

Bogue, E. Grady, and Sanders, Robert L. *The Evidence for Quality: Strengthening the Tests of Academic and Administrative Effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992, 313 pages. Reviewed by Gilles G. Nadeau, Professor of Evaluation, University of Moncton.

In the present context of the search for quality and the pursuit of excellence in North American colleges and universities, this book titled, *The Evidence for Quality*, is a welcome addition to the recent handful of publications on the topic. Whether one is looking at total quality concepts or is seeking criteria and indicators of quality, the book outlines the place of current approaches to defining quality operationally that have been adopted and adapted to postsecondary institution in the American higher education system. Its subtitle, *Strengthening the Tests of Academic and Administrative Effectiveness*, clearly focuses the reader on measurement, assessment, and evaluation of quality as the central theme of the book. The book attempts to answer two questions: Is it reasonable to expect to measure quality?; and, How do we adequately assess quality and still allow for diversity? Both authors have had extensive experience in the higher education system of the state of Tennessee; and for five years Bogue was the director of the Tennessee Performance Funding project, one of the first such programs in American higher education.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part is titled, "The tests of quality," synthesizing the policies and practices in quality assurance in the American experience, with six chapters presenting the strengths and limitations of accreditation, college rankings and ratings, follow-up studies, licensure, academic program reviews, and college outcomes. These approaches are presented in the chronological order in which they have emerged in American higher education. Part two is titled, "Enhancing quality," with three chapters on partnerships for quality enhancement, the promotion of campus renewal through quality assurance, and developing a strategic vision of academic quality.

The introductory chapter of the book is one of the best treatises on the definition of quality in postsecondary institutions this reviewer has encountered in the vast literature on the topic. The authors first express their belief that while not all aspects of higher education will yield to measurement at this time, quality can be defined, measured; and results can be used for improvement. The rest of the book sets out to demonstrate the basis of that belief, along with the conviction that each college and university has the potential for quality and excellence within its own mission. These need only be realized through leadership and commitment from individuals and communities of effort.

The authors define educational quality as “conformance to mission specification and goal achievement within publicly accepted standards of accountability and integrity” (p. 20). Clearly this definition rejects the notion that quality is in limited supply and is somewhat static or absolute in nature, and argues for several varieties of quality and excellence in individual and institutional performance. It proposes that quality is context specific, is anchored in purpose or mission, aims at consensus and partnership, requires full public disclosure, and points to ethical conduct. The proposed definition of quality reflects a partnership in “the definition, measurement, decision application of quality information and the renewing of outcomes of quality assurance efforts” (p. 23). The book is structured around each element of this partnership. It is descriptive in part, but more importantly, prospective and action oriented in accordance with the authors’ adopted motto: “acting on the possible while awaiting perfection” (p. 18). The book’s main thrust is about purpose and outcomes of colleges and universities and evidences, indicators, and standards of performance. “The first call on accountability is to our students” (p. 18) is a claim alluded to several times in the book.

The chapter on accreditation, subtitled “The test of mission fulfilment” (p. 24), traces the history of voluntary (nation, regional) and specialized (professional) accreditation in the United States, and outlines the problems, issues, concerns, weaknesses, shortcomings, and controversies associated with it. The authors discuss nine criticisms of accreditation and give their own rejoinders. Anchored in peer review process and self study procedures, accreditation is seen as the “best known signal and perhaps most effective instrument for nurturing and guaranteeing collegiate quality” (p. 54).

The chapter on college rankings and ratings, subtitled “The test of reputation,” reviews several studies of college and university rankings in the U.S. over the years. The authors ask fourteen questions about those studies and provide straightforward answers to each. Shortcomings of such rankings are outlined and their positive “lifting” effects are discussed. These are: keeping the concern for quality visible and active; reflecting the power of innovation; demonstrating the power of perseverance; and creating the competitive edge. In conclusion, the authors state their conviction clearly: “We are not inclined to see reputational studies as a very useful quality assurance tool” (p. 92). As pointed out, few of these studies have linked reputations to student learning.

Chapter four deals with follow-up studies, subtitled “The test of client satisfaction,” for the assessment of quality in postsecondary institutions. In this chapter a review is made of the available instruments developed in the U.S.,

particularly in the American College Testing Program, Educational Testing Service, UCLA Centre for the Study of Evaluation, and other campus developed alumni surveys, as well as other formal and informal follow-up procedures. As quality assurance instruments of mutual benefit to students (clients) and institutions, follow-up studies adequately conducted are essential tools for measuring and enhancing quality.

Chapter five deals with licensure and is subtitled "The test of professional standards." It reviews licensure in medicine, law, nursing, and teacher education. Successful completion of licensure and certification examinations of the professions is seen as important for quality assurance of preparation programs. Here also one must take into account the issues and criticisms that have been levelled at licensure and licensing bodies.

Chapter six summarizes academic program reviews and is subtitled "The test of goal achievement." Included under this rubric are program evaluation, and program audit. The evolution of academic program review is traced with its links to quality assurance at the campus level, governing and coordinating boards' level, as well as state level systems program reviews. As an instrument of partnership development from within and from without the institution, program reviews, carefully conducted, can be useful tools for assessing quality. This reviewer fully agrees with the authors that "review and evaluation done without care and competence can damage community, demoralize personnel, and promote prejudicial and parochial views. With artistic and sensitive leadership at every level, however, academic program reviews can realize a renewing purpose" (p. 157).

The last chapter in part one of the book deals with college outcomes and is subtitled "The test of results." It looks at college outcomes, primarily student outcomes as primary indicators of both program and institutional quality (p. 160). Outcome assessment is an outgrowth of concerns for costs of postsecondary education and results obtained from investments made. Noting that there are proponents and critics of outcomes assessment, the authors then review contemporary definitions of college outcomes and models of student outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. They point to the several instruments currently available for assessing college outcomes and discuss at length the technical characteristics of validity, reliability, bias, difficulty levels, time and costs and issues in the measurement of change in the value-added model of assessment. They also point to the more imaginative models of assessment of student outcomes through capstone courses, portfolio assessment centres, connoisseurship, and others. They finally point to the gap between our

knowledge of assessment and the practice observed at large in higher education institutions. Dare we ask the question: "What has been our impact on our students and how do we know?" (p. 193).

Part two of the book considers ways and means of enhancing quality in higher education. Chapter eight surveys the many instances where government, state governing boards, and coordinating agencies in the U.S. are influencing the improvement of quality and effectiveness of programs and institutions. Partnerships have developed, funding incentives have emerged, and policies are being formulated for quality enhancement beyond quality assurance in colleges and universities in several states. Many, however, have yet to develop a comprehensive quality assurance agenda; and of course in the midst of all these initiatives from within and from without, the all important questions of institutional autonomy must be fully present. There is no apparent reason why any or all of these incentives to ensure and enhance quality could not apply in the Canadian context.

Chapter nine is a proposal for action on the basis of a set of principles coming out of existing quality assurance practices. A philosophy of quality is thus exposed, with examples of models of action in a sample of institutions. This leads to a proposal for a minimal element quality assurance model as a prelude to renewal and discovery in search for quality. Partnership, linkage to teaching and learning, improvement-centred atmosphere, novel unobtrusive practices, recognition of varieties of excellence, multiple indicators, triangulation of measures, public disclosure, external standards, attention to unresolved tensions and ambiguities, and learning by doing are the eleven principles forming the authors' philosophy of quality. Six exemplars of actions on these principles are then exposed to the reader as illustrations of decision application of quality assurance information. Finally, the authors present an integrated quality assurance model composed of the minimal essentials in dealing with improvement and accountability for student outcome on the one hand, and program effectiveness on the other. The intent is "to encourage individual campuses and their faculties to define and describe their own varieties of excellence — the features of purpose and performance that mark the parameters of distinction for a given campus" (p. 237). The minimal element quality assurance model of student outcomes contains assessments upon admission, at the end of the second year, at graduation time, and after graduation. For programs and services, the minimal elements of quality contain a variety of assessments conducted annually, periodically, and on a required basis. This model flows out of the authors' definition of quality outlined at the beginning of the book. The renewal outcomes of these

quality assurance efforts are to be found in discovering purpose, defining priorities, enlarging the vision of quality, extending the range of values and sensitivities, promoting personnel development, and strengthening community in “caring and daring.”

Chapter ten is a call for the development of a strategic vision of academic quality which of necessity must evolve in a positive leadership context. According to the authors, this strategic vision should include eight perspectives: philosophical, definitional, commitment, client, time, funding, systems, and proactive perspective. This vision begins with what we need to know about quality assurance. *The Evidence for Quality* has given much more information on the entire spectrum of quality assessment efforts. The rest is a matter of caring, “a ‘heart first’ attitude in which concerns for quality constitute the premier leadership call on the attitudes and actions of every person on the campus” (p. 279). This book concludes with a twenty-one page reference list.

Anyone interested in what colleges and universities accomplish and how good a job they are doing will find the book informative and inspiring. Anyone who looks at the assessment of programs and institutional quality, whether as an evaluation specialist, practitioner, administrator, or faculty member will find the book easy to read, with many examples, illustrations, references, and practical guidelines.

Several books and monographs have been written in recent years on each of the quality assurance approaches reviewed by the authors. *The Evidence for Quality* provides an overview of these approaches, with particular attention to the **measurement** of quality through each one. It could serve as a guidebook for the neophyte, the student, as well as quick reference for the more experienced reader, faculty, and administrator alike in the search for quality assurance, through both institutional purpose and performance. The book would also benefit individuals in government and business who are interested in quality in post-secondary education.

After reading *The Evidence for Quality*, one is left with the obvious question for the Canadian higher education scene. Can it be done here? One cannot help but ask how is it that a recent national commission on the quality of university teaching dismissed the search for quality indicators with the back of one hand and found only one student outcome assessment procedure to be applicable in Canada, namely a written essay at the beginning and at the end of undergraduate programs. Clearly the many issues of quality, duplication, costs, coordination, and impact of institutions and programs, as experienced these days across Canada can be enlightened by the variety of approaches and solutions,

albeit partially developed south of the border. And yes, there are as yet no perfect single or multiple instruments or solutions; and yes, we cannot measure everything at this time. But, *The Evidence for Quality* issues a “call to act on what we already know” (p. 185). It posits that “improved impact on our students and our institutions is possible with the knowledge we have at hand now” (p. 185). Or is it that “the teeth are there, but the bite is oftentimes missing” (p. 62)?

Throughout the book, the reader will encounter the following notions to be associated with the quest for quality in higher education: enthusiasm, emotion, passion, caring, daring, commitment, competence, perseverance, risk, community building, adventure in decision, discovery and renewal, courage, and magnificent obsession. Who would dispute that this is the very essence of what colleges and universities should be constantly and diligently trying to instill in their students? In the Canadian postsecondary education context, this easily readable book provides needed information on quality assessment and should give ample food for thought to friends and critics alike. In this reviewer’s opinion, the entire book or parts thereof is a most appropriate and valid reply to recent well-publicized media reports on the rating of Canadian colleges and universities.

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Idea of the University: A Re-examination*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992, x and 197 pages. Reviewed by Patricia Kennedy Arlin, Professor & Head, Department of Educational Psychology, University of British Columbia.

Early in Pelikan’s *The Idea of the University: A Re-examination*, Pelikan acknowledges that his book is in “some ways a personal essay.” It is about how he defines his vocation as a professor, about how he defines the university, and about the university as he has experienced it. Though personal, his definitions and experiences are not atypical.

Pelikan takes his title from John Henry Cardinal Newman’s *Idea of a University Defined and Illustrated* (I. Nine discourses delivered to the Catholics of Dublin (1852); and II. Occasional lectures and essays addressed to members of the Catholic University (1858), edited with an introduction and notes by I.T. Ker, Oxford: Clarendon, 1976). What is remarkable about the work of Newman and this new work by Pelikan is the ease with which Newman’s vision of the university in the nineteenth century and Pelikan’s idea of the university on the