



**Contacts:** Debra Humphreys, AAC&U  
202-387-3760, ext 422; [Humphreys@aacu.org](mailto:Humphreys@aacu.org)

Richard Porter, CHEA  
202-955-6126; [porter@chea.org](mailto:porter@chea.org)

## Media Alert

### Major Educational Associations to Pledge New Leadership for Student Learning and Accountability

*Statement to be Released and Senator Lamar Alexander to Speak  
on Accountability and Quality in Higher Education at Annual Conference  
of Council for Higher Education Accreditation*

**Event:** Release of *New Leadership for Student Learning and  
Accountability* at Council for Higher Education Accreditation  
Annual Conference

**Date and Time:** **January 30, 2008**

**8:00 a.m.** **Speech by Senator Alexander**

**12:00 p.m.** **Luncheon Release of New Leadership Statement**

**Location:** Omni Shoreham Hotel  
2500 Calvert Street NW  
Washington, DC

**Washington, DC—January 17, 2008**—Major educational associations such as the American Council on Education and the Association of American Universities will join The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) at the formal release of *New Leadership for Student Learning and Accountability: A Statement of Principles, Commitments to Action* at CHEA's annual conference on January 30, 2008.

- MORE -

## Major Educational Associations Pledge . . . cont'd.

“Our higher education system is our secret weapon in America’s competition in the world marketplace. I believe excellence in American higher education comes from institutional autonomy, markets, competition, choice for students, federalism and limited federal regulation . . . But, if colleges and universities do not accept responsibility for assessment and accountability, the federal government will do it for them,” said Tennessee Senator Lamar Alexander in May of 2007.

Senator Alexander will expand on these thoughts in a speech on January 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. at the CHEA annual conference at the Omni Shoreham Hotel.

“Little is more important to the higher education community than sustaining and enhancing the leadership role of our colleges and universities in defining and judging academic quality,” said CHEA President Judith Eaton. “This statement provides a platform from which our institutions can strengthen this leadership role while, at the same time, addressing the important public accountability and transparency expectations that are now part of the social context in which we operate. The statement demonstrates a powerful commitment on the part of the higher education community to use its traditional leadership role in the service of effective consideration of institutional performance and student achievement.”

Shortly after Senator Alexander’s speech, CHEA and AAC&U will formally release its statement at a noon luncheon featuring presentations about efforts to advance comprehensive and meaningful assessment of essential student learning outcomes. The statement will also be discussed at AAC&U’s annual meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

Other leaders scheduled to speak at the CHEA release event luncheon include:

- David Ward, president of the American Council on Education
- Peter McPherson, president of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
- George Boggs, president of the American Association of Community Colleges
- Richard Ekman, president of the Council of Independent Colleges
- Ed Elmendorf, senior vice president for government relations and policy analysis, American Association of State Colleges and Universities
- John Vaughn, executive vice president, Association of American Universities
- David Warren, president of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

“Intellectual freedom and institutional diversity are hallmarks of American higher education. But the corollary of freedom is responsibility,” said AAC&U President Carol Geary Schneider. “As educational leaders, it is our responsibility to define our core educational purposes and act on them. There is no getting around it—some learning outcomes really are essential for success in today’s world. And we are committed to taking the lead in defining these outcomes and ensuring that every student achieves them.”

## Major Educational Associations Pledge . . . cont'd.

For advance copies of *New Leadership for Student Learning and Accountability*, contact Debra Humphreys at [humphreys@aacu.org](mailto:humphreys@aacu.org) or Richard Porter at [porter@chea.org](mailto:porter@chea.org).

---

---

*The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) is an institutional membership organization that coordinates institutional and programmatic accreditation in the United States. CHEA is a national advocate and institutional voice for self-regulation of academic quality through accreditation. CHEA represents the interests of its members to the federal government on matters of accreditation and academic quality, reviews and affirms (“recognizes”) the quality of accrediting organizations and provides a range of membership and other services. Founded in 1996, approximately 3,000 degree-granting colleges and universities are now members of CHEA. For additional information, please contact CHEA at [chea@chea.org](mailto:chea@chea.org) or visit the CHEA Website at [www.chea.org](http://www.chea.org).*

*AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises more than 1,100 accredited public and private colleges and universities of every type and size.*

*AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Its mission is to reinforce the collective commitment to liberal education at both the national and local levels and to help individual institutions keep the quality of student learning at the core of their work as they evolve to meet new economic and social challenges.*

*Information about AAC&U membership, programs, and publications can be found at [www.aacu.org](http://www.aacu.org).*