

Report to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee

2001-02 Supplemental Report Language for ASSIST

Item 6440-001-00001 - University of California

November 2002 – Final Report on ASSIST

September 12, 2002

DRAFT

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Executive Summary

As requested in the Supplemental Report Language for the University of California in the 2001-02 State of California Budget Act, the ASSIST Board of Directors is providing this final report to address items raised by the Legislature. A preliminary report was provided in November 2001 which addressed the initial set of items requested by the Legislature. The preliminary report is available on the Internet at http://assist.org/pdf/assist/abd/2001_Leg_Report.pdf.

The Supplemental Report Language was originally proposed along with a \$1.1 million augmentation, which was included in the 2001-02 Governor's Budget. However, due to the rapid deterioration of the State's fiscal situation, the augmentation was vetoed by the Governor in the final Budget Act. Without the additional funding, ASSIST has not been able to fully ensure 24 hour-a-day 7 day-a-week service, improve the technical infrastructure to meet the high demand, make the system more usable for students, or address a number of other key needs as described in the 2001-03 ASSIST Strategic Plan. The ASSIST Board, however, remains committed to meeting the intent of the Legislature as expressed in the Supplemental Report Language and a number of efforts have been completed to partially address Legislative concerns. While this final report provides all of the information requested by the Legislature, further progress with ASSIST will be limited until additional funding can be secured.

Throughout this report the term "articulation" refers to course articulation which is information that describes how courses from one institution are used upon transfer to another institution.

As requested in the original Supplemental Report Language, this report provides information on:

"[ASSIST's] efforts to improve the site so that it more effectively aids students in accessing UC and CSU articulation agreements and transferring to a UC or CSU campus."

This report describes a number of activities from the past year aimed at improving ASSIST such as:

- Enhancement of the ASSIST web site to be ADA compliant for users with disabilities
- Adoption of a California Model Articulation Format to make articulation easier for students to understand and compare between universities
- Augmented procedures to better ensure complete data in ASSIST
- Recent efforts to address some of the ASSIST technology issues
- Establishment of new policies for including articulation with independent colleges and universities in ASSIST

As further follow-up to the preliminary report from November 2001, this report also includes additional information regarding the new online facility that was added in September 2001 to allow students to report occasions when a university does not honor articulation. Since September 2001, there have been 20 reports submitted through this facility. All 20 reports of articulation not being honored were researched and in every case it was found that either the student misunderstood the articulation or the university had already found in favor of the student.

There were no confirmed reports of articulation not being honored by a university where a student was later required to take additional courses as a result.

While ASSIST has worked to make some improvements in recent years, there are many needs that continue to be unmet. The overall capacity and stability of ASSIST technologies are still a concern, ASSIST needs to be expanded to serve a substantially higher number of students, and ASSIST needs to be made easier for students to use.

At a future time when the economy of the State is improved, the ASSIST Board of Directors plans on submitting a new request for additional, permanent ASSIST funding. Until that time, the CCC, CSU, and UC systems and the ASSIST Board of Directors are committed to maintaining the core operations of ASSIST to keep the system viable.

Introduction

This report is the final report as requested in response to the Supplemental Report Language for the University of California in the 2001-02 State of California Budget act (item # 6440-001-00001) which states:

1. Articulation System Stimulating Inter-Institutional Student Transfer (ASSIST). It is the intent of the Legislature that all University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) campuses honor all articulation and transfer information that is provided through the ASSIST Web site. To ensure accountability, the Web site shall provide an online mechanism for students to report if a UC or CSU campus does not honor an online articulation agreement and to provide general feedback regarding the usefulness of the site. The UC, in collaboration with CSU, the ASSIST Board of Directors, and the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), shall provide a preliminary report to the Legislature on November 1, 2001, which describes:

- *The process they use to ensure that online articulation agreements are updated in a timely manner.*
- *The proportion of all existing articulation agreements that are included on the ASSIST Web site and the proportion that are being honored by UC and CSU.*
- *The development of an online mechanism for students to report if a campus does not honor an articulation agreement.*
- *Preliminary information obtained from students regarding the usefulness of the ASSIST site.*

These agencies shall provide a final report to the Legislature on November 1, 2002, which describes:

- *Their efforts to improve the site so that it more effectively aids students in accessing UC and CSU articulation agreements and transferring to a UC or CSU campus.*

The preliminary report was provided in November 2001 and is available on the Internet at http://assist.org/pdf/assist/abd/2001_Leg_Report.pdf. The preliminary report addresses the first four items in the Supplemental Report Language.

This final report addresses the last item in the Supplemental Report Language and provides additional follow-up information on the topic of “articulation not honored by universities” as indicated in the preliminary report.

The Supplemental Report Language was originally proposed along with a \$1.1 million augmentation, which was included in the 2001-02 Governor's Budget. However, due to the rapid deterioration of the State's fiscal situation, the augmentation was vetoed by the Governor in the final Budget Act. Without the additional funding, ASSIST has not been able to fully ensure 24 hour-a-day 7 day-a-week service, improve the technical infrastructure to meet high demand, make the system more usable for students or address a number of other key needs as described in the 2001-03 ASSIST Strategic Plan (see Appendix A). However, The ASSIST Board of Directors remains committed to meeting the intent of the Legislature as expressed in the Supplemental Report Language and a number of efforts have been completed to partially address Legislative concerns.

Although ASSIST cannot currently ensure 100% availability for the web site, during the 01-02 academic year ASSIST did not experience any critical equipment failures and availability has been better than expected. However, ASSIST equipment continues to age and the speed of the system has continued to be slow as more people continue to use ASSIST. During the 01-02 academic year there were approximately 20 occasions in which the ASSIST web site was unavailable. On most of these occasions the outage lasted from 5 to 30 minutes and no outage lasted longer than 2 hours.

Use of the ASSIST web site has continued to increase, especially during the past two years. Currently ASSIST receives approximately 4,000,000 hits and provides almost 300,000 articulation reports in a normal month.

For the entire 00-01 academic year the ASSIST web site received 30,891,523 hits and provided 2,049,595 articulation reports to students, faculty, and staff.

For the entire 01-02 academic year the ASSIST web site received 40,797,238 hits and provided 2,893,978 articulation reports to students, faculty, and staff. While these numbers represent a continuing increase from past years, one of the goals for ASSIST is to increase these numbers dramatically so that a much higher number of students are served. Students and campuses continue to call for more information and faster service from ASSIST.

The following sections of this report describe ASSIST efforts over the past year to improve the web site for the overall benefit of student users. **Since the 01-02 funding augmentation for ASSIST did not materialize these efforts only represent a minimal amount of activity as most attention has been focused on maintaining the basic viability of the core ASSIST services.** The ASSIST Board of Directors continues to maintain more complete plans for making ASSIST easier to use, increasing the number of students who use ASSIST, and stabilizing the ASSIST technologies. Many of these plans are described in the 2001-03 ASSIST Strategic Plan (see Appendix A). The ASSIST Board will pursue additional permanent funding to support and expand ASSIST at a future time when the State's economy is in a more favorable condition.

Section I - ADA Compliance

When the ASSIST web site was developed in 1996, few guidelines existed for ensuring that web sites were accessible to persons with disabilities. The original version of the ASSIST web site was intentionally designed with a “lowest common denominator” approach in an effort to help ensure that it could be used by emerging “accessible” web browsers. Eventually the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) and the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) developed a coherent set of guidelines for web sites to promote accessibility by persons with disabilities.

During the 01-02 academic year, ASSIST finalized the development of enhancements to the ASSIST web site to achieve ADA compliance according to the W3C/WAI/CAST guidelines. In April 2002 these software enhancements were activated and the ASSIST site is now qualified as ADA compliant according to these published standards.

Section II - California Model Articulation Format

Historically universities have been responsible for establishing, communicating, and maintaining articulation agreements (in collaboration with colleges) since the universities will eventually grant or deny credit to transferring students. Also, each university has been responsible for determining the format for presenting articulation agreements. There has not been a standard agreed upon format for universities to use in presenting articulation and this has made it difficult for students to compare articulation between universities. When ASSIST was created in 1985, there was a small amount of standardization, but in general it was the charge of ASSIST to reflect the realities of the existing articulation policies, processes and products, rather than to impose new ones.

In an effort to help standardize the presentation of articulation and make it easier for students to understand, the ASSIST Board of Directors sought the development of a California Model Articulation Format. ASSIST worked with the California Intersegmental Articulation Council (CAIC) to develop such a format. CIAC is a professional organization of most all university and college articulation officers in California and was seen as a key organization to guide the development of such a model.

During the 01-02 academic year the ASSIST Board of Directors formally adopted the California Model Articulation Format developed by ASSIST and CIAC (see Appendix B). The ASSIST Board then directed each CSU and UC campus to carefully consider implementation of as many aspects of the model format as possible. ASSIST is also working on developing some minor enhancements to the software that will support the California Model Articulation Format and is expected to activate those software enhancements during the 02-03 academic year.

The California Model Articulation Format should help make the presentation of articulation be much more consistent across universities. This will help students who want to compare articulation with different universities. It will also help college and university articulation staff

by providing them with an agreed upon set of guidelines to follow as they figure out how best to present course articulation.

Section III - Ensuring Complete Data in ASSIST

The November 2001 preliminary report on ASSIST included detailed information on new policies and procedures to ensure that all of the most current articulation information is maintained in ASSIST. During the 01-02 academic year, the ASSIST Board of Directors began the first full year of monitoring articulation under these revised policies. A complete report on the findings for the 01-02 year is included in Appendix C of this report.

In Fall 2001 ASSIST found that there was an extremely high level of compliance with these policies. It was found that over 99% of all existing official articulation established by CSU and UC campuses with California Community Colleges was currently in ASSIST. For the less than 1% that was not in ASSIST (or was not up to date in ASSIST) the CSU and UC system offices worked with the respective universities to gain compliance by the end of the year.

This monitoring and reporting process will continue annually as new articulation is published and the ASSIST Board of Directors will be informed regularly of the results and any required intervention.

Section IV - New Equipment

The ASSIST web site and related services operate using 5 Unix-based server computers and 6 Windows-based server computers housed at the ASSIST Coordination Site in Irvine. There are three pressing issues related to the technologies that support ASSIST.

- 1) The newest primary ASSIST computers are four to six years old and are now operating beyond their recommended lifespan.
- 2) With the current level of student, staff, and faculty use of the ASSIST web site, the current aging computers do not have the required capacity and the ASSIST web site runs very slowly.
- 3) If there is a critical failure of one of these primary systems, ASSIST services will be unavailable until repairs can be made, and ASSIST has only a marginal amount of funding available for such repairs.

In order to address these problems, the ASSIST Board of Directors has recommended that a fully redundant technical environment be established for ASSIST so that in the event of a system failure the ASSIST web site will continue to operate. The ASSIST Board has also recommended a level of funding that will allow these computers to be replaced every three years in accordance with accepted practices and that the computers be of sufficient capacity to handle the current demand from users.

In the summer of 2002 the CCC, CSU, and UC system offices secured small amount of one time funds to purchase a limited number of new computers to run the ASSIST web site. While these funds are not sufficient to address all of the current and ongoing technology needs for ASSIST, these new computers will help to increase the capacity of the ASSIST web site and make it faster for the current number of students, faculty, and staff who use it regularly. These new computers will be activated in November 2002 at which time there should be an improvement in the speed and stability of the ASSIST web site.

While these new computers will help in the short-term, they are not sufficient to address all of the technology needs of ASSIST. Additional computers are needed to provide the full capacity and redundant technological environment for the ASSIST web site and all related computer services as recommended by the Board. These additional computers would also be required if ASSIST is to substantially increase the numbers of students who use ASSIST (a primary goal for the ASSIST Board). The desktop computers for the ASSIST Coordination Site staff of programmers and analysts are all 4 years old or older and there are growing concerns about the stability of these systems. ASSIST does not have sufficient funding to support the Board recommended three year life-cycle for all computer equipment where old computers are sold and replaced with current models after their first three years of operation.

Section V - Articulation with Independent Colleges and Universities

For many years the ASSIST Board of Directors has had intermittent discussions with the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) regarding how articulation with independent colleges and universities could be included in ASSIST. Since ASSIST is solely funded with public dollars, there have been concerns about how best to work with private for-profit and not-for-profit educational institutions. While the AICCU has recently pursued the development of a separate web site for their articulation, many individual independent colleges and universities continue to express and interest in having their articulation included in ASSIST.

During the 01-02 academic year, the ASSIST Board of Directors established new policies and procedures which enable interested independent colleges and universities to include their articulation in ASSIST. The related policy document is included in Appendix D of this report. A copy of the policy document was provided to AICCU who informed ASSIST that they would distribute it to their member institutions. Any independent colleges or universities who are interested in including their articulation in ASSIST would pay an annual fee (to be established by the ASSIST Board) and would be responsible for ensuring that all articulation established with any California Community College is included in ASSIST.

At this time, the ASSIST Board does not have any plans to actively market ASSIST to independent institutions. However, as interested colleges and universities contact ASSIST there is now a process that can lead to the inclusion of their articulation in ASSIST.

Section VI - Articulation not Honored by Universities

The 2001-02 Supplemental Report Language requested:

“To ensure accountability, the [ASSIST] Web site shall provide an online mechanism for students to report if a UC or CSU campus does not honor an online articulation agreement and to provide general feedback regarding the usefulness of the site.”

The November 2001 preliminary report on ASSIST partially addressed this item and provided numerous details about general feedback received by ASSIST since 1996 regarding the usefulness of the web site via such an on-line mechanism. The preliminary report also provided initial findings regarding a new facility added in September 2001 that allows students to report when articulation is not honored by universities. Since that facility was added only a few months before the preliminary report was submitted, the following is a summary of the reports via this mechanism from September 2001 through September 2002.

In September 2001 ASSIST added an additional feedback form to the web site with a prominently placed graphic button that asks students to report any incidents when articulation is not honored by universities. From September 2001 through September 2002 ASSIST has received 20 reports submitted via this new online feedback form. Each report is reviewed within one business day and ASSIST staff follow up immediately on each actual report of articulation not being honored to gain further information from the student.

All 20 reports of articulation not being honored were researched fully and in each case it was found that either the articulation was in fact honored correctly but that an intervening problem caused confusion or the university had already found in favor of the student. **During this initial year, there were no confirmed reports of articulation not being honored by a university where a student was later required to take additional courses as a result.**

ASSIST will continue to monitor its feedback mechanisms on a daily basis and report to the ASSIST Board of Directors any cases when articulation is not honored by universities.

Conclusion

During the past few years ASSIST has achieved a number of baseline objectives toward meeting the overall goals of improving the web site to more effectively aid students in accessing course articulation information and transfer to CSU and UC campuses. While these accomplishments have been important to maintaining the basic viability of ASSIST, there are a number of areas that need further attention if ASSIST is to meet its overall goals. These areas include:

- Further increases in the capacity and stability of ASSIST technologies,
- Substantial increases in the number of students served by ASSIST, and
- Enhancement of ASSIST to make it even easier for students to use.

At a future time when the economy of the State is improved the ASSIST Board will be submitting a budget change proposal that requests additional permanent ASSIST funds in order to support a sufficient, long term technology environment for ASSIST, increase the number of students who use ASSIST, and make ASSIST easier for students and others to use.

Appendix Summary

The following summaries of each of the appendices to this report are provided for further clarification.

Additional questions or comments regarding this report or the information in the appendices should be directed to:

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Appendix A – 2001-03 ASSIST Strategic Plan

This is the most recent version of the working document that guides the ongoing operations of ASSIST and the work of the ASSIST Board of Directors. Every two years the ASSIST Board reviews and updates the ASSIST Strategic Plan to help ensure that ASSIST remains on track to serve its varied customers most effectively and efficiently.

Appendix B – California Model Articulation Format

This document that was jointly developed with ASSIST and the CIAC (campus articulation officers professional organization) and has now been adopted by the ASSIST Board of Directors. It provides recommended, but not required, guidelines for universities to follow in determining how best to present their articulation agreements with colleges.

Appendix C – 2002 Report on Articulation Not in ASSIST

This report was developed at the request of the ASSIST Board of Directors in response to the 2001-02 Supplemental Report Language for ASSIST and provides details on the 2001 study of any official articulation between CCC, CSU, and UC campuses that has been entered into ASSIST.

Appendix D – Policies for Including Data for Independent Colleges and Universities in ASSIST

These policies were adopted by the ASSIST Board of Directors in July 2002 and provide a mechanism for independent colleges and universities to include their articulation with California Community Colleges in the ASSIST web site.

APPENDIX A

2001-03 ASSIST Strategic Plan

2001-03 ASSIST Strategic Plan

Revised - August 15, 2001

Introduction

In November 1998, the ASSIST Board of Directors adopted a new Strategic Plan to guide the continued implementation of ASSIST. During the 1998-1999, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 project years, the campuses, Coordination Site, and Systemwide Offices worked hard to achieve many of the objectives identified in the plan. Major accomplishments during this period included:

- Continued entry and maintenance of articulation data in ASSIST to maintain a complete database of all of the most current articulation established between all CCC, CSU and UC campuses
- Operation of ASSIST as California's official repository of articulation and transfer information
- Development of the new Web ASSIST Articulation Maintenance System to complete the conversion of all ASSIST software from the original technical environment into more current technologies
- Improved quality and consistency of data contained in ASSIST
- Development of a 2001-02 budget augmentation to meet the expanding needs of ASSIST

In order to sustain the forward momentum of ASSIST, the Board meets every two years to update their strategic plans. The following plan represents the updated mission, vision, goals and objectives for ASSIST to guide activities through the 2001-02 and 2002-03 project years. In addition to moving ASSIST forward in a number of key areas, the goals and objectives in this plan also cover unmet items from the prior plan. Individual activities in this plan which require additional or redirected resources are noted as appropriate.

Note: In July 2001, in order to meet desired State budget reserves, the Governor vetoed the ASSIST funding augmentation requested by the ASSIST Board of Directors. Without this funding augmentation many ASSIST services will be either severely restricted or eliminated in order to keep ASSIST operating within current resources. Strategic Plan activities affected by this funding shortfall are noted when applicable throughout this document.

Mission Statement

The mission of ASSIST is to facilitate the transfer of California Community College students to California's public 4-year universities by providing an electronic system for academic planning which delivers accurate, timely and complete information and operates as the official repository of articulation information for the State of California.

Vision Statement

ASSIST will become a student-centered, electronic information system for students planning to transfer. It will continue to be maintained as the official repository of California articulation information and will 1) serve as a key component of a comprehensive Statewide information and advising system to enhance student transfer, 2) provide universal on-line access to articulation, and 3) support collaboration with other Statewide transfer and articulation related efforts.

Goals

Goal 1: Improve the quality of ASSIST data through enhanced collection, organization, presentation, completeness, accuracy and timeliness

Goal 2: Improve the usability of ASSIST for clients, especially students

Goal 3: Increase the understanding and use of ASSIST through marketing and education

Goal 4: Increase collaboration with other statewide efforts to facilitate the academic planning and transfer of students

Goal 5: Improve central ASSIST hardware, software, networking and personnel to ensure continuous availability of ASSIST services

Objectives

Goal 1: *Improve the quality of ASSIST data through enhanced collection, organization, presentation, completeness, accuracy and timeliness*

Objective 1: Evaluate and improve documents, forms, reports and procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive articulation in the ASSIST database

Objective 2: Adopt a recommended model format for all articulation represented in ASSIST

Objective 3: Identify level of concordance between CCC, CSU and UC electronic curriculum data in ASSIST and campus catalogs

Objective 4: Review and update documents that describes and specify policies for ASSIST as “California’s Official repository of Articulation”

Goal 2: *Improve the usability of ASSIST for clients, especially students*

Objective 1: Improve the ASSIST user interface for students using student focus groups to determine needs and test alternatives

Objective 2: Improve the usability of ASSIST for persons with disabilities by making it ADA/Section 508 compliant

Objective 3: Change the ASSIST software as appropriate to support the “Model Articulation Format” once it is adopted by the ASSIST Board

Objective 4: Implement new features for Web ASSIST

Goal 3: *Increase the understanding and use of ASSIST through marketing and education*

Objective 1: Develop and implement a strategy to educate key legislative staff, LAO, DOF and the Secretary of Education’s office about the goals of ASSIST

Objective 2: Communicate regularly with key constituencies regarding ASSIST activities and accomplishments

Objective 3: Develop and implement a strategy to make ASSIST better known and used by Community College students

Goal 4: *Increase collaboration with other statewide efforts to facilitate the academic planning and transfer of students*

Objective 1: Establish and maintain continuing relationships with other agencies/organizations to help achieve ASSIST goals

Objective 2: Board members represent ASSIST, participate in and provide support to relevant articulation related activities.

Goal 5: *Improve central ASSIST hardware, software, networking and personnel to ensure continuous availability of ASSIST services*

Objective 1: Establish service-level standards for ASSIST services

- Objective 2: Establish redundant, fault-tolerant hardware and networking for central ASSIST servers
- Objective 3: Maintain the currency of central ASSIST hardware and software
- Objective 4: Continue technology planning activities to maintain a current ASSIST Technology Plan and ensure that ASSIST remains in synch with segmental technological directions
- Objective 5: Determine and implement practices to promote staff training and professional development at the Coordination Site

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives

Primary Goal 1

Improve the quality of ASSIST data through enhanced collection, organization, presentation, completeness, accuracy and timeliness

Objective 1: *Evaluate and improve documents, forms, reports and procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive articulation in the ASSIST database*

Activities: Review the documents, forms and procedures that have been developed related to ensuring complete data in ASSIST. These include annual CSU/UC data entry planning matrix, mid-year data entry status report, annual articulation status report, CSU/UC segmental intervention for data entry problems, etc..

Develop proposed changes and submit them to the ASSIST Board for review and adoption.

Responsibilities: Workgroup and Campus Advisory Committee

Timeline: Complete by December 2001

Costs: Meeting & travel costs (2 meetings estimated)

Status: The Campus Advisory Committee involvement in this activity has been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 1

Improve the quality of ASSIST data through enhanced collection, organization, presentation, completeness, accuracy and timeliness

Objective 2: *Adopt a recommended model format for all articulation represented in ASSIST*

Activities: Continue working with the CIAC to finalize a proposed Model Articulation Format. Present it to the ASSIST Board for review and adoption. ASSIST Board determine plan to address implementation plans and issues.

Responsibilities: ACS

Timeline: Fall Board Meeting

Costs: none

Activities: Submit draft proposal to ICAS and ask for faculty review and comment. Consider asking ICAS to endorse the Model Articulation Format after it has been finalized.

Responsibilities: To be determined

Timeline: To be determined

Costs: none

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 1

Improve the quality of ASSIST data through enhanced collection, organization, presentation, completeness, accuracy and timeliness

Objective 3: *Identify level of concordance between CCC, CSU and UC electronic curriculum data in ASSIST and campus catalogs*

Activities: Campuses represented on the Campus Advisory Committee review the ASSIST curriculum data for a small set of CCC/CSU/UC campuses against their general catalogs and identify any differences in course names/numbers, unit values and significant differences in the intent of course titles. The CAC will need to determine how the campuses to review will be selected. Report to the ASSIST Board on findings. Board consider expanding to more schools along with other possible follow-up.

Responsibilities: Campus Advisory Committee

Timeline: Complete by the Fall 2002 Board Meeting

Costs: Meeting and travel costs for CAC - perhaps staff release time for campuses to conduct the reviews

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 1

Improve the quality of ASSIST data through enhanced collection, organization, presentation, completeness, accuracy and timeliness

Objective 4: *Review and update documents that describe and specify policies for ASSIST as “California’s Official Repository of Articulation”*

Activities: Review the “Repository Definition”, “Policies for Ensuring Complete Data”, and “Policies for Including Data for Independents” documents.

Develop proposed changes and submit them to the Board for review and adoption.

Responsibilities: Workgroup (possible expanded to include some campus representation)

Timeline: Complete by the Fall 2001 Board Meeting

Costs: Meeting and travel costs

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 2

Improve the usability of ASSIST for clients, especially students

Objective 1: *Improve the ASSIST user interface for students using student focus groups to determine needs and test alternatives*

Activities: Review the methodology and results from the first round of student focus groups conducted in April 2000. Determine objectives for further focus groups. Conduct focus groups. Analyze results and develop a set of proposed enhancements to ASSIST. Submit proposal to Board and follow the ASSIST Software Development Framework process for implementation of the enhancements.

Responsibilities: ACS

Timeline: Conduct Focus Groups in Spring 2002, complete software enhancements on schedule to be determined based on proposal

Costs: Costs for conducting focus groups (\$2000 - \$7000 for costs and incentives depending on number of students if ACS or Grad Students conduct groups - Higher costs if a company is hired to conduct groups)

ACS programming costs for implementation of software enhancements

Note: In the next ASSIST Strategic Plan, the Board may want to consider conducting some type of evaluation to measure if improvements made have the desired effects

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 2

Improve the usability of ASSIST for clients, especially students

Objective 2: *Improve the usability of ASSIST for persons with disabilities by making it ADA/Section 508 compliant*

Activities: Investigate requirements for Section 508 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act compliance. Investigate how CCC/CSU/UC campuses and segments are complying for systems like “Student Friendly”, “Pathways”, “Mentor”, etc.. Determine level of current ASSIST compliance. Develop a proposed set of enhancements to gain compliance. Submit proposal to ASSIST Board and follow the ASSIST Software Development Framework process for implementation of the enhancements.

Responsibilities: ACS, To be determined

Timeline: To be determined

Costs: To be determined - ACS programming costs for implementation of software enhancements

Status: The extent of software modifications for this activity may be limited due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 2

Improve the usability of ASSIST for clients, especially students

Objective 3: *Change the ASSIST software as appropriate to support the “Model Articulation Format” once it is adopted by the ASSIST Board*

Activities: After the ASSIST Board has adopted the Model Articulation Format, develop a related set of proposed enhancements to ASSIST. Submit proposal to ASSIST Board and follow the ASSIST Software Development Framework process for implementation of the enhancements.

Responsibilities: ACS

Timeline: Completion date to be determined - begin work after Model Format is adopted

Costs: ACS programming costs for implementation of software enhancements

Status: The extent of software modifications for this activity may be limited due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 2

Improve the usability of ASSIST for clients, especially students

Objective 4: *Implement new features for Web ASSIST*

Activities: Campus Advisory Committee consider new features for Web ASSIST proposed by current users (such as Matrix of Articulation and Single Course Lookup). ACS develop a related set of proposed enhancements to ASSIST. Submit proposal to ASSIST Board and follow the ASSIST Software Development Framework process for implementation of the enhancements.

Responsibilities: CAC, ACS

Timeline: To be determined

Costs: Meeting and travel costs, ACS programming costs for implementation of software enhancements

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 3

Increase the understanding and use of ASSIST through marketing and education

Objective 1: *Develop and implement a strategy to educate key legislative staff, LAO, DOF and the Secretary of Education's office about the goals of ASSIST*

Activities: Educate key segmental Governmental Relations staff and keep them up to date on ASSIST status. Develop a P.R. packet directed to governmental liaisons.

Responsibilities: Segmental Offices, ACS

Timeline: To be determined

Costs: Design and production costs for a P.R. packet

Status: The development of a P.R.. Packet has been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 3

Increase the understanding and use of ASSIST through marketing and education

Objective 2: *Communicate regularly with key constituencies regarding ASSIST activities and accomplishments*

Activities: Develop and publish a semi-annual newsletter directed to a broad audience of ASSIST constituencies

Responsibilities: ACS

Timeline: Ongoing (target first issue for Fall 2001)

Costs: Ongoing design and production costs

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 3

Increase the understanding and use of ASSIST through marketing and education

Objective 3: *Develop and implement a strategy to make ASSIST better known and used by Community College students*

Activities: Develop a comprehensive marketing and public relations plan. Consider consultation with campus Public Information offices and student organizations. Submit the proposed plan to the Board for review and adoption. Implement the plan.

Responsibilities: CAC, ACS

Timeline: To be determined

Costs: \$30,000 earmarked for marketing/PR activities

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 4

Increase collaboration with other statewide efforts to facilitate the academic planning and transfer of students

Objective 1: *Establish and maintain relationships with other agencies/organizations to help achieve ASSIST goals*

Activities: Maintain existing relationships with the following initiatives: IMPAC, CIAC, Student Friendly, Pathways, CSU Mentor, Gateways, CAN. Attend meetings as appropriate. Convey ASSIST related issues between those initiatives and the ASSIST Board.

Responsibilities: ACS

Timeline: As appropriate

Costs: Meeting and travel costs

Status: These activities may be limited due to insufficient funding

Activities: Identify other organizations/initiatives where collaboration would be appropriate and beneficial. Initiate contact and determine appropriate levels of collaboration. Attend meetings as appropriate. Convey ASSIST related issues between those initiatives and the ASSIST Board.

Responsibilities: Workgroup, ACS

Timeline: As appropriate

Costs: Meeting and travel costs

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 4

Increase collaboration with other statewide efforts to facilitate the academic planning and transfer of students

Objective 2: *Board members represent ASSIST, participate in and provide support to relevant articulation related activities.*

Activities: Participate in and provide support to activities such as the proposed ICC Transfer and Articulation Committee and the CERT Blue Ribbon Panel on Transfer and Articulation as deemed appropriate by those organizing these initiatives.

Board members report on such activities at Board meetings.

Responsibilities: To be determined

Timeline: To be determined

Costs: To be determined

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 5

Improve central ASSIST hardware, software, networking and personnel to ensure continuous availability of ASSIST services

Objective 1: *Establish service-level standards for ASSIST services*

Activities: Investigate service-level standards that have been established for other systems such as Pathways, CSU Mentor, Student Friendly, etc.. Develop a proposed set of standards. Submit proposal to ASSIST Board for review and adoption. Monitor appropriate service levels and report to Board annually.

Responsibilities: Workgroup, TAC, ACS

Timeline: To be determined

Costs: None

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 5

Improve central ASSIST hardware, software, networking and personnel to ensure continuous availability of ASSIST services

Objective 2: *Establish redundant, fault-tolerant hardware and networking for central ASSIST servers*

Activities: Plan and establish a redundant, fault-tolerant hardware and networking environment for central ASSIST services.

Responsibilities: ACS (TAC review and monitor plans)

Timeline: ASAP

Costs: Significant, but budgeted in the 2001 ASSIST BCP

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 5

Improve central ASSIST hardware, software, networking and personnel to ensure continuous availability of ASSIST services

Objective 3: *Maintain the currency of central ASSIST hardware and software*

Activities: Maintain the currency of central ASSIST hardware and software.

Responsibilities: ACS (TAC review and monitor plans)

Timeline: Ongoing

Costs: Significant, but budgeted in BCP

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 5

Improve central ASSIST hardware, software, networking and personnel to ensure continuous availability of ASSIST services

Objective 4: *Continue technology planning activities to maintain a current ASSIST Technology Plan and ensure that ASSIST remains in synch with segmental technological directions*

Activities: Continue technology planning activities to maintain a current ASSIST Technology Plan and ensure that ASSIST remains in synch with segmental technological directions

Responsibilities: TAC

Timeline: Ongoing

Costs: No additional costs beyond those budgeted for hardware/software maintenance/support/contingencies

Status: These activities may be limited due to insufficient funding

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives - continued

Primary Goal 5

Improve central ASSIST hardware, software, networking and personnel to ensure continuous availability of ASSIST services

Objective 5: *Determine and implement practices to promote staff training and professional development at the Coordination Site*

Activities: Establish goals for ACS Staff training and professional development. Report to Board on activities annually.

Responsibilities: TAC, ACS

Timeline: Ongoing

Costs: Training and professional development costs

Status: These activities have been suspended due to insufficient funding