

Summary Notes

ASSIST Board of Directors Meeting, October 7, 2002

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, Sacramento

Present:

Suzanne Bolding, ASSIST Coordination Site
Aiden Ely, California Community College Chancellor's Office
Mary Ann Estes, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Patty Faiman, California State University, Northridge
Stephen Handel, University of California, Office of the President
Diane Glow, San Diego Miramar College
Judith James, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Jose Michel, CAN System Office
Judy Osman, California State University Chancellor's Office
Cathy Robin, ASSIST Coordination Site
Jeff Spano, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Eric Taggart, ASSIST Coordination Site
John Tarjan, California State University, Bakersfield
Renee Tuller, Grossmont Community College
Kevin Woolfork, California Postsecondary Education Commission
Yoly Woo-Hoogenstyn, University of California, San Diego

The meeting was convened at the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Sacramento) at 10:00 am by the new ASSIST Board Chair Judith James.

1. ASSIST 2002 Legislative Report

Director Taggart presented the ASSIST 2002 Legislative Report as requested in the Supplemental Report Language (SLR) in the 2001-2002 California Budget Act. The preliminary report was submitted last November and responded to all preliminary questions posed by the Legislature including a lengthy report on the proportion of articulation not in ASSIST. As requested by the Legislature in the SLR, the final report focuses on efforts to improve the ASSIST site to more effectively aid students. Since the funding augmentation for ASSIST in the 2001-2002 State Budget Act was vetoed, however, many of the more significant planned activities for improvement of the ASSIST site were not implemented and are awaiting a future funding augmentation.

The Coordination Site did address and implement those additional activities to enhance the ASSIST web site which were possible within its current funding limitations, including enhancement of Web ASSIST for ADA compliance, adoption of the California Model Articulation Format, augmented procedures to better ensure complete data in ASSIST, establishment of new policies for including articulation with independent colleges and

Summary Notes

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universities in ASSIST, purchase of new equipment to address pressing technology needs (made possible by a one-time funding supplement from the three systemwide offices), and establishment of a venue on Web ASSIST for students to report articulation in ASSIST was not honored by a university.

Director Taggart reported that this last enhancement was accomplished by providing a feedback form accessible through a prominent graphics button in Web ASSIST where students could report articulation which is not honored. Although over 600 feedback forms have been submitted, only twenty actually represented issues regarding articulation not honored, and the Coordination Site followed up on all 20 relevant cases with the universities. (Misdirected feedback is forwarded on to the ASSIST contacts at the universities for follow-up). Of the 20 reports of articulation not honored, all but a couple were already addressed by the universities and were decided in favor of the student. The remaining cases involved students' hoping that the articulation meant other than what was displayed in ASSIST. Concerns from the segments persist that ASSIST is not the best venue for soliciting reports of articulation not honored since ASSIST is used at the front-end, before the transfer process, and that perhaps another on-line system, such as CaliforniaColleges.edu, may be a better place for reporting articulation not honored.

Other comments on the Legislative Report from the Board included suggestions on language and clarification on what activity is reported (hits versus reports, and by whom).

The final report will be transmitted to the legislature via UC as was done last year for the preliminary report.

2. Status of Participation of Independent Colleges in ASSIST

Director Taggart reported that over the summer the ASSIST Board adopted a policy for participation of independent colleges in ASSIST. The policy states participating independents will be held to the same standards that UC and CSU are held to in terms of current, accurate articulation data and that some fee would be charged. The Board would accept the charge of developing the fee structure once any of the independents show serious interest.

3. Plans for the 2002 ASSIST Conference

Director Taggart advised the Board on plans for the 2002 ASSIST Conference, November 12, 2002. The conference, now biennial rather than annual, was pared down as well this year to one day due to funding considerations. The conference will be structured with a general session in

Summary Notes

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the morning with a keynote speech on the Master Plan by Charles Ratliff. The afternoon will be comprised of break-out sessions on topics including community college-to-community college articulation, the ASSIST Maintenance System, Web ASSIST activity, OSCAR, degree audit systems, the Curriculum Update System, and the Model Format for Articulation. Attendance is expected to be in the range of 150-175 people. The ASSIST Conference will be announced at the CIAC meeting as well.

4. Status of ASSIST/CAN Data

Director Taggart updated the Board on the status of three projects ASSIST is currently working on with CAN: 1) exchanging data to download a clean set of CAN qualification information into the ASSIST database and establishing a process to ensure ASSIST gets updated information on CAN course qualification approvals or denials 2) the details of displaying CAN identifiers in ASSIST articulation reports and 3) working on a prototype of an on-line automated system using ASSIST to process CAN requests for verification. There are larger issues regarding the exchange of data which have not been resolved including tracking historical data, and it may be that CAN will only provide current CAN qualifications, not historical. Once these issues are worked out, the display of CAN identifiers in ASSIST will be presented to the CAN and ASSIST Boards for review by e-mail before the next Board meeting.

5. Status of Request for Matrix of Articulation in ASSIST

The Board briefly reviewed the the status of a frequent request for a matrix of articulation in ASSIST which would show how major requirements can be fulfilled across different colleges or universities. The project is somewhat difficult since majors are not always translatable across schools. Although this kind of matrix of articulation is in the Strategic Plan, it has not yet been developed due to the lack of funding.

6. Overview and Status of OSCAR

Over the summer the Board reviewed and approved a proposal to have ASSIST develop a portion of the Online Services for Curriculum and Articulation Review (OSCAR) system. Conceived at the CSU Chancellor's Office for conducting the labor and paper-intensive annual IGETC and CSU GE Review, OSCAR is comprised of two parts, which will be phased in successively. ASSIST has prototyped the first part which is a front-end web site which can collect course outlines electronically from community college campuses either as data

Summary Notes

ASSIST Board of Directors Meeting, October 7, 2002

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, Sacramento

downloaded from curriculum management systems, or typed in. An intersegmental advisory committee for OSCAR has already been established to guide in the development of the software.

A pilot group of 3-6 colleges is targeted for the next submission cycle this year to test feasibility of the process and system. The second phase of OSCAR, which allows for on-line faculty review of outlines, will be developed separately by the CSU Chancellor's Office.

ASSIST has a vested interest in providing the front-end collection system since in the current process courses are frequently submitted which are not in ASSIST, or which are not yet on the UCTCA's, or which have inconsistencies with ASSIST data, and it is then up to ASSIST to reconcile the course data after the fact. A front end system in ASSIST would require clean data beforehand and therefore greatly speed up the time from approval to publication, providing counselors and students with updated IGETC, CSUGE, and CSU Baccalaureate lists shortly after May 1st for the coming Fall. Other processes such as the UC TCA review and CAN in the future may also benefit from an on-line outline collection system. Aiden Ely suggested an evaluation of the process so that efficiencies and improvements to the current processes can be fully identified and credited.

The OSCAR pilot group of 3-6 campuses is small by design to allow for changes without impacting campuses. The pilot group will include all volunteer colleges both with and without curriculum management systems. The OSCAR Advisory Committee is being cautious that the project does not get out of control and that campuses should not be forced to use OSCAR. While the efficiencies are clear in some areas, a campus without a curriculum management system burdened with a mandatory use of OSCAR on a large scale could be a tremendous drain on its resources.

The Technical Advisory Committee will continue to update the Board on OSCAR from the ASSIST perspective.

7. Status of Software Changes for the Model Articulation Format

The Model Format for Articulation with the resulting ASSIST software changes was adopted by the Board at the last meeting. The Coordination Site is currently working on the software changes although they are of lower priority than the new equipment, CAN and OSCAR. The ASSIST Conference will have a session detailing the changes. Since it has been a while since CIAC approved the Model Format the conference will serve to bring it back into focus by providing a forum for discussion for articulation officers.

Summary Notes

ASSIST Board of Directors Meeting, October 7, 2002

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, Sacramento

8. 01-03 ASSIST Strategic Plan Activity Status

The ASSIST Strategic Plan was developed by the Board at the last biennial Strategic Planning Summit. Though the activities and goals remain valid, most of the Strategic Plan has not been executed in large part due to the unexpected lack of funding. The Board Workgroup, therefore, moved to extend the Strategic Plan for another year, and the Board concurred, adding that the State would probably remain fiscally depressed for another year or two and to pare down the existing plan would not be forward looking. The Strategic Plan was tabled for another year.

Alternatively, Judy Osman suggested the need for a one-day meeting to look at the integration aspect of the articulation and transfer projects (CAN, ASSIST, California Colleges), taking a look at how they function together. Board Chair Judith James referred to a new subcommittee of the ICC which focused on transfer and articulation issues. The Board Workgroup will discuss this Strategic Planning meeting and bring it back to the Board at the Spring meeting.

9. Community College-to-Community College Articulation in ASSIST

The Board discussed the possibility of using ASSIST for community college-to-community college articulation. While implementing this capability for the community colleges would not draw in any significant way on ASSIST resources, requiring only training on the Maintenance System for community college staff (the ASSIST software can accommodate articulation between pairs of community colleges), concerns were raised. First, it was suggested that perhaps it would be preferable and more useful to provide grids, rather than articulation between pairs of community colleges. Additional funding would be required for ASSIST to implement articulation grids. While grids would address a more mobile student population and campus impaction, the Board was cautioned that current grid articulation does not always undergo thorough faculty review. CAN issues would also need to be addressed with community college-to-community college articulation in ASSIST, as well as community college resource issues. Aiden Ely cited as a resource for information a grant-funded project some years ago which established community college-to-community college articulation at the regional level. He also cautioned that that project, while successful on the regional level, became too costly for Statewide implementation and so was not granted its proposed funding for the next level. The ASSIST conference will host a session on community college-to-community college articulation, providing a forum to discuss the desire and need for it. Based on the outcome of the conference session, the Coordination Site may make a proposal to board to do something with community college-to-community college articulation.

Summary Notes

ASSIST Board of Directors Meeting, October 7, 2002

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The Maintenance System provides not only a component for data entry of articulation agreements, but also the Maintenance Reports web site where institutions can see their individual articulation as well as curriculum from other institutions. Community colleges have frequently requested access to the curriculum in the Maintenance Reports to be able to see curricular changes. ASSIST will discuss providing logon ids and passwords to the community colleges so they can access the curriculum displays in the Maintenance Reports.

10. Ongoing Needs for an ASSIST funding Augmentation

Director Taggart reported on the near and intermediate term financial status and needs of ASSIST. Thanks to supplementary funding from CAN and the systemwide offices, this fiscal year ASSIST is expected to end with a small deficit. The financial picture for next year, however, looks bleak, with any chance for a July 2003 BCP gone. A 2004-2005 BCP remains doubtful, and if it is to be pursued, the deadline for submission is September 2003. The Executive Committee will meet in January 2003 to discuss whether or not to pursue a 2004-2005 BCP. More likely, the Board will be looking at 2005-2006 for a BCP. Because of the delay in funding, many of the Strategic Plan item including marketing, extra software features, and student focus groups are on hold. In addition, maintenance costs for the new equipment is not accounted for in the current ASSIST Budget. (The TAC has advised replacement of equipment every three years to keep ASSIST running optimally.)

Director Taggart clarified that the new equipment consists of six new servers. The current three servers will be used for development and testing environment with the oldest server being phased out. A second CAN contract for ASSIST to implement requests for verification system remains a possibility.

11. Director's Report

Director Taggart presented the Director's Report and provided a brief summary of items.

The Board discussed possible dates for the Spring Board Meeting to be held at the CSU Chancellor's Office in Long Beach. Monday, May 5th, and Tuesday, May 6th, were targeted; the Coordination Site will request calendars by e-mail and confirm a date.

The Board Meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.