2018-2020 University Assessment Report
Office of Program Review & Assessment, CSULB
August 1, 2020

Introduction to Assessment Processes
The nature of assessment reporting has changed considerably over the last ten years even as the processes of assessment activities have remained relatively unchanged. CSULB introduced an assessment policy in 1998, and that policy was integrated into the 2005 policy on program review. Though there were some changes to policy in 2010, assessment remained untouched and any changes were procedural. In 2013, after several years of consistent annual reporting under the new policy, the institution changed to biennial reporting. The theory behind that change was that departments would engage in continuous assessment, and the one year of not reporting would enable them to close the loop as the diagram below articulates:

Programs were placed on a staggered reporting schedule, so the Division of Academic Affairs would dialogue with approximately half of all programs every year. In addition to establishing biennial assessment reporting, the Director of Program Review & Assessment also encouraged departments to focus on alignment of their Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) with institutional and general education outcomes. With the alignment mapping project, the director analyzed all PLOs across the campus, mapping them to ILOs, general education outcomes, and WSCUC core competencies. The director then shared this information with departments, encouraging them also to consolidate and / or rewrite outdated or unmeasurable outcomes. Although there was some success with the alignment project, particularly with departments revising old outcomes, the move to biennial reporting itself was not successful. In a large institution with multiple degrees and programs along with academic support units, reporting (and indeed assessment activities) floundered. Rather than view the two-year cycle as continuous

meaningful assessment. In order to reactivate assessment activities and produce meaningful assessment, as well as to address WSCUC requests that core competency assessment be analyzed at the institutional level, the Director of Program Review & Assessment built on the alignment project and developed the Core Competency Project. Although the title emphasizes the WSCUC core competencies the project was designed for departments to actively assess their program learning outcomes and articulate the ways in which their outcomes are aligned with institutional learning outcome and WSCUC's competencies. The project accomplished a number of things: it was a hard reset for assessment activities across campus; academic programs returned to annual reporting and the assessment office resumed announcements of assessment activities; every academic program on campus analyzed the their Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) aligned to one of the core competencies over two years, increasing familiarity with WSCUC processes, but also creating an institution-wide discussion of them; and finally, it resulted in larger discussions of what assessment should look like on a large, state campus. The rest of this report discusses the results of the past two years.

Assessment Status / Submissions
With the introduction of the core competency project, the institution saw a significant increase in the submission of annual assessment reports. In 2018, 74% (n=85) of departments submitted reports by the end of the assessment cycle. The Director of Program Review & Assessment consulted with programs that did not submit reports to assist them in developing meaningful assessment related to WSCUC Core Competencies. In 2019, submission rate increased to 84% (n=91). Outreach continued with programs that did not submit their reports, and the institution is confident that the return to annual reporting and the detailed follow-up by the Director of Program Review & Assessment will lead to a submission rate of 100% over the next two cycles.

Overview of Results
The WSCUC core competencies aligned with PLOs formed the basis for the past two years' assessments. Graduate programs were exempt from this requirement, but could use the

It is clear that critical thinking and written communication are assessed more than other core competencies. Although many assessment reports addressed information literacy as part of their other assessment, fewer departments engaged in substantive analysis of this competency on its own.

Quality Assurance

Assessment reports have historically been reviewed by the Director of Program Review and Assessment. Beginning in 2020-21, they will be reviewed jointly by the new Director of Institutional Assessment and the Coordinator for Program Review & Assessment. Review of

explanation of issues, but struggled a bit with clarifying their position and personal perspective. Overall, however, Dance students met or exceeded competence levels for critical thinking. The department's assessments build from previous years' approaches and inc (r)8.9 2 (es)]TJches

assessments that will lighten some of the assessment burden but still provide meaningful data for continuous improvement within ABET accreditation standards.

Philosophy (CLA)
The department of Philosophy engaged in a unique assessment to determine the effectiveness of student learning across multiple platforms, and how specific interventions helped and / or hindered student learning. Contrary to traditional stereotypes of online education, the department discovered that achievement of stated learning outcomes was higher in the hybrid courses. The department determined that hybrid courses offered increased opportunity to engage in practice sets and self-assessments with immediate feedback improved student learning. Consequently, the department planned to supplement face-to-face learning by increasing targeted (and early) intervention and tutoring to close the achievement gap with critical thinking. As an additional note, the assessment conducted by the department can be a model for other departments struggling to ensure effectiveness of teaching and learning in the era of COVID-19.

Biological Sciences (CNSM)
The department of Biological Sciences consistently engages in high-level assessments of its GE and major courses and implements curricular changes that have had meaningful and positive impact on its students. This past year, the department assessed quantitative reasoning through its capstone examination given to all graduating seniors in each of the department's degree programs. The department provided substantive raw data that provided specific information on all learning outcomes, including quantitative reasoning. In this portion of the exam, the department noted that there were fairly large gaps between the students in each of the degree programs, suggesting that there is room for improvement in ensuring consistent quantitative reasoning skills. The assessment also thoroughly explored differences between the majors / options as well as between native student and transfer student. All of this information provides valuable clues to approaching curriculum for different groups of students. The department has shared its results with colleagues in the region and is actively working to restructure parts of its curriculum.

Periodic Program Review
A separate report is submitted to Academic Senate by the chair of the Program Assessment Review Council. That report is located here: https://www.csulb.edu/sites/default/files/u69781/parc_2019-2020_annual_report.pdf. Some changes to increase the meaningful review of programs have occurred over the last two years. The first major change was to implement a new report template. To encourage members to be more analytic and efficient, the council adopted a Commendation, Check, Concern, Opportunity checklist for reports, and only areas that represented concerns or opportunities would be discussed in the report. This procedural change resulted in several benefits: members were better able to write reports, and those reports were more meaningful and analytic; time from receipt of external review to presentation of report was reduced by nearly a

year; and departments and deans found the reports to be of better quality with more meaning for the programs. The council is embarking on a pilot program for self-studies in the 2020-21 academic year. This pilot program will focus on a streamlined self-study using WSCUC's "Review under the Standards" document as a model for departments.

New Developments: 2020 – 21 and Beyond

COVID-19 effects
In March 2020, the campus moved quickly to Alternative Modes of Instruction (AMI) as "Safer at Home" orders were issued in California. All instruction went online and only

OPIE
The Office of Program and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) is planned as an Inter-Divisional partnership between the DIA, the CPR&A, and the Assessment Coordinator in the Division of Student Affairs. This planned group will also house a dedicated research analyst to assist in the analysis and distribution of institutional surveys and surveys conducted at the program and college levels.

Program and Institutional Assessment Committee (PIAC)
Over Summer 2020, a university-wide Senate task force comprised of faculty, staff, students, and administrators has been working to revise program review policy, the charge and makeup of the Senate council on program review, and the policy on assessment. This is a timely and much-needed development. For example, the Senate Policy on Assessment had not been revised since its creation in 1998. Since then, research has expanded and best practices in assessment have become more sophisticated.

Final Summary

After several years of fits and spurts, assessment at CSULB is back on track. The past three years of assessment activities have been robust and meaningful. Departments are learning more about effective assessment, moving beyond compliance and into activities that focus on self-reflection and improvement. The developments from the Academic Senate Task Force, and the partnerships between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs are creating assessment and program