

Roundtable Discussion Report

Appropriate GPRA Measures for USED Across all Four Focus Areas of the Grant Program

October 1, 2013

This group discussion was facilitated by Dayle Barry, Title III Coordinator at the University of the Virgin Islands. Group members included a total of five persons, all of whose names are not recalled by the facilitator.

The discussion commenced with a review of draft definitions of the focus areas. Included with the draft definitions were examples (provided by the US Education Department in the Annual Performance Report) of projects that might be considered consistent with each of the focus areas.

The following definitions were agreed upon after review:

- **Fiscal Stability:** *Projects, the intended outcome of which is revenue base diversification for an institution, thereby leading to improved ability to endure periods of limited funding.*
- **Institutional Management:** *Activities intended to improve the capacity of the institution to control and direct its business and administrative affairs.*
- **Student Services and Outcomes:**
Student services: *Activities which provide services to students to aid their successful journey from matriculation to graduation.*
Student Outcomes: *Activities which impact those key performance indicators that measure the success and/or satisfaction of students at an institution.*
- **Academic Quality:** *Projects designed to improve those factors that contribute to the instructional capacity of the institution.*

Additionally, some changes were recommended to the examples of projects on the USED listing. These changes are provided on the markup document that accompanies this report.

The group then reviewed the objectives and performance measures established by the Department in its strategic plan, and assessed which of the focus areas could reasonably be measured by each of the objectives adopted. The following determinations were made for each of the three objectives.

- **Objective 1:** *Increase enrollment at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) over the long term.* This objective has the capacity to impact on Academic Quality, Student Outcomes and Fiscal Stability.
- **Objective 2:** *Increase the persistence rate for students enrolled at HBCUs.* Both Academic Quality and Student Services may be measured by this objective.
- **Objective 3:** *Increase the graduation rate for students enrolled at HBCUs.* This objective provides the ability to measure Academic Quality and Student Services.

The group agreed that none of the objectives provide for the measurement of *Institutional Management* as a focus area, but could not agree on an appropriate measure. Among the

suggestions discussed was an objective that might be linked to a reduction of the number of audit findings across the network of grantee institutions; however, the majority of the group was uncomfortable with institutional audits a measure of program performance.

It was agreed that an appropriate objective that provides for a measure of *Institutional Management* is needed in order to ensure the possibility of assessing program performance across all four focus areas.

It will be necessary to work with the Department to incorporate the proposed definitions and changes to the agency's listing of Focus Area examples into the Annual Performance Report. It will also be critical for the Assessment and Evaluation Committee to work with the Department to create an appropriate objective with performance measures that capture progress in the focus area of *Institutional Management*.