

# Definition of Functional Requirements

## Web ASSIST Version 2.0

### March, 1998

This document describes the functional requirements for Version 2.0 of the Web ASSIST articulation display software. Web ASSIST provides articulation related reports to users via the World Wide Web. Version 2.0 of Web ASSIST provides modifications to this software to enhance its functionality and ease of use. The Definition of Functional Requirements is a required document in the ASSIST Software Development Framework.

#### History

ASSIST reports were originally available only via DOS-based software. In 1994 the ASSIST on the Internet application was released, which made these reports available to users running Telnet client software and linking to a centralized server via the Internet. With the widespread adoption of the World Wide Web, the ASSIST Coordination Site began to align itself with this technology. Web ASSIST is prototyped in early 1997 and released to the public in September of that year.

Version 2.0 of Web ASSIST was proposed to: 1) incorporate additional functionality of the original DOS-based application that had not been provided in Web ASSIST, 2) improve the layout and functionality of the Web ASSIST application, and 3) incorporate suggestions from users of Web ASSIST.

The requirements which appear in this document were taken from suggestions by users and Coordination Site staff. These suggestions were evaluated for feasibility and benefit, and then collected into a suite of changes that meet overall goals and workload requirements.

#### Functional Requirements

1. Improve the appearance and organization of the prompting pages to make them more clear, increase their functionality, and reduce the number of steps required to produce a report. Specifically, these improvements include the following:
  - Combine information in the prompting pages to reduce the number of pages that must be visited to produce a report. This includes: 1) select the institution and academic year first, not the type of articulation; 2) provide a single page from which the type of report can be selected; 3) combine the selection of TCA type with the department/area for the TCA.

- Label the “Go” button differently, in order to make its function more clear. The exact text to use is to be determined, with “Continue” and “Next” among the possibilities.
- Ensure that the “Go” button is always visible (in most browsers) in 800x600 resolution without scrolling.
- Provide additional introductory text on the opening screen to help guide the user.
- Improve the organization of and information available on the sidebar.
- Provide a message on the opening screen to indicate the supported Web browsers. This will help prevent problems from users using unsupported browsers.
- Move the link to the ASSIST Information Center from the opening screen to the splash screen.
- Remove the articulation agreement by course name report. This report is for use primarily by articulation staff, and its inclusion in Web ASSIST is a frequent source of confusion for other users.
- Avoid the use of ambiguous terms such as “transferability.” Eliminate the use of terms such as “TCA” and “AA” where possible. Rewrite any text as appropriate.

2. Improve connectivity with systems outside of ASSIST. These improvements include the following:

- Provide the alternate paths to reports, such as a path that begins with a list of schools with IGETC agreements. These alternate paths will serve as entry points for campus system links.
- Provide a link to campus specific information that describes that campus' articulation policies.
- Add links to campus Web pages in a “Related Links” section.
- Add links to Web pages maintained by CAN and California Virtual University in the “Related Links” section.

3. Migrate all remaining functionality from the Revelation ASSIST application. This includes the following:
  - Widen all reports from 78 to 80 characters. Reports produced by Revelation ASSIST are 80 characters wide, but these reports had to be narrowed to 78 characters to support the ASSIST on the Internet application. Since ASSIST on the Internet has been phased-out, this restriction is no longer necessary.
  - Add the Matrix of Articulation report.
  - Integrate CAN information into ASSIST reports.
  - Support multiple selections at once (e.g.: produce a TCA report for multiple specific departments).
  - Allow the user to choose whether to display course names in local or standard format in reports.
  - Add the CSU Baccalaureate Level Course List report.
4. Improve the process for printing a report, as follows:
  - Automatically load the first part of the report into the Acrobat reader when the user selects "Print."
5. Provide more information about Web ASSIST to users and provide a feedback mechanism. This includes the following:
  - Provide better access to summaries of articulation, and more complete information in the summaries.
  - Provide a link to logs of software and database change descriptions.
  - Provide links to reports that detail the usage of Web ASSIST. This link will be provided in the ASSIST Information Center.
  - Add a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document which will be available from the help page.
  - Provide better instructions in the help pages for maximizing the browser's viewing area. This will include a bar that is labeled "Widen your viewing area until you can see this entire bar."

- Provide our own instructions for installing the Acrobat reader, to replace Adobe's instructions.
- Add a form the user can use to provide feedback. The Coordination Site will route feedback to the originator of the agreement on which they are commenting, if appropriate. The user will be allowed to indicate that they would like to receive a response.

**Costs:**

All costs are referenced in the Project ASSIST Strategic Plan, dated November 27, 1996.

Staffing: Existing Coordination Site staff will conduct all development activities. These staff include the following:

- One Programmer/Analyst for all programming activities
- One Technical Writer for all HTML development and documentation activities
- One Programmer/Analyst (part time) to support the database conversion activities
- One Systems Administrator/DBA (part time) to provide hardware support and database management support
- One Technical Manager (part time) to provide management and coordination

Hardware: No additional hardware purchases are anticipated.

Software: No additional software purchases are anticipated.

Other: No other costs are anticipated.

## **Schedule:**

A two-phase release of new features is anticipated, in order to minimize the impact of changes on users. A rough schedule for deployment is as follows:

### Phase 1

Anticipated release date: July 1998

- Combine information in the prompting pages.
- Label "Go" button differently.
- Ensure "Go" button is always visible in 800x600 resolution.
- Provide additional introductory text in opening screen.
- Improve sidebar.
- Provide information about supported Web browsers.
- Move ASSIST Information Center link to splash page.
- Remove the articulation agreement by course name report.
- Rewrite text that uses ambiguous language.
- Provide alternate paths to reports.
- Provide links to campus articulation policy information.
- Add links to campus Web sites.
- Add links to Web sites for CAN and California Virtual University.
- Add the CSU Baccalaureate Level Course List report.
- Automatically load the first part of printed reports into the Acrobat reader.
- Provide better access to summaries of articulation.
- Provide a link to logs of software and database changes.
- Provide a link to reports that detail Web ASSIST usage.

- Add a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document.
- Provide better instructions for maximizing the browser's viewing area.
- Provide our own instructions for installing the Acrobat reader.
- Add a form the user can use to provide feedback.
- Widen all reports from 78 to 80 characters.
- Allow displays of course names in standard or local format.

Phase 2

Anticipated release date: March 1999

- Add the matrix of articulation report.
- Integrate CAN information into ASSIST reports.
- Support multiple selections at once.