

# Department of Education Releases Accreditor Scorecards

By Don Sutherland

The June 21 edition of *Inside Higher Ed* [reported](#):

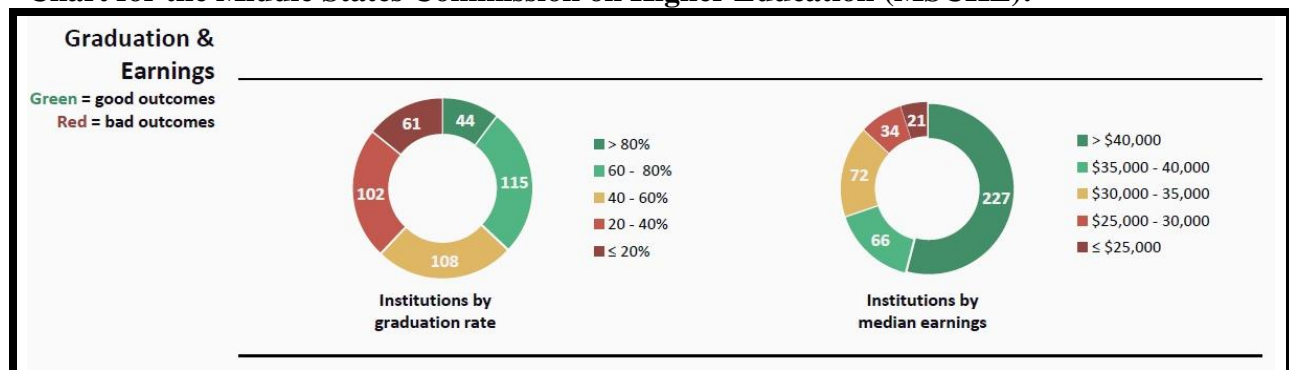
*The federal government is set to release data reports designed to help measure the performance of accrediting agencies, with metrics such as the graduation rates, debt, earnings and loan repayment rates of students who attended the colleges the accreditors oversee.*

*The U.S. Department of Education sent the new reports to accreditors on Monday, a couple of days before a scheduled meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, the federal panel that advises the department on which accreditors deserve federal recognition.*

The [Scorecard](#) is based on data from the Postsecondary Education Participants System (PEPS), the College Scorecard, and the Federal Student Aid (FSA) Data Center.

The Scorecard provides among the following information for each accrediting agency: Number of institutions, number of locations, number of institutions on Heighted Cash Monitoring, number of degree-seeking undergraduate students, Title IV aid to member institutions, number of institutions by sector (public, non-profit, for-profit, and total), data related to underrepresented populations, number of institutions by 6-year graduation rate, number of institutions by median earnings for graduates, number of institutions by loan repayment rate, number of institutions by Title IV loan volume, number of institutions by median debt of graduates, number of institutions by average net price.

## Chart for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE):



While it remains to be seen how accrediting agencies will use this data, they will likely monitor the data for trends and other developments. For example, the above chart shows that approximately 38% of MSCHE institutions had “bad” graduation rates while 52% had “good” graduation rates. For every school with a “bad” graduation rate, there were 1.4 schools with “good” graduation rates. Should these numbers deteriorate, it is plausible that MSCHE could increase its scrutiny on factors related to student success (retention, persistence, and graduation). Under MSCHE’s new accreditation standards, that hypothetical situation could lead to increased

requests for follow-up reports on at least Standards III (Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience) and Standard IV (Support of the Student Experience).