

TO: Linda Holt Academic Senate
FROM: Academic Support Task Force
DATE: September 28th, 2005

Task Force Charge: To determine what type of support structure is needed to engage academic departments in meaningful assessment strategies for the PEP process as well as other program planning and development efforts. The task force should meet to discuss what types of support are necessary across the different types of academic units and assign cash value to this support. This information should be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Senate within six weeks of the first task force meeting.

Make-up of Task Force:

Gabriela Sonntag, Chair of Program Assessment Committee
Regina Eisenbach, CoBA
Linda Shaw, Sociology
Denise Garcia, Biological Sciences
Bettina Huber, Director of Analytic Studies
Marie Thomas, WASC Educational Effectiveness Committee.

The Taskforce met on two occasions and exchanged ideas via email. Faculty input was invited via the discussion board on the Academic Senate website. Additionally Bettina Huber conducted a survey of practice on other CSU campuses relating to funding for program reviews and assessment.

As the campus moves forward with the WASC review and in consideration of the CSU Accountability Reporting process, including the review of educational effectiveness indicators, we foresee heightened focus on the program review process and especially on the assessment of student learning. The campus must acknowledge the serious investments that these entail and provide sufficient resources to faculty in the programs under review, as it is the faculty that takes on the greatest share of the task.

The CSU survey shows that funding is generally available for external reviewers (12 campuses routinely fund it; another 4 sometimes provide funding). Program reviews, per se, are not generally funded although 4 campuses do receive some funds (partial funding for attendance at assessment conferences, reimbursements for one-time expenses such as software purchases, small stipends for summer work).

We urge the university to set aside **funding for assessment** giving a priority to those departments undergoing program review. The survey of sister campuses found that 18 of them provide at least some funding for assessment.

- a. Funds (\$10,000 per program) to support the initial development of assessment plans. The department will submit a proposal that explains how the monies will be used: course releases, departmental retreats, attendance at conferences, etc. Flexibility is important to allow for variations in need.
- b. Additional funding in future years (\$2000) to support the implementation of specific assessment projects. Examples may include a survey development and implementation, alternative assessment tools, exit interviews, etc.
- c. Several campuses have used lottery funds to underwrite assessment initiatives.

Creating a faculty learning community on assessment is an innovative idea seen on other CSU campuses. The programs undergoing review can work together, attend assessment conferences, and provide support. The faculty member would receive a small stipend to participate.