

Minnesota Office of Higher Education Accountability Process

August 14, 2008, SHEEO Professional Development

Minnesota Office of Higher Education-About Us

- Cabinet agency – Director Susan Heegaard was appointed by Minnesota’s Governor in 2004.
- Provides students with financial aid.
- Serves as the state's clearinghouse for postsecondary data, research and analysis on enrollment, aid, and trends.
- Operates other programs and regulates private postsecondary education.
- Compared to other SHEEOs
 - *Does not directly operate colleges or universities, does not guarantee student loans or provide federal Stafford loans.*

Our accountability process

- **In 2004-5, Governor Pawlenty asked the agency to take action on Accountability for Higher Education.**
 - Desire for a statewide perspective, including public and private colleges, universities, and career schools.
 - Desire for information on outcomes - what the state is getting for its investment in higher education.
 - Sought information on the performance of the state as a whole, not just institutions.
 - *Not a report card on institutions*
 - *Data not meant to be “punitive”*
 - Wanted to add value to what the systems of institutions in the public and private postsecondary sectors were already doing.

Our accountability process - continued

- **The Office of Higher Education hired outside experts to begin the process.**
 - National consultants can enhance credibility
 - An arms-length relationship helped calm concerns about potential hidden agendas

Our accountability process - continued

- **Meetings with stakeholders**
 - Employers and business leaders
 - Faculty and faculty unions
 - Legislators and their staff
 - K12 School superintendents and principals
 - Minnesota Department of Education
 - Policy makers from the executive branch
 - Presidents of colleges and universities
 - Public policy groups and think tanks
 - Regional philanthropic foundations
 - Regional higher education compact
 - Students and student groups
- **Three meetings – more than 100 people attended each**
 - Data on Minnesota higher education
 - Input from stakeholders

Our accountability process - continued

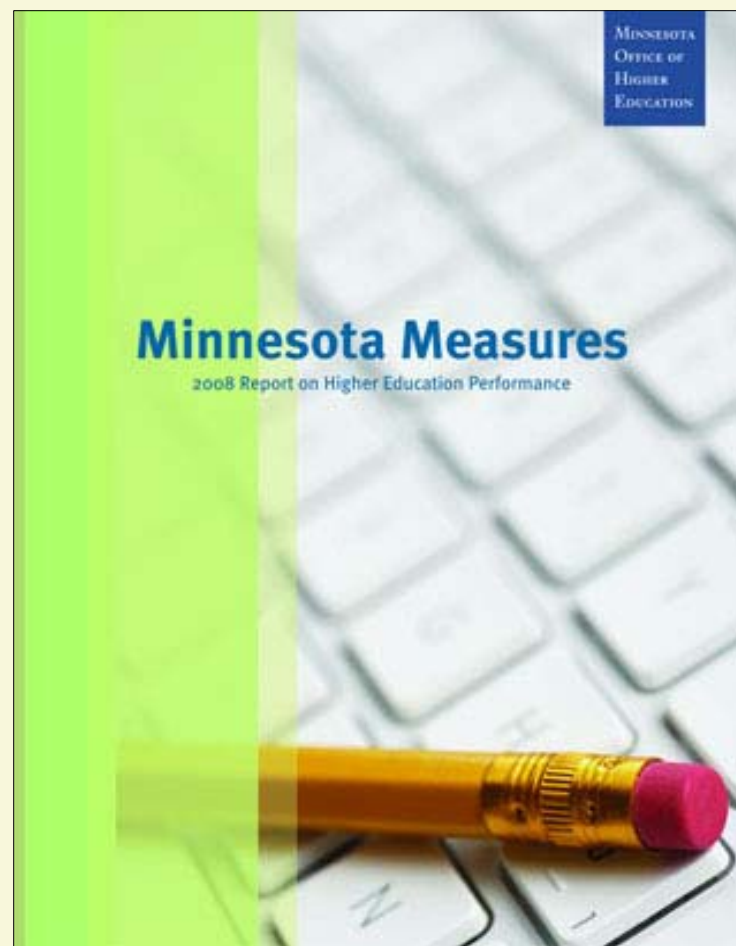
- **Developed goals based on input from stakeholders.**
- **Had 20 “listening sessions” around the state:**
 - 10 locations
 - Morning meetings were with employers, community members, interested citizens
 - Afternoon meetings with college presidents, faculty, students et al.
 - NCHEMs facilitated the meetings and summarized what we heard.
- **Refined and expanded goals.**

Minnesota Office of Higher Education Accountability Reports

2007



2008



Minnesota's higher education accountability goals and indicators

- 1. Improve success of all students, particularly students from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education.**
 - a. Achievement gap
 - b. College participation
 - c. Retention
 - d. Degree completion

- 2. Create a responsive system that produces graduates at all levels who meet the demands of the economy.**
 - a. Degree attainment
 - b. Degree production
 - c. Major field of study
 - d. Degree alignment

Minnesota goals and indicators - continued

3. **Increase student learning and improve skill levels of students so they can compete effectively in the global marketplace.**
 - a. Learning outcomes assessment
 - b. Student engagement
 - c. Preparation for graduate study
 - d. Occupational certification and licensure preparation

4. **Contribute to the development of a state economy that is competitive in the global market through research, workforce training and other appropriate means.**
 - a. Research and discovery
 - b. Workforce development

Minnesota goals and indicators - continued

5. Provide access, affordability and choice to all students

- a. Enrollment rates by age
- b. Price of attendance after subtracting grants and scholarships (net price)
 - a. *Average for students of all incomes*
 - b. *Average for each income category*
- c. Student loans – percentage of graduating seniors with loans and average amount borrowed.

Legislative request

- **Legislators were part of the initial large stakeholder meetings**
 - National experts made an impact
 - Legislator concerns were incorporated in the early summary documents
- **Developed a request for the 2005 budget session of the legislature**
 - \$100,000 the first year
 - \$300,000 the second year of the biennium, and ongoing
- **Many meetings with individual legislators**
- **Budget request was funded**

Report process for accountability project

- **Goal was a report in February, 2007**
- **Developed a draft report in October 2006**
- **Met with each higher education system for feedback while it was still in draft form**
 - Example of feedback – private four-year institutions wanted us to use 4-year graduation rates, public four-year institutions wanted 6-year rates, the report has 4-year and 6-year rates
 - Who are the “peers” to whom we want to compare ourselves?
 - *2007 report used the top 10 new economy states*
 - *2008 report used the Big 10 states*
- **Governor’s office had input on a draft**
- **Revised the draft to incorporate much of the feedback**

Report process - continued

- **First report had a section at the end for “next steps”**
 - International comparisons
 - Development of a core comparison group
 - Student learning assessment
 - Affordability – additional perspectives on price, aid and access
 - The value of degree completion
 - Workforce development benchmarks – quality, alignment and scope of training
 - Job placement and employer satisfaction data

Report process - continued

- **Legislators**
 - Mailed a copy to legislative leaders and each member of the higher education and k12 education committees
 - Met individually with the committee chairs and each member of the higher education committees
 - Hearing in the Minnesota Senate
- **Presented the report to:**
 - Business groups
 - Faculty groups
 - Student Advisory Committee
 - Financial Aid Advisory Committee
 - Governor's Workforce Development Committee
 - IPEDS/SHEEO Data conference
- **Media strategy**
 - Report was designed for "readability"
 - Called senior media contacts, provided a briefing on the report

Report process-continued

- **2nd report, due February 2008**
- **Met with higher education systems again**
 - Reaction to the first report
 - Suggestions for the second
 - They revised some of their accountability procedures to align with ours
 - *Concern that agency indicators would change and they would be out of alignment.*
- **Other feedback – tell us what the numbers mean**
- **First report helped build appetite for data on how K12 students do in the transition to college.**

Report process-continued

- **2nd report allowed more time to gather data on measures of learning already being used by Minnesota institutions.**
 - Systems were not comfortable with reporting which institutions are doing the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency, Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress, Collegiate Learning Assessment
 - Policy makers need to know many campuses are already doing assessment.
 - 2nd report lists how many campuses are doing each one.
- **Assessment Conference**
 - 125 people from systems and institutions attended
 - Emphasis on real world experience – best practices, what did you learn, how would you do it differently
 - Assessment is being done to improve learning
 - Positive feedback on the “realistic” nature of the conference

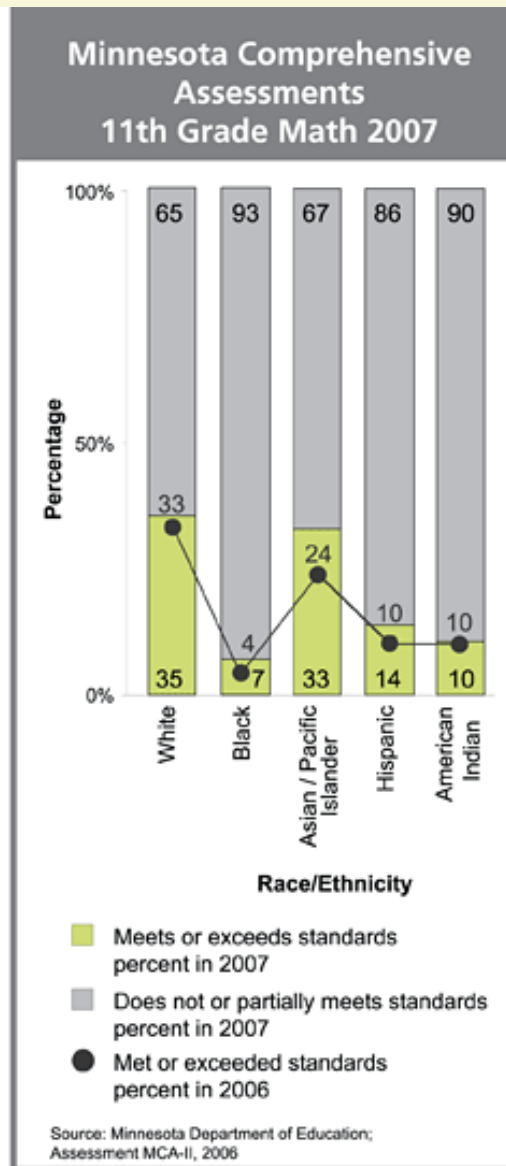
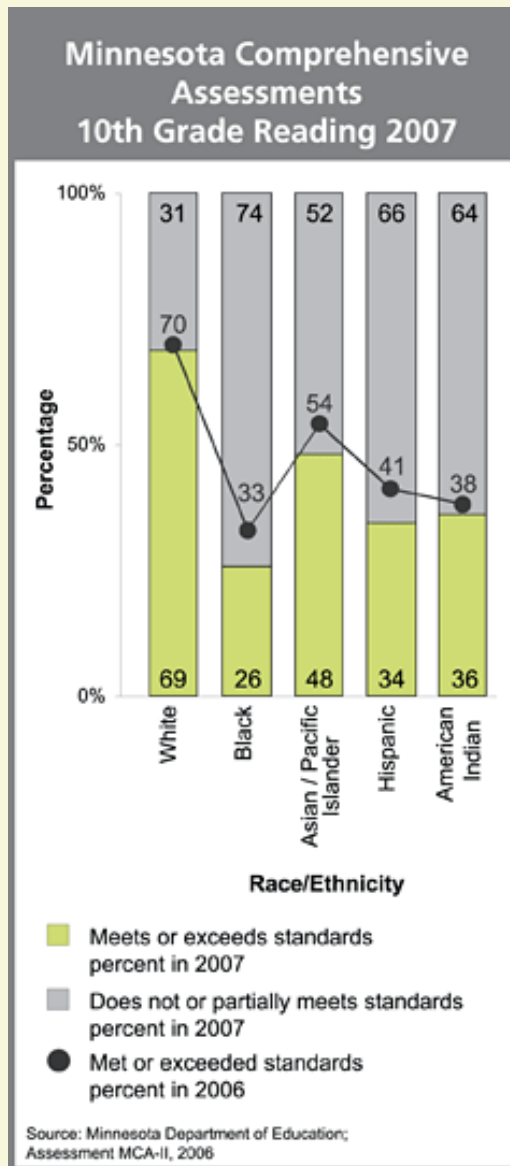
Report process - continued

- **Heading into the third annual report – Spring 2009**
- **Employer satisfaction survey is underway**
 - Broad sample of employers – different sized companies, public and private sector, variety of industries
 - What value they place on various skills
 - How satisfied they are with skill levels of graduates of Minnesota institutions
 - Goal is responses from 600 employers
- **Workforce survey**
 - How much different companies are using contract training
 - To what extent different systems are providing the training
 - How much is provided by non-higher ed providers
 - How much businesses are spending

Lessons Learned

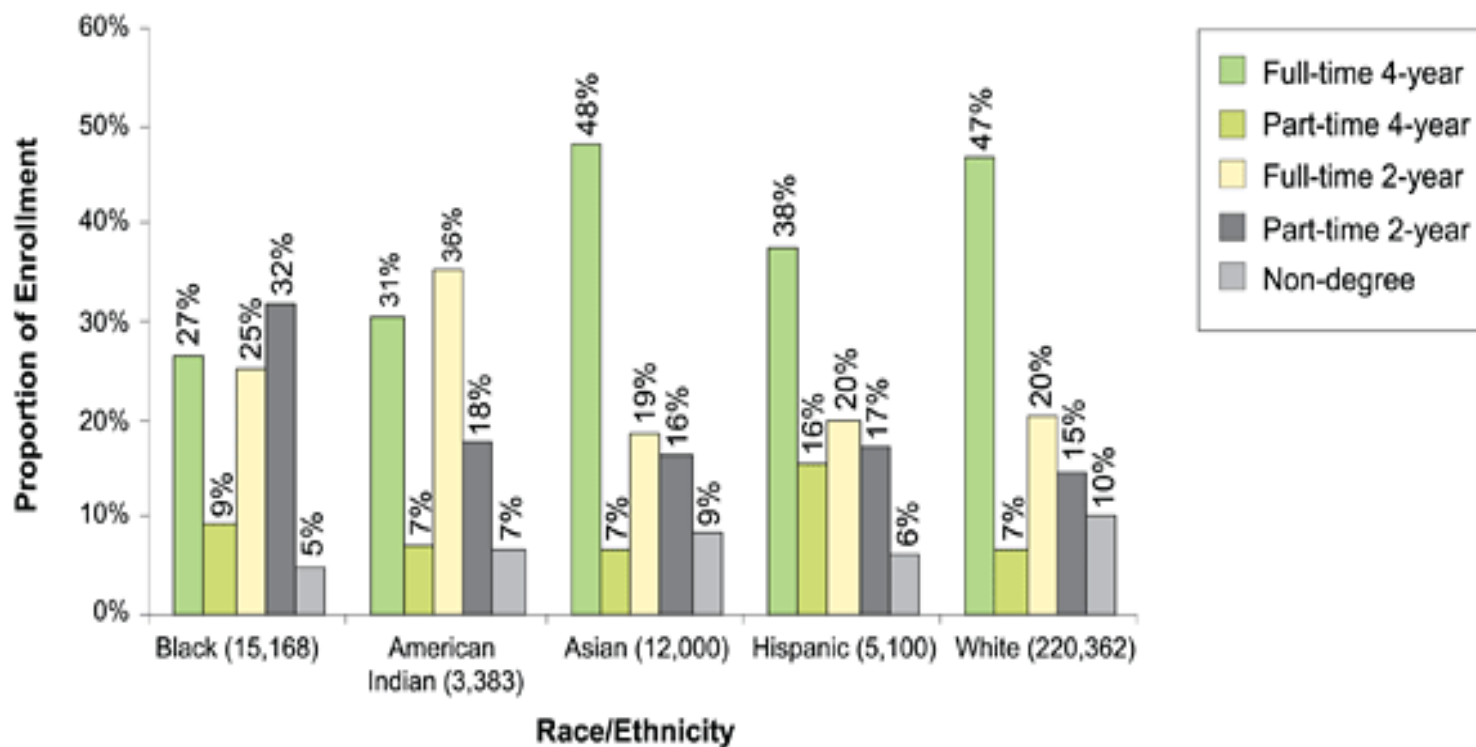
- **Statewide focus**
 - Looking at the state as a whole, where possible
 - Including all sectors – private, public, two-year, four-year, career schools
- **Participatory process**
 - Involving stakeholders
 - Feedback from stakeholders and higher education systems
- **Circular process**
 - Each stage incorporated both formative and summative assessment of the process.
- **Importance of readability**
- **Concise report**

Minnesota Accountability Report - Examples



Minnesota Accountability Report – Examples, continued

Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity and Attendance Status Fall 2006



Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

Minnesota Accountability Report - Examples

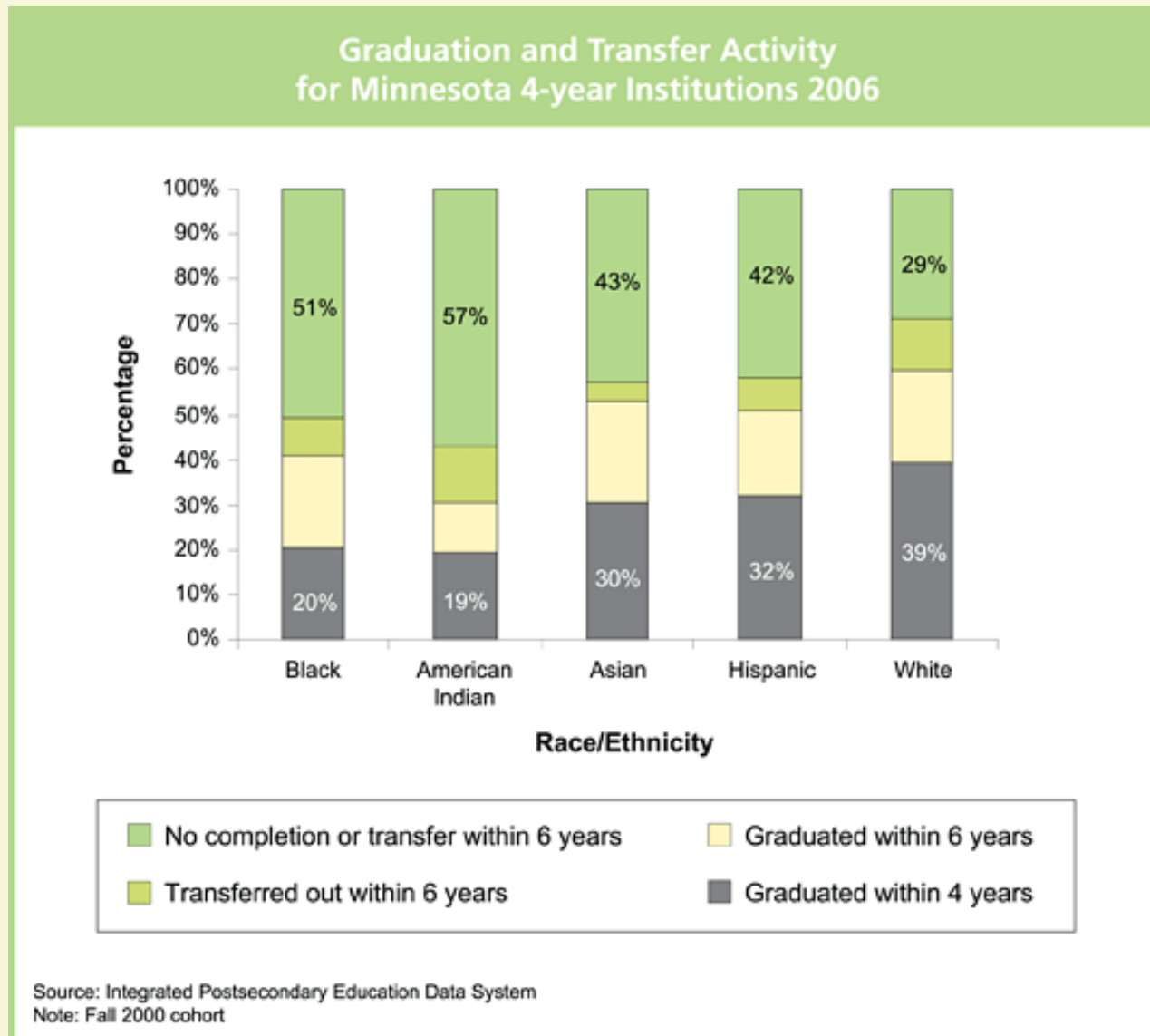
Graduation Rates at 4-year Institutions 2005⁸

4-year Rate		6-year Rate	
Top 3 States		Top 3 States	
Rhode Island	52.5%	Massachusetts	68.6%
Delaware	51.8%	Rhode Island	66.8%
Massachusetts	51.2%	Delaware	66.1%
Minnesota (21st)	35.0%	Minnesota (18th)	58.0%
National Rate	35.3%	National Rate	57.2%
Peer States ⁵	37.3%	Peer States ⁵	59.7%

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

Note: Fall 1999 cohort

Minnesota Accountability Report - Examples



Minnesota Accountability Report - Examples

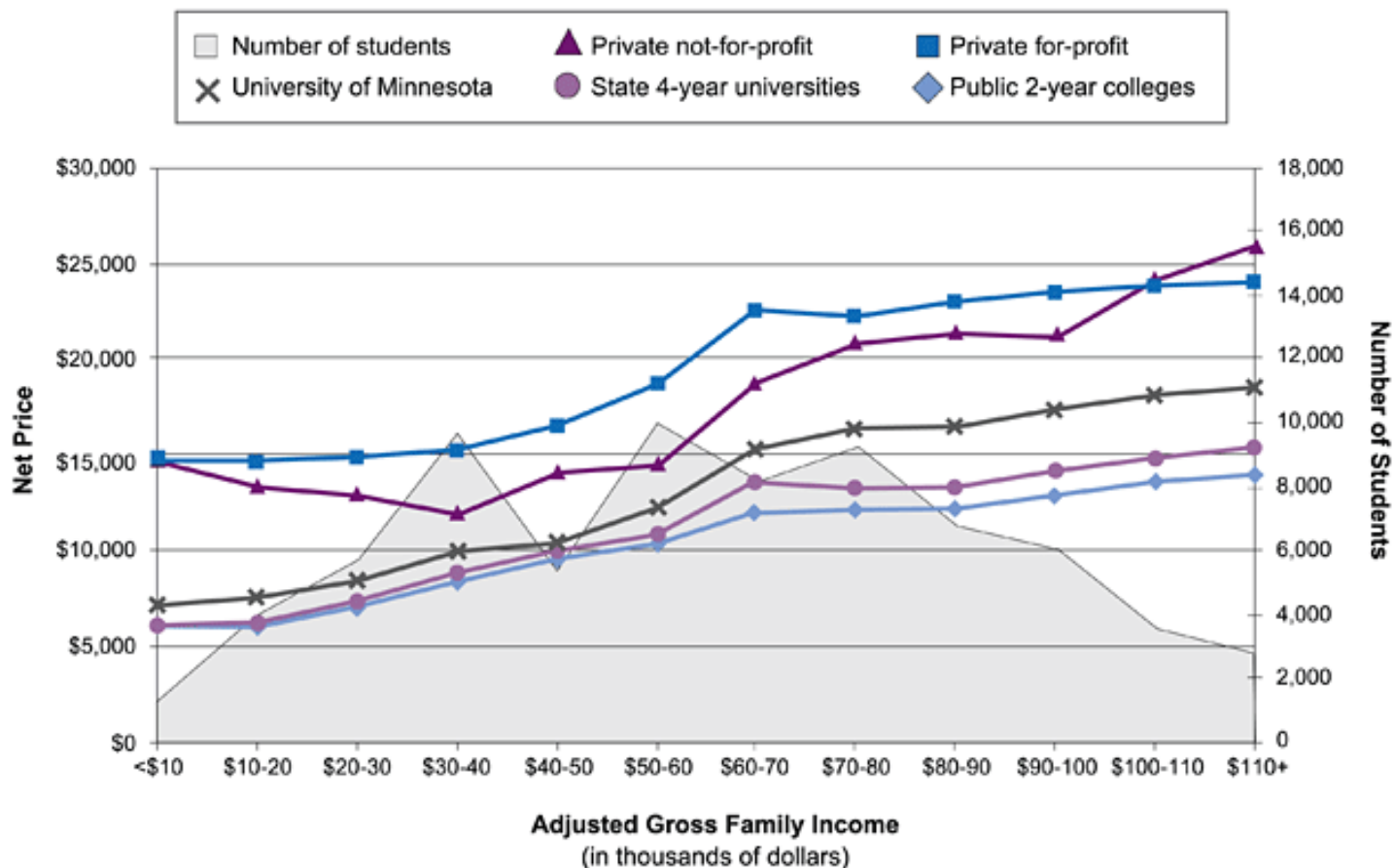
Mathematics- and Science-related Fields for which Degree Production May Not Be Keeping Up with Market Demand

Occupation Title	Number Needed by 2014	Percentage of Need Met through 2006	Minimum Education Requirement
Actuaries	287	11.5%	Bachelor's degree
Mechanical engineers	2,532	26.1%	Bachelor's degree
Engineers, all other	1,213	26.2%	Master's degree

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (job data), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (degree completion data).
 Note: Number Needed by 2014 is the number of new and replacement workers estimated to be needed in each field. Percentage of Need Met is the number of degree completers who graduated with postsecondary credentials in each field through 2006.

Minnesota Accountability Report - Examples

Net Price by Income for Full-time, Dependent Undergraduates 2006 – 2007



Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education.

Note: Net price reflects tuition, fees and a \$10,000 living allowance estimate for room and board, transportation and other expenses, minus all government grants, private and institutional scholarships and tax credits. The numbers are averages for students attending each institution type at each income level.

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Starting with the Public

A Context for Accountability

Public Opinion Research from The National Center for
Public Policy and Higher Education and Public Agenda

Supported by the Lumina Foundation for Education
Making Opportunity Affordable Initiative

Who We Are

- **The National Center:**
 - Independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit
 - Enhance opportunities to pursue high-quality education beyond high school
- **Public Agenda:**
 - Nonpartisan, nonprofit
 - Opinion research and engagement
 - Focuses on the gaps between leaders and the public

The Premise

- Higher education accountability must address key public concerns
- Measuring what matters

SqueezePlay:2007 Survey

- Collaboration between the National Center and Public Agenda
- Surveys going back to 1993
- SqueezePlay, 2007: 1000 Americans
- Over-sample of parents, minority parents
- Interviews with opinion leaders
- Focus groups

www.publicagenda.org/citizen/researchstudies/education/higher-education-reports

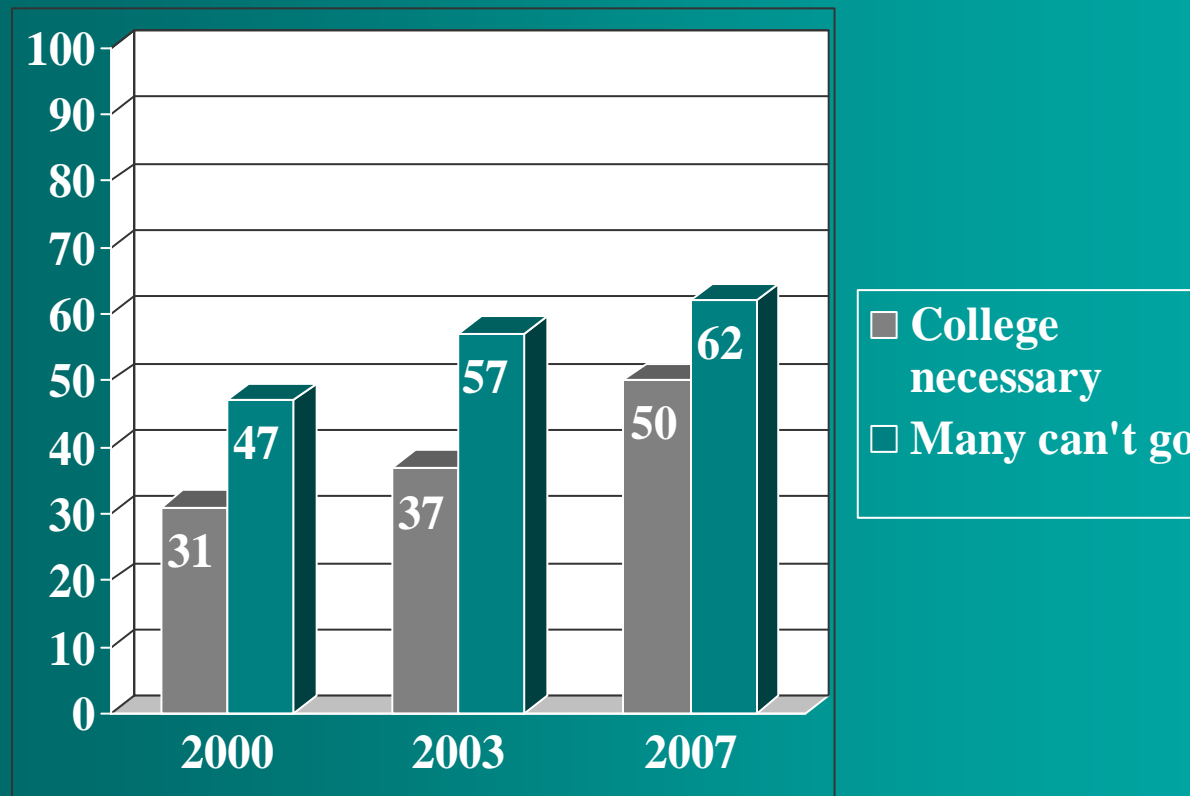
Overview

- **Growing importance of higher education**
- **Coupled with growing anxiety**
- **Confidence in higher education institutions, but . .**
- **More public skepticism – “the bloom is off the rose”**

A College Education: More Important than Ever, But . .

- College is NECESSARY to participate in U.S. economy
 - 2000 – 31%
 - 2003 – 37%
 - 2007 – 50%
- 67%: Employers want college, even for jobs that don't require it
- 88%: We should not allow cost to keep qualified students from attending college
- 62%: Many don't have opportunity to attend college

The Big Squeeze: More Important, but Declining Opportunity



Parents Are Worried, but Coping

- 76%: worried about costs
- 84%: we'll find a way to work out the costs
- Less than half (44%) think students are getting their money's worth

Minority Parents Are More Concerned

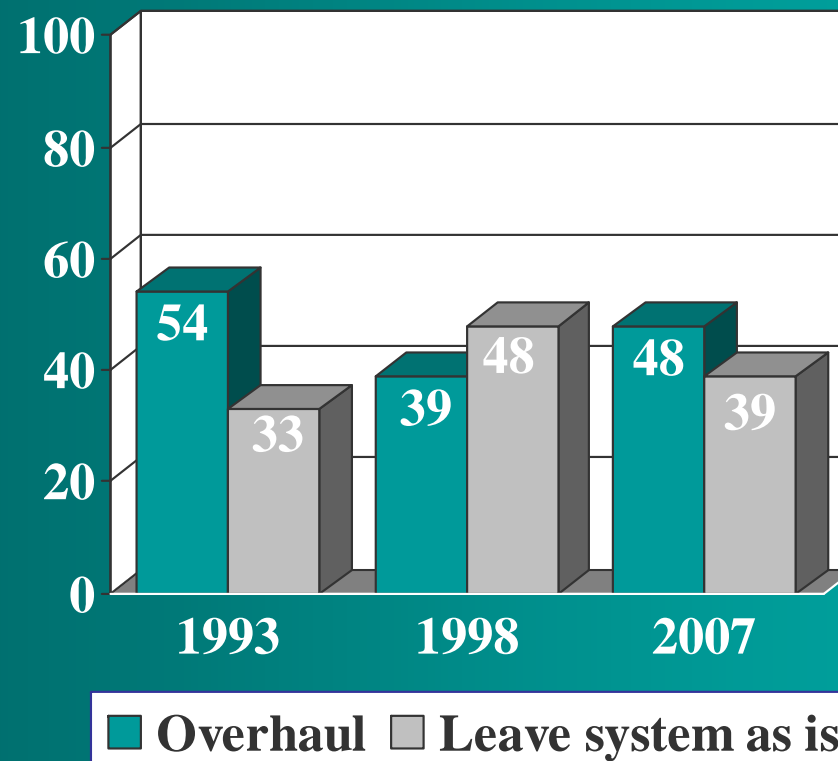
- Many don't have opportunity
 - Non-Hispanic white parents: 56%
 - Hispanic parents: 67%
 - African-American parents: 84%
- Ethnic/racial minorities have less opportunity
 - Non-Hispanic whites parents: 14%
 - Hispanic parents: 30%
 - African-American parents: 40%
- Higher-income minorities concerned too
 - 7 in 10 higher income minority parents say "many" don't have opportunity

"The Bloom Is Off The Rose"

- 52%: college more like a "business," focus on the bottom line
- 44%: "waste and mismanagement" are "major" causes of high cost
- More willingness to blame colleges (vs. high schools or students) for college dropouts
 - 2000 10%
 - 2007 25%

State Colleges: An Overhaul in the Offing?

Percent Favoring Overhaul



Public Believes Colleges Can Do More

- 58%: colleges could take more students without harming quality
- 56%: colleges could spend less and still maintain quality

Top-of the Head Reaction to Some Policies

- 75%: Give grants and tax breaks to students to improve access
- 68%: Make greater use of two-year schools
- 67%: Making more efficient use of facilities and distance learning

But . . .

- 66% oppose reducing credits needed for degree
- 65% oppose consolidating programs, closing branches

The Context:

- Broad recognition of importance
- Broad confidence in quality
- But fault lines in public support
- More concerns about access
- More questions about waste, and use of public dollars
- More questions about good faith intentions

An Undercurrent of Tougher Questions

- Multiple audiences

- Taxpayers: may be more skeptical, more alert to possible waste
- Parents: supportive, but more restive than in the past
- Business, leadership:
 - More likely to understand complexity
 - More concerned about waste, accountability
 - May have more concerns about quality
- Legislature: competing priorities

Communications Challenges

- Maintaining credibility
- Showing that hard-earned tax dollars are well-used
- Designing accountability systems that balance public, business, leadership concerns
- Public relations vs. public engagement
- How much buy-in do you need?