

Summary Notes

**ASSIST Board of Directors Meeting, May 21st, 2001
California State University Chancellor's Office, Long Beach**

Final Draft 6/11/01

Present: Sharon Adams, Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (guest)
Suzanne Bolding, ASSIST Coordination Site (taking summary notes)
Clyde Brewer, San Jose State University
Carla Ferri, University of California, Office of the President
Mary Gill, California Community College Chancellor's Office
Stephen Handel, University of California, Office of the President
Mary Jennings-Smith, Mira Costa College
Allison Jones, California State University Chancellor's Office
Thea LaBrenz, University of California, Riverside
ZoAnn Laurente, California Postsecondary Education Commission
Miki Mikolajczak, Saddleback Community College
Ross Miyashiro, California State University Chancellor's Office
Judy Osman, California State University Chancellor's Office
Cathy Robin, ASSIST Coordination Site
Betty Sundberg, CAN System Office (guest)
Eric Taggart, ASSIST Coordination Site
John Tarjan, California State University, Bakersfield
Kevin Woolfork, California Postsecondary Education Commission

The meeting was convened at the California State University Chancellor's Office (Long Beach) at 9:30 a.m. by Board Chair Carla Ferri. It was requested that the agenda be amended to look at broadening the activities under Primary Goal 6 discussion of the ASSIST Strategic Plan.

1. Web ASSIST Articulation Maintenance System Status Report

Director Taggart updated the Board on the status of the Articulation Maintenance System. In January, the long-awaited ASSIST Maintenance System was activated, providing campuses among other things the tools for overnight publications and automated e-mail notification of changes. The activation in March of Web ASSIST using the new database coupled with an increased usage of ASSIST resulted in a tremendous slowdown in system performance for users. Several software fixes have been implemented, and the system is now more usable. More hardware and software adjustments are planned over the summer. In addition, the new BCP funding will provide for more equipment to help alleviate the load on the system and increase performance. The campuses have been kept closely apprised of the system's status through e-mail correspondence. The merge feature of the system, which is critical to the rolling over of agreements, has not yet been activated, but is in the testing phase.

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2. 2001-2002 ASSIST Budget Change Proposal

The Board Chair Carla Ferri and Kevin Woolfork of CPEC reported that by all accounts the ASSIST Budget Change Proposal was progressing nicely and that the Legislature had resolved major issues in the overall budget last week. The Governor's signing of the budget bill is the last step in the process; letters of support to the Governor for the ASSIST BCP were recommended.

In the Supplemental Report Language to the BCP the legislature has required UC, along with CSU, the ASSIST Board, and CPEC to supply two reports: a preliminary report due early in the Budget process on November 1, 2001, and a second report on November 1, 2002. The reports should speak to ensuring student satisfaction regarding timely, accurate, complete information in ASSIST and accountability on the part of the universities in ensuring that all articulation in ASSIST is honored. The request for the preliminary report to provide "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" was discussed in detail, as it was not clear how to interpret the request, nor whether the information could be gathered through ASSIST.

ASSIST's feedback mechanism was offered as a way to report articulation not honored. The Board discussed the complexities, appropriateness, and efficiency of using ASSIST as the reporting vehicle. Careful structuring of the question to students to solicit reports of articulation not being honored was deemed necessary as was forwarding to the proper segmental channels for investigation. CSU Mentor, Pathways, and Student Friendly were also suggested as additional on-line vehicles for reporting the problem.

The Board resolved to have the Workgroup work on the longer report and to have the Executive Committee and Kevin Woolfork confer on how to best formulate the preliminary report to satisfy the legislature.

3. 2000-2002 ASSIST Budget

Director Taggart presented the 2001-2002 ASSIST Budget including the \$1,100,000 Intersegmental BCP and discussed how new funding would be used for technology, improving student use of ASSIST, and increasing support for data entry.

The Board approved the 2001-2002 ASSIST Budget Proposal as presented.

4. 2001-2003 ASSIST Strategic Plan

The 2001-2003 ASSIST Strategic Plan was discussed and adopted by the Board with the following recommendations: under Primary Goal 6, Objective 1, major preparation agreements would be encouraged as a common goal of the agencies represented on the ASSIST Board and the scope of related activities would be broadened to support other transfer initiatives. Under Primary Goal 1, Objective 3 it was suggested to investigate the use of the EDD's on-line database of college catalogs as a resource for the study. Mary Gill of the CCCCO reiterated the importance of expanding marketing efforts under Primary Goal 3, and Kevin Woolfork of CPEC pointed out the helpfulness of presentations to the legislators such as the UC SCOPE visit last fall. Eric Taggart emphasized that the Strategic Plan is meant to be a dynamic document that can be amended over time. The Board Workgroup will meet to incorporate the Board's recommendations into the 2001-2003 ASSIST Strategic Plan.

5. Ensuring Complete Data in ASSIST

a. Annual Articulation Status Report

A draft of the ASSIST 2000-2001 Statewide Articulation Status Report was presented to the Board for review. The report attempts to report on the coverage of schools both within the service area and outside of the service area, as well as to make some quantitative assessment on the amount and type of articulation (major preparation agreements vs. discipline-based agreements) distributed across schools within and outside of each university's service area. It was noted that service areas change over time and a final report will reflect as accurately as possible current service areas. The report gives representative numbers expressed as ratios of the median number of distinct, current major preparation agreements and discipline-based agreements each university has currently articulated to the highest number of distinct major preparation or discipline-based agreements articulated in all. By using the median (briefly, the middle value in a data set) as the numerator rather than the arithmetic average, any extreme data which could skew an average are not unduly weighted (the numerator therefore assesses each university's fair distribution of articulation among the colleges as well). Some discussion ensued as to whether simply representing the minimal amount of data to expose imbalances within a university's coverage area might be preferable to statistical analysis; however, the Board was reminded that the Workgroup's task had been to distill the data into a one-page report that would provide a snapshot of the amount and type of articulation in ASSIST for each university.

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The ratios derived represent as well a number between 0 and 1 for intercampus comparison. However, it was pointed out that large discrepancies could be attributable to the fact that some universities do not consider the review of courses or requirements which cannot be fulfilled at the community college as articulation, and are therefore not counted for the purposes of the report. The validity of comparing the numbers therefore breaks down. In other cases, universities may have only recently developed major preparation agreements. A quantitative analysis counting numbers of articulation agreements may not adequately reflect the articulation effort at each university. Moreover, the Board concluded that such a complicated report, given all the complexities of the articulation process, would be subject to misinterpretation and misuse in its current form. The Board requested that Kevin Woolfork join the Executive Committee in order to come up with a definitive resolution on the report especially as the SLR requests the proportion of articulation data in ASSIST to be provided in the legislative report due November 1.

a. Status of CAN Data in ASSIST

Betty Sundberg reported that many changes had been implemented in the CAN database and that CAN is now at a point where it needs to coordinate with ASSIST on its data. It was proposed that Eric Taggart meet with Betty Sundberg before CAN transitions to a new directorship.

6. Data in ASSIST For Independent Colleges and Universities

a. ASSIST Chair Letter of April 23, 2001

The Board discussed with Sharon Adams of the AICCU, the letter to John Brown of the AICCU, expressing discontent with the AICCU's decision not to put data for the Independents in ASSIST without following up with the ASSIST Board, the proper body to address in negotiating such matters involving policy decisions. Sharon Adams gave an update on the implementation of DAG's system, noting that a final contract had not been signed with DAG, and characterizing the decision to use the Canadian company instead of ASSIST as solely financial. The Board reiterated that it was not provided the level of information needed to generate a fee structure for the AICCU and that, a full conversation never having occurred with AICCU leadership, it would like that the AICCU respond in writing to the ASSIST Board and encouraged Juan Yniguez to confer with the ASSIST Executive Committee to bring closure to the negotiations.

The Board also opened to discussion the implications of having a public segment

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(the Community Colleges) commit to articulation with the Independents using the DAG system while fulfilling their commitment to the Official Repository in ASSIST.

b. Russ Mitchell Letter of June 26, 2000

The Coordination Site requested that the Board establish some policy on including data from Independents as sending institutions in ASSIST. Although the Board has discussed this issue numerous times, it has not yet come to a definitive decision, which puts the Coordination Site in an awkward position. This topic will be addressed at the Fall Board Meeting.

7. Student Focus Groups Final Report

The Board discussed the Student Focus Groups Final Report and plans for more focus groups in improving the usability of ASSIST. Since the Campus Advisory will be playing a significant role in this and other activities to increase use of ASSIST. It was proposed that the Board revise the composition of the Campus Advisory Committee, reflecting less of a need for technical input and focusing more on service level questions.

8. Model Articulation Agreement Format

The CIAC Model Articulation Format Committee has developed a proposed model articulation agreement format as provided in the last Strategic Plan. The Model Format will entail changes to ASSIST Software and, moreover, changes to the way universities do articulation. The model format will next be presented to the four-year articulation officers. Comments to the model format are due to CIAC by June 15th. The model format will come back to the ASSIST Board by early September. It was also recommended that ICAS also be consulted on the model format.

Director Taggart updated the Board on some miscellaneous Coordination Site items. The Coordination Site is investigating locating the primary ASSIST server computers on the UCI campus to provide a more stable environment. Also, IMPAC has requested some information from ASSIST that will require some programming, and a corresponding proposal will be developed for Board approval.

9. Fall 2001 ASSIST Board Meeting Date

Pending a survey of calendars next week, the Fall 2001 ASSIST Board Meeting will likely take place early October, on Monday or Wednesday, with a target date being

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Monday, October 8th, before the November 1 preliminary report is due. The meeting will take place at UC Office of the President in Oakland.

POST-MEETING NOTE: The Fall 2001 ASSIST Board Meeting date was subsequently set for Wednesday, October 3rd, 2001.