Promises in a Rapidly Changing World: The Gordon Commission

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Symposium on the Reports of the Gordon Commission on the Future of Assessment in Education
UCLA De Neve Plaza
12:30pm – 4:30pm
The Changing Locus(ts) of Assessment

• A long time ago, in a faraway time, teachers taught and developed their own assessments

• Wobbly on technical grounds, strong on instructional relevance

• Tests for accountability are claimed to have inverted this relationship
The Gordon Report

Readable, elegant, hopeful
Key Questions

• Underneath Gordon Report
  – Can the system be rebalanced?
  – Can aspirations for assessment in the service of learning (1953, 1974, 1990, 1994, 1995) be transformed into coherent policy?
  – Will flexibility and uniformity play together?
  – Are the technical supports in place to give the new Assessment Consortia a chance?
Farther Out Futures

• Predicted contexts
• What will be assessed?
• Who will be assessed?
• How? Concerns
Accountability and Equity

• How will accountability work in a short-term future:
  – That seems to desire integration of learning and assessment
  – Implies tasks will be done principally by teachers
  – That is raising the bar, all at once, it appears for all levels for diverse students
  – Could imply evaluation of integrated curriculum rather than individual test scores?
Easy Predictions
Hard Consequences

• New knowledge
• Changing contexts
• Differential birthrates and immigration
• Multinational sources of career and jobs
• Globalization vs. localization
• Ever-increasing competition
What Plus Domains?

• Skills include problem solving, reasoning, communication, decision making, embedded in content and contexts, risk assessment

• Affective or whole learner: motivation, self-efficacy, resilience, empathy, emotional components, effort

• Transfer to new settings, contexts, representations
How are Learners Changing?

• Expectations and experiences of age 30 and below people are far different than former generations: technology, social networks
• No intervening institutions, point-to-point, public, privacy!
• Real need for life-long learning
How Will Assessment Take Place?
3D, Augmented Reality? Sure, but…
Data, Privacy, and the Ever Changing, New-New?

- In a data-rich environment, far beyond dashboards, formative assessment
- NOTE: 90% of the world’s data developed in the last 2 years, and will double every two years
- Even if education is slower…..
If “Learning Assessment” and Data Occur

• As envisioned
• And accountability remains in some form: Adaptive to learning, engagement, background, choice
• On-the fly
• Through multiple input/output channels
• Displaying transfer and generalization gradients
Essential Design and Development Requirements

• Robust front-end design—tools for both learning and assessment
  – Ontologies of content, skills, contexts for transfer
  – Specifications of embedded, outcome, transfer tasks as regular part of process
Instead of Pilot and Field trials

- Iterative trials
  - Test bed experiments
  - Crowdsourcing design components
  - Crowdsourcing evaluation
- Computational models to design more diverse levels of learning and assessments
- Way more diversification, e.g., paths
Gordon Report Recommendations?

• Do we need innovation and research evidence in assessment and learning?
  Yes.

• Do we need regulation and oversight?
  Yes, maybe if we like it.

• Centralized?
  Maybe not.