

# **Project Proposal**

## **Web ASSIST Version 2.0**

### **March, 1998**

#### **Purpose:**

Web ASSIST provides articulation related reports to users throughout California via the World Wide Web. Version 2.0 of Web ASSIST will provide modifications to this software to enhance its functionality and ease of use.

#### **Background:**

ASSIST reports were originally available only via DOS-based software. In 1994 the ASSIST on the Internet software 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 was prototyped in early 1997 and released to the public in October of that year.

Version 2.0 of Web ASSIST is proposed to: 1) incorporate additional functionality of the original DOS-based application that had not yet 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.

#### **Needs to be addressed:**

A number of specific needs were identified by the Coordination Site staff and the users of Web ASSIST. These were collected by the Coordination Site and evaluated for feasibility and benefit. These needs can be categorized as follows:

- 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.
- Improve connectivity with systems outside of ASSIST. This includes providing links from ASSIST to campus Web sites and alternate paths to ASSIST reports for use by campus systems.

- Migrate all remaining functionality from the Revelation ASSIST application. This includes adding the matrix of articulation report and widening all existing reports from 78 to 80 columns.
- Integrate California Articulation Number (CAN) information with ASSIST reports.
- Improve the process for printing an ASSIST report.
- Provide more information to users, and provide a mechanism for users to submit feedback. This includes providing links to summaries of articulation maintained in ASSIST and providing additional help, such as a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document.

The specific modifications and additions to Web ASSIST will be detailed in the Definition of Functional Requirements.

**Proposed modified products:**

Web ASSIST Version 2.0 will consist of revisions to the existing Web ASSIST product. These revisions will include replacing the existing HTML web pages with improved versions and modifying the existing C++ report generation software and supporting software to increase its functionality.

Users will not need to acquire additional software to use Version 2.0 of Web ASSIST. The minimum requirements have not changed from Version 1.0.

**Affected customers and benefits:**

Web ASSIST is used by a wide range of people throughout California. ASSIST users include students, faculty, articulation officers, counselors and outreach officers. These users will benefit from the improved usability and additional reports that will be provided with Version 2.0 of Web ASSIST.

Campus staff developing local systems will have increased ability to integrate ASSIST information into their systems.

## **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. Costs for the Sybase database software are included in the ASSIST maintenance software project.

Other: No other costs are anticipated.

## **Schedule:**

A two-phase release of Web ASSIST 2.0 is anticipated. The first phase is currently targeted for July 1998, and the second phase for March 1999. A detailed schedule will be provided with the Project Plan.