Colorado State University-Pueblo

Progress Report

Submitted to the Higher Learning Commission

February 20, 2010

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Context for the Progress Report

Following its visit to campus in 2007, the HLC review team recommended that Colorado State University-Pueblo (CSU-Pueblo) submit a progress report on the assessment of student learning by February 26, 2010. Specifically, the team indicated in its April 11, 2007 report that

> while departments/divisions/schools have begun the assessment process, assessment has been stalled since the campus wide assessment person retired. Assessment has thus been devolved to the schools where it is the individual Dean's responsibility to ensure compliance. Each academic unit is therefore at different points along the assessment path with the professional schools (business, education, nursing, and engineering) further along due to their external accrediting agencies. There are numerous assessment activities taking place at the departmental and college levels, but there is little if any coordination and it is not clear how the assessment results improve student learning and foster program development and revision. (p.16)

Purpose and Organization of this Report

This progress report describes the activities undertaken by CSU-Pueblo to enhance campus coordination of assessment processes and program improvements to improve student learning, the ultimate goal of assessment. It is organized chronologically to help readers understand the chain of events that occurred between the Fall 2007 semester and the current time.

Introduction

CSU-Pueblo has taken seriously the HLC's 2007 charge to better coordinate assessment activities and assure that they result in program improvement. A variety of major projects have been initiated and a number of activities have taken place across campus in multiple functional areas. In fact, many of them have gone beyond the original HLC recommendations to include the following:

- Adopting a campus-wide academic program assessment database, PRISM, that allows us to record and share information about academic program assessment;
- Revisiting and updating academic program student learning outcomes (SLOs) and the processes for assessing them;
- Creating and filling a new position, Assistant Provost for Assessment and Student Learning (APASL), dedicated exclusively to the coordination of assessment and the enhancement of learning;
- Establishing a campus-wide Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) to coordinate and integrate quality improvement in functional areas across campus;
- Drafting an institutional assessment plan to coordinate the collection and use of assessment information;
- Revising the student learning outcomes for general education through a process that extensively involved internal and external stakeholders;
- Developing a general education assessment plan; and
- Measuring the general education SLOs, sharing the results, and initiating improvement.

Academic Year 2007-2008

Campus

Following receipt of and reflection on the HLC *Corrected Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit* in early August 2007, a group of faculty was charged by the Provost to create a centralized University assessment committee and program. This group, the Assessment Team, began collecting information from the schools and colleges about their assessment processes. It researched models of campus organization for assessment, the role of unit assessment coordinators, and the purpose and value of a single, campus-level coordinator of assessment activities. Issues such as the availability of administrative support for assessment activities and the role of the

Associated Student Government (ASG) were also considered, as were different reporting systems. Other campuses were contacted and interviewed about their assessment processes, their successes, and their challenges, and the results were weighed as part of the Assessment Team's deliberations. In addition, a locally-developed survey, the *CSU-Pueblo Assessment Team Survey of Chairs*, was administered in efforts to learn more about current practices and chairs' experience with assessment on campus.

Through these investigations, some common themes developed, including the importance of 1) coordinators or designated individuals responsible for assessment, 2) centralized processes for assessing, 3) a centralized data system, 4) strong administrative support for and oversight of assessment, 5) ASG endorsement of learning outcomes and assessment, 6) a focus on processes that result in actual, demonstrable program and teaching improvement, and 7) resources to do the work of assessment and improvement.

The work of the Assessment Team culminated in a May 2008 report to the Provost (Appendix A) describing its work and making recommendations for starting, coordinating, and integrating campus assessment; for closing-the-loop; and for a timeline for implementing the recommendations.

General Education

In 2008, the General Education Board (GEB) conducted a survey of its own among department chairs, asking what they felt students need to get out of the general education curriculum. Whereas the Assessment Team survey focused primarily on academic program assessment processes, the general education survey focused primarily on the content of student learning. During a convocation week discussion of the survey results, it became clear that the University needed to develop assessable SLOs in the general education program that would be shared by and communicated among faculty.

Academic Year 2008-2009

Campus

A number of changes occurred at CSU-Pueblo during the 2008-2009 academic year. Among them were the unprecedented growth in enrollment, especially among freshman, and a simultaneous reduction in the budget for the Colorado State University System and consequently, for CSU-Pueblo. Despite these distractions, the campus remained dedicated to its commitment to student learning, accountability, and assessment.

Based on the Assessment Team's report and the recognized need to establish campus leadership and expertise for academic program and general education assessment, the position of Assistant Provost for Assessment and Student Learning (APASL) was established and filled in October 2008. The APASL assures that assessment efforts across campus are coordinated, that the information they generate is effectively disseminated and used, and that the resources and expertise to do so are available to faculty and staff.

At the campus level, the conversations initiated by the Assessment Team about the need for a coordinating body for assessment and student learning were continued. The APASL and the Provost considered the advantages and disadvantages of establishing this body as an academic affairs committee but decided that such a structure would not provide the holistic perspective that reflects the student experience of campus, nor would it allow the contributions made by other departments and service areas to student learning to be adequately recognized. Consequently, the IEC was established to centralize accountability and effectiveness activities and information to better understand and improve campus. It is composed of a steering committee and sub-committees of faculty, staff, and students representing functional areas from across campus. These areas range from the Student Recreation Center to the CSU-Pueblo Foundation Office, from the Registrar to the Outdoor Pursuits program, and from academic program review to general education (see Appendix B for the IEC functional chart). Each sub-committee identifies contributions it makes to learning—direct or indirect—and then designs assessment/evaluation processes to determine how effective they are.

The IEC Steering Committee and its sub-committees met several times through the end of the academic year. Some of the sub-committees organized quickly, developing their questions and collecting data from relevant areas to inform their initial steps. Others took more time to contemplate the work they wanted to embrace and identify others to involve in it.

Academic Programs

The APASL met with the department chairs and deans during 2008-2009 to 1) develop rapport with faculty, 2) understand the current state of assessment on campus, 3) identify the strengths and challenges of academic program assessment processes at CSU-Pueblo, 4) develop strategies for being effective in the newly-created position, and 5) develop a plan for centralizing assessment information on campus. She met with the Provost on an

on-going basis to communicate the information collected. In addition, she periodically updated the President and the Vice President for Finance and Administration to apprise each of them of the state of assessment at CSU-Pueblo and to solicit their ideas and support for centralizing assessment.

It became apparent that many academic programs were assessing systematically and effectively but that others had been episodic in their efforts. Without clear expectations for assessment, and with the absence of expertise and assistance, chairs felt confounded in their efforts to measure student learning. The APASL provided one-on-one and small group training for departments in response to need. She created an assessment handbook that provides basic information about academic program assessment, a question and answer brochure that addresses some faculty concerns about it, and an assessment plan checklist. These and other resources are posted on the assessment Web page that was created during this period. The CSU-Pueblo Assessment Web Page (http://www.colostate-pueblo.edu/assessment/Pages/default.aspx) centralizes and simplifies access to resources and data. In addition, a physical library containing relevant books and materials was established in the Provost's suite of offices.

The Coordinator of the Instructional Technology Center and the APASL designed and conducted training for the use of the campus assessment reporting system, PRISM, and concurrently, for core assessment concepts. This design gave faculty opportunities to learn about the basics of assessment while they learned how to apply them in the reporting system.

The APASL asked department chairs to revisit the SLOs for each of their programs to confirm that they are still relevant and accurately reflect the learning faculty expect of their students. The outcomes were updated as appropriate and submitted for publication in the next edition of the campus catalog. The APASL worked closely with the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHASS) throughout this process to target programs without professional accreditation.

The University Library shifted to an outcomes-based approach to their work in academic classrooms. The Library faculty developed SLOs for the orientations and specialized sessions they provide to students in courses and classrooms across campus. They use them to communicate with the classroom faculty about what they will cover for any class and what they expect students will learn as a consequence of the experience. This strategy created a

vehicle for on-going and close collaboration of Library faculty with classroom faculty to implement direct and indirect assessment measures of learning and to improve student learning.

General Education

General education assessment at CSU-Pueblo is the responsibility of the General Education Board (GEB). The GEB is composed of faculty from each college and the library, an ASG representative, the Registrar, a faculty senator, and the APASL, as the Provost's appointee. During the 2008-2009 academic year, members of the GEB launched a major three-phase project for maximizing participation in the development of specific, observable, measureable SLOs for general education. In the first phase, three focus groups, one each of community members, students, and faculty, were conducted to begin identifying and prioritizing student competencies for general education. Although the three groups worked independently, the GEB found a surprising level of agreement among them about the skills CSU-Pueblo graduates should possess.

The GEB used the SLOs initially developed by the focus groups to launch a Delphi process for the project's second phase. It adopted the Delphi technique as a way to assure that all faculty—not just those participating in the focus group—had multiple opportunities to participate in shaping and refining the outcomes. Throughout this iterative process each faculty member recommending modifications was contacted by the GEB Co-Chair for follow-up discussion, clarification, and input on how the change should be worded.

The third phase of the project consisted of presentations by GEB members during college meetings late in the Spring 2009 semester. The presentations solicited additional comments on the SLOs, reminded faculty of the general education assessment process, described the GEB's planned next steps, encouraged participation in assessing the new SLOs, and responded to questions.

In May 2009, the CSU-Pueblo Faculty Senate voted unanimously to accept the General Education SLOs. They are as follows:

Upon completion of general education courses, students will

- Use the English language to communicate with clarity, coherence and persuasiveness, demonstrating critical analysis, logic, precision and rhetorical awareness. (Communication)

- Identify, analyze and evaluate arguments and sources of information to make informed and logical judgments, to arrive at reasoned and meaningful arguments and positions, and to formulate and apply ideas to new contexts. (Critical Thinking)

- Articulate the nature of a multicultural society and recognize the role of aesthetic awareness, foreign language skills, cultural and social perspectives or human and institutional systems of the past and present. (Diversity and Social Responsibility)

- Clarify and evaluate their own values and ethical conduct and analyze the values and ethical conduct of others. (Personal Values and Ethics)

- Apply numeric, symbolic and geometric skills to formulate and solve quantitative problems. (Quantitative Reasoning)

- Apply the scientific method, laboratory techniques, mathematical principles and/or experimental design. (Scientific Reasoning)

- Identify and evaluate wellness principles, including mental, emotional and physical health, needed to make informed choices. (Wellness and Well-Being)

In June 2009, the GEB convened a group composed of faculty, the Registrar, and the APASL for a day-long work session to align the syllabi from general education courses to the newly developed SLOs. This mapping process helped the campus understand how well current general education courses meet the new SLOs. Participants also discussed how the general education curriculum might be made stronger and more cohesive, and what the role of advisors might be in communicating the importance of general education to students.

Building upon the level of support of faculty and the formal acceptance of the outcomes by the CSU-Pueblo Faculty Senate, the GEB began developing processes for assessing them that would similarly engage faculty. In April and May 2009, the Board reviewed the three externally developed tests sanctioned by the Voluntary System of Accountability, of which CSU-Pueblo is a member. The *Collegiate Learning Assessment*, the *Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress* (MAPP), and the *Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency* were reviewed and the content of each test was systematically aligned with the SLOs to determine which of them each measured and at what level. While none of the three tests are perfectly suited to measuring all the SLOs, the GEB initially determined that the MAPP was the best of the three for our campus.

Also in May, the Board convened a small group of faculty to review the MAPP and consider whether the information it produced (assuming it was selected and administered) could be used for program improvement. While

some faculty thought the test would be useful, the English Department faculty disagreed. They indicated that it would be difficult to use a multiple choice test such as the MAPP to evaluate composition skills. While the meeting concluded without a clear decision about adopting the MAPP, it provided a number of insights and useful questions for the future.

During the Spring 2009 semester, CSU-Pueblo responded to an invitation from the Tennessee Technological University (TTU) to participate in a train-the-trainer workshop for its Critical Thinking Assessment Test (CAT). While CSU-Pueblo funded travel expenses for the GEB Co-Chairs and the APASL to attend the training session, a small grant from TTU provided (through project funding from the National Science Foundation) 100 copies of the test and $2,500 to be used for faculty training when the test was implemented.

The CAT is unique among assessment tests of critical thinking in that local faculty review and score it, providing ample opportunities for faculty to see and understand student performance first-hand. Scoring sessions conclude with a discussion of how analogs of the CAT questions might be developed to create learning opportunities in classrooms, thereby closing the loop on assessment.

Academic Year 2009-2010

Campus

During the current academic year, the IEC continues its efforts to identify areas for campus improvement, and to establish and implement closing-the-loop processes to sustain them. Centralizing assessment and effectiveness information allows the IEC to make recommendations for improvement. A case in point developed when the IEC Student Entry and Exit Subcommittee identified issues related to improving student services and indirectly to student learning. Some of the recommendations—such as enhancing auxiliary services and processes—can be implemented with few or no additional resources. Other recommendations—such as adding capacity to the campus computer information system—require substantial funding. Meetings are scheduled for the current semester with the Provost, President, and Vice President of Finance and Administration to discuss how best to use improvement recommendations such as these.

In addition, the Planning and Program Review Subcommittee of the IEC worked closely with the Curriculum and Academic Programs (CAP) Board, a Committee of the Faculty Senate, to discuss the potential for changing

academic program review. Concurrent efforts in this area included 1) two pilot tests of outcomes-based program review and 2) a survey of program chairs. The outcomes-based program review pilots were conducted in coordination with the MA program in English and the undergraduate Foreign Languages program. The Chair of the IEC Planning and Program Review Subcommittee and the APASL worked closely with the chairs to conduct the program review. The survey queried academic program chairs about the utility of the current program review process and what changes would make the process more useful and effective. Results of these initiatives will be forwarded to the Provost and the CAP Board for discussion and action.

Other actions underway by the IEC are assessing the usefulness of the PRISM database system, developing a peer review process of assessment plans and reports, and organizing the ASG for involvement. Initial drafts of an institutional assessment plan (Appendix C) and assessment action plan (Appendix D) are being developed to further enhance efforts to organize and sustain campus improvement.

Academic Programs

The APASL is in on-going contact with all campus departments. She continues to meet with and support the assessment efforts of faculty and staff and to schedule meetings and training sessions as needed. Following the update of PRISM, she reviewed the assessment reports for the entire campus. In the future, the IEC and groups of faculty peers will be involved with this process as expertise continues to develop.

All departments have been asked to publish program student learning outcomes and update the assessment activities in the upcoming edition of the catalog. The APASL has also requested that assessment plans be submitted for inclusion in the assessment Web page by the end of the academic year. The review of these plans will be conducted by the IEC, the APASL, and groups of faculty peers.

The CSU-Pueblo climate of assessment is intensifying as we engage in more conversations about teaching and learning and as a consequence, a number of questions are arising. For example, some faculty were interested in exploring the relationship of academic program assessment and academic freedom, and after a meeting of faculty representatives from the campus chapter of the American Association of University Professors, a campus forum was created. *Does Assessment Compromise Academic Freedom?* was co-presented by the APASL and the Faculty

Senate President to explore the topic. Faculty attending engaged in a spirited discussion of assessment and its role in their classroom, program curriculum, department, and campus.

Also during the current academic year, the CSU-Pueblo Faculty Senate is developing a position statement on academic program assessment. Currently in draft form, the statement will describe the role and responsibilities of faculty for assessment and the expectation that the current faculty-driven approach be continued. The statement will provide clarity and set expectations for the future while averting potential misunderstanding between faculty and administration.

General Education

During his convocation speech at the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year, the President spoke to the faculty about the importance of general education and its assessment. He encouraged faculty to be involved in assessment and to support the GEB in the complex process of assessing our distributed model of assessment. This statement and his on-going efforts signal to the campus that we take seriously the assurance of student learning.

The co-chair of the GEB provided a general education update to faculty during convocation week. Faculty were reminded of the previous year's work related to general education assessment, discussed the activities planned for the future, and asked questions about the process. The co-chair is well-respected across campus and faculty share a sense of confidence about her work with general education.

Based on the evidence provided by the syllabus review, a Talking About Teaching (TAT) session in fall 2009 was dedicated to best practices in syllabus development in general education courses. (TAT sessions are offered by faculty for faculty throughout the academic year and address topics related to teaching and learning.) Faculty shared examples of their syllabi and discussed how they might be refined to enhance student learning.

Following extensive conversation among GEB members and faculty from across campus, the CAT was administered in September 2009 to a sample of 110 students representing junior and senior students from each of the colleges and the larger major areas of study among them. Later the same month, the GEB convened a group of faculty for an all-day training and scoring session. Faculty were provided with information about the CAT and with information on scoring the test as per instructions from the TTU train-the-trainer workshop. Faculty scored the test and then discussed their initial impressions of the test and of student performance. TTU later created reports from the

scores and returned a packet of information to campus. While discussing the tests results and reports in a November meeting, the group felt that some additional analyses (e.g., results for those who had completed general education requirements compared to those who had not) would be helpful so additional reports were ordered from TTU. The GEB plans to reconvene the group during the Spring 2010 semester to discuss the new reports, develop a plan for disseminating the results across campus, and design professional development opportunities associated with teaching and learning critical thinking skills.

An unintended consequence of administration of the CAT to measure the critical thinking skills general education outcome has been that some programs have expressed an interest in administering it to their majors. Biology and Exercise Science & Health Promotion faculty are discussing the feasibility of administering the CAT to evaluate their own students.

Another TAT session in the fall provided a forum for an early discussion about the CAT and about addressing critical thinking skills in the classroom. Faculty discussed the importance of these skills and brainstormed ideas to further enhance the curriculum.

A second measure of the general education SLOs is slated for the Spring 2010 semester when the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) will be administered to all first-year and senior students. The survey opened on February 1 and data collection will be on-going through March. The GEB will use the information as an indirect measure in its evaluation of student learning outcomes. Results of previous NSSE administrations may be found at the assessment Web site, but have not been distributed as widely as the results from the current administration will be.

The GEB is in the planning stages for the administration of the MAPP in the 2010-2011 academic year. Several decisions related to sampling and administration must be made before the MAPP is implemented.

Student Life

The Student Life Division includes residence life, student activities, student government, health services, recreation center, counseling services, career services, student diversity and cultural programs, student conduct, student support services, and upward bound programs. A new Dean of Student Life was hired approximately two years ago, and he quickly began the process of introducing and implementing a culture of assessment within the

Division. With the increased enrollment and rapid expansion of residence halls, initial assessment activities were focused on the assessment and evaluation of residence life programs and services. After completing an internal review process using national standards, the process moved to an external evaluation process that will be completed at the end of the current academic year.

The position of Associate Dean of Student Life, which was created and filled during the Fall 2009 semester, is responsible for developing and implementing a division-wide assessment process focusing on assessment of student learning outcomes for each Student Life department. The Student Life Division will also develop a program review process that includes internal and external evaluation and measurement standards and practices. The results will be used in the Division's planning processes and integrated in the IEC's centralized effectiveness and planning activities.

Finance and Administration

Finance and Administration (F & A) includes business and student financial services, budget, payroll, human resources, facilities management including construction and planning, law enforcement and safety, and auxiliary services. Through the operation of these functional areas, it provides services to students that directly (e.g., student financial aid, cashiering, student employment, and student accounts receivable) or indirectly (e.g., campus grounds and buildings, environmental health and safety, and parking) impact their experience, and thus their success, at CSU-Pueblo.

Significant facility improvements and additions have been made over the past four years to increase recreational and learning space for students. These include completed capital renovation of the Health, Physical Education and Recreation building which houses academic and athletic programs as well as space for intercollegiate competitive athletic programs; completed construction of an outdoor general purpose Student Recreational Field and a new Student Recreation Center; completed construction of a football stadium, track & field events venues, and a Field House to support intercollegiate competitive athletic programs; completed remodel of common spaces in the Psychology Building where General Education courses are offered; and the continued capital renovation and expansion of the University Library, scheduled for completion in Spring 2011.

The University has also sought to make administration of the financial aspect of the student experience less burdensome and thus intrusive to the learning experience. Specific efforts include implementing on-line, web-based financial aid application, student employment hiring and timesheet processes, student account billing, credit card and ACH payment of student bills, and bookstore purchasing. We moved to the Federal Direct Loan Program and direct deposit to student accounts to provide more timely delivery of student loan proceeds and work-study earnings.

F & A processes are continually reviewed to find opportunities to improve levels of service. F & A is represented on the IEC, but in the future the Committee will look for additional and deeper ways to involve it in its work of centralizing and integrating improvement on campus.

Next Steps

Efforts at the campus, academic program, and general education levels will continue. We anticipate that we will be challenged to close-the-loop on our assessment activities, just as many other campuses are. However, we are dedicated to thinking about assessment as an internally-driven process that is tied to our core values rather than one that is mandated by professional or regional accreditors. We believe that this approach will help us sustain our efforts and to use assessment in authentic and meaningful ways. If we can achieve that, we expect that assessment will become a natural part of the way we do business at CSU-Pueblo.

The IEC plans to continue to evaluate, synthesize, and integrate effectiveness information, an area in which the HLC CEs found us most in need of improvement. The IEC will develop processes that will result in a stream of information flowing across campus and up to campus decision-makers. One goal the IEC hopes to accomplish in the next year is to initiate a written plan for centralizing and using information in a systematic way to inform the strategic plan and budgetary decisions. It will examine ways to involve more faculty and staff in its processes as they mature over time. Members of the IEC are, by the nature of their involvement in it, under-going professional development which they will in turn apply to their own departments and functional areas. This cascade effect will enhance the developing culture of assessment and accountability throughout campus. We also anticipate that it will enhance the *esprit de corps* as we learn to work outside our traditional functional areas to make our campus a great place to teach and learn.

Academic program assessment will become more systematic in its assessment processes. The APASL will continue to monitor assessment and provide support and training where appropriate. The IEC Undergraduate Subcommittee will explore efficient ways to develop expertise among faculty and involve more of them over time.

The GEB and the APASL developed an initial draft assessment plan for general education that will be refined and updated. Plans for professional development for faculty related to teaching CT skills in general education and the majors are underway. Based on the evidence gathered to date, our students are performing at a level on average with students in other institutions, but we believe it important to maximize CT among our students to better prepare them for work and graduate school. In addition, the GEB will administer the MAPP and develop a plan for using the information to improve general education.

Conclusion

CSU-Pueblo has engaged in a number of academic program and campus effectiveness activities in the past few years that are contributing to our understanding of teaching and learning on our campus. We are optimistic that our next decennial self-study will reflect a mature, authentic assessment process that centralizes and uses the information these activities generate to inform the direction of our campus.

Appendix A

May 2008 Assessment Team Report to the Provost

Report of the Spring 2008 Assessment Team

to

Dr. Russ Meyer, Provost

by

Charles Zeis

May 15, 2008

Members of the spring, 2008 Assessment Team:

Bernard A. Arogyaswamy, Judy M. Baca, Wade H. Bailey, Courtney Bruch, David L. Dillon, Carol P. Foust, Joe Franta, Jane M. Fraser, Vicky Hansen, Bruce N. Lundberg, Leasher D. (Dennis) Madrid, Wayne C. Martinez, Jenny A. Piazza, Jonathan A. Poritz, Cathi J. Robbe, Jack A. Seilheimer, Michael W. Wakefield, Marta J. Wallin, Brian Vandenheuvel, and Charles Zeis.

I. Introduction

Provost Russ Meyer gave his charge to the Committee on March 6, 2008. He reminded us that the Core Mission of the University is "To Serve Students" and asked us to keep this in mind as we move through the process of creating a centralized University Assessment Program. A mechanism for sharing among the academic programs engaged in the Assessment Program should be part of the process of assessment that should lead to program changes resulting from our continuous assessment and improvement.

The Provost wants the Committee to consider "on-line assessment", and to plan to centralize the oversight of assessment of all academic programs. And each academic program should be using their assessment of student success to make programmatic changes leading to improvement of learning. (This is called "closing the loop".) A set of generic learning goals that apply university-wide across disciplines is needed. A starting point is to identify what we would like to see all students know and be able to do.

Another original goal was to examine certain departmental assessment practices, and critique them. The idea would be to guide departments toward better assessment. The committee discussed this and decided that would not be sensible, for the following reasons.

1. Although there were several committee members with a lot of assessment experience, none felt qualified to judge assessment in another discipline.

2. The committee feels this "judgment" would be viewed unfavorably by faculty members in departments being judged. It would not generate good will, and would be considered elitist. (Call this the problem of "jurisdiction".)

3. A committee attempted a similar approach in the past, under the very capable leadership of Dr. Bud Allen. It was unsuccessful.

The committee set out to find a way to bring about successful assessment at CSU-Pueblo. It needs to satisfy the Higher Learning Commission precepts that were viewed as deficient in the North central Association accreditation of spring, 2007.

II. HLC List of Deficiencies

The deficiencies of today's programs campus-wide, as described by HLC during NCA accreditation are (See appendix 1: Deficiencies Reported by HLC …):

a. "there is little if any coordination"
b. need to "improve student learning"
c. need to "foster program improvement"
d. expand "measures and data collection points so that feedback loops can be used to affect programmatic changes…"
e. "The (HLC) team also recommends that someone or a committee be responsible for the coordination of all campus wide assessment programs. Normally, this responsibility is housed in the office of the vice president."
f. Informally, the CSU-Pueblo Self-Study team heard that the review teams look for a consistent culture of assessment across the campus.

The HLC charge is to address these, and report back to HLC by spring, 2010.

III. Steps Toward a Plan

The committee decided to gather information from as many departments as possible on campus, to find out what works and where deficiencies exist, and to formulate a plan that will rectify the above deficiencies and result in a successful system campus-wide by February, 2010.

The ultimate goal of the committee is: To bring about an assessment process that will successfully foster program improvement and a culture of assessment by 2010, and that will serve our students into the future.

The committee decided to perform the following things to achieve a plan.

1. To find out what HLC considers as good practices and criteria for successful assessment.

2. To identify, at least initially, common learning goals that are being used across the campus at present.

3. To determine strategies and practices which are successful at CSU-Pueblo.

4. To identify problems that departments currently encounter regarding successful assessment.

5. To gather and analyze data from departments that will tell us how to organize assessment activities at CSU-Pueblo, and where effort is most needed.

6. To identify what things are foreseen as necessary to solve the deficiencies listed.

7. To determine a realistic campus organizational structure that will result in successful assessment.

8. To delineate campus relationships and resources necessary for success.

9. To map out rough timelines for the plan to be carried out.

IV. What the Higher Learning Commission Considers as Good Practice

Appendix 2 contains documentation from the Higher Learning Commission for good practice. It can be seen that it is very general. And the methods are not characterized with specificity. It must achieve institutional and discipline-specific learning goals, it must be measured, it must "close the loop", and all faculty members across campus must be involved.

The HLC Review Team identified, formally or informally, programs that were exhibiting successful assessment. (Remember that at present, successful departments are not centrally coordinated, and General Education has not yet been successful. So it cannot be said that any department is "off-the-hook" regarding assessment needs.) They are roughly those departments that have listed coordinators in appendix 5. These departments roughly correspond to those with external discipline-specific accreditation agencies such as AACSB, ABET, etc.

V. Common Learning Goals

Teacher Education, Exercise Science, Health Promotion, and Recreation, Engineering, Hasan School of Business, Art, Nursing, and the Library brought in examples of learning goals. The committee discussed a number of these, and concluded that the following learning goals should be common goals. They are:

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving

Reading Competency

Communication/Collaboration Skills, including written and oral communication, and communication that utilizes technology

Diversity/International Outlook and Awareness/Cultural Competence

Creativity/Innovation

Citizenship

Ethical Awareness and Social Responsibility

Leadership/Teamwork skills

Life Long Learning Skills

Quantitative Reasoning

Scientific Awareness

These common learning goals should be viewed as a starting set, to be finalized later by the new CSU-Pueblo Assessment Board.

VI. Practices That Are Successful at CSU-Pueblo

Professional accreditation requirements work well for some. (HLC told us that too.)

The use of program beginning, intermediate, and capstone exams works well for Nursing.

Capstone projects with writing/research components work well for some, including Psychology.

Electronic portfolios that include class inputs work for some, including Education.

Top-down focus where assessment is highlighted in faculty meetings works for some, including HSB.

Having an assessment coordinator who gets training and resources, including release time, to perform the job is working for HSB. HSB also used re-organization of faculty/staff to meet new priorities.

VII. Problems which Departments Currently Encounter

Administrative oversight is lacking.

Although many departments do considerable assessment, it lacks the connection with program improvement. "Closing the loop" for assessment is lacking.

Assessment activities tend to be haphazard. They need to be an ongoing part of departmental processes.

Consistency in accomplishment of outcomes is seen as a problem.

ASG Involvement in Assessment Goals and Learning Outcomes is lacking.

Lack of Measurement Processes that Close the Loop – i.e., that bring about demonstrable program and teaching improvement – are problematic.

Lack of Resources for the assessment coordinators, the centralized process, and the computer/web support were reported.

VIII. Gather and Analyze Data from Departments

The committee decided to administer a survey of department chairs to gain awareness of how they perceive their levels of expertise and success with assessment. A survey instrument was developed. (See appendix 3.)

Fourteen departments responded to the survey. Results are as follows.

a. 10 of 14 (71%) programs are coordinated by their chairs.

b. 8 of 14 (57%) programs have external accreditation agencies. (This speaks to the fact that those programs with external accreditation respond in greater numbers. All accredited programs that I know of responded, whereas some non-accredited ones did not.)

c. 6 of 8 (75%) accredited programs received "needs no changes" in their last review.

d. 100% of programs reported make changes to their programs as a result of assessment results.

e. 9 of 14 (64%) of programs have demonstrated improvement to student learning as a result of assessment results.

f. 3 of 11 (27%) programs that have General Education assess them separately.

g. 100% of programs reported their own faculty are involved in defining learning outcomes.

h. 4 of 14 (29%) of programs reported Other Faculty are involved in defining learning outcomes.

i. 10 of 14 (71%) of programs reported Students are involved in defining learning outcomes.

j. 9 of 14 (64 %%) of programs reported Advisory Groups are involved in defining learning outcomes.

The following table gives averages for attitudes regarding assessment aspects.

The scale is 1 ……. 2 ……. 3 ……. 4 ……. 5

strongly agree ……..strongly disagree

	goals defined	faculty all in	outcomes measured	results useful	learning improved	faculty embrace	priority dean	have experts	sufficient resources
avg	1.36	1.57	1.71	1.42	2.07	2.36	1.83	1.77	3.28

Remember that we are hearing from all departments that are doing good assessment, and some that are not doing it are not responding to the survey. Given this, we are concluding that assessment activities are fairly successful among the individual respondents. The areas of least agreement are demonstrated learning improvement, full faculty embracement, and resources. Having adequate resources is by far the most disagreeable statement. By and large, the chairs feel they have the expertise in their departments. However, in many cases, they do not feel they have sufficient resources.

IX. What things are foreseen as necessary for successful assessment?

1. Assessment Coordinators

Departments should have designated individuals managing assessment. We call these individuals assessment coordinators.

Many departments are successfully satisfying the accreditation standards for assessment in their disciplines. Examples are Exercise Science and Health Promotion, Nursing, Engineering, Teacher Education Program, and the Hasan School of Business. (All three departments are coordinated together in Hasan.)

There are two successful coordinator models:

a. The department chair coordinates the assessment activities (71% at present).

b. A faculty member acts as the designated assessment specialist. They receive special training and generally need release time for success.

The committee wants to allow either model, depending on the desires and needs of the department. The committee also wants to not force successful departments at present to change their mode of operation. To force a new arrangement on successful programs would be unfair.

Small departments will need to join together with related departments. For example, Physics will need to join together with one or more other science departments.

2. A Central Assessment Person, called the University Assessment Coordinator

The HLC reported that central coordination was a major problem, in no uncertain terms. The committee recommended that an organizational focal point for all campus assessment activities be created. It must

a. support, advise, and coordinate the coordinators and their departments, and

b. manage (i.e. oversee) and coordinate the assessment data system.

This person will be trained to be able to provide assessment expertise that can be called upon when support and advisement is needed by departments. This person will work with the Institutional Research director, and will have an association with a contact person in Information Technology Services.

3. A CSU-Pueblo Assessment Board

Lacking a university-wide assessment director, an entity is needed that will direct and coordinate assessment activities. To underscore the importance of assessment at CSU-Pueblo, and to insure the culture of assessment is established and maintained, a faculty and staff board is needed. It needs to be formed as follows:

a. It will join with the university coordinator as a focal point for all campus assessment activities.

b. It will contain the University Assessment Coordinator.

c. It will report to the Faculty Senate as well as the Provost.

d. It will serve as support and coordination for departmental assessment activities. (This will mitigate the problem of "jurisdiction" in item 2 of section I.)

e. It will oversee coordination of the assessment data system.

f. Because most departments feel they have expertise, but not resources, to carry out successful assessment, some coordinators will need new training.

g. When faculty members take on the coordinating role, they will usually need release time. This issue should be discussed in the Dean's Council. (This is discussed in the section on Relationships and Resources.)

h. It will contain an Associated Students Government (ASG) representative.

i. It will contain a GenEd as well as a Continuing Education (ConEd) representative.

X. A Realistic Campus Assessment Organizational Structure

Appendix 5 depicts a rough, tentative, organizational chart of assessment for CSU-Pueblo that the committee recommends. It contains "coordinators" for combinations of departments. Coordinators are responsible to see that assessment is implemented; measurements are taken, managed, and reported; and the loops are closed, including tracking improvement in student learning. The following table depicts the big picture of assessment entities. (Microsoft software is incapable of depicting the entire Excel table here.)

Assessment Coordinator	College CEEPS	Assessment Entities (Combinations of departments)
1	Jane Fraser, chair	Engineering/Engr Tech/AIM
2	Carol Foust, chair	Exercise Science, …
3	Karen de la Cruz, fac	Nursing
4	Victoria Marquesen, assoc dean	Teacher Education
	Hasan School	
5	Mike Wakefield, fac	Acctg-Fin/Mgmt-Mktg/CIS
	Library	
6	Courtney Bruch, fac	Library
	Science/Math	
7	to be named	Biology/Chemistry/Math-Physics
	CHASS	
8	to be named	Art/Music/MassComm
9	to be named	Engl-Foreign-SpCom/Hist-PoliSci-Phil-Geog
10	to be named	Psych/SocialWk/Socio-Anthro-SocSci
	Other Assessment Entities	
11	to be named	GenEd Assessment
12	to be named	ConEd Assessment

Decisions will have to be made to assign coordinators that are listed as "to be named". The appendix 5 chart also contains "contact" faculty members, who are at present active in the assessment process. They may or may not end up in a coordinating role. They are, at present, coordinating their departmental assessment.

Notice the coordinators are well in place in CEEPS, the Hasan School, and the Library. These correspond to departments that HLC noted, formally or informally, have successful assessment processes in place. This is not to say that others are inadequate. Most of the departments that report to outside, discipline-specific assessment agencies are meeting their assessment obligations.

In CEEPS, Engineering Technology and AIM remain to be coordinated. We are suggesting that they can naturally be coordinated with Engineering without interrupting the successful assessment process that is going on there.

Notice that General Education and Continuing Education also need to have coordinators. The GenEd coordinator will take a large role on the General Education Board, and on Faculty Senate.

The university-wide assessment coordinator will be a part of the Assessment Board. It would be efficient if the university-wide coordinator, the General Education Board assessment contact, and the Faculty Senate representative for assessment were the same person.

The CSU-Pueblo Assessment Board will contain the 12 coordinators, the university assessment coordinator (if not already a Board coordinator), the Faculty Senate representative (if not already a Board coordinator), the GenEd representative, the Continuing education representative (if not already a Board coordinator), and the ASG representative.

CSU-Pueblo Assessment Board – 16 positions
1 University-wide Assessment Coordinator (which may be one of the entity coordinators) 12 coordinators for entities, including a GenEd entity and a ConEd entity A Faculty Senate representative A General Education Board representative (may be same as Faculty Senate rep) A Continuing Education representative An Associated Students Government representative

The last section of this document will give a rough timetable for implementation of the Assessment Board.

XI. Relationships and Resources

1. Resources for Coordinators

The history of our existing assessment coordinators for departments or combinations of departments is long and complicated. In appendix 6, I briefly discuss that of the Hasan School.

Again, the two models CSU-Pueblo uses for assessment are a. Chair (or Associate Dean or other administrative position), and b. Faculty member.

It is clear that the chairs are ultimately responsible for assessment in their departments. Duties, expectations, and financial treatment of chairs at this university are diverse. Because of this, the committee cannot formulate a rule for relationships between administration and chairs, deans, associate deans, and other administrators.

For assessment coordinators who are faculty members, the committee sees that:

a. Other service obligations must be minimal at most.

b. There should be some resource/release consideration for most of them.

c. Principles a. and b. above apply even more strongly to the University Assessment Coordinator.

Since the resources generally come from the programs being assessed, the Dean's Council, in conjunction with chairs, should work out a plan for these resources.

Looking at the Assessment Board organizational chart, it appears there will be between zero and five new faculty coordinators, and a university-wide assessment coordinator. It seems the university is about halfway complete regarding coordinators.

2. Data Reporting and Computer Assistance

Assessment data for existing successful programs is managed within departments and colleges. The same will be true for new entities, which will be managed by the assessment coordinators. The university assessment coordinator will manage the composite data, in a central data system. This may be the present web-based system, or another system. (That can be decided in the coming year.)

The university assessment coordinator will need computer assistance. Both the Institutional Research Director and a person from Information Technology Services should be assigned to work with the university assessment coordinator to insure data integrity.

3. Strategies for Departments That Are Not Yet Achieving "Closing the Loop" and "Demonstrated Improvements in Student Learning"

Mike Wakefield lists 10 general steps advocated in many conferences and workshops on assessment. They also follow the Alverno model that he mentions, and about which we had presentations in January 2008. The steps are discussed in appendix 7, and are as follows.

Startup phase

1. Establish learning goals. There is wisdom and simple elegance in focusing on a few broad goals, perhaps 4-6. This phase should include input from several focus groups of multiple stakeholders.
2. Re-evaluate university mission to determine congruence between learning goals and objectives stated in mission. Adjust mission to ensure alignment.
3. Create rubric for overall learning goals. These rubrics will be further refined for specific department and even specific course objectives.
4. Map current syllabi objectives into learning goals. Ask departments to have faculty brainstorm sessions to determine what they currently do in the classroom that supports learning goals, even if those activities are not clearly articulated in their syllabi.
5. Create a task force to identify activities or courses that may be used to fill any gaps in learning objectives.
6. Develop measurement instruments and course/activity rubrics.

7. Teach courses, engage in activities, collect data using measurement instruments, and apply rubrics.

Closing-the-loop phase

8. Compile data from measurement instruments and give as feedback to faculty. Ask faculty to interpret data, and develop their own action plan for the next teaching cycle.

9. Implement action plan, collect data, and again return to faculty. Ask them to compare 1st and 2nd assessments, interpret, and develop next action plan. Later cycles can result in longitudinal records.

10. Repeat steps 7-9 forever

XII. Rough Timelines for Implementation

June, 2008	Provost meets with Chairs to assess plan and discuss appointment of coordinators, including University assessment Coordinator.
June, 2008	Initial appointments of coordinators are made. Provost appoints University Assessment Coordinator.
July, 2008	University Assessment Coordinator plans Fall Convocation activity for coordinators.
Fall Convocation	CSU-Pueblo Assessment Board participate in convocation activity, and meets for the first time. UAB contacts Faculty Senate Executive Committee to discuss the relationship. UAB plans brown bag meetings for fall, 2008. UAB plans assessment conference activities.
September, 2008	Univ. Assess. Coordinator, et al, attend Faculty Senate meeting. UAB meets to discuss common learning outcomes. Each coordinator reports on faculty participation in their entity.
October, 2008	Each coordinator reports plan for assessment activities for 2008-9 for their entity.
…	Assessment status is reported to Faculty Senate.
December, 2008	All departments are have reported learning goals, and have a plan to implement measures in their programs in spring, 2009.
…	Assessment status is reported to Faculty Senate.
May, 2009	At least one department in each unit is closing the loop – reporting data from their process to their faculty.
…	All departments are implementing measures for their programs.
August, 2009	The plan is in place to get follow-up data to assess the above programs, and to be taking action by fall, 2009.
…	Assessment status is reported to Faculty Senate.
December, 2009	All coordinating units have some departments that have satisfied all steps in the assessment process. The rest of the departments on campus have a plan to complete their processes.

The above plan is a rough guideline. It would achieve the goals of the HLC by the deadline they gave to report to them – February, 2010.

The goal is not to have achieved complete finished-product assessment for all departments that currently have not yet done so, but rather to have some programs complete in each coordinating unit by then, and to have a system that is fully coordinated across the campus, and that is embedded in all faculty processes.

The culture of assessment will take place as a byproduct of the above.

XIII. Some Conclusions

In discussion with the Higher Learning Commission during their visit in spring, 2007, we got some feedback about how schools succeed with assessment. Schools with resources hire a professional assessment director, with support staff. If there is competence in their staff, and sufficient support and motivation from all concerned, it succeeds.

Some schools cannot afford, financially or politically, those luxuries. Those schools succeed in a myriad of different ways. A common theme for success is the desire and commitment of both faculty and administration.

It is clear our faculty and administration are committed to student learning. The HLC reported good results in that matter.

It is clear our faculty and administration have succeeded in many cases with assessment that had to satisfy stringent standards of other accrediting agencies, even though they have not been centrally organized across the campus. Those programs were mentioned by HLC and in this report. In fact, with proper diligence, we surmise the university is almost halfway home regarding having a complete assessment program university wide.

The model described in this document is the committee's best effort to achieve a top-notch assessment program for universities with our mission and resources. The CSU-Pueblo Assessment Board, with a University Assessment Coordinator, gives us the highest chance for overcoming the HLC's stated shortcomings – central coordination, improvement in programs and student learning, data collection and feedback loops to support this, a set of people with a high-level reporting structure who are responsible for assessment, and a consistent culture of assessment throughout the campus.

If conscientiously implemented, this model should attain for the university a level of learning second to none in our region.

Members of the spring, 2008 Assessment Team are : Bernard A. Arogyaswamy, Judy M. Baca, Wade H. Bailey, Courtney Bruch, David L. Dillon, Carol P. Foust, Joe Franta, Jane M. Fraser, Vicky Hansen, Bruce N. Lundberg, Leasher D. (Dennis) Madrid, Wayne C. Martinez, Jenny A. Piazza, Jonathan A. Poritz, Cathi J. Robbe, Jack A. Seilheimer, Michael W. Wakefield, Marta J. Wallin, Brian Vandenheuvel, and Charles Zeis.

List of Appendices

appendix 1: Deficiencies reported in the "Assurance" section and the "Advancement" section of HLC report … April 13, 2007. (Word for Windows)

appendix 2: Assessment Principles from the Higher Learning Commission … From HLC "A Guide for Institutions and Evaluators" … (Word for Windows)

appendix 3: CSU-Pueblo Assessment Team Survey of Chairs (Word for Windows)

appendix 4: Data Results from the Survey of Chairs (Excel, first worksheet)

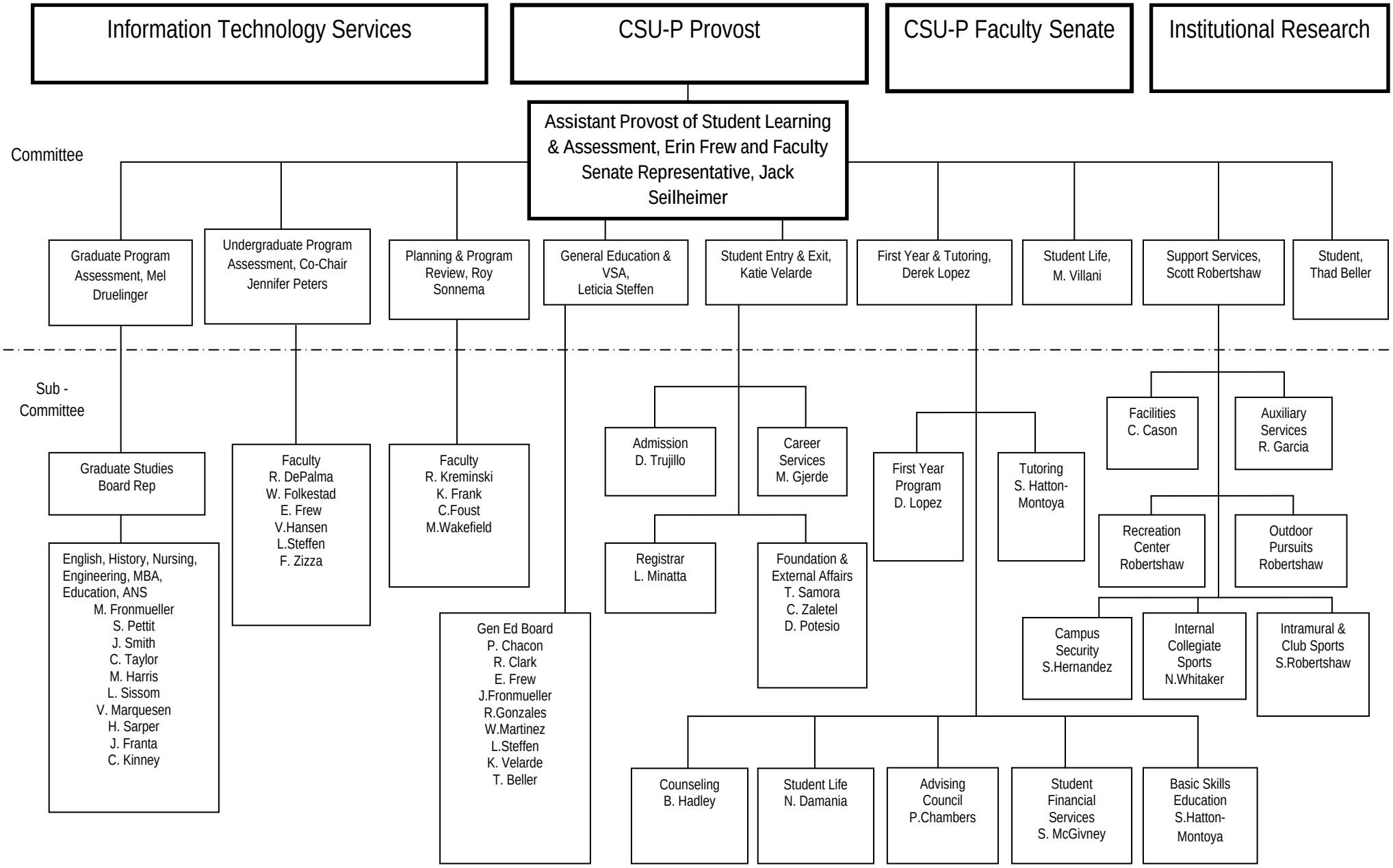
appendix 5: CSU-Pueblo Assessment Board (tentative assessment organizational structure) (Excel , second worksheet)

appendix 6: Zeis thinking-out-loud: the history of HSB's coordinator 01Apr08 (Word for Windows)

appendix 7: A summary of points of discussion among CSU-Pueblo personnel after the "Assessment as Learning" seminar presented at CSU-Pueblo 1/10/08, and suggested action plan for a CSU-Pueblo learning-driven assessment program. (Word for Windows)

Appendix B

Institutional Effectiveness Committee Functional Chart



Appendix C

Institutional Assessment Plan

DRAFT

Colorado State University-Pueblo
Institutional Assessment Plan

Erin J. Frew
Assistant Provost for Assessment & Student Learning
Last Update: February 2010

For more information about assessment please contact:

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Introduction

The purpose of the Assessment Plan is to describe the institutional, academic program, and general education assessment processes at Colorado State University-Pueblo (CSU-Pueblo) and the connection of these processes to our mission statement. It describes the campus plan for the on-going efforts of faculty, staff, and students to assure that our students graduate with the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for work and continued learning. It outlines the timeframe for assessment and the role of faculty and staff in assuring that assessment processes are effective and efficient.

The framework for creating and sustaining a culture of assessment at CSU-Pueblo is adapted from the following *Principles of Good Practices* published by the American Association of Higher Education in 1996:

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.
2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.
3. Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.
4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
5. Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.
6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.
7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.
8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.
9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.

Our philosophy values academic assessment as an on-going process driven by faculty but with involvement of the entire campus and the community. We value student learning and consequently, we value the opportunities for improvement and open discussion created by assessment.

Recent History of Assessment at CSU-Pueblo

Assessment is not new at CSU-Pueblo. The campus has been engaging in some form of assessment periodically for the past several years. However, upon receiving feedback from the Higher Learning Commission Consultant-Evaluators in 2007, it was clear we could do more to establish and consistently integrate assessment and in turn, use our improved understanding of students' experiences and learning to inform the strategic planning processes that were becoming central to our campus.

In 2008, the General Education Board (GEB) implemented a multi-phase process of developing student learning outcomes (SLOs) which culminated in their unanimous acceptance by the CSU-Pueblo Faculty Senate in May 2009. In the fall of 2009 the GEB began assessing one of the most important of these outcomes, critical thinking skills, informing campus about the results, and designing faculty training to close the loop on the initial findings. The efforts of the GEB continued throughout the 2009-2010 academic year as it selected a test endorsed by the Voluntary System of Accountability, and participated in the administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement.

Likewise, academic programs began, as the first step in renewing their assessment processes, reviewing and revising their student learning outcomes in 2008. Departments connected their programs' SLOs with the mission of

their school and with that of the university to assure that assessment is integrated and informs the on-going processes of strategic planning at the university level. Assessment processes were also revisited at this time.

Institutional Assessment

During the Spring 2009 Semester, the CSU-Pueblo Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) was formed. The IEC is charged by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs with providing leadership for the overall direction and support of university and academic program effectiveness, assessment, and improvement. Specifically, works with the Assistant Provost for Assessment and Student Learning (APASL) to:

- Develop an institutional effectiveness plan and timeline that is aligned with the mission statement and strategic plan of the campus.
- Review and analyze institutional effectiveness indicators including student learning outcomes assessment.
- Review results and reports from the academic departments and the General Education Board, and make recommendations for continuous improvement on campus.
- Provide recommendations to the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs for budgeting and strategic planning based on the results of effectiveness processes.
- Oversee assessment and evaluation activities across campus to assure they result in integrated, meaningful, and sustained campus and program improvement.
- Communicate the results of institutional effectiveness efforts to appropriate campus and external stakeholders to promote accountability and transparency.
- Explore the potential for integrating assessment and program review processes to maximize efficiency, avoid redundancies and strengthen teaching and learning.
- Recommend changes to the university's reporting strategies and feedback processes as appropriate.
- Determine how faculty activities related to assessment can be used in promotion and tenure, and develop processes to recognize and reward faculty and departments for making meaningful contributions to assessment efforts.
- Serve as a resource for institutional effectiveness efforts on campus.

The scope of the IEC goes beyond academics to integrate activities and centralize functional areas across campus touching on or contributing to student learning. These areas include, for example, student life, facilities, outdoor programs, admissions, and counseling. The form and function of the IEC continues to evolve as it matures in its work. The APASL and a faculty member co-chair the IEC. Together they provide support and organization for the varied activities of the subcommittees and assure that those activities are integrated, coordinated, documented, and shared.

The campus assessment Web site (http://www.colostate-pueblo.edu/assessment/Pages/default.aspx) is used for posting and sharing general education, program, and institutional assessment information. It also offers a variety of resources developed by our campus and hyperlinks to other resources available through national organizations and assessment centers at other campuses.

Assessment and effectiveness information is included in the CSU-Pueblo campus strategic planning and budgeting process to assure that it informs decision-making and resource allocation. Embedding assessment in the on-going business of campus helps achieve our mission and continuously improve the programs and services we offer.

Academic Program Assessment

Graduate and undergraduate program assessment is conducted at the department level by its faculty members. Faculty establish student learning outcomes for each program, design assessment methods to evaluate them, and use the information generated to improve the program. Each department is expected to use the PRISM assessment

software system to report assessment results. Departments submit assessment plans and annual reports to the IEC for review and comment. The IEC provides feedback and makes recommendations for change.

The APASL acts as an internal consultant to faculty, coordinating assessment efforts across campus, assuring that the information generated is effectively disseminated and used, and offering resources and assistance to faculty and staff.

All CSU-Pueblo academic units are expected to

- Publish an assessment plan for each academic program that consists of 1) the SLOs for that program, 2) a curriculum map aligning the curriculum with the SLOs, 3) the timeline and method for assessing each of the outcomes, 4) a description of who will be responsible for accomplishing the plan and who will be involved in the assessment process, and 5) a description of how the assessment information will be used and by whom.
- Engage in on-going academic program assessment processes to determine whether their students are learning the outcomes faculty have established.
- Review and publish information resulting from their assessment processes to determine whether program changes should be made or whether program successes should be celebrated.
- Make program changes that improve student learning.
- Include outcomes assessment results as part of the program review and planning process.

Tentative academic program assessment calendar

Action	Date	Responsible Party/Parties	Notes
Academic programs submit assessment plans	May 2010, and on-going as revisions are made	Deans, department chairs, IEC	Each academic department designs assessment plans for its programs based on a timeline that evaluates all student learning outcomes within no more than four years
Academic programs submit assessment reports via PRISM	October of each year	Deans, department chairs, IEC	Each academic department reports its assessment activities for the previous academic year, including how it has used assessment information to improve its programs
Academic programs receive feedback on their plans and reports	March of each year	IEC	The IEC and APASL will also use the feedback to design relevant professional development activities
Departments and campus use assessment information to allocate budgets, inform enrollment management, strategic planning, and program review	On-going and every 6 years	Deans, department chairs, IEC	The IEC is piloting 1) the use of outcomes-based program review that would enhance the utilization of assessment information in planning and 2) a feedback loop for campus-level decision-makers

General Education Assessment

In May 2009, the CSU-Pueblo Faculty Senate voted unanimously to accept the General Education SLOs. The SLOs follow:

Upon completion of general education courses, students will

- Use the English language to communicate with clarity, coherence and persuasiveness, demonstrating critical analysis, logic, precision and rhetorical awareness. (Communication)

- Identify, analyze and evaluate arguments and sources of information to make informed and logical judgments, to arrive at reasoned and meaningful arguments and positions, and to formulate and apply ideas to new contexts. (Critical Thinking)
- Articulate the nature of a multicultural society and recognize the role of aesthetic awareness, foreign language skills, cultural and social perspectives or human and institutional systems of the past and present. (Diversity and Social Responsibility)

- Clarify and evaluate their own values and ethical conduct and analyze the values and ethical conduct of others. (Personal Values and Ethics)

- Apply numeric, symbolic and geometric skills to formulate and solve quantitative problems. (Quantitative Reasoning)

- Apply the scientific method, laboratory techniques, mathematical principles and/or experimental design. (Scientific Reasoning)

- Identify and evaluate wellness principles, including mental, emotional and physical health, needed to make informed choices. (Wellness and Well-Being)

Assessment of the general education SLOs is the responsibility of the GEB, a committee of the CSU-Pueblo Faculty Senate. The general education assessment plan uses a staggered timeline for assuring that all the outcomes are evaluated every three years.

General Education SLO Evaluation

Measures/ Process	General Education Student Learning Outcomes							
	Communication	Critical Thinking	Diversity & Social Responsibility	Personal Values & Ethics*	Quantitative Reasoning	Scientific Reasoning	Wellness & Wellbeing*	Timeline
Indirect:								
NSSE	1.b, 1.c, 1.d, 1.e, 11.c, 11.d	1.d, 1.i, 6.e, 6.f, 11.e, 11.m	1.e, 1.k, 1.u, 1.v, 6.a, 6.e, 7.b, 7.e, 7.f, 9.d, 10.c, 11.i, 11.l, 11.o	6.d, 6.e, 11.k, 11.n	11.f		6.b, 6.c, 11.p	Administered during the Spring Semester: 2003, 2005, 2008, 2010 and then every three years (as required by VSA) 2013, 2016, 2019
CSU-Pueblo Alumni Survey	4.a, 4.b, 4.c, 4.e,	4.f, 4.g, 4.h,	4.k, 4.m, 4.n,		4.d,	4.i, 4.p,	4.o	Each year
CSU-Pueblo Graduation Survey	40, 41	45,	49, 50, 51,53	48	44, 46	54	52	Each year
Direct:								
MAPP	X	X	X		X	X		Administer every 3 years, Fall and Spring Semester (as required by VSA) 2010-2011, 2013-2014, 2016-2017, 2019-2020
CAT	X	X			X	X		Administered Fall 2009 Semester, then other Spring Semesters (with MAPP) 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019

*SLOs Personal Values & Ethics and Wellness & Wellbeing may need additional measures

Administration Schedule for General Education

Assessment Tool	Administration
NSSE	Spring 2003, 2005, 2008, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019
CSU-Pueblo Alumni Survey	Each year
CSU-Pueblo Graduation Survey	Each year
Critical Thinking Skills Assessment Test (CAT)	Fall 2009, and then Spring 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019
MAPP	Fall 2010 (first-year students) & Spring 2011 (seniors), Fall 2013 & Spring 2014, Fall 2016 & Spring 2017, Fall 2019 & Spring 2020

Student Life Assessment

An assessment plan for Student Life is currently under development. In December 2009, the new position of Assistant Dean of Student Life was created and filled. The Assistant Dean is responsible for assessing the various functional areas of student life and as part of the on-going efforts of campus to integrate assessment information to create effective improvement, she participates on the IEC.

Continuous Assessment and Closing the Loop

The campus recognizes that assessment of the campus student learning outcomes is a continuous process of improvement, but it is at this very point—closing the loop—that so many campuses fail in their efforts. We intend to be vigilant in this regard, looking for points at which we make decisions, and incorporating assessment and effectiveness information to inform those decisions.

Using this assessment plan as a guide, we will continuously collect information about student learning and use it to improve the quality of teaching and learning at CSU-Pueblo. The IEC anticipates that this will take on a number of forms including professional development opportunities, campus-wide discussions, and collaboration with the Provost's office and the Faculty Senate.

Meta-Assessment

The IEC will review the processes as well as the content of assessment across campus and ask questions about how well they are working. That is, it will want to know if the processes described in this assessment plan are effective in generating the information needed to help our campus improve. Based on this analysis and reflection, the IEC will recommend changes and identify those things that are working well. Recommendations for change will be made to the Department Chairs, Dean, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Financial Affairs, the President, the Faculty Senate, and the Associated Student Government as appropriate.

Appendix D

Assessment Action Plan

Institutional Effectiveness Committee DRAFT—For Discussion Only
Institutional Assessment Action Plan
Drafted July 2009 by E. Frew, updated February 2010

Action	Purpose	Start Date	End Date	Person/Unit Responsible	Status	Notes
INSTITUTIONAL						
Establish a campus-wide Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC)	IEC will provide centralized leadership for the overall direction and support of university and academic program effectiveness, assessment and improvement	Spring 2009	Spring 2009	APASL	Complete	IEC charge and functional chart developed January and February 2009, planning meetings 12/17/08 and 2/3/09, IEC meets monthly
Establish shared faculty governance of campus assessment	Faculty drive assessment and improvement on campus, develop senate document governing assessment	Fall 2009	Fall 2009	APASL, Faculty Senate President	In process	Initial draft document discussed in Senate Executive meeting 2/1/10
Develop a comprehensive assessment plan for campus	Integrate assessment and efforts to assure student learning in graduate and undergraduate programs, general education, co-curricular programs	Summer 2009	Fall 2009	IEC	In process	Initial draft developed July 2009, revised Fall 2009 and Spring 2010
Develop an annual assessment cycle	Develop an assessment cycle timeline with procedures and reporting expectations to assure systematic feedback about student learning and on-going improvement efforts	Fall 2009	Fall 2009	IEC	In process	
Identify and implement an electronic system of documenting and reporting assessment and closing-the-loop activities	Streamline assessment management and reporting and assuring transparency in the process	February 2009	December 2009	APASL, IEC	In process	Discuss options with deans at a academic affairs council meeting, IEC working with IT Services to review options

Action	Purpose	Start Date	End Date	Person/Unit Responsible	Status	Notes
Plan, develop, and implement an assessment web page	Provide resources and disseminate information on student learning	April 2009	June 2009	APASL	Complete	Maintenance is on-going
Prepare and submit HLC progress report	Respond to the HLC's request for a progress report on assessment for accreditation and continuous improvement	January 2010	February 20, 2010	IEC	Complete	
Link assessment with strategic planning and budgeting	Use the results of the assessment processes to inform planning and budgeting decisions	Spring 2010	Spring 2010	IEC	In process	Initial closing-the-loop meeting of IEC with President, Provost, VP of F & A January 2010, timeline for actions developed February 2010
Develop strategies for orienting students to assessment process	Engage students in the process of teaching and learning	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	IEC	In process	ASG representative appointed to IEC
Evaluate and adopt the CLA, CAAP or MAPP for partially assessing SLOs	Using the VSA College Portrait to assure the transparency of our actions and accountability for student learning	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	General Education Board	In process	
Populate and post results to the VSA College Portrait for CSU-Pueblo	Assure the transparency of our actions and accountability for student learning	Fall 2010	Summer 2011	General Education Board	In process	
Review the processes of program review and assessment	Streamline processes and avoid redundancies where possible	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	IEC	In process	Pilot process completed January 2010
Update the CSU-P catalog	Enhance awareness of assessment practices	Spring 2010	Spring 2010	APASL, GEB, deans, department chairs	In process	GEB, deans, chairs, APASL currently updating assessment information
Develop an assessment process chart	Develop a chart that describes the assessment process and post to web site	Summer 2009	Fall 2009	APASL	Complete	
Develop an	Post to web site as a resource for	Summer	Summer	APASL	Complete	

Action	Purpose	Start Date	End Date	Person/Unit Responsible	Status	Notes
assessment practices handbook	faculty, staff, and students	2009	2009			
Consider developing or revisiting campus goals	Articulate expectations for student learning	Fall 2009	Spring 2011	IEC	In process	
Offer professional development activities for faculty and staff	Develop and document assessment expertise among faculty and staff	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	General Education	In process	Under consideration for 2010-2011
Review annual performance review process	Ascertain role of academic program assessment in the performance review process for deans, chairs	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	IEC	In process	
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS						
Develop SLOs	Articulate expectations for student learning in all graduate and undergraduate programs	Spring 2009	Fall 2009	Deans, department chairs	On-going	Programs without SLOs are developing them, programs without current SLOs are revising them
Publish updated SLOs to campus catalog	Articulate expectations for student learning in all graduate and undergraduate programs	Spring 2010	Spring 2010	GEB, deans, department chairs	In process	Deans, chairs, APASL currently updating assessment information
Develop curriculum maps	Determine the alignment of curriculum with SLOs	June 2009	Fall 2010	Deans, department chairs	In process	
Develop assessment plans	Articulate a systematic process for assuring and improving graduate and undergraduate program student learning, including a cycle of evaluation	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	IEC, deans, department chairs	In process	
Close the loop	Use assessment information for program improvement	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Deans, department chairs	In process	
Engage in continuous assessment process	Employ on-going processes for assuring student learning, celebrating success	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	IEC, deans, department chairs	On-going	
GENERAL EDUCATION						

Action	Purpose	Start Date	End Date	Person/Unit Responsible	Status	Notes
Develop general education student learning outcomes	Assessment of general education, assure student learning, general education improvement	October 2008	June 2009	GEB	Complete	Three focus groups conducted 12/08-1/09, Delphi Process conducted 2/09-5/09, college presentations 5/09, accepted by faculty senate 5/09, feedback to community members 6/09
Develop general education curriculum map	Determine the alignment of general education curriculum (course syllabi) with general education SLOs	June 2009	June 2009	GEB	Complete	A group of faculty and general education board members aligned approximately 89 syllabi with the SLOs 6/09, faculty presentation on process and results during convocation 8/09
Develop general education assessment plan	Articulate a systematic process for assuring and improving student learning in general education, including a cycle of evaluation	May 2009	May 2010	GEB	In-process	Initial draft complete, under review
Evaluate and adopt the CLA, CAAP or MAPP for assessing SLOs	Use the VSA College Portrait to assure the transparency of our actions and to account for student learning	Spring 2009	Spring 2010	GEB	In process	Conducted initial meeting with faculty to review and discuss MAPP and its usefulness to inform improvement, 02/09 MAPP adopted Spring 2010 for implementation in 2010-2011
Measure and evaluate critical thinking SLO	Assure student learning, improve general education curriculum, celebrate accomplishments	August 2009	September 2009	GEB	In process	Three members of the Board received train-the-trainer instruction for the Critical Thinking Skills Test 3/19-3/20/09, student sample selected 07/09, test administered 08/09-09/09, faculty training and scoring session 09/09, results distributed to campus faculty 10/09 and February 2010
Implement general education assessment processes for remainder of SLOs	Identify assessment processes, collect artifacts of student learning and evaluate SLOs	Fall 2009	Spring 201	GEB	In process	Planning underway to evaluate all SLOs using MAPP and locally developed essay
Update the CSU-P catalog	Enhance awareness of general education assessment practices	February 2010 (change copy)	Fall 2010 (published 2010-2011 catalog)	GEB	Complete	Completed for next catalog, annual update process will be on-going