



QED NEWS

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Mission Statement

To facilitate the identification, communication, and promotion of the use of quality principles, concepts, and technologies for continuous improvement in all aspects of education.

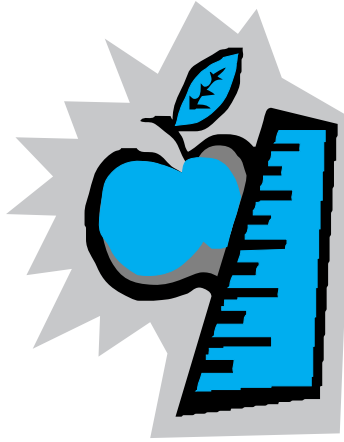
Call to Action for Global Engagement for Quality in Education in 2009

The ASQ Education Division exists for quality professionals who want to support the use of quality principles and methods in our school systems. Many division members are not professional educators, but they have a keen interest in helping improve the educational systems in their communities and know that using quality methods will help make this happen.

ASQ is a global organization, and our members have the opportunity to support the use of quality principles and methods in education worldwide.

Don't sit back and let another year go by without taking action. There are many things you can do. For starters, as an Education Division member you can participate in ASQ-supported discussion boards and blogs.

Every ASQ member belongs to a local section. Make this the year that you engage your section in supporting quality in education. Your section can purchase great books from ASQ Quality Press on quality in education and give them to local schools and school administrators. You can provide a scholarship to send a school superintendent to ASQ's Education Leadership Summit—the premiere event for helping school systems understand and deploy the Baldrige criteria. Or, you can provide a scholarship



for a teacher to attend the 17th Annual ASQ National Quality Education Conference this October.

*Dr. John Dew
Immediate Past Chair and Newsletter
Editor, ASQ Education Division*

Engineering Education Column: Global Competition for Ph.D. Engineering Students

by Cindy P. Veenstra

Today, U.S. engineering colleges are competing with engineering colleges worldwide for the best Ph.D. students. U.S. engineering colleges have always recruited for the “best and brightest” Ph.D. students who can deliver exceptional quality research and ensure that their colleges receive the best research grants. Today, more than ever, U.S. engineering colleges recruit worldwide for the best students. Reciprocally, many international bachelor-degreed engineering students, especially students from China and India, are interested in attending the high-ranking U.S. engineering colleges for their graduate studies. In the new global competition for the best minds in research, national origin has little weight in graduate admissions.

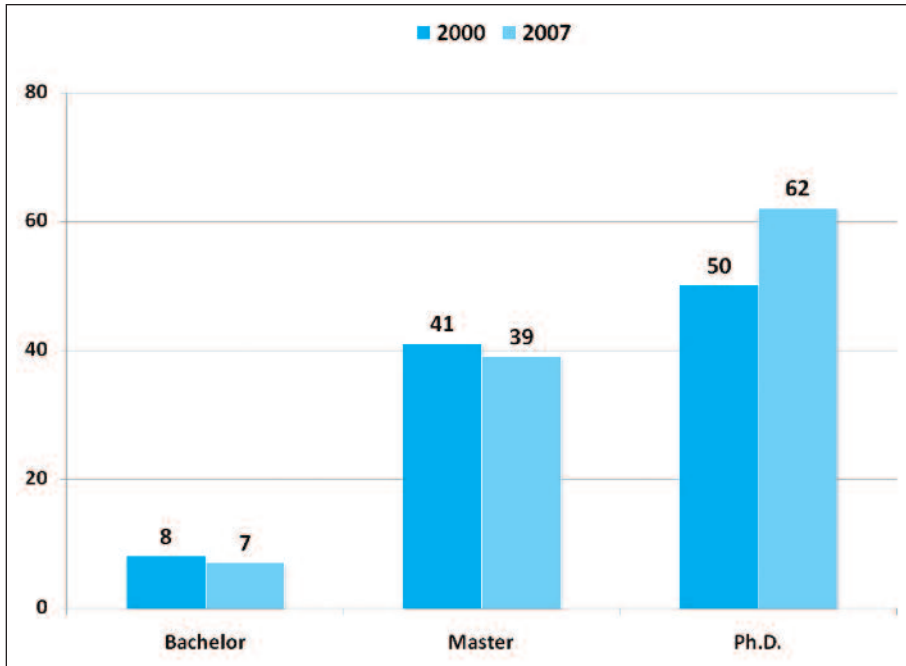
Figure 1 shows the percent of international students admitted to all U.S. engineering colleges by degree. From 2000 to 2007, the percent of international Ph.D. graduates has increased from one-half to almost two-thirds of all Ph.D. engineering graduates.

While the number of U.S. Ph.D. graduates has increased, the number of international Ph.D. graduates has increased at a higher rate. In 2007, only 38 percent of the Ph.D. graduates from U.S. engineering colleges were from the United States. From conversations I have had with colleagues, I would like to propose that the reasons for this include:

1. Many of the brightest bachelor and master level U.S. graduates in engineering prefer an engineering position in industry.
2. Five more years of college may be seen as too expensive by many U.S. bachelor-degreed engineers and their families.
3. One of the primary criteria for admission to a Ph.D. program is high scores on the GRE. The focus of most U.S. engineering programs is on a solid engineering education, not on testing well on the GRE test.
4. International students applying to U.S. graduate engineering programs tend to be highly motivated and academically prepared in engineering research skills. The United States is still seen as the land of opportunity and in many cases, international Ph.D. students would prefer to

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Figure 1 Comparison of the percent of international graduates in each degree program at U.S. engineering colleges for years 2000 and 2007¹.



begin their career as an assistant professor at a U.S. university.

It is reasonable to ask if the pendulum has swung too far in recruiting international students, and whether engineering colleges are doing enough to mentor U.S. students into Ph.D. research careers. Much of the engineering research is funded by the National Science Foundation from the U.S. government. Should not the U.S. engineering colleges be training a higher percentage of U.S. graduate engineers at the Ph.D. level, who can then be innovators in research at U.S. companies and universities?

Recommendations

In the new global competition of engineering colleges for the best students, we need to continue to

encourage the K-12 community to adopt learning policies supportive of engineering. This will improve the pipeline of students into engineering colleges. We also need to encourage engineering colleges to increase their mentoring programs that encourage bachelor-degreed engineers to pursue graduate degrees.

The global exchange of engineering ideas is needed and the competition for the best students in the world will continue. The high percentage of international students entering U.S. graduate programs is a complement to the quality and leadership of U.S. engineering graduate schools. At the same time, there is reason for concern for U.S. engineering innovation. It cannot be overstated that engineering innovation is important for the economic

success of the United States. With this in mind, U.S. engineering graduate colleges urgently need to consider a strategy that will encourage a higher percentage of U.S. bachelor-degreed engineers into Ph.D. engineering programs.

Reference

Michael T. Gibbons, *Engineering by the Numbers*, ASEE, 2008. Available at www.asee.org/profiles/upload/2007profileeng.pdf.

Cindy P. Veenstra, Ph.D., is the Higher Education vice-chair of the Education Division. She can be reached at cpveenst@umch.edu.

An Update on Engineering Education International Collaboration

by Cindy P. Veenstra

Collaboration activity in the research and practice of engineering education is occurring throughout the world. As evidence of this, the First International Conference on Research in Engineering Education (ICREE) was held in 2007, concurrent with the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) Annual Conference (Lohmann, 2008, Borrego et al., 2007). In a report on the conference, the authors indicated the mood of the international conference:

“During the conference, participants were most appreciative of the opportunity to receive in-depth feedback on their papers. One participant

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commented, ‘It was very helpful to have a group of people caring about the same issue, working on similar projects to share ideas and give feedback.’” (Borrego et al., 2007)

Further, the conference was evaluated as a very positive step: “Without international collaborations, broadly influential engineering education research may not happen at all. Now is the time to be more open to possibilities and different models of mutually beneficial partnerships.”

Since this conference, more international activities in this field have occurred. Additionally, the Australasian Association for Engineering Education and the European Society for Engineering Education have placed more effort on engineering education research (Lohmann, 2008).

With respect to accreditation, ABET, Inc. (formerly the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology), provides a specialized accreditation of programs in engineering. Typical of most U.S. accreditations in higher education, the ABET accreditation process is voluntary. The ABET accreditation process is based on its Engineering Criteria 2000, which includes an outcome assessment and continuous improvement concepts.

The ABET organization has reached out to the international community. For example, through the Washington Accord, ABET has mutual recognition agreements with a number of accreditation boards or councils outside the United States. These include accreditation boards or councils in Canada, South Africa, Australia,



the United Kingdom, Singapore, and Japan. See www.abet.org for a complete list of mutual recognition agreements with other accreditation boards and more information on ABET’s accreditation process.

For our readers who would like a more in-depth discussion of international activities (including accreditation) related to engineering education, I strongly recommend “Competencies Beyond Countries: The Re-Organization of Engineering Education in the United States, Europe, and Latin America” published in the October 2008 issue of the *Journal of Engineering Education*.

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Lohmann, J.R., “The Editor’s Page: A Rising Global Discipline,” *Journal of Engineering Education*, July 2008, ASEE. Available at www.asee.org.

Lucena, J., Downey, G., Jesiek, B., and Elber, S., “Competencies Beyond Countries: The Re-Organization of Engineering Education in the United States, Europe, and Latin America,” *Journal of Engineering Education*, October 2008, ASEE. Available at www.asee.org.

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International Quality Assurance Efforts in Higher Education: There Is a Link With What Is Happening Here in the USA

by Fernando F. Padró
Cambridge College

There is a significant link between higher education quality assurance efforts in the United States and what is happening abroad. Issues surrounding the global economy and its diversification requiring assurance that the increasing national intellectual capital demands are being properly met are driving these efforts. Also driving QA efforts are concerns based on the impact of technology on access and delivery of instruction. And changing expectations of the role of the university regarding revenue generation and service to the community through research enter QA as well. Not to be forgotten, additional drivers for change are the changing vision of the role of the faculty and how university performance should be evaluated.

Evidence of the link between international efforts and the influence these efforts can have in higher education in this country can be seen in the continued existence of the National Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) in the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 2008 to continue advising the

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Department of Education on the recognition of accreditors and related topics. While the underlying efforts of the 2006 Spellings Commission Report have failed to completely restructure quality assurance and reporting processes as pursued by accrediting bodies have dimmed in their impact, the HEA Reauthorization Act represents some trends the Commission supported such as transparency in accreditation (publishing reports), information to consumers about affordability and costs, the making of public transferability policies, determining graduate results (employability or furthering educational or training activities), and looking at an analysis of the regulatory environment in higher education. The Reauthorization Act in 2008 also added an international concern seen in policy documents or protocols from other countries when it added resources to identify, warn potential users, and combat “diploma mills.”

International agencies such as the OECD, UNESCO, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization are actively involved in establishing criteria and standards for higher education systems. There are many declarations that abound creating a nexus between quality assurance in higher education and quality of life in terms of economic well-being and social integration and participation. Evidence of this approach is seen in the inclusion of education in the General Agreement on Trade in

Services (GATS). Article VII (1994) specifically refers to the need for a robust quality assurance system based on standards to be in place to allow the recognition of degrees from different higher education systems. And it is the importance placed on this link that is one of the obvious driving forces of the reshaping of higher education systems in Europe undertaken by its Bologna Process. Under this reform movement, Europe is moving on degree standardization, setting qualifications in terms of learner outcomes, streamlining the transferability of credits, improving quality assurance, encouraging cooperation and networking, and generating transparency. The first legal entity created to engender a transnational system was the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), which drafted the standards and guidelines national systems of higher education must pursue and through which universities will be evaluated. One interesting wrinkle the European changing landscape has is a requirement for agencies to establish contact and participation with international QA bodies such as the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

The OECD’s (2008) current volume on projections for higher education up to 2030 (ISBN 978-92-64-04065-6) points to influences that changing demographics will have on higher education policy, which, in turn, will impact notions of institutional quality for universities. However, more interesting is its prediction of changes affecting the academic teaching profession. Changes are beginning to occur challenging the traditional notions of faculty work and the relationship between faculty and higher education institutions. The Bologna Process more readily accepts the old corporatist notion of recognizing monopolies of interests; hence faculty units are listened to. Here and in other parts of the world, this recognition is not as firm, hence the animosity of groups such as the AAUP when it comes to the call to generate more appropriate quality assurance measures. So, rather than ignoring what is happening abroad to the different QA efforts that are taking place, faculty as well as administrators and policy makers should make themselves more aware of what is happening. For those of us who are knowledgeable with what is happening abroad, the nexus is apparent regardless of personal approval or opprobrium. Nevertheless, many of the practices that seem to be coming to higher education are being generated elsewhere through the efforts of international agencies and national systems that want to become stronger competitors in the international education arena.

Quality Assurance of Universities: The Australian Model—AUQA

by Fernando F. Padró
Cambridge College

There are three types of external review processes associated with external reviews of higher education institutions (HEIs) throughout the world: accreditation, assessment, and audit. In the United States, the emphasis is on accreditation. Europe has traditionally used the assessment approach while other countries such as Australia and New Zealand use an audit method. The distinction can be misleading because at the programmatic level there is an increasing preference to focus on accreditation methods by recognized disciplinary or professional agencies to augment the institutional review process. It is argued in literature that this is an inefficient approach toward institutional QA, but it is seen as being particularly relevant as a means of adding value to an institution's reputation.

One of the leading quality assurance agencies in the world is the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). Established in 2000, it has been operating under the guidelines set forth by Chapter 2, Part 2-1, Division 19, Subdivision 19-C of the Higher Education Support Act of 2003 of defining quality and accountability requirements for universities. This act stipulates that a higher education provider must be audited as required by a quality



auditing body at least once every five years. Overall, AUQA is the “principal national quality assurance agency in higher education, with responsibility for quality audits of higher education institutions and accreditation authorities, reporting on performance and outcomes, assisting in quality enhancement, advising on quality assurance; and liaising internationally with quality agencies in other jurisdictions, for the benefit of Australian higher education.” It operates as an independent, nonprofit national agency although it is owned by and receives the core of its funding from the Australian Commonwealth.

Australian HEIs—there are 38 universities—are generally established under state or territory legislation, becoming self-accrediting as a result, i.e., empowered to set their own qualifications and standards. AUQA’s approach to audits is based on the fitness-for-purpose model. The audits are based on the Australian Higher Education Quality Assurance Framework and focus on the quality of the academic activities (including attaining standards of performance and outcomes of Australian universities and other higher education institutions) and the quality assurance arrangements (based on data collected by the use

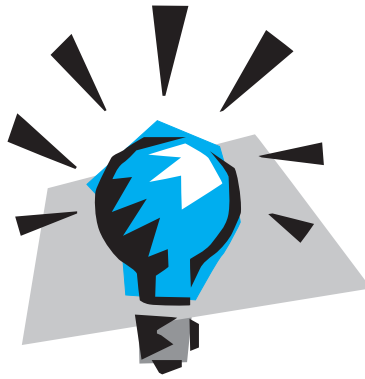
of variants of the Course Experience Questionnaire and the Graduate Destination Surveys and soon data from an Australian version of the National Survey of Student Engagement) intended to maintain and elevate that quality based on compliance with criteria set out in the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes and alignment with HEI enabling legislation. The Commonwealth government also adds to the determination of quality at these institutions through its policy steering capacity through the creation of strategic performance indicators through the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund initiated in 2006 (again using data from the CEQ and GDS instruments) along with the creation of what now is the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) and the already existing Research Performance Fund to encourage the engagement of universities in knowledge transfer activities for commercial efforts and other use.

AUQA submitted itself to an external review in 2006 based on 10 guidelines identified in the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice. The final report commended AUQA for successfully establishing a credible peer-review approach and the fitness-for-purpose model for quality audits, for providing public reports of audit findings, for getting support from the HEI sector, for progress made on quality enhancement activities even if not properly funded to do so, and for its growing reputation nationally and

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internationally as a center of intelligence and advice within the higher education sector (for example, OECD looks at Australia as a leading practitioner in QA for HEIs, and AUQA has been sought by countries in the Middle- and Far-East for expertise on how to establish their own higher education QA system). On the other hand, the external review recommended a regular review of its mission, vision, and values to adequately reflect the changing education contexts and adding to the level of student participation and consultation with the HEIs as they begin their second audit cycle. Discussed but not placed as recommendations include: (1) a suggestion for AUQA to pursue a national benchmarking project given the importance being placed on it and (2) a minority perspective advocating a clearer standards and outcomes-based approach.

The discussion in AUQA's external review for a rethink of the fitness-for-purpose audit approach to one based on externally validated standards and rigorous measures of performance is the Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) 2008 review of the Australian higher education report's more forceful statement of the minority view. DEEWR's report states that the current arrangement does not support the envisioned framework for the "foreshadowed larger, more diverse, demand-driven system"; hence the need for a single national body to regulate the whole of the higher education sector. This belief



is not unique to Australia. In effect, it is a *de facto* operating premise behind the creation of a transnational approach in Europe to standardize higher education. And the premise does echo what is still a minority view of how higher education should be restructured in the United States.

How Quality Professionals Worldwide Can Work to Improve K-12 Education

Keeping with this issue's international theme, we are presenting actions that we, as quality professionals, have taken in support of K-12 education in U.S. schools. We put these forward knowing that there is wide variation in the K-12 education system in countries around the world. The U.S. education system is decentralized with significant control and funding at the state and local levels—and much less so at the federal level. Our goal is to stimulate quality professionals worldwide into action using their often unique skills, knowledge, and experience to improve K-12 education outcomes for their country's children. We believe that this, after

all, is the true goal of education and a key building block of a sound economy and functioning country.

Quality professionals have many skills that can benefit K-12 education in classrooms, districts, and on the federal level. The skills we have found most applicable are:

1. **Data analysis** to turn data, which is abundant at all levels in the United States, into actionable information. This also includes data collection, sampling, and organization, as well as comparative statistics to test for significance. Data analysis supports planning and data-based decision-making.
2. **Accomplishing goals**, in which we include a broad scope of activities: planning and goal setting (short and long term), action plans and project management to achieve the goals, constructive leadership, organizational alignment, teams and their effective functioning and management, and developing professional relationships that foster effective communication and cooperation.
3. **Problem solving/continual improvement**, which includes a method for solving problems. PDSA or PDCA (plan-do-study or check-act) works well, as does the multitude of problem solving tools starting with the 7 Basic Quality Tools and expanding from there, and all with a concerted focus on getting to root cause determination of

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why things are the way they are. This provides a structure and common language to support data-based decision-making and an approach that allows educators to achieve their goals.

4. **Process creation/standardization** includes procedure writing and process flowcharting as a way of deciding on best practices, documenting them, communicating and training others in them, maintaining continuity as people enter and leave the organization, and providing a method to hold the gains achieved through improvement efforts.

We have applied the skills by working with school staff to reduce incident referrals, preparing school improvement plans and the analysis of relevant data, coordinating the combination of two schools, training in problem solving methods and tools, making decisions on grade level looping, coaching principals, etc.

A starting point for individuals or groups either as part of a professional society like ASQ, a social organization, or on your own or with colleagues, friends, and other concerned community members, etc., is: **“A Guide for ASQ Sections: Initiating and Sustaining Engagement With K-12 Schools and Districts”**

It is located on the Education Division Web site at www.asq.org/edu/quality-information/sections-edu.html.

Although written for sections, it is equally useable by other groups or individuals. In fact, that is how it was developed. It is the documentation of the lessons learned by the author, Phil Schmidt, from his success working initially as an individual to improve K-12 education.

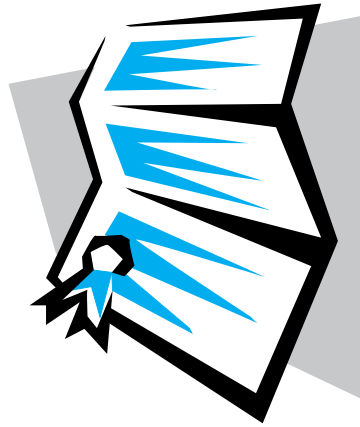
Besides bringing the skills listed above to working with schools, their staff, and with administrative structures, the following is an additional list of opportunities we have been involved in or are aware of: facilitating the involvement of university students studying quality with improvement projects in schools; work with specialty programs at the schools or activities focused on increasing math, science, or engineering such as construction or other trades; robotic teams; and teams participating in science or engineering competitions.

In closing, we trust that the ideas we have presented provide the spark for you to get involved in improving K-12 education in whatever country or region you are in. We would greatly appreciate hearing about your experiences and are happy to support or assist you as you initiate and sustain your own K-12 improvement efforts.

About the Authors: *Phil Schmidt and Rossi Wittlinger are co-vice chairs of the K-12 Education Committee of ASQ’s Education Division. They are also involved in improving K-12 education through various ASQ national efforts and in the Milwaukee Section. They are independent consultants facilitating growth solutions for sustained organizational greatness.*

Iredell-Statesville School District Wins Baldrige Award

The Iredell-Statesville K-12 Public School District, located in the southwest piedmont region of North Carolina, won the 2008 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. The district includes 19 elementary schools, seven middle schools, five high schools, two early learning colleges, two alternative schools, and four support facilities. The district’s mission, to “rigorously challenge all students to achieve their academic potential and to lead productive and rewarding lives” is complemented by its vision, “to be a school system committed to improving student learning by igniting a passion for learning.” Iredell-Statesville Schools has embraced the Plan-Do-Study-Act methodology throughout the administrative functions and classrooms that support more than 20,000 students in the district. The school superintendent, Terry K. Holliday, has been a public advocate for the Baldrige process for several years and will be a speaker at ASQ’s Education Leadership Summit, June 18-19, 2009, in Fort Myers, FL.



Odds and Ends

Education Division Web Site Update

Be sure to check out information on the Education Division's Web Site, www.asq.org/edu/. The Web site includes updates on division plans and activities and supports discussion boards to enable members to share their perspectives about a variety of issues related to supporting quality principles and methods in the education sector.

Education Division Sponsors Session at 2009 World Conference on Quality and Improvement

The Education Division will feature Dr. Jamison Kovach, from the University of Houston, at a session Tuesday, May 19, 9:15 a.m., at the World Conference on Quality and Improvement in Minneapolis, MN. Dr. Kovach's session will focus on podcasting as an instructional technology. Podcasting, now used in college classrooms, is an innovative method for relaying information. The technology can supplement existing activities in face-to-face courses, or be used for online instruction. This session will discuss podcasting resources, provide instructions on how to create a podcast, and demonstrate examples of instructional podcasts.

Education Division Supports National Engineers Week

The Education Division is very interested in encouraging students to pursue college studies in engineering

and is supporting National Engineers Week by posting a discussion board on the division Web site and including a column on engineering education in this newsletter. National Engineers Week ran February 15–21.

ASQ Sponsors Education Leadership Summit For School Superintendents

This year's ASQ Education Leadership Summit will be at the Sanibel Harbour Resort & Spa in Fort Myers, FL, June 18–19. Each year this program provides school superintendents with expert advice on implementing the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award process in school systems. Featured speakers include Robert Ewy, former director of quality programs for the 2003 Baldrige Award-winning Community Consolidated School District 15 in Palatine, IL, F. Mike Miles, superintendent of Harrison School District Two in Colorado Springs, CO, and Terry Holliday, superintendent of the 2008 Baldrige Award-winning Iredell-Statesville Schools in Statesville, NC.

You can find more information on the Education Leadership Summit at <http://leadership.asq.org>. How about making this year the year that your ASQ section provides a

scholarship for a school superintendent in your area to attend the Education Leadership Summit?

Newest Publications on Education From ASQ

Is your ASQ section looking for a way to introduce quality principles and methods in your local schools? Then how about purchasing some of the latest resource materials for schools from ASQ Quality Press and giving them to educators in your area?

ASQ Quality Press continues to provide excellent resources for educators at all levels of the preK-20 educational system. *Claire Anne and the Talking Hat*, by Barbara Cleary, which provides guidance to help students become more effective self-directed learners, is a great read for educators and their students.

A revision of *Thinking Tools for Kids: An Activity Book for Classroom Learning*, by Sally J. Duncan and Barbara Cleary, is now available. This book is written especially for young people and describes the real-life challenges grade-school kids encounter and how they can be solved by a variety of quality tools.

A new edition of *Living on the Edge of Chaos: Leading Schools Into the Global Age*, by Carolyn J. Snyder, Michele Acker-Hocevar, and Kristen M. Snyder, has just been released. This new edition provides a focus on how to develop schools as global learning centers that prepare students to be competent and caring global citizens.

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Continuous Improvement in the Science Classroom has also been updated with a second edition that has just been released. Written by classroom teacher Jeffrey Burgard, this book describes how Burgard discovered and applied Dr. W. Edwards Deming's principles to classrooms.

Those who are responsible for facilitating strategic planning in school districts will benefit from *Stakeholder-Driven Strategic Planning in Education*, by Robert W. Ewy. This 2009 release provides practical guidance on how school districts can organize effective strategic plans.

Another work by Robert W. Ewy, *SPC for Teachers*, will be available in June of this year. This book provides numerous examples of the use of flowcharting and statistical process control to enhance the understanding and management of functions throughout a school district.

New Education Blog

ASQ is supporting a new blog related to higher education. The blog is written by the division's past-chair, Dr. John Dew, and can be found at www4.asq.org/blogs/higher-ed/.

Get Ready for the 17th National Quality Education Conference

ASQ will sponsor the 17th National Quality Education Conference, October 25–27, 2009, at the Hyatt Regency in Jacksonville, FL. In addition to excellent speakers on quality issues in education, the conference includes a team accomplishment showcase and the annual



team award recognition process. Every ASQ section should look into sending someone from a school system in its region. Look for more information at <http://nqec.asq.org>.

The Higher Education Community Network

www.asq.org/members/communities/higher-education/faq.html

About two years ago, the Higher Education Advisory Council, chaired by the Education Division's past chair, John Dew, conceptualized the idea of a higher education network in which the college faculty could share course material including a course syllabus or case studies related to courses in quality. The idea of a shared open courseware network grew out of MIT's concept of its OpenCourseWare effort. In the case of ASQ's Higher Education Community Network (HECN), the hope was that faculty who teach courses on quality in engineering, business, statistics, or other credit courses, would contribute to the network so that sharing of the design of courses would occur. The HECN is open only to ASQ members.

To date, the HECN has not reached its potential. Only a few course outlines and case studies have been contributed. If you teach a college

credit course on quality, we would like you to consider contributing your course material to our network. Even if it is only the course outline, we would appreciate its inclusion. Visit the Web site for details. If you are not a current member of the network, please sign up and pass this information on to your colleagues who teach courses in quality. A benefit of signing up for the HECN is that network members automatically receive the bi-monthly *ASQ Higher Education Brief* online newsletter on topics of interest in higher education.

We would like to grow this network so it reaches its potential in sharing course material with faculty who teach courses in quality. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Cindy Veenstra at cpveenst@umich.edu with an e-mail subject of Higher Education Community.

Discussion Board on Scholarship of Teaching

The Education Division is sponsoring an ASQ public discussion board known as the Scholarship of Teaching (visit www.asq.org/discuss/ and search the public discussion boards). The focus is on topics related to "scholarly teaching" or research related to teaching (i.e., scholarship of teaching) of college-level courses. If you have topics or questions, especially related to teaching courses on quality, please visit this discussion board. For example, one of the current topics is sharing teaching experiences related to using Deming's bead box.