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The following is a summary of the various activities in which the ASSIST Coordination Site has been engaged since the May ASSIST Board meeting. There will be time on the October 3, 2001 meeting agenda to discuss these items in more detail.

1. ASSIST Staffing, Technology and System Outages

In preparation for the expected funding of the \$1.1M ASSIST BCP, the ASSIST Coordination Site had received approval to begin the recruitment process for the two new programming staff funded by the BCP with the understanding that final offers could not be made until after the budget was approved. Upon hearing about the Governor's veto of the ASSIST BCP, the Coordination Site cancelled these recruitments and notified all candidates.

With the veto of the ASSIST BCP, the Coordination Site suspended all plans to upgrade the aging server computers that support Web ASSIST, the ASSIST Articulation Maintenance System and the ASSIST Curriculum Update System. The three most important unix computers that serve these functions are now 3, 4 and 5 years old respectively and are beyond their recommended life span.

The following is a summary of the various service interruptions that have affected ASSIST since the last Board meeting:

Monday, July 16, 2001 - 11am - 2pm - UCI's network connection to the building that houses the Coordination Site and all ASSIST server computers failed. During this outage no ASSIST services were available to the public or the campuses.

Monday, August 6, 2001 - 6:30am - 7:30am - The uninterruptible power supply for one of the server computers failed. During this outage, only the articulation data entry was unavailable for campus users. All other ASSIST services remained unaffected.

Tuesday, August 21, 2001 - 2:15pm - 4:15pm - The unix server computer that operates the primary database server had a hard drive failure that caused some limited database corruption and the database server crashed. During this outage no ASSIST services were available to the public or the campuses.

Wednesday, August 22, 2001 - 9:30am - 10:00am - The unix server computer that operates the primary database server had a memory failure that caused the database server to crash. During this outage no ASSIST services were available to the public or the campuses.

Thursday, August 23, 2001 - 12:00am - 7:30am - The unix server computer that operates Web ASSIST crashed and failed to restart correctly. The reason for the server crash could not

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be determined. During this outage Web ASSIST was unavailable for the public.

Friday, August 24, 2001 - 7:45am - 2pm - The primary database server ran out of allocated disk space. For the duration of this problem all ASSIST services remained available to the public and the campuses, but campus data entry users were not allowed to create new articulation agreements or use the new "Merge Instance" utility.

Tuesday, August 28, 2001 - 6:00am - 7:00am - UCI had to perform some required maintenance to the campus network. This outage was scheduled and users were notified a few days in advance. During this outage no ASSIST services were available to the public or the campuses.

September 4, 2001 - 1:30pm - 1:50pm - UCI's network connection to the building that houses the Coordination Site and all ASSIST server computers failed. During this outage no ASSIST services were available to the public or the campuses.

Saturday, September 15, 2001 - 7:00am - 10:00am - The building that houses the Coordination Site had to perform required maintenance on the building power supply and had scheduled 1 hour for the work. The work took longer than expected. Once power was restored, all ASSIST services were restarted. This outage was scheduled and users were notified a few days in advance. During this outage no ASSIST services were available to the public or the campuses.

Friday, September 21, 2001 - 11:20am - 1:15pm - The "Search and Replace" utility ceased to function properly. For the duration of this problem, all ASSIST services remained available to the public and the campuses, but campus data entry users were not allowed to use the "Search and Replace" utility.

These past few months represent the most frequent and significant incidents of ASSIST service interruptions. Prior to this, most interruptions happened infrequently, lasted a few minutes and were usually related to the aging network connection from the UCI campus to the building housing the Coordination Site. Many of the more recent problems are related to aging equipment and we can expect more of these types of problems in the future. Whenever problems occur, Coordination Site staff notify campuses of the problem as soon as possible via the ASSIST-L listserv and/or direct email to the campus ASSIST Managers.

The speed of ASSIST systems continues to be an issue. Last Spring users experienced significant slowness with ASSIST as usage increased dramatically and new systems were deployed. Fine-tuning of the database server improved basic performance, but the Coordination Site continues to receive

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comments about the overall slowness of the system whenever usage increases. With October and November being historically active months and with the expected release of the 01-02 TCA data as real data (and not archived PDF files) the Coordination Site is expecting the system to slow down significantly over the coming weeks.

2. Articulation Maintenance System

The Coordination Site has continued to develop and release the final components of the new ASSIST Articulation Maintenance System which has been operating since January 2001. Over the past few months the "Merge Instance" utility, the "Search and Replace" utilities and the "All Instances" maintenance report were completed, tested and released. Also a long standing problem with the "Document View" function was resolved. There are still a number of ancillary utilities and system features that need to be completed and released including "All Instance for a Course" maintenance report, "Database Summary" maintenance Report, "List of Majors" maintenance report and the "Articulation Data Extracts" utilities. Coordination Site staff are continuing to work on these as well as address various software bugs that are identified by users.

3. Web ASSIST Usage

Use of Web ASSIST for looking up articulation information has remained high but has dipped over the summer months as expected. Usage for the beginning of this academic year so far is approximately 50% higher than last academic year at this same time.

	<u># Report</u>	<u># Hits</u>
July 2000	117,928	1,722,788
August 2000	159,961	2,327,835
September 2000	121,018	2,083,569
October 2000	157,931	2,553,051
November 2000	198,199	3,012,752
December 2000	112,316	1,781,504
January 2001	165,530	2,616,264
February 2001	137,523	2,155,163
March 2001	194,939	2,843,238
April 2001	170,370	3,239,328
May 2001	250,166	4,318,722
June 2001	189,605	3,236,119
July 2001	174,975	3,040,424
August 2001	215,886	3,719,437
September 2001	119,880	2,105,490 (Incomplete - #s as of 9/23/01)

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The Coordination Site is continuing to provide detailed Web ASSIST activity reports on the ASSIST Information Center under the "Database" category. More detailed information on usage can be found there. Colleges and universities use this information to monitor the number of reports being requested for specific institution/majors each month. This information is automatically updated on a regular schedule.

4. Curriculum Updates and Error Corrections

All public colleges and universities have been using the Web ASSIST Curriculum Update System to provide details on curricular changes for transferable and articulated courses. The Winter 2002 update cycle was conducted during September 2001. There has continued to be a very high level of compliance on the part of all colleges and universities in using this system to update their curriculum.

Immediately after each Curriculum Update cycle finishes, the new and updated curriculum information is made available for the universities to use in entering and updating articulation agreements using the new Articulation Maintenance System.

The Coordination Site has also continued to receive many curricular error corrections and late course additions via the web-based form. This is the process institutions use to correct historical errors in curriculum and to submit new courses being added after the update cycle for a given term closes. The volume of error corrections has leveled off during this year and the Coordination Site has been able to enter these changes in a timely manner.

5. TCA Data Clean-up

The Coordination Site is in the final round of cleaning up data inconsistencies between curriculum data, the UC Transferable Course Agreements, CSU baccalaureate lists, IGETC lists and CSU GE Certification lists as related to the central curriculum data. Since much of this data is only updated once each year over the summer, the Coordination Site activated Web ASSIST with the TCA information only available in archived PDF files. However, the ACS has now begun releasing 00-01 UC TCAs and is almost ready to release all 01-02 CSU Bacc lists, IGETC lists and CSU GE Cert lists.

Because the Coordination Site staff have had to focus much of their time on improving the performance of Web ASSIST, work on making the various TCA data consistent with the curriculum data has been slower than expected.

The Coordination Site has continued to work closely with UCOP staff on the clean-up and presentation of data related to the UC TCAs. The UC TCAs represent another important part of the overall

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database that must align with the centralized curriculum data in ASSIST. Since UC TCAs have been historically based on college catalogs (instead of curriculum files like the CSU Bacc, IGETC, and CSU GE lists) numerous discrepancies exist between the current UC TCAs and the curriculum data in ASSIST. These discrepancies must be examined carefully so that CCC courses are not mistakenly dropped from UC transferability during this transition.

6. CSU Campus Data Entry

As reported at the last Board meeting in May 2001, all of the CSU campuses were doing their own data entry of articulation data (instead of contracting with the Coordination Site) with the exception of CSULA and SDSU. CSULA has now begun doing their own data entry into ASSIST and this is the last year that the Coordination Site will contract for doing the data entry for SDSU. SDSU has been contacted about doing their own data entry, but is not yet ready to make the switch.

7. 2001 Annual ASSIST Conference

The 16th Annual ASSIST Conference originally scheduled for December 3 & 4 at the Newport Beach Marriot Hotel in Fashion Island has been cancelled due to the lack of funding and suspension of most planned future ASSIST Strategic Plan activities.

8. Articulation Data Extracts

For a number of years, the Coordination Site has provided CCC, CSU and UC campuses with data extracts from the ASSIST database for use in local campus information systems. This capability has not yet been implemented in the new system, and there is an increasing demand for this information. While the Coordination Site will eventually complete this component of the new system, a specific schedule has not yet been developed.

Recently, there have been a number of companies working in conjunction with CCC/CSU/UC campuses who are requesting data extracts. Current policy is to provide data to campuses only and not to companies. A number of companies appear to be developing new systems that heavily rely on data from ASSIST for some of their core functionality. The Coordination Site is concerned that the Board has not established policies about ASSIST data related to for-profit companies and has raised this issue with the Board Workgroup. It is expected that this topic will be addressed in more detail at a future Board meeting.