This assessment newsletter provides you with key dates for assessment activities this spring as well as, we hope, some helpful tips to make the assessment process work smoothly in your programs. As always, we welcome your questions, suggestions, and ideas.

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Important Dates — Spring 2010

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>March 12</td>
<td>Annual Report Workshop, ED 1-1, 10 am - Noon</td>
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<td>March 15</td>
<td>Program-specific questions, alumni emails, and introductory cover letter for Alumni Survey due to AO (Advanced Programs) Program-specific questions for Exit Survey (Advanced Programs) due to AO</td>
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<td>April 5</td>
<td>Spring 2010 Data Collection Templates distributed to programs</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td>Advanced Programs Exit Survey released to completers</td>
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<td>April 30</td>
<td>Advanced Programs Alumni Survey released</td>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td>Annual Reports due to AO (Degree-only Programs)</td>
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<td>May 28</td>
<td>Spring 2010 signature assignment data due</td>
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The Assessment Office Web Site and Your Documents

The AO web site serves as an online resource for assessment. You can access the main page of the site at: [http://www.ced.csulb.edu/assessment/](http://www.ced.csulb.edu/assessment/)

On the right of the page, under Resources, is a link to Programs' Assessment Documents. Here you can find all of your program's current documents – the plan, the curriculum map, rubrics, and annual reports. If something is not up to date, let us know and we’ll fix it.

Manageable Data Discussion Meetings

Data Discussion Meetings are a time for colleagues to come together for conversations about and use of data to inform program improvement efforts. These meetings are the basis for the annual reports due to the AO each year. Here are some ways to make the most of these meetings:

- Use a data discussion guide ([http://www.ced.csulb.edu/assessment/data/discussion.cfm](http://www.ced.csulb.edu/assessment/data/discussion.cfm)) and consider involving a data coach.
- Rather than a long meeting, consider having your data discussions in small segments over multiple meetings. For instance, talk about just one SLO for 30 minutes and then move on to other topics.
- Review assignment exemplars. Looking at these allows you to move beyond the numbers to a more nuanced look at students' skills and knowledge.
- Calibrate. (See page 2 for how)
- Plan for actions to improve student learning where you see them struggling.
- Celebrate! Congratulate yourselves on success.

Data Coaches

Sometimes it helps to have a colleague from outside the program available to facilitate conversations around data. CED is fortunate to have four talented individuals who have agreed to serve as data coaches:

- Paul Boyd-Batstone
- Lesley Farmer
- Teresa Chen
- Trini Lewis

These individuals are available to help you prepare for or facilitate program data meetings. They can meet with you beforehand to help you plan, facilitate/co-facilitate a meeting, or take notes and serve as an external voice so that you can focus on running the meeting.

If you are interested in having a data coach participate in a program data meeting, please contact the AO (5-2506) or ced-assessment@csulb.edu
Involving the Professional Community

Finding ways to involve the professional community in the assessment process is an important element in the college’s unit assessment system. Here are some ways you might use your advisory board in the assessment process:

- Tell a story. Whatever you share, have a clear point for doing so and a clear goal. Let the board know what you need from them.
- Start broadly and then get into details. For example, explain that students perform well on all outcomes but a couple. Then explore which outcomes they struggle with and on what criteria.
- Have the board help interpret data – in a focused manner. They may not want to see all the SLO or survey data you have. But if there is some data you think they might be particularly interested in (e.g., alumni are reporting the program prepared them well for their job with particular knowledge), share this with them and get their reactions. They can provide insight into depth of skills displayed and additional knowledge needed by your graduates.
- Have the board review the program SLOs. See if they have thoughts about the skills and knowledge your graduates need.
- Solicit input on one or more signature assignments. Does the assignment reflect practice in the “real world”? Might it be refined?
- Engage the board in a discussion about possible survey items for exit and alumni surveys. What do board members think the program should know about its graduates?
- Involve the board in capstone experiences. Invite members to student presentations, a reception for fieldwork students/supervisors, or a portfolio display. Get feedback from board members afterwards.

Calibrating Rubrics

A critical component of a fair, consistent, and accurate assessment system is having program faculty calibrate around the rubrics and signature assignments. Because the outcomes are program learning outcomes, it is important that signature assignments are scored with consistency across instructors.

Now that programs have been collecting data for a couple years, we can begin this process. Here are a couple of ways to calibrate:

If different faculty teach sections of the same course

- Contact the AO and ask us to run course data by section to see if there are differences in average score and score distributions.
- If you find differences, bring the instructors together and have them calibrate using the method covered below.

If only 1 instructor consistently teaches the course

Even if just one person teaches a course, it is important that program faculty have general agreement on the criteria for student performance on a signature assignment. To calibrate in this case:

- Distribute copies of exemplars at each level of performance for the assignment.
- Have instructors read these individually and evaluate each using the rubric for the assignment.
- Come together as a group and discuss similarities and differences in scoring.
- Establish a general consensus on performance levels and criteria.
- This exercise may mean you end up changing your rubric criteria, performance descriptors, or parts of the signature assignment itself.

Note: Reviewing exemplars is a great way to get detailed information to inform program improvement.

Assessment Office Contact Information

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Don Haviland: 5-2553
Meredith West: 5-2506

Assessment Office Services

The AO provides a range of services and support:

- Data entry
- Data analysis and reports
- Online and scanable paper surveys