

**ACADEMIC SENATE
of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA**

AS-735-11

RESOLUTION ON COORDINATED CAMPUS ASSESSMENT EFFORTS

- 1 WHEREAS, The current assessment process at Cal Poly is only loosely coordinated,
2 occasionally duplicative, and largely directed by administrative offices without
3 systematic faculty participation or sufficient support; and
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- 5 WHEREAS, The WASC visiting team has recommended that:
6 1) University Learning Objectives, Program Learning Objectives, and Course
7 Learning Objectives be aligned across Cal Poly
8 2) Leadership on assessment be clarified
9 3) The role of faculty governance in academic decision-making be reviewed
10 4) Quantitative measures associated with various themes of the self-study be
11 identified; and
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- 13 WHEREAS, Student learning is a community effort necessitating contributions from General
14 Education, the major, and co-curricular components; and
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- 16 WHEREAS, All programs are expected to complete Program Review; and
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- 18 WHEREAS, On-going assessment and continuous improvement are an expectation of Program
19 Review; and
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- 21 WHEREAS, The Academic Assessment Council currently serves to guide assessment processes,
22 but was established outside the Academic Senate and without strong faculty
23 participation; and
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- 25 WHEREAS, AS-718-10 has resolved “that the Academic Programs Office provide annual
26 summaries to the Academic Senate on the findings of academic programs that
27 underwent program review in that year...”; and
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- 29 WHEREAS, AS-716-10 has resolved “that the Academic Senate oversees university-level
30 assessment”; and
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- 32 WHEREAS, AS-716-10 has resolved “that findings or data resulting from such assessment must
33 not be used in making retention, promotion, and tenure decisions nor be placed in
34 an individual faculty member’s personnel action file”; therefore be it
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36 RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate endorse the attached proposal to adjust the membership
37 and mission of the Academic Assessment Council, including coordination and
38 direction of campus assessment efforts.

Proposed by: WASC/Academic Senate Assessment Task Force
Date: May 9 2011
Revised: May 31 2011

***ATTACHMENT TO
RESOLUTION ON COORDINATED CAMPUS ASSESSMENT EFFORTS
REVISED MISSION OF THE ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT COUNCIL***

Principles of Assessment for the AAC:

The purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. The assessment process should include the collection, the analysis, and the distribution of data at the student level, the program level, and the university level. Likewise, the work of assessment should be shared equitably, both within and between levels (faculty, programs, colleges, and university). Ideally, assessment will generate useful information about student learning while adding only minimally to faculty and administrative workloads. One primary method of achieving that goal is to coordinate existing assessment efforts and make future efforts more predictable, by identifying which activities occur in a given year. The main mission of the AAC is to carry out those coordinating and planning activities.

Campus assessment efforts should seek to centralize data collection and coordination, while decentralizing substantive decisions about how assessment is done and what criteria are used. Program faculty should have the maximum feasible control over deciding how and where to assess student learning. Creative approaches should be encouraged.

Regardless of the methods program faculty use to assess student learning, all programs have an obligation to annually report to the AAC their methodology and findings, to reflect on what the findings reveal about student learning, to identify areas of possible improvement, to develop plans about implementing improvements, and to later assess whether curriculum changes have actually improved student learning.

Responsibilities:

Cal Poly's assessment efforts need to become more predictable, more efficient, and better coordinated. Faculty workload needs to be reduced while still maintaining a faculty-driven process for program improvement. Ideally, this will ensure that program faculty have adequate assessment data, including data on student learning and attitudes, for program review, that the colleges and university have adequate assessment data for reaccreditation, that student learning is actually improved, and that assessment is integrated into existing activities to the extent possible, thus avoiding creating excess work.

To achieve these goals, the responsibilities of the AAC shall be as follows:

- 1) Lead and coordinate campus assessment efforts.
- 2) Create a central repository for information and resources related to assessment (i.e., rubrics, lists of best practices within and outside Cal Poly, and so on).
- 3) Ensure that data needed for program review and WASC are generated and stored appropriately.

- 4) To the extent necessary and possible, create a central repository for assessment data.
- 5) Review the annual reports of program- and college-level assessment efforts.
- 6) Report the results of assessment efforts to the campus community.

On-Going Duties:

- 1) Create a multi-year schedule for assessment, so that at a minimum all learning objectives are assessed by all programs at least once between WASC cycles (i.e., every 10 years).
- 2) Coordinate and create a multi-year schedule for indirect assessment efforts, for example surveys of seniors, alumni, and/or employers. An example of such coordination might be identifying an office that could conduct these surveys on behalf of programs and act as repository for the data. Another example might be creating and circulating a standard survey format that could be adopted by programs and colleges, with program-specific additions.
- 3) Receive and review the annual assessment reports generated by all academic programs on campus. Identify common needs and campus-wide assessment resources to meet them. The committee may, in consultation with the various programs and colleges, elect to review college-level, aggregated reports, instead of the reports of individual programs.
- 4) Generate and circulate to all programs an annual summary report about campus assessment efforts, aimed at identifying best practices, areas of strength and weakness, success stories, and so on.
- 5) Identify offices and procedures by which existing data useful for assessment will be gathered, analyzed, stored, and disseminated. The committee shall find ways to make best use of existing data, so that information needed for assessment can be derived from existing sources, to the extent possible.
- 6) Identify possible new sources of data and offices to gather, analyze, store, and disseminate them. An example of such a new source of data might be student portfolios.
- 7) Identify and propose changes to existing assessment tools to improve their utility for assessment.
- 8) Identify existing sources of data that could be used for assessment, for example Writing Proficiency Exam scores.
- 9) Identify existing assessment activities and processes, and take steps to coordinate them.

10) Evaluate how to balance needs and resources regarding assessment.

11) Investigate the possibility of creating an office to coordinate and store information about assessment best practices, campus-wide rubrics, the results of previous assessment efforts, and so on. The committee is encouraged to consider whether the Center for Teaching and Learning might fill this role.

12) Ensure that assessment data be made available to faculty, as needed

Membership and Appointment Procedures:

The AAC shall be composed as follows:

Part I -- 1 representative from each academic unit, appointed by the respective deans (7 people total)

Orfalea College of Business
College of Liberal Arts
University Library/Information Services
College of Architecture and Environmental Design
College of Science and Math
College of Engineering
College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

Part II -- Non-Academic Administrative Representatives, as nonvoting members, appointed by the respective heads of the departments (6 people total). One representative from each of:

- Student Affairs
- CTL
- ITS
- IP&A
- Academic Programs
- GE

Part III -- 1 student representative, appointed annually by the ASI president

Part IV -- Faculty Representatives (7 people total)

1 faculty member from each academic unit selected by the Academic Senate Executive Committee

Members identified in Parts I, III, and IV are voting members (15 total)

The committee shall elect its own chair annually.

Term limits shall be for 3 years and are renewable.

State of California
Memorandum

To: Rachel Fernflores
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: June 28, 2011

From: Jeffrey D. Armstrong
President



Copies R. Koob, E. Smith

Subject Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-735-11
Resolution on Coordinated Campus Assessment Efforts

This memo formally acknowledges receipt of the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution.