

Cowen Institute to Host Education Panel Discussion

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The Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives at Tulane is hosting an education panel discussion on Tuesday (Nov. 11) on “Standards, Assessments and Accountability: Do They Raise the Bar for Educational Excellence?” The event, free and open to the public, will take place from 5:30 p.m. until 7 p.m. in the Freeman Auditorium of the Woldenberg Art Center.



Measuring academic achievement in the New Orleans public schools will be the topic of a panel discussion on Tuesday (Nov. 11). (Photo from the Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives)

“There's a critical need to determine the most effective ways to measure academic achievement and to ensure that people and schools are held accountable for performance,” says Shannon Jones, executive director of the Cowen Institute. “This discussion promises to be informative and engaging; the panelists are the best in their field and will share best methods for measuring student success. We strongly encourage teachers, students, faculty, parents and the community at large to attend.”

The panel will provide an overview of standards, assessments and accountability systems from federal, state and local perspectives. It will consider the politics and policies of public school accountability and explore whether assessments, standards and accountability can be used effectively to drive academic excellence, promote greater student achievement and create a culture of learning.

Panelists will clarify the need for effective standards, assessments and accountability systems for measuring academic success and discuss arguments for and against the use of high-stakes testing as a measurement of student and school performance. Alternative methods for measuring student success and school improvement will also be presented.

Panelists are: Gaile S. Cannella, research professor in the A. B. Freeman School of Business; Leslie Jacobs, founder of Educate Now! and former member of the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; Kelly A. McClure, director of academics for KIPP New Orleans; Scott Norton, assistant superintendent of the Office of Student and School Performance in the Louisiana

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Department of Education; and Claire Amy Thoreson, assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling and Foundations at the University of New Orleans.

The [Cowen Institute](#) is an action-oriented think tank that addresses the issues impeding student achievement by designing and advancing innovative, high-impact policies and programs. The institute also serves as a clearinghouse for public schools in New Orleans to directly access the myriad of experts and resources available at Tulane.

“Using a multidisciplinary approach, we are pioneering a new model for the role of universities in the transformation of public education,” Jones says.

Amy Mahfouz is communications and development manager for the Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives.