight state budgets and the perception that higher education costs are growing rapidly, many states have gone beyond mandating outcomes assessment and have called for measures of performance. While it is far from clear that public universities (even major research centers) are inefficient and wasteful (Johnstone 2001), the belief that they are is widespread, leading to the institution of performance-based budgeting in at least 36 states (Layzell 1999; Schmidt 2002). Many states have also attempted, sometimes indirectly sometimes directly, to exert greater control over university budgets (Bardahl and McConnell 1999) [see below for more on performance-based budgeting].

The increasing costs of higher education coupled with tight state budgets have also pressured public university administrators to seek new sources of funding. Monies from external grants and from private fundraising are becoming increasingly important to university's fiscal solvency. Concerns have been raised, consequently, that the private corporate sector will play an increasingly important role in higher education's future. Public/private collaborations may pressure faculty to produce research that is immediately useful to the private sector and may lead to the imposition of a corporate model of control on universities. The corporate model—in opposition to the traditional collegial control model in the hands of faculty—is consistent with the rhetoric of efficiency and accountability and with the standardized collection of quantitative data for decision makers.

The heightened role of accreditation and disciplinary associations reflects a final contextual factor. All six regional accreditation agencies responsible for accrediting

college and universities have placed greater emphasis on learning outcomes assessment in their standards, requiring clearly stated objectives for each program as well as specific plans for measuring achievement (McMurtrie 2000). Results are to be used in future self-study reports for accreditation purposes. As an example of the agencies' clout, Peterson and Augustine (2000) found the particular accreditation region to be a primary influence on which of three approaches to student assessment is used: cognitive, affective, or post-college. Similarly, the American Sociological Association (1991) recommended using multiple measures to assess regularly the sociology major. Chalkley, Fournier, and Hill (2000) describe how pressure at the national level in the UK has yielded "benchmarking" documents within disciplines, which will set subject standards and identify the attributes and skills that graduates in each discipline should possess.

CHARGE OF TASK FORCE

The elected ASA Council sought information about these national trends, how aspects of faculty performance were being measured, and the impact and implications of these measures for sociology faculty. To provide this information, Council established the Task Force on the Implications of the Evaluation of Faculty Productivity and Teaching Effectiveness in 1999 with the following charge:

> *The purpose of this Task Force is to examine the measures used by universities, colleges and various external agencies to assess faculty productivity and to determine if these measures threaten the freedom of faculty teaching and research. Over the past decade, such factors as the application of a corporate model to academia and pressures from external agencies such as state higher education commissions have resulted in increasing demand for faculty to be assessed at even greater levels. Measures such as post-tenure review, outcome assessment, and evaluation of faculty teaching loads are more commonplace and could either provide useful information or could be used to diminish the freedom and flexibility of faculty to be effective scholars and teachers. This Task Force will examine these issues and report to Council, with information on "best practices" and any recommendations appropriate for ASA action.*

Given the wide range of practices it was asked to review, and the variety of motivations underlying its creation, the Task Force has made every effort to define its charge broadly. We seek, first, to understand the range of practices in use in academic institutions and to clarify how they relate to one another. Further, we seek to avoid either a witch-hunt or an uncritical celebration of these new trends. Rather, we are trying to identify "best practices" and concerns that have already emerged, so that we can provide information and suggestions to departments confronting one or more of these practices in their institution.

The task force has also been concerned to distinguish among different measures that have different intents and different origins. In particular, it has focused on the distinction between efforts to measure faculty productivity and efforts to assess student outcomes. We discuss them separately in the report, in part because of this concern. At the same time, the task force has noted that, in practice, people sometimes confuse the

two and, in reality, the measurement of productivity and outcomes assessment occasionally are linked in practice, something we discuss further below.

The task force met on five occasions to develop this report—at the annual meetings of 1999, 2000, and 2001, 2002 and at a working session in Cleveland during the weekend of April 27-28, 2002. Data to inform discussions resulted from an open call for input from sociologists (published in Footnotes in Fall 1999), from interviews with faculty, chairs and administrators at selected public institutions (chosen to reflect different institutional realities and different political contexts), and from the analysis of questionnaire data gathered during the chairs' conference associated with the ASA annual meetings of 2001. The ASA Office also provided the Task Force with relevant data from research it conducted independently of the Task Force.

PRODUCTIVITY

DEFINITIONS OF PRODUCTIVITY

Discussions of the issues that prompted the formation of the task force are complicated by the many and conflicting definitions of key terms. There is considerable variation in how productivity is defined. Most importantly, productivity can mean the productivity of an individual faculty member or it can mean the collective productivity of a department or larger academic unit.

When the focus is on the individual faculty member (as in a tenure and promotion review or a review for merit), productivity is defined to include performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. Traditionally, productivity in the area of scholarship has been given the most weight. In recent years, under the influence of the writings of Ernest Boyer (1990), the definition of scholarship itself has been broadened to include the scholarship of integration, application, and teaching as well as the traditional scholarship of discovery. Certain tensions exist among these various forms of scholarship and between faculty commitments to teaching, service, and scholarship. Faculty has limited time. Further, teaching and service tend to be activities directed inward to the institution employing the faculty member while scholarship tends to be directed to an external audience of readers, practitioners and publishers.

There is increasing evidence that productivity in the university has also come to mean the productivity of larger units, departments, divisions, and colleges. Most commonly, productivity in this sense refers to the "production of students" (i.e., to student/teacher ratios, numbers of student credit hours produced, numbers of graduates, etc.), but, particularly in research-oriented universities, it can refer to "scholarly" productivity, as, for example, when overall departmental publication records are compiled (to compare departmental "quality") or when departments are asked to demonstrate success in attracting external funding. However defined, these supra-individual discussions of productivity are framed by talk of accountability, and the rhetoric of efficiency and the marketplace is prominent.

MEASURING SCHOLARLY PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity traditionally has been defined in terms of individual performance judged through the tenure and promotion process, and the focus has been on the measurement of scholarly productivity. This remains a widespread understanding of what the term means. Institutions and departments have long collected data on faculty publications, grants, citations and the like and have used these for various purposes, including decisions about promotion and tenure, discretionary or merit increases, and even workload (in some institutions, "unproductive" faculty who do not meet institutional standards for research productivity are sometimes assigned additional teaching or service responsibilities; even unionized campuses may have contracts that allow for this kind of thing).

There have always been disputes about this type of measurement of faculty productivity. Generally, these focus on how to measure (are citation rates meaningful? Should books count more or less than articles? How should journal prestige be measured? What weight should be given to journal prestige? How to weigh the relative significance of grants and publications? How should submissions with multiple authors be judged? How should articles in specialty journals be judged in comparison to articles in "mainline" journals? How should articles outside the field of sociology be judged in comparison to articles in sociology journals? What weight should be given to external reviewers? What weight should be given to grants (i.e., external funding)? what weight should be given to textbooks? What weight should be given to trade texts rather than to those published through academic or university presses? How should publications in international journals be judged?)   Questions are also raised about the appropriate period of time over which to measure productivity (One year? Three years? Five years?) And there are always disputes about how the data should be used. But most faculty members appear to accept the idea that they should document their research productivity and that these data will be used, in some way, in making personnel decisions. Chairs, surveyed by the Task Force, mentioned many more positive than negative consequences of these reports. They focused on their potential value as a developmental tool, on their use in evaluating faculty for promotion, and on their value as ammunition in negotiations for additional resources. In part, faculty support for this type of productivity assessment stems from its being embedded in a collegial system of review by peers.

The tenure and promotion process also routinely includes an evaluation of teaching effectiveness and service, although the term "productivity" is not commonly associated with teaching success and service involvement. While institutions with a strong teaching focus have traditionally given teaching effectiveness considerable weight in personnel evaluation systems, recent attempts to define and expand the definition of scholarship have led many institutions, including those with a research emphasis, to give more attention to the evaluation of teaching (Donald and Denison 1996).

MEASURING TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

The measurement of teaching effectiveness is complex and problematic. The most commonly used technique for assessing teaching quality is a quantitative instrument completed by students near the end of a course (Seldin 1998). These instruments are

used on most university campuses, but have been the subject of much criticism. Some see such instruments as measuring little more than faculty popularity with students. Others contend that a variety of factors (class size, gender of instructor, rank of instructor, expected grade, difficulty of course, etc.) affect student responses, making the results of these evaluations difficult to interpret and/or misleading. Not surprisingly, given the controversy, considerable effort has been devoted to trying to identify what determines student responses on these questionnaires. Members of the Task Force reviewed this literature and found that it both calls into question some of the assumptions of the skeptics and leaves many questions unanswered. For example, the widespread belief that grades predict positive evaluations has not been supported (in fact, some studies find positive correlations between students' perception that a course is "difficult" and their evaluation of the instructor). Other beliefs, however, have not been dismissed. A few have been supported (for example, it appears that, within a major, required courses are less favorably evaluated than electives); others remain in dispute (for example, there are contradictory findings on the effect of instructor gender on student evaluations).[a]

There has also been extensive research on the reliability and validity of the many existing quantitative measures of teaching effectiveness (Cashin 1995). It appears that reliable, valid instruments for measuring teaching effectiveness have been developed. However, many institutions use homegrown instruments that have been inadequately tested, so questions remain regarding the reliability and validity of the evaluation of teaching.

Qualitative analyses of teaching effectiveness are much less common. Peer reviews of teaching are time-consuming and some have questioned their reliability (Morehead and Shedd 1997). Further, there can be an unfortunate tendency for reviewers to focus on the occasional negative substantive comment, overlooking the bulk of qualitative evidence, which is, in fact, positive. As with many efforts to evaluate faculty productivity, junior faculty may be disproportionately affected by the institution of a system of peer review, as it is they who must go through the process of tenure and promotion (which, at some institutions, requires presentation of multiple measures of teaching effectiveness). They are also more likely to be asked to produce teaching portfolios, of which peer reviews form an integral part.

MEASURING SERVICE

The measurement of service is best described as crude and commonly consists of little more than a listing of committee assignments in the department, college, or university and/or of activity in professional associations at the national or regional level. Community service—a strong point for many sociologists—is not commonly given full credit in productivity studies (Glassick, Huber and Maeroff 1997). Some data suggest that women (and junior faculty) do disproportionate amounts of departmental and

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[a] The literature on teaching evaluations is too vast to be reviewed adequately here. Interested readers may usefully consult some of the many university-based web sites devoted to the evaluation of teaching (many of which provide extensive bibliographies and links pages). One that the Task Force found useful is: http://www.indiana.edu/~best/multiop/ratings.htm

university service work (mentoring students, serving on committees to ensure "diversity," etc.). Consequently, the vagueness of existing ways of assessing service disproportionately affects women and minorities in the discipline (Park 1996).

In an effort to measure faculty productivity more holistically, some departments have adopted the portfolio method (Cerbin 1994). However, portfolios are themselves time consuming to prepare and readers up the chain of command sometimes complain when narratives are not condensed into "sound bite" packages (thereby defeating the purpose of the portfolio).

MEASURING FACULTY ACTIVITIES

In many universities, another measure of faculty productivity has come into widespread use – the routine collection of faculty activity reports. More than 90 percent of the chairs surveyed by the Task Force reported that faculty were required to report on their productivity or workload and 71 percent indicated that these data were reported to the Dean or a College committee. In these reports, each faculty member is asked to indicate how they spent their work time over a given period of time (usually an academic year), documenting publications, presentations and grants, but also indicating any service activities in which they engaged and describing their teaching and advising activities. While this kind of measurement is widespread enough to be uncontroversial, it does raise another set of issues for faculty.

First, what is "productivity" in each of the areas being measured? For research productivity, the same issues we have already reviewed arise. Teaching and service are even more complex. Faculty activity reports give considerable attention to teaching activities, but how should teaching productivity be measured – by teaching evaluations? by the number of students taught? by student-to-teacher ratios? by the development of new courses and/or new teaching techniques? by teaching effectiveness (and how is that to be measured)? by cost indices? by student completion rates? by job placement rates? Concerns over these questions have been intensified by state legislatures' recent expressions of concern that faculty spend too little time in teaching and too much time in research and other activities. Also, what should count as service? And how much weight should be given to the various activities in which faculty engage in composing an overall picture of their productivity?

DEPARTMENTAL PRODUCTIVITY AND CROSS-DISCIPLINARY DISPARITIES

When institutions routinely collect data on faculty activities, it also opens up the question of whether to measure departmental productivity (and not just individual productivity). It is obviously possible to aggregate the data on individual faculty members and create a picture of a department's overall productivity. These data can become the basis for comparisons, either within institutions or across them. For example, chairs know that Deans and other administrators sometimes gather data on departmental "productivity" and use them to help guide resource allocation decisions. Comparisons across institutions are also possible, as when a department's research productivity is compared to the productivity of competing departments at other institutions.

Responding to concerns that cross-disciplinary comparisons are inappropriate, and to more general concerns about the inaccuracy of standard measures of departmental productivity, some academic administrators have begun exploring improved ways of measuring productivity. Probably the most notable of these attempts is the so-called "Delaware Study," a project funded, in part, by FIPSE and by TIAA-CREF, which has recently been summarized by one of its principal investigators, Michael Middaugh (2001).

This study represents a sophisticated attempt to develop an elaborate methodology for measuring productivity. Its authors try to sort through the many difficulties involved in calculating how much faculty actually teach, whether students are being taught by tenure-track faculty, how to factor in complications such as released time, administrative duties, grant buy-outs, etc. They have collected data on faculty activity from a range of national (mostly public) institutions and, using the new methodology and concepts they have developed, attempt to compute "benchmark" productivity rates by discipline. The idea is that these discipline-specific benchmarks could be used in examining productivity in specific departments and would help to discourage inappropriate cross-disciplinary comparisons.

It is unclear that this has had much effect … yet. Despite the fact that a large number of institutions have provided data for the Delaware Study, the Task Force has encountered few faculty who were even aware of the study or who knew whether or not their institution participates in it. Further, the researchers involved in the study indicate that it is not widely being used at present. However, they do talk about how it might be used.

Middaugh advocates using the benchmarks for diagnostic purposes, not to reward and or punish departments in a simple-minded way. He opposes a simple process in which a department is rated either above or below average and then rewarded accordingly. Instead, he encourages administrators to combine quantitative data on productivity with other data, including qualitative data, to explain unusual patterns, etc. For example, if a department of Sociology is producing at a level below the national benchmark for productivity, this should not be an occasion to punish that department. Instead, it should induce questions – are there specific reasons why the department is "less productive?" Is the department doing other things that the institution values which compensate for low productivity in other areas? Middaugh points out that a program that focuses on graduate education will generally appear less productive than one which teaches many undergraduates. But, this may be consistent with the institution's mission or departmental priorities; it may also lead to other kinds of productivity (high national rank for research; grant income). Before concluding that a department is performing poorly, questions such as these need to be answered.

The suggestion is, therefore, that the Delaware benchmarks be applied carefully and for diagnostic purposes. Since there appear to be few states (Middaugh mentions Utah as a possible exception) in which the Delaware data are actually being used to evaluate productivity and/or guide resource allocation decisions, it is not yet possible to determine whether this suggestion is being followed.

IMPLICATIONS OF MEASUREMENT FOR FACULTY AND CHAIRS

For the most part, activity reports seem to raise few red flags for faculty, who experience them as a bureaucratic annoyance. Chairs responding to the Task Force survey reported that their principal complaints about such reports were that they were "too time-consuming" and "did not measure quality well." Indeed, it is often the case (or at least faculty believe as much) that the reports are simply collected and filed, and that little is actually done with them. Department chairs, however, are aware that it is fairly common for deans or provosts to calculate departmental costs per student credit hour, or to use data on enrollments and sections taught to compute measures of departmental productivity (e.g., the ratio of student credit hours to FTE, a rough measure of the number of students taught per faculty member), or to measure departmental productivity in terms of generating external funding. Once these data are presented for all departments in a college or university, it is easy for a discussion to develop in which departments are identified as "efficient" or "expensive." In a few universities, of which Ohio State is a clear example, data on departmental productivity have been used to identify "excellent" or potentially "excellent" programs and to justify steering additional resources to those departments.

RELATION BETWEEN PRODUCTIVITY AND RESOURCES

Most of the time, however, departmental productivity data appear to have few practical consequences. In fact, some chairs complain that decisions about resource allocation are NOT based on these data. At some institutions, the complaint is that decisions about new hires are driven by accreditation concerns, not by whether departments are teaching large numbers of students with small numbers of full-time faculty. In effect, some faculty and chairs complain that administrators use productivity data only to support pre-existing priorities; a "productive" department may find that it gets no additional resources (instead, it is praised for being "efficient") while another department whose accreditation is in jeopardy or that has been identified as an institutional priority may receive additional resources in spite of being less "productive" than other departments. Indeed, this apparent disconnect between productivity data and resource allocation breeds widespread cynicism among faculty and chairs about the productivity data themselves. It is tempting to conclude that the measurement of collective faculty productivity is just the latest in the series of "management fads in higher education" recently described by Robert Birnbaum (2000).

Still, as Birnbaum and others note, even momentary fads can alter people's way of thinking and create institutional structures and categories of thought that eventually become the basis for change. Moreover, there are significant political pressures on public universities to "get serious" about measuring productivity. In state systems, efforts abound to tie resource allocation decisions to these kinds of data, to reward those programs or units that are "productive" and to raise concerns about or even punish those that have "excessive" costs or have been "underperforming." Some form of performance-based budgeting has been implemented in at least 36 states, according to

SUNY's Rockefeller Institute of Government (Schmidt 2002). Perhaps the most notable example is South Carolina, where a panel of non-academics appointed by the state legislature developed a plan to use a complex set of performance indicators in determining how resources would be allocated within the state university system. In theory, 100 percent of university budgets were to be allocated in this way (Trombley 1998).

The reality in South Carolina, and in virtually all other states, has been somewhat different. Three percent or less of states' education budgets is tied to performance indicators. And, there is little evidence that performance pressures at the institutional level have translated into pressures on individual departments (Allen 1999; Schmidt 2002). Perhaps reflecting this, when the Task Force surveyed department chairs on the advantages and disadvantages of productivity measurement, there was no mention of concern about budgetary consequences.

It would be naïve, however, to ignore the potential consequences of productivity measurement. In an era of tight resources, university administrators are likely to experience powerful pressures to improve efficiency and to attract external resources; this creates an incentive to make use of the productivity data at their disposal in making strategic decisions. Slaughter and Leslie (1997) have described how these pressures also encourage faculty to engage in a kind of "academic capitalism," involving various kinds of entrepreneurial activity tied to resource availability rather than intellectual criteria. Finally, pessimists point to the British case, where the collection of data on departmental productivity has become routine. British faculty feel genuine external pressure to maintain high rates of publication and external funding to prevent their departments from being downgraded or even closed (Chalkley, Fournier, and Hill 2000), as happened recently to the University of Birmingham's esteemed department of Cultural Studies.

RELATION BETWEEN PRODUCTIVITY AND DISCIPLINARY CONTENT

To the extent that these measurements of faculty productivity become part of the decision-making process in universities, they can also have implications for the substantive nature of the discipline.

- ➢ Creating pressures to focus on training students in areas where students gets jobs (e.g., criminal justice)
- ➢ Encouraging large sections of service courses (e.g., SOC 100) and giving less attention to upper division courses for majors
- ➢ Disadvantaging graduate classes with their relatively low enrollments or, alternatively, favoring those classes because state funding formulae reward graduate programs more liberally
- ➢ Encouraging research in areas where grants are plentiful (e.g., drug abuse prevention, homeland security) and devaluing research which is unlikely to be funded (in non-policy areas, using qualitative methods, etc.)
- ➢ Favoring research which can find publication outlets readily rather than research that is cutting edge or controversial.

RELATION BETWEEN PRODUCTIVITY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Some faculty express concerns related to academic freedom. They point to:

➢ The difficulty of teaching small, writing-intensive, critical courses.
➢ Concern with teaching "more" rather than teaching "better"
➢ Priority on research to the detriment of teaching (although see the new emphasis on multiple modes of scholarship)
➢ Concern that traditional forms of collegial faculty control are being undermined, generally.

Many also express concern that institutional demands for high productivity fall disproportionately on junior faculty, again, because of their vulnerability to tenure and promotion decisions. Senior faculty entered the university under a different set of "rules" and is, to an extent, insulated from the new pressure to be "productive" because of that.

However, the increased emphasis on the measurement of productivity has also led to the creation of systems of post-tenure review on many campuses. Here, the measurement of productivity at the individual level joins forces with the measurement of aggregate productivity.   Thus, far, post-tenure review has not eroded tenure protections enjoyed by senior faculty (although many report that the institution of a serious post-tenure review program encourages early retirement among the senior faculty). The American Association of University Professors opposes post-tenure review, but reports few complaints of abuse from faculty. At present, the most common complaint appears to be that it is a redundant, bureaucratic exercise (Montell 2002). Aper and Fry (2003:258) find that post-tenure review in most cases is "more ritual than substantive and more driven by politics and appearance than by deeply rooted intentions to change the status of the faculty within the academy." Their survey of institutions with graduate programs indicates that most schools that institute post-tenure review do not carefully assess the consequences of these activities, nor do they devote additional resources to them.   Nevertheless, it is clear that post-tenure review is motivated by the sense among administrators and others that senior faculty are not responding to the increasing demands that faculty maintain high levels of productivity.

Overall, it seems to be the case that the evaluation of faculty productivity has yet to have a noticeable impact on faculty lives. But there is also clearly an active discussion in administrative and legislative circles of faculty productivity, and efforts are being made both to improve institutions' ability to evaluate productivity and to use data about productivity to guide decision-making. It is reasonable to conclude that this is likely to continue (Allen 1999).

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MINIMIZE MISUSE OF PRODUCTIVITY DATA

The desire to make these kinds of comparative analyses of productivity at the departmental level has revealed some new problems of measurement. We offer a series of recommendations to minimize the misuse of productivity data.

10. Most obviously, the same standard of productivity should not be applied to all disciplines. A "one-size-fits-all" standard implies, incorrectly, that all departments should structure their programs and use resources in precisely the same ways.
11. Similarly, caution should be exercised in comparing institutions with differing missions, histories, funding bases, and student bodies.
12. Faculty need to be made aware of the types of data that are being collected on them and to be equally aware of the ways in which the data are being reported and used. The fact remains that collected data have the potential of being used in ways that are punitive to individuals, departments, and/or institutions.
13. General discussions of data collection, data quality, and data use should not be divorced from institutions' existing systems of faculty governance and control. Collective faculty productivity should not be viewed as an administrative issue, while individual faculty productivity is viewed as an issue subject to peer review and collegial control. In particular, faculty collectively need to be ready to organize in opposition to pressures which undermine their ability to control and organize curricula, pedagogy, and research as they see fit given their disciplinary expertise.
14. Faculty—with their considerable methodological expertise across many disciplines—also need to be involved in the technical discussions of how data are to be measured, whether at the departmental, institutional, or system levels.
15. Multiple measures of productivity are inherently preferable to single measures.
16. Non-numeric data need to be incorporated into discussions of productivity so that both context and the quality of efforts are given full weight.
17. The time demands on faculty for data collection need to be kept to a minimum. Gathering information on productivity should not undermine productivity by distracting faculty from the traditional time demands of teaching, research, and service.
18. Junior faculty, in particular, need to be protected from bearing the undue weight of changing pressures for faculty productivity.

Both because they are faculty members and because their distinctive expertise qualifies them to be useful contributors to the discussion, Sociologists need to be actively involved in the discussion of measuring faculty productivity. In administrative circles, the discussion has moved beyond the question of whether to measure productivity to the question of how; but there is still a need to discuss whether or not this is an appropriate way to discuss academic work. And, if there is to be a discussion of how to measure productivity and what to do with the data so generated, sociologists need to be among those echoing Middaugh's cautions against cross-departmental comparisons, against crude measures of faculty teaching load, and against simple-minded uses of even the more sophisticated measures of productivity.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Faculty are more likely to be familiar with efforts to assess student learning outcomes, since many academics have been required to undertake such assessments for their programs. Outcomes assessment is being mandated by all of the regional accrediting agencies across the United States as well as by many of the specialized accreditation bodies. In addition, some state boards require that campuses engage in outcomes assessment using either locally created assessment instruments or instruments required by campuses throughout the state. So, it is likely that more faculty will become familiar with it in future. 71 percent of the Chairs surveyed by the Task Force reported that they had been asked to engage in the assessment of student learning.

Numerous commentators have defined assessment. Most definitions suggest that assessment involves three components—the establishment of learning goals or outcomes for students, the determination of the extent to which students have achieved those goals or outcomes, and efforts to make improvements in pedagogy or curricula if a gap exists between expectations for students and actual performance. The very nature of assessment requires that we sociologists agree within our departments on what is important for students to learn and that we develop ways of measuring what we believe is important.

While faculty have always assessed students by assigning grades to their work and credit to their course completion, what is new in contemporary discussions of assessment is the focus on student learning rather than faculty teaching, the emphasis on improvement rather than simply accountability, and the focus on the program or curriculum rather than the individual (isolated) course as the unit of analysis. In fact, assessment challenges the idea that courses belong to individual faculty members and that teaching and learning are synonymous. Assessment also encourages discussions of the advantages of collectively developing an integrated curriculum. Further, some outcomes assessment efforts focus on the process of student learning (e.g., their engagement in academic activities) rather than on simply their knowledge, skills, and attitudes when they graduate.

At present, there is considerable unevenness in the application of outcomes assessment practices. Some institutions have enthusiastically embraced it and made it part of their institutional culture, others are only beginning to talk about it. There are enormous variations in the techniques being used to do assessment: one encounters, among many others, the use of standardized tests, locally produced tests and interviews, portfolios, exit interviews, alumni surveys, questionnaires with employers, and capstone experiences.[b]

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[b] Useful resources on assessment include Charles F. Hohm and William S. Johnson, *Assessing Student Learning in Sociology*, 2nd edition. Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association, 2001 and
http://www.lib.cmich.edu/bibliographers/ruiwang/index1.htm.

Wagenaar (2002) examined the use of outcomes assessment in sociology departments. He found that alumni and senior surveys and capstone products are used most often, while commercial exams, external review of student work, and oral exams are used least often. The American Sociological Association Survey of Baccalaureate and Graduate Programs in Sociology (2000) largely confirmed this finding; departments surveyed reported that Student Surveys, Senior Theses and/or Projects, and Exit Interviews were the most commonly used types of student assessment. The Task Forces less extensive survey of chairs of Sociology departments found a similar pattern. While these general patterns held across different types of institutions, some differences do appear to exist for school type and size. The ASA Survey indicates that departments in Ph.D-granting institutions were less likely than others to use Senior Theses or Projects while departments in Liberal Arts Colleges were more likely than others to use departmental exams. Similarly, departments in Baccalaureate II colleges were more likely than others to use External Exams.

IMPLICATIONS OF MEASUREMENT FOR FACULTY AND CHAIRS

While outcomes assessment is becoming widespread, its impact on the curriculum and teaching is modest at best, with faculty members at private and smaller schools reporting greater impact (Wagenaar 2002). We are now beginning to learn more about faculty attitudes towards assessment. The ASA's survey of Baccalaureate and Graduate Departments (2000) found that the majority of departments in all kinds of institutions found most assessment methods to be "useful" (although there was noticeably less enthusiasm about external and departmental exams, especially in Ph.D.-granting institutions). The same study, however, found that only senior theses were regarded as "very useful" by a majority of departments. These findings suggest that, at the aggregate level, outcomes assessment is accepted but with something less than unbounded enthusiasm.

Attitudes to assessment clearly also vary by department and individual. There are individuals and campuses that believe in the value of assessment. They see it as a tool they can use to determine whether their teaching is effective, whether their curricula make sense to students, and to develop ways to improve and enrich the way in which they teach. In addition, some faculty argue that discussions about assessment lead to more cohesive departments that are more enjoyable places for faculty to work. Chairs surveyed by the Task Force identified curricular revision and departmental self-assessment as the primary advantages of outcomes assessment. Womack, Nichols, and Nichols (1999) argue that the department is the locus of both instruction and the educational experiences of students and should, therefore, also be the locus of most assessment activities. They observe that departmental level assessment enhances departmental commitment to schools' missions.

But there are also many who, at best, tolerate it, seeing it as an exercise that they are obliged to go through. Some see it as an externally imposed requirement whose value to them or their students is unclear. Some also complain of the burden of work involved, particularly where reporting requirements are unclear or where institutions demand the same information in multiple forms. Sociology Chairs mentioned the "time burden" it imposes as assessment's primary disadvantage. Further, the attention to assessment is

episodic on some campuses, largely a function of the interests of the chief academic officers or the immediate demands occasioned by accreditation visits.

Those who grumble about assessment appear to be most concerned about the amount of work it requires them to do. There appears to be less discussion of potential threats to academic freedom or faculty rights, although there is always friction when departments make collective decisions about how to "improve" individuals' courses. Some faculty simply do not like the idea of someone else telling them what they should be doing, especially when the "someone else" is external to the academy or the faculty governance system. The time-consuming nature of assessment also leads some faculty to worry that their teaching effectiveness will actually decline as energies are directed to assessing student learning rather than promoting it. In addition, some faculty feel that they must develop assignments and examinations that can easily be used for departmental assessment purposes or feel that with assessment they must "teach to the test."

Faculty also clearly articulates their need for assistance with the assessment process. Sociologists are concerned with issues regarding the measurement of student outcomes. They want examples of how to do assessment well and examples of "best practices."

RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE USEFULNESS OF OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

What is abundantly clear is that assessment is becoming more widespread and that it can be done both badly and well. Some general principles are beginning to emerge that can be used to guide departments and to distinguish between good and bad assessment practices. Among them, we can mention:

15. Assessment activities need to be separate from personnel decisions so that faculty will be willing to ask difficult questions that can lead to improved curricula, pedagogy, and student learning without fearing the consequences for their career success.
16. Punitive resource allocation decisions need to be separate from assessment. Departments must have the option of choosing when to report assessment findings when decisions about resource allocation are at issue. Even using assessment data to make positive resource allocations raises critical issues: departments that are not rewarded may feel that they have been "punished" and there are real questions about the fairness of such decisions generated by the uncertainty of measurement and the limited time period for which assessment data are available.
17. Departments and faculty must be in charge of the assessment process—from conceptualization through to interpretation. Assessment is misdirected when Deans provide the interpretation of data or define the learning goals. Assessment must be useful to departments. It must involve asking questions that faculty want to address. No one assessment model works across departments and institutions; while faculty should be encouraged to borrow from one another it is unlikely that a single model can be adopted *in toto*.
18. While it is reasonable to ask departments to report on what they are doing and the changes they have made, assessment data must be owned by departments.

Departments should have discretion about when and whether raw findings are made public.

19. The assessment process should be decentralized, with departments having the discretion about the framing of learning goals and the collection and interpretation of assessment data. The diversity of approaches to assessment that results from this decentralization is, in fact, an advantage. Departments should resist efforts to make comparisons with aggregated, national data.

20. The faculty governance system in place on a particular campus should control the assessment process. Clear policies should be developed and endorsed at the front end, rather than as problems arise.

21. A number of faculties must be involved in assessment activities within departments. The most useful component of assessment is the "conversation among faculty" that it encourages. Consequently, assessment cannot be the responsibility of just one individual. Efforts should be directed to ensuring that junior faculty is not expected to complete a disproportionate amount of a department's assessment activity.

22. Resources must be available to do the work of assessment so that departments are not expected to use their existing operating budgets to subsidize assessment activities. Similarly, faculty development opportunities should be made available to faculty so that they can learn from one another and from the past experiences of other institutions. Assessment can be made more economically efficient by encouraging cooperation among departments with similar learning goals and data collection strategies.

23. The reward structure in place on campuses must give credit to faculty involvement in assessment activities.

24. Assessment is often most successful when it is integrated into existing activities, rather than being seen by faculty or students as an "add on." On some campuses, assessment will be seen and credited as an extension of teaching rather than as a new faculty responsibility. The data collection associated with assessment can often be made a part of the credit-bearing activities associated with a course or program; this is preferable to expecting students or faculty to complete additional out-of-class activities simply for the purpose of assessment.

11. The time horizon should be long-term rather than short-term—especially if resources are at stake. Faculty has only so much time to devote to assessment in a given year. Further, developing a "culture of evidence" within a department or institution is an on-going effort rather than a one-shot activity designed to meet an administrative calendar. Care should be taken to ensure that assessment is not so time-consuming that other important faculty and department goals suffer because of the energies directed to assessment.

12. Attention must be given to the quality of measurement. Consequently, discussions must focus on issues of reliability and validity, and the use of multiple measures is essential.

13. Understanding the context in which data are gathered is important. Qualitative data can be especially useful to highlight context and may provide insights about student learning which are difficult to garner with quantitative data.

14. As we have seen regarding studies of faculty productivity, efforts must be made not to compare disparate departments or disparate colleges.

A final concern regarding outcome assessment is the possibility that national standards or measures of student learning may emerge. In many states, K-12 teachers find themselves confronted by the need to enable their students to pass state-mandated proficiency tests in various subjects. These tests are controlled not by local schools but by statewide bodies. This, in turn, creates concern that local schools will lose control over their curricula and that teachers are being encouraged to "teach to the test" in order to improve their school's "report card." Thus far, no analogous movement has developed in higher education. Still, regional accrediting bodies do exercise an at least mild standardizing effect on assessment (since all of the schools evaluated are scrutinized according to the same criteria). Moreover, the temptation to use standardized tests (such as the GRE subject tests) to evaluate student learning encourages faculty to teach to the test. Even the recently developed National Study of Student Engagement (NSSE), which examines how academically engaged students are, could become a standardizing force if it becomes an alternative to the popular *US News & World Report* measures of institutional quality. If nothing else, faculty need to be aware of the possibility that outcomes assessment, which can be a valuable pedagogical tool when controlled locally, could become something quite different if it becomes a standardized, one-size-fits-all exercise.

As with the measurement of faculty productivity, sociologists have distinctive research and conceptual skills that qualify them to be active contributors to discussions of outcomes assessment and how to do it. The fact that there are both good and bad practices in use, and good and bad ways of reporting and using assessment data, makes it all the more important that sociologists become actively involved in discussions of assessment. Further, sociologists can contribute much to the discussions about the ways in which higher education is changing from pressures both external and internal to it. In this light, it is important to recognize the ways in which assessment can be used against departments, programs, and individual faculty members. With this in mind, the discipline and its members are encouraged to take precautions against data misuse and to be vigilant in the creation of institutional policies and in the analysis of institutional trends.

LINKAGES BETWEEN PRODUCTIVITY ISSUES AND ASSESSMENT

Interest in measuring faculty productivity (particularly at the aggregate level) has different roots than the outcomes assessment movement. The former derives from the growing economic pressures on universities faced with declining state support; the latter is rooted in the concern for student performance highlighted by documents such as A Nation at Risk. There are both positive and negative aspects to both of these practices, as we have noted. However, it is also the case that, at times, these two processes are being linked on some campuses:

➢ Assessment data are being asked for in productivity studies (e.g., alumni survey data, graduation rate data)

➢ Campus reviews of programs for resource allocation purposes (e.g., program review) ask for assessment data (data on student outputs) in addition to the traditional data on "inputs" or faculty "outputs" (e.g., productivity indices).

Furthermore, there are tensions between the growing demand that faculty assess student learning and the concomitant pressures to be productive:

➢ The time-consuming nature of assessment and the consequent focus on teaching may lead to decreased scholarly productivity among faculty.
➢ Assessment itself tends to encourage more attention to teaching while faculty productivity reports have traditionally given more attention to scholarship.
➢ Generally speaking, other important institutional goals—e.g., diversity, general education—may be undervalued when so much attention is placed on either assessment or faculty productivity.

Faculty governance mechanisms need to pay more attention to the contradictory demands being made of faculty. They also need to work to keep separate the activities of assessing productivity and assessing student outcomes so that the latter, in particular, can be done in a way that is useful to both faculty and students.

CONCLUSION

Outcomes assessment, the measurement of faculty productivity and other new administrative practices are becoming more widespread. There is good reason to suppose that these trends will continue. There is little evidence that faculty have either embraced these practices enthusiastically or opposed them vigorously. Rather, it appears that some are enthusiastic about some practices (particularly outcomes assessment), while many grumble about an increase in externally imposed bureaucratic reporting requirements. Many also appear to know very little about the new practices which may be affecting them or will affect them in the future.

Many of these practices raise issues, both philosophical (should we actually measure faculty productivity?) and practical (how should we measure? what should be done with the information we gather?). The Task Force hopes that its final report has outlined for sociologists what the issues involved are, has identified both concerns and "best practices" that will help Sociology departments in their own discussions, and will encourage more involvement by sociologists in on-campus and national discussions of these practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL

We make the following recommendations to the ASA Council to ensure that the issues raised in this report are discussed widely within the profession.

7. This report in its entirety should be distributed to member of the ASA Council, to ASA staff, to department affiliates, and to the individuals who agreed to be interviewed by task force members. A link to the report should be available on the ASA's web site. Further, we suggest that the ASA sponsor a session on this report at the annual meetings of 2004 and that the report be summarized in an article in *Footnotes*.

8. This report suggests that efforts to measure faculty productivity and to engage in outcomes assessment have not led to the dire consequences some have predicted. Nonetheless, it is critical that the ASA maintain vigilance in these areas. The opportunity for the misuse of productivity and assessment data remains, and there is no sense that pressures on departments and institutions to engage in these activities will lessen. Therefore, we recommend that the ASA use *Footnotes* and the Chairs Workshop associated with the annual ASA meetings to solicit feedback on a biannual basis from faculty about whether these kinds of data gathering activities are creating academic freedom and other problems for faculty and departments.

9. We encourage ASA staff to meet periodically with their counterparts in other learned societies to monitor the ways in which these data gathering activities are impacting faculty and their professions. Further, we encourage staff to work with their colleagues in other professional associations to share resources and to host joint workshops when time and place allow (e.g., another workshop of assessment in sociology in conjunction with the annual assessment conference sponsored by the AAHE).

10. The ASA should continue to provide resources to departments to assist especially with assessment efforts. The "teaching and academic resources" published by the ASA should continue to give emphasis to assessment. Similarly, the ASA should continue to host academic workplace workshops and sessions on assessment during the annual meetings. The Department Resources Group (DRG) should be expanded to include experts on assessment who are willing to consult with departments facing assessment issues (or, alternatively, a new group with a focus on assessment could be developed to serve as a resource to departments nationally).

11. The ASA should encourage the regional and state associations to hold workshops and sessions on assessment issues.

12. While recognizing the need for editors to maintain control of their publications, the ASA should encourage *Teaching Sociology, Sociology of Education,* and *VUES* (the newsletter of the section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology) to give attention to assessment issues.

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