
QUALITY ASSURANCE MATTERS



ABSTRACTS OF CONCURRENT SESSIONS

2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

01.

From the President

02.

Designing for Quality Assurance in Competency-Based Education

03.

Standards, Co-creation and Freedom. How institutions
can Work Together to Protect Quality

04.

Using Integrated Academic Master Planning to Create
and Maintain Quality Programs

05.

A Model for Developing Global Accreditation that is
Affordable & Sustainable

06.

It's All About Perspective: A Discussion with
Accreditors and Institutions

07.

Accreditation of Higher Education Certificate
Programs: Ensuring Quality and Relevance




TABLE OF CONTENTS

08.

From Reactive to Responsive Leadership: Cultivating a Culture of Quality Assurance (QA) & Improvement

09.

New Normal Assessment: Roles, Practices, and Values

10.

Leading, Learning and Logistics: Implementation of an Effective Accreditation Process

11.

Ensuring Accreditation Signifies Quality in an Era of Political Unrest

12.

The Role of Quality Assurance in Building the European Higher Education Area

13.

Impact of International Recognition on Accreditation Agencies and Medical Education

14.

Improving Educational Quality Through Sustainability

TABLE OF CONTENTS

15.

Quality Assurance Through Futures Thinking: Showcasing
an AI Curriculum Guide

16.

Mobility & Accessibility--What We are Learning from Existing Efforts

17.

Data Collection and Ensuring Compliance with Accreditation
Standards: Programmatic Accreditation Approaches

18.

Sustainable Higher Education: Responsive Leadership,
Learning Outcomes, & AI Integration

19.

The Gaps Within: Quality Assurance Partnerships in Universities

20.

Implementing Centralized Quality Controls in a
Decentralized Environment

21.

Regional Accreditors and Non-Credit Programs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

22.

There and Back Again: An Unplanned Journey from
Sanction Back to Compliance

23.

Student Voices in Academic Quality: Aligning DEI with the Practice of
Internationalization

24.

A Force for Good? Exploring Critical Approaches to Quality
Assurance in the Global South

25.

Local vs. International: An Accelerated Process for
Institutional Accreditation in Qatar

26.

Navigating the AI Revolution: Crafting an Adaptive Paradigm
for Quality Assurance

27.

Changing Governance to Create a Sustainable Institution

28-30.

Contributors



TABLE OF CONTENTS

31.

Disclaimer

32.

Sponsors



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings Colleagues,

Thank you for attending the 2024 CHEA/CIQG Conference! Your participation was engaging and represented the global connection of scholars and academicians committed to quality assurance in higher education. It was our sincere pleasure to have you as continuous partners and collaborators with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. This community of scholarship helps us all become better prepared to address issues that influence quality and more importantly, student success!

The theme, “Quality Assurance Matters” was highlighted by the thoughtful plenaries and the inclusive, informative and innovative concurrent sessions. We are pleased to share with you abstracts, summaries and key points derived from the concurrent sessions. It is our hope that you will reflect and have more dialog with your colleagues about the content. Please note that the sessions are also available on the Attendees Conference site.

We look forward to seeing you again next year and invite your colleagues to participate in the 2025 CHEA Conference!

Sincerely,
Cynthia Jackson Hammond, Ed.D
President



“This community of scholarship helps us all become better prepared to address issues that influence quality and more importantly, student success!”

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Designing for Quality Assurance in Competency-Based Education

Melanie Gottlieb, Amber Garrison Duncan and *Laurie Dodge

Ensuring quality in competency-based education is conducted throughout the full program design from the initial step of developing clear measurable competencies to building authentic summative assessments and creating an engaged learner experience rich with relevant content. Equally important is the ability to signal to industry the specific outcomes (i.e., competencies) that learners have achieved. The value propositions of quality plus relevancy that are baked in competency-based education ensure learners are achieving the knowledge, skills, and abilities that employers are seeking.

This presentation was designed to give participants a deeper understanding of quality features of competency-based education as defined in the C-BEN Quality Framework. The Framework guides institutions in building and reviewing CBE programs that meet quality measures for clear and measurable student learning outcomes, student engagement in the learning journey, authentic summative assessment, and employment outcomes.

The Framework illustrates means for designing, implementing, and building continuous improvement strategies as design features. In addition, effective strategies of signaling outcomes (i.e., summative and formative assessment of competency using innovative credentials) were shared that addresses workforce needs in our skill-based economy.

A recent analysis of accreditation requirements for CBE programs and the C-BEN Quality Framework support a strong synergy especially in the areas of faculty role, mastery of competencies, and rigor. Institutions and organizations can discover how the Framework supports institutions seeking accreditation and federal approvals. The quality approach of co-creation (i.e., higher education + employers) of competencies can lead to clear and relevant employability skills.

The panel presentation by competency-based education and credential innovation leaders provided a review of the current state and future possibilities for how competency-based education can provide rigor for the designation of skill mastery behind credentials- both new traditional degrees.

Presenters shared a crosswalk of accreditation requirements across the seven institutional accreditors in the U.S. and reveal essential quality measures in CBE. Additionally, presenters shared enrollment management functions and new types of transcripts and signals that enhance learners, institutions, and employers understanding and relevancy of competencies mastered.

Melanie Gottlieb, Executive Director, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (ACCRAO)

Amber Garrison Duncan, Executive Vice President, Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN)

Laurie Dodge, Vice President of Quality Assurance & Accreditation, Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN)

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Standards, Co-creation and Freedom. How Institutions can Work Together to Protect Quality

Ailsa Crum and *Vicki Stott

At the 2024 CHEA/CIQG annual conference, we explored the dynamic interplay between institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and quality assurance in higher education. Our session delved into this intricate relationship, using the UK Quality Code as a primary example and offered a thought-provoking exploration of how co-created sector standards serve as pivotal tools in achieving balance between collective quality assurance while preserving institutional autonomy.

The UK Quality Code, under the stewardship of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), serves as a cornerstone in maintaining academic standards and assuring the quality of the student learning experience across the UK higher education sector while respecting the autonomy of individual providers. The session explored how the co-ownership of sector reference points like the Quality Code enables and empowers institutions to autonomously reflect on and improve their policies and practices. Through this reflective approach, institutions are able to design interventions to positively affect their student outcomes while also having insight into the policies and practices of other providers balancing autonomy with collective intelligence.

The format of the session blended an informative opening segment with an engaging open-mic discussion. Vicki Stott and Dr Ailsa Crum will begin with a detailed exploration of the UK Quality Code, tracking its origins in the Dearing Inquiry of the 1990s through its current status and continued evolution. The aim was to give participants a shared understanding of the Code's structure, implementation, and impact across the diverse regulatory landscape of the UK, where it is interpreted and applied in different ways across the different jurisdictions.

Having considered this specific UK example, the session transitioned into a structured, open discussion. This interactive component fostered active participation and exploration of the presented concepts. Attendees were encouraged to relate the insights from the UK Quality Code to their institutional contexts, sparking a rich exchange of ideas and experiences.

The session:

- Provided participants with a deepened understanding of the UK Quality Code, which has undergone multiple iterations since its inception in 2000 and is now poised for another significant update.
- Offered an immersive discussion on the nature and impact of co-created standards, prompting participants to consider how such collaborative benchmarks can assist educational providers to navigate the complex and often divergent expectations of governments, funding bodies, and regulators.
- Considered how collective and institution-led evaluations can be adopted and adapted to meet these varied demands.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Using Integrated Academic Master Planning to Create and Maintain Quality Programs

*Catherine Wehlburg

Does your institution have quality academic programs? How do you know? Without knowing how to measure quality in an academic program, it becomes impossible to focus on improvements to make. Are your academic programs aligned with workforce or industry needs? How is this measured or vetted? Again, without a way to discuss and address alignment, academic programs can become stale and stagnant. This session explored the synergistic potential of using an integrative academic master planning (AMP) system to enhance and sustain quality teaching and learning. The AMP system delves into collaborative strategies for enrollment and retention, faculty participation and governance, budget/resource allocation, and overall academic planning. The session provided an interactive and engaging experience, offering insights into methodologies and a holistic educational environment that adapts to evolving pedagogical needs while ensuring sustainable quality in academic programs. Participants left the session with ideas for incorporating an Academic Master Planning process on their campus to engage faculty, shared governance, student learning, assessment as well as a way to rationally discuss viability of academic programs with faculty, chairs, and deans. Participants explored the need for multi-year academic planning that takes budget and enrollment trends into consideration to build vibrant, engaging, and meaningful academic programs. Handouts describing the Academic Master Planning process and templates were provided and discussed.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

A Model for Developing Global Accreditation that is Affordable & Sustainable

*Anthony Stanowski and Daniel West

Dr. West, in his capacity as Chair of CAHME's Global Advisory Council and Dr. Stanowski, President and CEO of CAHME, will review CAHME's experience in expanding to be a global accreditor.

- 1) Conduct research.
 - a. Determine demand and targets.
 - b. Determine faculty relationships with programs outside of North America.
 - c. A concept paper summarizing key findings and creating a strategy.
- 2) Leveraging personal relationships.
 - a. Programs with relationship with US and Canadian CAHME Accredited programs.
 - b. Foster relationships with global institutions
- 3) Provide a solution to meet needs of global programs
 - a. Establish a Global Advisory Council of multi-national members.
 - i. Review applicability of eligibility, criteria, and standards.
 - ii. Concluded that CAHME standards are applicable to global programs
 - b. Establish the CAHME Mentorship Circle to mentor programs.
 - c. Determine prudent financial commitment and operational execution.
- 4) Close the "sale" and follow up with programs in process
- 5) Work the pipeline.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

It's All About Perspective: A Discussion with Accreditors and Institutions

Lisa Beatty, *Amy Dykens, Nasrin Fatima and Martha Mock

Competing priorities and political headwinds make navigating the world of higher education accreditation challenging to say the least. How can accreditors cut through the noise to help their institutions and programs focus on what really matters? How can institutions keep their focus on students and the successful achievement of their goals?

The role and value of accreditation in higher education is facing scrutiny on several fronts. The drive to improve learning and student achievement may actually be lost in the noise, however, if we don't work together to make quality assurance the focus. This panel of leaders from a diverse representation of accreditors and institutions explored how accreditors and institutions are working together, strengthening higher education, and keeping the focus on improving student success.

Lisa Beatty, Executive Director, Association for Biblical Higher Education

Amy Dykens, Chief Executive Officer, Weave

Nasrin Fatima, Associate Provost for Assessment and Analytics, SUNY Binghamton

Martha Mock, Executive Director, Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Accreditation of Higher Education Certificate Programs: Ensuring Quality and Relevance

***Steven Parscale**

Certificates have emerged as a dynamic tool within higher education, offering a nimble and efficient means for institutions to equip students with targeted, job-specific skills and knowledge in a condensed timeframe. These programs have garnered widespread recognition for their ability to swiftly prepare individuals for the demands of the modern job market. However, the credibility and effectiveness of certificate programs can significantly benefit from the process of accreditation.

Accreditation serves as a vital mechanism in ensuring the quality and relevance of certificate programs. It is a rigorous evaluation process conducted by recognized accrediting bodies that assesses whether a program aligns with industry standards and maintains high educational standards. Accreditation, therefore, acts as a stamp of approval, indicating that a certificate program meets specific criteria for content, instructional quality, and outcomes.

The importance of accreditation cannot be overstated. It not only validates the rigor and legitimacy of certificate programs but also enhances their value to students and employers. Accredited programs provide students with the assurance that they are receiving a high-quality education that will equip them with the skills and knowledge sought after by employers. For employers, accreditation signals that graduates from these programs are better prepared to contribute effectively in the workplace, which can lead to more productive and satisfied employees.

Furthermore, accreditation benefits higher education institutions as well. It helps them continuously improve their certificate programs by providing feedback and benchmarks for excellence. This ongoing commitment to quality assurance ensures that institutions remain competitive in the educational landscape.

To maximize the positive impact of accreditation, it is crucial for stakeholders to engage in clear and effective communication about its benefits. Higher education administrators should champion accreditation as a means to enhance program quality and meet industry demands. Researchers and academics can contribute by conducting studies that demonstrate the correlation between accreditation and positive program outcomes. Certificate program coordinators and faculty members should actively seek accreditation to elevate their programs' credibility and ensure their graduates' success.

Government officials also play a vital role in supporting accreditation efforts, as they can provide funding and resources to institutions pursuing accreditation. Moreover, they can promote accreditation as a means to drive workforce development and economic growth in their regions.

In conclusion, accreditation is a cornerstone in the success of higher education certificate programs. Clear and strategic communication about the value of accreditation is essential to garner support from various stakeholders, ultimately benefiting students, employers, institutions, and industries alike.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

From Reactive to Responsive Leadership: Cultivating a Culture of Quality Assurance (QA) & Improvement

***Boushra Rahal and David Moore**

Evaluation and monitoring of Quality Assurance (QA) have always been cyclical. Afterwards, leaders feel weary and focus on other institutional priorities. Leaders are currently facing myriad and cascading crises, a dynamic higher education landscape, and global changes in the ecosystem. They are challenged with the internal institutional issues as well as externally driven pressures that force them to be reactive. Moreover, the traditional structures and processes built within the organizations have proven that they are not serving us well in today's environment.

Based on our experiences leading academic and financial units, as well as by serving as lead and members of evaluation teams for institutional reviews for reaffirmation of accreditation, we have witnessed how there is a lack of holistic planning and even knowledge or awareness of pressing issues which, might risk institutional accreditation, reputation and, hence ranking.

This presentation addressed how institutions and their leaders should be responsive and responsible in aligning relevant units (i.e., Strategic Planning, Accreditation, Institutional Effectiveness, and Planning & Budgeting) to eliminate inefficiencies while integrating QA requirements within their systems, policies, procedures, and major functions to ensure documented periodic internal evaluation with sustainable improvement efforts that are linked to long-term financial planning and budgeting. Institutional leaders should be enabled to enable re-engineering of their organizations to be a dynamic hub of excellence and should partner and collaborate to ensure engaged culture to ensure meaningful change, continuous improvement and positive impact. We recommended that the life cycle be revisited to ensure meaningful and impactful leadership from recruitment, planning, implementation, evaluation, and retention of university leadership.

The takeaways were: 1) Leaders should think about ways to institute QA within their institution in a sustainable and effective way; 2) Leaders should rethink structural units that overlap in certain areas and impact the institutions priorities (examples: compliance, accreditation, strategic planning, institutions effectiveness, planning and budgeting and decision making units); 3) A model and culture of periodic internal evaluation should be built, documented and followed through regardless of the re-accreditation review timeline.

Boushra Rahal, Director of Institutional Accreditation and Assistant to Provost for Academic Affairs, American University of Beirut
David Moore, Vice President for Financial Planning and Analytics – Chief Budget Officer, Rutgers University

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

New Normal Assessment: Roles, Practices, and Values

*André Foisy, Jillian Kinzie, Megan Rogers Good

Assessment practitioners work in an era of "new normal assessment," a climate in which assessment has reshaped roles and practices than it did when the assessment movement began. Institutions aim to improve quality to align with accreditation standards and satisfy peer review teams, often inadvertently fostering a 'report-centric' mindset over one focused on genuine improvement. This 'report-centric' mindset is characterized by assessment programs that attempt to engage in numerous improvement programs, rather than focus on a few improvement projects that examine educational issues in depth, partially, at least, to satisfy the expectations of accreditation peer review teams.

The purpose of our panel was to help foster an understanding of the challenges the current report-centric framework places on assessment practitioners, limiting the impact of improvement initiatives. The panel was comprised of three participants with rich and varied experience in institutional processes to assess student learning. The panel offered practical ideas for a new path forward for accrediting organizations, institutions of higher education, and volunteer peer reviewers. Audience members left the session with an understanding of how the interpretation of accreditation standards by volunteer peer review teams could place pressures on assessment practitioners that unintentionally impede authentic improvements. Audience members left the session with a list of actionable steps to help move assessment practices from being report-centric to impact-centric.

Key panel discussion points included:

- The evolution of assessment practice over the last 30 years
- A number of critical constraints in the assessment field that inhibit innovation
- Exploration of what changes can be made within current accreditation constraints (including discussion of the constraints themselves)
- Ideas for innovation in assessment

André Foisy, CHEA Fellow; Ph.D. Candidate, University at Albany; (Employed by) SUNY Empire State University.

Jillian Kinzie, Associate Director of the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Institute.

Megan Rogers Good, Executive Director, Center for Assessment and Research Studies, James Madison University

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Leading, Learning and Logistics: Implementation of an Effective Accreditation Process

***Nanette Smith**

Attention to detail is paramount as it relates to accreditation. One simple oversight, large or small, can make or break a comprehensive evaluation, self-study report, or program site visit. With accreditation being vital to Higher Education in order to demonstrate a commitment to mission, quality assurance, consumer confidence, continuous improvement, and compliance with best practices; there is a need to ensure related accreditation activities are woven into the DNA of an institution. This requires a holistic approach to implementation.

Using the concept of a tool-kit as the backdrop, this session outlined how a 2-year public college emphasizes the importance of leading, learning, and logistics in support of current and future institutional and program accreditation. Participants engaged in an interactive discussion to unpack innovative strategies for obtaining successful accreditation outcomes.

Significant themes that were embedded throughout the presentation include the: (1) establishment of a framework for planning and agile management; (2) identification of emerging leaders, cross-functional teams and accreditation champions; (3) establishment of processes, systems and tools for evidence collection and writing narrative reports (i.e. assurance arguments, self-studies, etc.); and (4) retention of intuitional knowledge through intentional education/training and ongoing professional development.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Ensuring Accreditation Signifies Quality in an Era of Political Unrest

*Will Miller

In a time marked by significant political unrest, the role and reliability of accreditation in higher education institutions have come under intense scrutiny. This presentation delved into the challenges and opportunities facing these institutions in maintaining the credibility and value of their academic offerings, particularly in the context of quality assurance and institutional values. As political and societal landscapes shift, there is an urgent need for academia to reassess and adapt, ensuring that accreditation continues to be a robust marker of educational quality.

Our central thesis revolved around the critical need for accreditation to evolve and align with changing societal values and expectations, without compromising on the rigorous standards that define academic excellence. We argued that in an era where trust is at a premium, the significance of accreditation as a symbol of quality is more pronounced than ever. It is not only a matter of maintaining standards but also of adapting these standards to resonate with contemporary societal needs and expectations.

The presentation involved a comprehensive analysis of current accreditation practices, a review of literature on quality assurance in higher education, and case studies reflecting the impact of political and societal changes on academic institutions. The multifaceted approach provided a holistic understanding of the challenges and potential pathways forward.

The presentation highlighted the increasingly complex environment in which institutions operate. The pressures stemming from external political and societal forces necessitate a reevaluation of accreditation criteria. This reevaluation must ensure that the criteria are stringent enough to maintain high standards of quality, yet flexible enough to adapt to the dynamic nature of education and society. Our research also underscored the importance of aligning accreditation with institutional values, emphasizing that this alignment is critical for institutions to remain relevant and effective in a rapidly changing world.

The key takeaways from this presentation were strategies to navigate the evolving landscape of higher education accreditation. We discussed the importance of transparency in the accreditation process, the need for stakeholder engagement, and the adoption of a culture of accountability. Those strategies are imperative for institutions aiming to uphold the integrity of their academic programs and to ensure that accreditation remains a true indicator of quality, even in times of political unrest. We aimed to equip stakeholders in higher education with the insights and tools necessary to navigate challenging times, ensuring that their institutions not only survive but thrive in fulfilling their educational missions.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

The Role of Quality Assurance Building the European Higher Education Area

*Daniela Cristina Ghițulică, Ann Katherine Isaacs and Liesbeth Hens

Quality Assurance (QA) is part of the Bologna Process since the signing of the Declaration in 1999. It was considered crucial to promote European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing trust, through comparable criteria and methodologies. 20 years later, the Bologna Process Implementation Report (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice) acknowledges the development of higher education quality assurance systems as one of the most significant features and drivers of change in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Today work continues to ensure full implementation using peer support methods among the member countries.

Commitments regarding quality assurance, as established by the Ministerial Communiqués, have evolved over time. This resulted in changes at the level of the 49 EHEA member countries, in regard to their higher education and quality assurance systems, ultimately affecting 4.000 higher education institutions (HEIs).

In 2001 it was decided that QA arrangements should be “mutually recognised” across the EHEA, while the Berlin Communiqué in 2003 sets an important principle of the Bologna Process: that the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself. Since 2005, QA becomes one of the three key commitments of the Bologna Process.

At the EHEA level, structures and tools are in place to oversee and guide the development of quality assurance processes.

The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) were first approved in 2005 by the ministers. These comprise the standards applicable for internal and external quality assurance, and to the quality assurance bodies. Since 2015 a new tool is in place: the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programs, fostering the development of such study programs, an important feature of transnational cooperation between HEIs.

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) was founded in 2000, as a network of quality assurance agencies and the designated stakeholder organisation for quality assurance within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) was established in 2008, by ENQA and other organisations representing HEIs and students at the EHEA level, as the register of trustworthy quality assurance agencies.

Today, the quality of higher education continues to be “the heart of setting up a European Higher Education Area”, as ministers acknowledged, being essential for building trust in and among higher education systems and institutions.

Daniela Cristina Ghițulică, Vice President, Council of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS)

Ann Katherine Isaacs, Vice Chair Bologna Follow Up Group, Emeritus, European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Liesbeth Hens, BFUG co-chair, co-chair of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue and of the Thematic Peer Group C on Quality Assurance (TPGC)

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Impact of International Recognition on Accreditation Agencies and Medical Education

Mohammed bin Saleh Bashammakh, Thafer Y. Assaraira,

*Marta van Zanten and Nadia Badrawi

In late 2024, Intealth and its division, the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), will launch the Recognized Accreditation Policy to stimulate accreditation efforts worldwide, increase publicly available information about medical schools, and provide greater assurance that doctors are appropriately educated. Certification by ECFMG is required for international medical graduates (IMGs) to enter post-graduate training in the US and pursue medical licensure. Approximately 25% of doctors practicing medicine in the US are IMGs. The Recognized Accreditation Policy will include reporting of a medical school's recognized accreditation status in the World Directory of Medical Schools and in physicians' ECFMG Status Reports. The World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) and the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) of the US Department of Education are approved by ECFMG for the recognition of accrediting agencies.

Numerous Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) accreditors, including the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institution (AQACHEI), Jordan, and the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation (NCAAA), Saudi Arabia and have received international recognition by WFME to meet the policy. Representatives from these agencies and the Arab Network shared their experiences and described the impact of an external review process on accreditation systems and quality of their medical schools.

The presentation shed light on the impact of WFME accreditation on AQACHEI, the medical schools, and graduate attributes in Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, and Syria. Impacts discussed included: A) elevating the global acknowledgment and standing of medical schools and healthcare practitioners, B) nurturing a commitment to maintaining high-quality standards within the realm of medical educators and institutions, and C) enabling graduates with the high level of skills and competencies that meet the international standards.

In addition, impact of WFME recognition awarded to the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation (NCAAA), Saudi Arabia was presented. This designation by WFME helps NCAAA accreditation for medical schools to be internationally recognized and it also assures the quality of graduates from accredited medical schools towards better alignment with international standards.

Intealth's Recognized Accreditation Policy promotes quality medical education around the world. Takeaways from this session included understanding of the benefits and challenges of external recognition of EMR accrediting bodies on the quality and internationalization of medical education in the region.

Mohammed bin Saleh Bashammakh, Chief Executive Officer, National Center for Academic Accreditation

Thafer Assaraira is the President of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions in Jordan.

Marta van Zanten, Senior Associate, Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research

Nadia Badrawi, President, ANQAHE

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Improving Educational Quality Through Sustainability

*Ivelisse Lazzarini

If the mission of universities is to promote quality education that sustains societies and their progress, and if the foundation of human knowledge, skills, and habits are cultivated within classrooms and academic hallways, then educating to live sustainably without undermining the planet's natural resources for future generations, must be the goal of higher education institutions.

Health education is foundational to a global partnership on sustainable healthcare practices. Pursuing sustainable-quality driven education models will require healthcare programs to prepare students to practice within Sustainable Healthcare Frameworks. The urgency and undeniable call for action necessitate healthcare practitioners to join the workforce with a deep understanding of sustainable-quality education practices to fully contribute to advancing sustainable healthcare agendas. Accrediting organizations committed to evaluating higher education institutions have an ethical responsibility to explore and support necessary changes in the standards directing healthcare education to advance the transition to a more sustainable, equitable future that supports healthy people living on a healthy planet.

Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015 as part of the Sustainable Development Agenda, SDG 4 - Quality Education, is at the heart of the quality education discourse. Through thoughtful implementation of sustainable-quality education models, healthcare programs can empower educators and students to act and solve challenges in rapidly changing healthcare environments. Implementing sustainable healthcare frameworks will help assess the drivers of, barriers to, and options for mitigation actions for several healthcare challenges.

The accumulated research supporting sustainable healthcare practices can change the expected value of education worldwide. A sustainable-quality education perspective will ensure that healthcare agents are academically and clinically competent to respond to the dynamic changes in environmental/social issues. Thus, the proposed quality education paradigm shift embedded in Sustainable Healthcare Education Frameworks is quintessential to facilitating the refinement of healthcare education. A global sustainable-quality education paradigm will allow healthcare programs to integrate sustainable development practices into curricula, providing a viable alternative to existing narrower healthcare practice views, assessments, interventions, and frameworks. The expanding quality education paradigm can be described as encompassing freedom of choice and action, health, security, and good social relations.

*Key Points: 1. Educating healthcare students to practice within Sustainable Healthcare Frameworks; 2. Accrediting organizations have an ethical responsibility to support educational changes by increasing attention to SD content and standards; 3. Fulfilling health care needs through quality education in the US for a more equitable future that supports healthy people living on a healthy planet.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 30, 2024

Quality Assurance Through Futures Thinking: Showcasing an AI Curriculum Guide

Julia Nyberg and *Maricel Lawrence

In a rapidly evolving higher education landscape, integrating progressive strategies such as Futures Thinking is vital for institutions to remain relevant and effective. This presentation delved into how Purdue Global's Strategic Foresight team harnessed Futures Thinking to identify artificial intelligence (AI) as a critical driver in their futures scenarios. One of the key initiatives was the establishment of an AI Taskforce, mandated with ensuring the integration of AI into curriculum and instruction adhered to the highest standards of academic integrity and quality assurance, resonating with Purdue Global's commitment to academic excellence and innovative education for adult learners.

Central to this presentation was the unveiling of the AI Curriculum Guide, a visionary document crafted to steer the future direction of curriculum design at Purdue Global. The guide is more than a mere roadmap; it represents a strategic framework that synthesizes Future Thinking with curriculum development, thereby ensuring that the institution remains at the forefront of educational innovation. By intertwining exemplars of AI integration across academic disciplines, the guide underscores the importance of AI adaptive curriculum and instruction and the cultivation of a future-oriented course development for students.

Participants in this session will be able to:

- Describe the value of Futures Thinking for exploring possible futures and using what is learned to inform institutional strategy, curriculum, quality assurance, and course design.
- Utilize suggested Futures Thinking resources to strengthen their knowledge and application of foresight practices.
- Describe the characteristics of an AI Curriculum Guide.
- Summarize the process of developing an AI Curriculum Guide for their institution.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Mobility & Accessibility – What We Are Learning from Existing Efforts

*Margit Schatzman, Melanie Gottlieb and Hironao Okahana

There is a global trend toward more equitable and accessible pathways to meaningful credentials and recognition of learning from non-traditional academic sources. In the US, this is evidenced by increased interest from funders, the proliferation of third-party providers of learning, and pressure from the general public to decrease costs and increase post-secondary education ROI. We examined a variety of tools, projects and initiatives that effected large-scale change in higher education and remaining gaps in the work, and discussed with participants a promising model to support continued programs: a qualifications framework.

The session addressed the topic of innovation beyond technology. Takeaways include:

- An overview of the dynamic and fast-evolving US learner mobility conversation
- An understanding of what a qualification framework is (and is not)
- An understanding of how a qualifications framework can further efforts for equitable learning mobility
- An understanding of opportunities for engagement with the USQF

Margit Schatzman, President, Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE)

Melanie Gottlieb, Executive Director, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (ACCRAO)

Hironao Okahana, Assistant Vice President and Executive Director of Education Futures Lab, American Council on Education (ACE)

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Data Collection and Ensuring Compliance with Accreditation Standards: Programmatic Accreditation Approaches

J. Gregory Boyer, Megan Fujita, Marisa K. James and

*Joseph Vibert

Specialized and professional accreditors collect a broad array of data from the programs they accredit in order to monitor ongoing compliance with accreditation standards. During the fall of 2023, the accrediting agency members of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) were surveyed to identify the frequency of data collection from programs, the methods of collection and the types of data collected. Fifty accreditors responded to the survey and a final report of the findings is expected to be available on the ASPA website in early February 2024. Highlights of the findings that were presented at the CHEA conference from the draft report include: a vast majority of programmatic accreditors require programs to submit regularly scheduled reports with compliance and other data; those reports are submitted mainly electronically or using an online system; and in the instance of substantive changes, most accreditors require a separate report from programs. The presentation also highlighted some unique approaches to data collection from three accreditors who contributed to the survey.

J. Gregory Boyer, Associate Executive Director of ACPE and Director of Professional Degree Program Accreditation, Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)

Megan Fujita, Vice President of Education, Executive Director of Accreditation Council on Social Work Education

Marisa K. James, Chief Executive Officer National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences

Joseph Vibert, Executive Director of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Sustainable Higher Education: Responsive Leadership, Learning Outcomes & AI Integration

*Tahira Hoke, Connie Mitchell, Anis Koubaa and
Ahmed Al-Yamani

The presentation delved into the evolving field of sustainable higher education, framed through the perspectives of responsive leadership, effective learning outcomes, and the integration of Generative AI. Central to the session was the exploration of responsive leadership in fostering sustainable learning environments, crisis management, and guiding institutional transformation within complex cultures (Jesacher-Rößler & Agostini, 2021; Abdelaziz & Elsheikh, 2021; Kezar & Eckel, 2002). Dr. Yamani provided insights on achieving sustainable accreditation excellence through his leadership at Prince Sultan University. His approach at the university has been instrumental in its recognition in the Voluntary National Report's in-depth case study for SDG4: Quality Education as part of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. Prince Sultan University's initiatives under his guidance have exemplified innovative educational strategies that align with global sustainability goals.

The presentation also underscored the significance of employing institutional learning outcomes across various colleges to assess and enhance student success. It addressed the paradigm shifts brought about by the pandemic, especially in how educators monitor learning outcomes across different learning modes, including online, traditional, and hybrid education (Mitchell, 2023). It also highlighted the struggle an institution could undergo to obtain a full implementation of learning outcome assessment. It is about finding a balance between the institutional policies that incorporate flexibility for college leaders and faculty to continuously improve the quality of learning (Mitchell & Hoke, 2018).

Moreover, the session explored the innovative role of Generative AI and Large Language Models in higher education. Highlighting Koubaa's research (2022), which found that participants surpassed Chat GPT in a coding simulation during a programming competition, the discussion provided practical insights into AI applications in curriculum design, accreditation processes, and academic quality assurance.

Participants left with a comprehensive understanding of AI's role in education, encompassing its benefits and challenges, tools for evaluating AI solutions, and strategies for integrating emerging technologies in higher education institutions and accreditation bodies. The presentation advocated for future research and collaborative engagement with global accreditation agencies, focusing on revising accreditation standards and related policies. This initiative aims to deepen the comprehensive understanding of higher education's evolving landscape, emphasizing the integral relationship between leadership, technology, and curriculum design in achieving sustainable and high-quality educational outcomes. Emphasizing this aspect underscored the need for ongoing refinement and adaptation of global accreditation practices in response to the dynamic nature of higher education.

Tahira Hoke, Aide to President, Director of the Evaluation and Academic Accreditation Center (EAAC), Prince Sultan University
Connie Mitchell, Vice Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences/Director of Teaching and Learning Center, Prince Sultan University
Anis Koubaa, Aide to President on Research and Governance, Director of Research and Initiatives Center, Prince Sultan University
Ahmed Al-Yamani, President, Prince Sultan University

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

The Gaps Within: Quality Assurance Partnerships in Universities

*Cecilia Botwe

Governments, states, and other authorized entities broadly influence the trajectory and rate of change in higher education by enacting quality assurance processes that push educational institutions toward attaining high academic standards. However, the complex landscape of quality assurance partnerships associated with universities in most countries creates gaps that influence the efficacy of quality assurance collaborative efforts. Ghana is committed to high standards in higher education and has made substantial progress in establishing and improving quality assurance systems.

The current study aimed to examine the roles of the quality assurance partners to find issues that may limit their performance in fostering quality assurance in higher education. Specifically, the study's main research question was, "What gaps exist within the functions of quality assurance partners? Using secondary data retrieved from these agencies' websites, content analysis was used to examine the critical tasks of five quality assurance partners: the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission, the Accreditation Directorate, the Ministry of Education, and the University of Cape Coast (a Public Chartered Institution that serves as a Mentoring Institution), and the Medical and Dental Council (a Professional Accrediting Agency).

The analysis revealed three key quality assurance themes and practices common to most partners: data reporting and management, maintenance of academic standards, and human resource capacity building. The study found that duplication and ambiguity among some partners, a lack of specific requirements for using artificial intelligence, and the need for summative institutional reviews were all gaps that needed to be addressed. The study's recommendations include implementing summative evaluation of institutions, establishing guidelines on using artificial intelligence in educational institutions, and enhancing collaborative approaches to solve these gaps. A collaborative approach via a collective impact model can minimize role duplication and ambiguity by establishing a platform for partners to deliberate on their shared goal of strengthening quality assurance in institutions. Establishing artificial intelligence guidelines can assist educational institutions in managing these tools within common frameworks and minimizing the unfavorable effects of using artificial intelligence. Finally, a summative evaluation of all partner reports over five years is proposed.

This new paradigm is intended to bring partners together to evaluate institutional performance and make proposals to improve quality standards. This research has implications for the roles of quality assurance partners in higher education.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Implementing Centralized Quality Controls in a Decentralized Environment

Dr. Mark DeGoti and *Andrew Taylor

Auburn University just recently went through its decennial reaccreditation with its institutional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Through that process, it was discovered that many aspects of Auburn's daily operations function in a decentralized way. As an R1 public institution, it is no surprise that collecting siloed documentation to support accreditation and federal compliance efforts was challenging. Approaching this decentralized environment through building relationships and implementing new quality controls proved successful in meeting compliance requirements while also streamlining internal processes. Three areas that were discussed in this presentation to showcase centralized quality controls include Faculty Credentialing, Federal Guidelines for Licensures, and Curriculum Publication.

As part of the SACSCOC decennial review, Auburn University was responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty members. Using official transcripts of highest degrees earned and CVs/resumes, Auburn was able demonstrate compliance with SACSCOC's accreditation standard 6.2.a Faculty Qualifications. As the most cited standard, good communication skills and a clear understanding of expectations was required. Through this experience, we were able to improve the culture around faculty credentialing by championing the uniqueness of all professional and academic fields across campus.

When the Department of Education announced new federal guidelines related to licensure programs in 2020, many institutions, including Auburn, worked diligently to help inform campus partners of these updates to maintain Title IV Funding. With over 100 programs leading to licensure at Auburn, communication and collaboration have been key factors in successfully implementing improved quality controls across a decentralized institution to meet these new requirements.

Maintaining consistent publications of academic programs at Auburn University has proven to be challenging. Understanding multiple systems and historical context of programs allowed for productive discussions to ensure accurate representation of Auburn's educational offerings.

The long-term goal achieved from these three instances was not only a better understanding of the importance of compliance, but also helping represent and champion Auburn University more accurately.

Participants in this session learned how buy-in has been established across a decentralized campus environment. Using examples related to accreditation and federal compliance regulations, the session outlined key steps taken to improve processes and policies while building stronger relationships among campus partners. Strategic approaches to communication and relationship-building were revealed, and lessons learned were discussed. Attendees were able to translate this knowledge to better implement quality controls at their home institutions.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Regional Accreditors and Non-Credit Programs

Laura M. Gambino, Barbara Gellman-Danley and *Kermit Kaleba

Historically, non-credit programs and credentials have not been included as part of the institutional accreditation process. However, as more institutions provide non-credit offerings - whether developed internally or in partnership with external providers - there is growing interest from institutions and consumers in evaluating the quality of those programs. This session covered how two leading accreditors, the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), are tackling these questions, and explored what the future might hold for ensuring the quality of non-credit programs.

By sharing two different approaches to including non-credit and credit credentials and programs in their quality assurance processes, NECHE and HLC shared how they engaged their member colleges, the feedback they received, and how that shaped their new approach to addressing the emerging landscape of credentials, credit and non-credit. The two agencies tackle this from different approaches, one reviewing non-credit programming at member institutions and the other reviewing external providers and the internal infrastructure of institutions moving into this new space.

Participants learned:

(1) how leading accreditors are considering the evaluation of quality of non-credit programs, external providers and ways institutions of higher learning can be best positioned to integrate new processes into reviews, whether within or outside of accreditation

(2) insights shared by NECHE and HLC's member institutions about what works and what doesn't and guardrails to assure success

(3) opportunities to create successful partnerships through identification of best practices and those that hold risks

(4) the importance of engaging stakeholders from the workforce and other relevant organizations

(5) how accreditors are adapting to a new world with many more non-credit and credit certificates and credentials while also ensuring quality assurance is properly evaluated

(6) establishment of successful certificates that can lead to a degree

Laura M. Gambino, Vice President, New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE)

Barbara Gellman-Danley, President, Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

Kermit Kaleba, Strategy Director, Employment Aligned Credential Programs, Lumina Foundation

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

There and Back Again: An Unplanned Journey from Sanction Back to Compliance

Colonel Stuart Helgeson, Christine Royce, *Robert F. Smith

In 2022, Valley Forge Military College (VFMC) faced one of the most difficult challenges of its eighty-five-year history, yet it emerged stronger than ever by embracing its motto: 'Courage, Honor, Conquer.'

Using the military model of education and operating as part of Valley Forge Military Academy Foundation, the college has been accredited since 1954. Questions about VFMC's governance structure (as part of the Foundation) and student engagement (the military model) were raised over time, but never had the college's stability and operations been called into question. However, after a virtual visit in 2022, an unengaged re-accreditation team determined that "the institution does not appear to meet...the requirements of affiliation." The institution was found out of compliance with six of seven accreditation standards. Subsequently, the institution was placed on Show Cause status and given three months to show why it should remain accredited.

Moving beyond shock and anger, the institution reacted to the situation with motion leadership. The new challenge had to be addressed, while operations continued. The college began implementing changes while learning what implementation meant.

VFMC put together an accreditation team to understand what had gone wrong and how to better demonstrate that operations were up to standard. The team included legal counsel, a consultant, board members, staff, and faculty. Senior leaders realized that institutional pride had to be laid aside. And the consultant translated accreditation-speak for the team to understand. The team learned along the way that the college had been trying to fit operations into outdated procedural molds.

Significant changes were made; policies were rewritten, and assessment procedures were made to fit operations. Answers were stated more clearly, and with clearer evidence, to questions about consumer reporting, governance, and budgeting. The team also addressed how operations needed to be improved and how processes needed to be more well-defined.

VFMC hosted a new review team visit to campus, during which the institution demonstrated the student accountability and discipline that make it a unique environment. The whirlwind year ended with the college's removal from Show Cause in November 2022.

As a result of the college's ability to translate, learn, implement change, and improve its presentation skills the institution hosted a very positive follow up visit in March 2023 that continued to demonstrate its commitment and its compliance with standards. Since that time, it has continued implementing the updates it embraced. VFMC proactively communicates with its accreditor, applies its simplified assessment models, and maintains its manageable procedures. The college continues to develop in motion, learning by doing and continually improving.

Colonel Stuart Helgeson, President, Valley Forge Military College

Christine Royce, Trustee, Valley Forge Military College

Robert F. Smith, Provost, Valley Forge Military College

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Student Voices in Academic Quality: Aligning DEI with the Practice of Internationalization

Abby-Gail Blanchard and *Annie Everett

The panel's joint presentations were united around three overarching themes:

- The practice of internationalization in higher education;
- The global import and export of standards of academic quality;
- And the role of diversity, equity, and inclusion as components of academic quality.

Annie Everett's presentation focused on these themes from a U.S. perspective, while Abby-Gail Blanchard investigated similar issues from a Surinamese perspective. In the U.S., practitioners have found themselves in the midst of a society-wide debate about what counts as "academic quality" in postsecondary education today. The debate has provided an entry point into today's discussion for both presenters' discussion. For Annie, it has served as the lens through which she analyzed and continues to analyze the lessons U.S. practitioners may glean about the nature of diversity, equity, and inclusion as key principles of academic quality through efforts to internationalize at home. Abby-Gail's presentation brought the audience back to a more nuanced conversation about the practice of internationalization and the import/export of academic quality metrics in non-U.S. contexts, particularly when non-U.S. institutions and systems of higher education import standards related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Together, the presentations provided two overarching lessons for both practitioners and policymakers:

- The practice of internationalization, the creation of academic standards, and definitions of "DEI" require nuance, in both U.S. and non-U.S. contexts.
- In order to do the work of quality assurance effectively, practitioners on the ground have to be able to bridge the gap between policy and practice through evidence-based decision making and planning that better aligns external policy mandates with local needs.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

A Force for Good? Exploring Critical Approaches to Quality Assurance in the Global South

*Eduardo Ramos

Goal 4 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals outlines an ambition for "quality education". But what is meant by quality? How do we define quality? Who defines quality? How do we demonstrate and measure quality?

In the European Higher Education Area, the Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance (ESG) published by The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) provide the framework for internal and external quality assurance. ESG are used by quality agencies across Europe, including QAA, to demonstrate high-quality provision. If institutions are deemed to meet the standards outlined in ESG they can be awarded international accreditation.

This session considered whether using ESG in contexts outside of Europe is appropriate and fit-for-purpose, or could be considered to be imposing Western-centric values and practices in Global South contexts. It interrogated whether use of ESG internationally stifles innovation, promotes normativity, and perpetuates power imbalances between the Global North and Global South, where the North's mode of education is maintained as the paradigm. It also considered the effect and challenge of taking ESG into areas with a substantially different cultural background.

This session aimed to:

- Encourage participants to consider quality in their own contexts.
- Provide participants with an understanding of ESG and how this is used beyond the European Higher Education Area
- Explore the relationship between quality and neo-colonialism and develop a shared understanding of the ethical issues with international quality practices.
- Develop an understanding of good practice in quality and international accreditation, including a focus on how we might make current approaches bidirectional, and how institutions and governments can positively engage with this.

Participants worked in small groups to interrogate quality in their own contexts, discuss challenges and solutions, and engage in debate regarding the relationship between quality and Western-centric approaches and how we might make international quality practices bidirectional.

The session was broadly structured in three parts:

- Facilitator presentation
- Group work
- Feedback, discussion and conclusion

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Local vs. International: An Accelerated Process for Institutional Accreditation in Qatar

*Mazen Hasna and Saif Alsowaidi

The National Committee for Qualifications and Academic Accreditation (NCQAA) in the State of Qatar was established in 2022 with a mandate to perform both programmatic and institutional accreditations for higher education institutions (HEI)s in the country.

To this end, NCQAA has worked on articulating a set of institutional accreditation standards that are both aligned with international best practices and tailored to the local needs in the country.

Over the past few years, some HEIs in the country have started seeking international accreditation from agencies around the world, and while some are still in the process, several other institutions have achieved accreditation from agencies like WSCUC, and QAA.

For NCQAA, an early decision was made that institutions with international recognition still need to go through the local process. However, those with recognition from well-established agencies can take advantage of a carefully designed “recognition” process for institutional accreditation.

The steps of the process can be summarized as follows:

1. A thorough review of the standards of the agency from whom the institution was granted accreditation to decide on accepting it on the recognition process.
2. A mapping on the standards' level and the underlying criteria between NCQAA standards and the granting agency standards to decide on the significance of coverage match.
3. NCQAA votes on the acceptance of the application.
4. The institution submits to NCQAA the SSR that was used with the international accrediting agency, along with all reports. In addition, an amendment should be submitted to report on standards/review criteria of NCQAA as mandated by the committee vote.
5. In all cases, standard 5 (Making an Impact and Meeting Stakeholders Expectations) should be reported on by the institution regardless of the mapping process.

The recognition process will be extended later to programmatic accreditation, which is expected to be easier as program level standards are usually universal and reflect professional and occupational needs with lesser emphasis on local contexts.

A case study was conducted to compare NCQAA standards/criteria with that of WSCUC (was chosen for its presence in Qatar), and a preliminary mapping shows that 11 criteria of NCQAA are not covered by those of WSCUC. Once finalized, this process is expected to leverage the strengths of reputable international accrediting agencies, while reducing the burden on HEIs who have/planning to pursue international accreditation in addition to the local one.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Navigating the AI Revolution: Crafting an Adaptive Paradigm for Quality Assurance

*Marie Reid

In an era marked by rapid digital transformation, "Navigating the AI Revolution: Crafting an Adaptive Paradigm for Quality Assurance" introduces the AI-Integrated Quality Assurance Model (AIQAM), a novel framework designed for the AI and automation age. This presentation focused on the transformative impact of these technologies on academic integrity and the future of work, offering essential insights for stakeholders in the higher education and industry sectors, while underscoring the dynamic interplay between academic standards, technology, learning, and workforce evolution.

AI & Academic Integrity: The session began by demystifying Artificial Intelligence (AI), addressing common fears, and highlighting its potential to reinforce academic integrity. Academic integrity, defined as the commitment to honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility in the academic community, is reexamined through the transformative lens of our four key stakeholders: Quality Assurance Authorities, Education Providers, Employers, and Workers (including learners). We discussed the paradigm shifts in each group's perspective on integrity, contrasting the pre-AI era with the evolving demands and responsibilities in the AI era.

Unified Strategy in the AI Era: Here, we introduced the AI-Integrated Quality Assurance Model (AIQAM), a framework designed to assist stakeholders in effectively integrating AI and automation within their operations, strategies, and everyday lives. AIQAM is grounded in systems thinking, an approach that emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of all components within the educational and workforce ecosystems. This model underscores the necessity for agility and adaptability in this era and encourages stakeholders to break down silos and identify blind spots, fostering a more holistic understanding of how changes in one area can impact the entire system. This approach is crucial for navigating the complexities of AI integration, ensuring that collective actions are harmonized and mutually reinforcing.

Skills for the Present and Future: The presentation wrapped up with the practical applications of AI in education and workforce transformation, aligning with the AIQAM framework's focus on agility and adaptability. It presents a snapshot of how AI can reshape academic planning to meet the rapidly changing demands of the job market. A brief demonstration provided attendees with a glimpse into the potential of AI technologies and related tools in these areas. Designed to be both informative and inspiring, this part of the presentation ignited curiosity and encouraged attendees to consider the implications and opportunities of AI in their own contexts.

CONCURRENT SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2024

Changing Governance to Create a Sustainable Institution

*Melik Peter Khoury and Sharon Reishus

In 2016, Unity Environmental University faced a crisis common to many small, tuition-dependent institutions: a failing governance model accompanied by high presidential turnover. This presentation chronicled Unity's transformative journey led by Dr. Melik Peter Khoury, Unity Environmental University President, and Sharon Reishus, Board Chair, as they navigated through industry disruption by overhauling the University's governance structure.

The session highlighted the pivotal steps and methodologies used to shift from an outdated consensus model to a dynamic executive model, as recognized by the 2018 AGB John W. Nason Award for Board Leadership. This strategic move not only halted the trend of presidential attrition but also sparked remarkable enrollment growth and financial stabilization.

Dr. Khoury and Chair Reishus delved into the Role, Scope, and Authority (RSA) framework, which was instrumental in delineating the jurisdictions of the President and the Board, allowing for more definitive and effective leadership. They discussed how this governance reform empowered executive decision-making, setting the stage for Unity's renaissance.

Key learnings for attendees included:

- Understanding the impact of governance structures on the sustainability of tuition-driven institutions.
- Assessing the suitability of current governance models to their institutions' goals.
- Initiating governance restructuring to better align with institutional values and accreditation standards.

This presentation not only shared Unity's success story but also provided a template for governance evaluation and restructuring that can be adapted to other private institutions aiming for transformative change.

CONTRIBUTORS

Saif Alsowaidi, National Committee for Qualifications and Academic Accreditation

Ahmed Al-Yamani, President, Prince Sultan University

Thafer Assaraira is the President of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions in Jordan.

Nadia Badrawi, President, ANQAHE

Lisa Beatty, Executive Director, Association for Biblical Higher Education

Abby-Gail S. Blanchard, Graduate Assistant, The Pennsylvania State University

Mohammed bin Saleh Bashammakh, Chief Executive Officer, National Center for Academic Accreditation

*Cecilia Botwe, Graduate Research Assistant, Center for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), University of Iowa, cecilia-botwe@uiowa.edu

J. Gregory Boyer, Associate Executive Director of ACPE and Director of Professional Degree Program Accreditation, Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)

Ailsa Crum, Director of Membership, Quality Enhancement and Standards, The Quality Assurance Agency (UK)

Dr. Mark DeGoti is the Accreditation Liaison, Auburn University, alt0011@auburn.edu

*Laurie Dodge, Vice President of Quality Assurance & Accreditation, Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN), laurie@c-ben.org

*Amy Dykens, Chief Executive Officer, Weave, amy@weaveeducation.com

*Annie Everett, Graduate Research Assistant, The Pennsylvania State University, annie.e.everett@gmail.com

Nasrin Fatima, Associate Provost for Assessment and Analytics, SUNY Binghamton

*André Foisy, CHEA Fellow; Ph.D. Candidate, University at Albany; (Employed by) SUNY Empire State University, afoisy@albany.edu

Megan Fujita, Vice President of Education, Executive Director of Accreditation Council on Social Work Education

Laura M. Gambino, Vice President, New England Commission of Higher Education

Amber Garrison Duncan, Executive Vice President, Competency-Based Education Network

Barbara Gellman-Danley, President, Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

CONTRIBUTORS

*Daniela Cristina Ghițulică, Vice President, Council of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS), cristina.ghitulica@aracis.ro

*Melanie Gottlieb, Executive Director, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), margit@ece.org

*Mazen Hasna, Committee Chair, National Committee for Qualifications and Academic Accreditation, m.hasna@edu.gov.qa

Colonel Stuart Helgeson, President, Valley Forge Military College

Liesbeth Hens, BFUG co-chair, co-chair of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue and of the Thematic Peer Group C on Quality Assurance (TPGC)

*Tahira Hoke, Aide to President, Director of the Evaluation and Academic Accreditation Center (EAAC), Prince Sultan University

Ann Katherine Isaacs, Vice Chair Bologna Follow Up Group, Emeritus, European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Marisa K. James, Chief Executive Officer National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences

*Kermit Kaleba, Strategy Director, Employment Aligned Credential Programs, Lumina Foundation, kkaleba@luminafoundation.org

*Melik Peter Khoury, President & Chief Executive Officer, Unity Environmental University, mkhoury@unity.edu

Jillian Kinzie, Associate Director of the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Institute, jikinzie@indiana.edu

Anis Koubaa, Aide to President on Research and Governance, Director of Research and Initiatives Center, Prince Sultan University

*Maricel Lawrence, Innovation Catalyst, Purdue Global, maricel.lawrence@purdueglobal.edu

*Ivelisse Lazzarini, Program Director, Occupational Therapy, Notre Dame of Maryland University, ilazzarini@ndm.edu

*Will Miller, Associate Vice President for Continuous Improvement and Institutional Performance, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, will.miller@erau.edu

Connie Mitchell, Vice Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences/Director of Teaching and Learning Center, Prince Sultan University

Martha Mock, Executive Director, Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council

CONTRIBUTORS

David Moore, Vice President for Financial Planning and Analytics – Chief Budget Officer, Rutgers University, david.b.moore@rutgers.edu

Julia Nyberg, Professor, Purdue Global, julia.nyberg@purdueglobal.edu

Hironao Okahana is Assistant Vice President and Executive Director of Education Futures Lab, American Council on Education (ACE)

*Steven Parscale, Chief Accreditation Officer, Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)

*Boushra Rahal, Director of Institutional Accreditation and Assistant to Provost for Academic Affairs, American University of Beirut, br02@aub.edu.lb

*Eduardo Ramos, Director of International & Professional Services, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, e.ramos@qaa.ac.uk

*Marie Reid, Founder /Owner, EduLearn Connect, Marie@EduLearnConnect.com

Sharon Reishus, Board Chair, Unity Environmental University

Megan Rogers Good, Executive Director, Center for Assessment and Research Studies, James Madison University, good2mr@jmu.edu

Christine Royce, Trustee, Valley Forge Military College

*Margit Schatzman is President, Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE), margit@ece.org

*Nanette Smith, Executive Director Institutional Effective Planning, James A. Rhodes State College, smith.n@rhodesstate.edu

*Robert F. Smith, Provost, Valley Forge Military College, rsmith@vfmac.edu

*Anthony Stanowsky, Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education, astanowski@cahme.org

*Vicki Stott, Chief Executive Officer, The Quality Assurance Agency (UK), v.stott@qaa.ac.uk

*Andrew Taylor is the Academic Compliance Manager, Auburn University

*Marta van Zanten, Senior Associate, Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research, mvanzanten@faimer.org

*Joseph Vibert, Executive Director of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors, jvibert@aspa-usa.org

*Catherine Wehlburg, Interim President, Athens State University, catherine.wehlburg@athens.edu

Daniel West, University of Scranton

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