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Today, the Organisation of Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) announced the launch of a feasibility study for a major new initiative, the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO).¹ The intent of AHELO is to measure learning outcomes across OECD's thirty-one member countries. AHELO is not about ranking or standardization but rather the improvement of policy and practice in higher education independent of differences in language and culture.

We are pleased that our Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) has been selected to anchor the "generic strand" of the AHELO and thus will be part of the proof of concept study.² We are also pleased that our OECD colleagues share our commitment to providing higher education institutions with information about student learning outcomes in critical thinking, analytical reasoning, problem solving, and written communication. The recognition that these higher-order skills are critical to the development of human capital and citizenship in the 21st century is increasing on an international scale. It is clear that leaders in the OECD member countries share the conviction that in today's Knowledge Economy citizens must be able to do more than simply Google. They need better skills to access relevant information and a greater capacity to structure and employ their findings to create dynamic solutions to real-world problems.

CLA's Faculty Academies currently provide professors throughout the United States with the tools necessary to develop their own performance assessments for their classrooms. These academies will be offered to faculty in the countries participating in the feasibility study.

Dr. Richard Shavelson is the Principal Investigator of CAE's part of the AHELO project. Dr. Shavelson, a distinguished measurement scientist at Stanford University, co-developed the initial performance tasks that launched the CLA with Dr. Stephen Klein. He has continued to provide leadership for the CLA and, among his most recent publications on assessment is [Measuring College Learning Responsibly](#) (2010). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

¹ The OECD currently sponsors the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) a world-wide evaluation of the reading, mathematics, and science skills of 15 year old students.

² CAE will continue its principal focus on the CLA in the United States where we are introducing a number of improvements for fall 2010 under the heading CLA 2.0 that will make our performance tasks more useful for direct improvement of teaching and learning, including use by faculty in the classroom.