

Learning • Teaching • Outcomes • Access  
School & Work • K - 16 Transitions  
Quality & Efficiency • Accountability  
Restructuring • Technology • Assessment  
Access • Accountability • Outcomes  
K - 16 Transitions • Quality & Efficiency  
Technology • Teaching • Restructuring



How do we create change? • Who benefits? • Where is change  
occurring? • What's at stake? • Why is change necessary?  
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Why is change necessary? • How do we create change?  
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necessary? • How do we create change? • Who benefits?

**A Collaborative Research Venture**

**Stanford University • University of Pennsylvania • University of Michigan**

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

In the wake of fifty years of rapid higher education expansion, colleges and universities are now facing a rapidly changing set of local, national, and international pressures. Pursuing an ambitious research agenda, the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement (NCPI) aims to provide its various constituent groups—faculty, researchers, administrators, students, parents, policymakers, and employers—with analysis, recommendations, and conceptual tools that will enable them to adapt to, and even thrive in, this environment.

NCPI's research, dissemination, and outreach efforts are creating a national forum for examining and improving teaching, learning, and reorganization efforts across a wide range of postsecondary settings—from community colleges to research universities. Our research is organized into six interconnected windows of study, with each project area pursuing a substantive set of issues. The researchers leading these projects bring an impressive range of disciplinary lenses—including economics, organizational studies, political science, history, sociology, and psychology—that provide a strong foundation for inquiry and dialogue.

My colleagues and I at NCPI hope that you, as a stakeholder in this important venture, will join us in examining the tremendous challenges and opportunities facing us today in postsecondary education.



Patricia J. Gumpert  
Executive Director



The National Center for Postsecondary Improvement contributes to dialogue and policy analysis aimed at defining a common ground amidst increasingly complex and often contradictory environmental demands. NCPI research:

- Provides policymakers, institutions, and students and their parents with an understanding of the marketplace for higher education.
- Helps consumers and institutions better understand student outcomes.
- Provides researchers, policymakers, and institutions with information on institutional and state responses to changing environmental demands.
- Offers educators, employers, and policymakers insights to improve student transitions from school to school and school to work.
- Provides policymakers and practitioners with data analysis and policy recommendations to improve access to higher education.
- Offers institutional leaders insight into managing organizational change.
- Provides educators and policymakers with an analysis of effective teaching, learning, and assessment practices.

NCPI disseminates its research broadly to faculty, researchers, administrators, students, parents, policymakers, and employers. NCPI conducts seminars, focus groups, and conferences in which these constituencies assist Center researchers in exploring vital issues. Several vehicles enable the public to access research findings and communicate with NCPI researchers and staff, including print publications and a comprehensive website (<http://ncpi.stanford.edu>). The website features detailed descriptions of research projects, instructions for ordering and downloading technical reports and other publications, NCPI news and upcoming events, and links to other higher education resources.

ORGANIZATIONAL  
RESTRUCTURING

Analyzes the ways in which postsecondary organizations have responded to a variety of environmental demands such as improving access and quality, lowering costs, and establishing better mechanisms for accountability.

*Project Area Director: Patricia J. Gumpert, Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research, Stanford University*

How do colleges and universities adapt to shifting environmental demands?

STUDENT  
TRANSITIONS:  
EDUCATION  
AND WORK

Examines the context and paths that students follow as they move from initial education to working life, often engaging in a combination of work and schooling.

*Project Area Director: Peter Cappelli, the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania; Robert Zemsky, Institute for Research on Higher Education, University of Pennsylvania*

How can we improve student transitions from K-12 to postsecondary institutions and from school to work?

MARKETS AND  
STUDENT  
OUTCOMES

Investigates the ways in which students' participation in postsecondary education shapes their subsequent academic achievement and employment outcomes.

*Project Area Director: Robert Zemsky, Institute for Research on Higher Education, University of Pennsylvania*

How does a student's educational experience affect his or her employment choices and success?

PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

Investigates the effectiveness of professional development initiatives and the potential for these initiatives to enhance teaching and improve student learning.

*Project Area Director: Richard Shavelson, School of Education, Stanford University*

How can we improve undergraduate teaching and accelerate the education of under-prepared students?

LEARNING AND  
ASSESSMENT

Focuses on key dimensions of student assessment and learning, including external accreditation and state-level governance, institutional policies and practice, and academic program and departmental-level assessment and reforms.

*Project Area Director: Marvin Peterson, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, University of Michigan*

How do state and institutional assessment initiatives impact student learning?

ACADEMIC  
QUALITY AND  
PRODUCTIVITY

Explores a number of approaches to achieving quality assurance and accountability within the context of cost containment, including an examination of the potential of information technology as a driver of change.

*Project Area Director: William Massy, Stanford University and Jackson Hole Higher Education Group*

How can we improve the quality and productivity of academic institutions?

## Contributing Researchers (Past and Present)

### Organizational Restructuring

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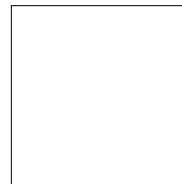
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## NCPI Leadership

The Center's work is guided by an Executive Committee composed of senior researchers and a Board of Senior Scholars, a group of distinguished researchers and national leaders in postsecondary education.

Headquartered at Stanford University, NCPI is an institutional partnership among three of the nation's leading research universities.

### COLLABORATING PARTNERS

Stanford University  
Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research

University of Pennsylvania  
Institute for Research on Higher Education

University of Michigan  
Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Patricia Gumpert	Stanford University
William Massy	Stanford University
Michael Nettles	University of Michigan
Marvin Peterson	University of Michigan
Richard Shavelson	Stanford University
Robert Zemsky	University of Pennsylvania

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