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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to help ensure that the College of Business and Economics (CBE) has processes for determining if our program learning goals are relevant and appropriate, for designing and delivering curricula that help students achieve these goals, for demonstrating that students are achieving these goals, and for improving our programs where students are not meeting program learning goals.

This handbook documents our curriculum management and assurance of learning (AOL) processes and defines terminology used in these processes. Beginning with an overview of our college mission, vision, and values, the document reviews program learning goals, curriculum management which defines the processes of how our program curricula are developed, revised, and reviewed, and assurance of learning (AOL) which defines the processes of how learning is assessed and how these assessments are used for continuous improvement of our programs and curricula. While curriculum management and AOL are presented as separate processes in this handbook, it should be noted that they are interconnected and that AOL may be seen as a part of our overall curriculum management process.

Over time changing circumstances will require improvements to our curriculum management and assurance of learning processes. These changes may be proposed by CBE faculty, staff, administration or other stakeholders, but must be incorporated into this handbook and approved by the CBE Curriculum Committee and the Dean.

Mission, Vision, and Values

The CBE faculty have adopted the following Mission, Vision, and Values statements to guide management of our curriculum. These statements are available online at http://www.csueastbay.edu/cbe/about/mission-vision-values.html.

Mission

CBE provides life-changing, quality business education to prepare students from diverse backgrounds to become successful business professionals and leaders.

Vision

We aspire to be a leading business school known for making a difference in the lives of our students and for our impact on the world.
Values

In support of our mission, we value:

- Ethical behavior and personal integrity
- Collegiality and mutual respect
- Collaboration for learning, scholarship, and community engagement
- Social and environmental responsibility
- Inclusive learning environment for a diverse student population
- Innovative thinking and a global mindset

Expected Outcomes

- Student professional success
- Innovative academic programs meeting business and professional needs
- Improvement in student learning based on teaching innovations
- Intellectual contributions to the body of knowledge in the theory, practice and teaching of business

Program Learning Goals and Objectives

The CBE mission, vision, and values should drive the learning goals of each degree program. These program learning goals state our educational expectations and how we intend graduates to be competent and effective from completing our programs. Learning goals are then translated into measurable learning objectives that explain what program graduates should be specifically able to do.

CBE’s program learning goals and objectives have gone through three generations of evolution. A turning point was the 2012 AACSB Review in which our AOL system was identified as not meeting standards. Following the 2012 review, program goals and objectives were modified to be consistent with AACSB standards.

Many of these updated goals and objectives, however, will be revised again in the Fall of 2018 as we convert from quarters to semesters. This conversion process has been known as “Q2S” and has used faculty grouped in program taskforces to improve our curricula based on AOL data and faculty and stakeholder feedback.

Program learning goals and objectives are available at online at http://www.csueastbay.edu/cbe/about/assurance-of-learning/plan-and-conduct/learning-goals-and-objectives.html.
**Curriculum Management**

The goal of curriculum management is to have mission-driven curriculum accountable to our stakeholders and focused on continuous improvement. Curriculum management includes the processes for development, revision, and review of each program’s learning goals, structure, content, and pedagogy. Curriculum management should take input from advances in business, from stakeholders like students, faculty, administration and employers, and from the AOL process.

The CBE Curriculum Committee oversees the overall curriculum management process, while the AOL Subcommittee, a subcommittee of CBE Curriculum Committee, focuses on the AOL process. Curriculum Committee membership includes one member from each of the four departments elected by the faculty of each department and one at-large faculty member elected by all faculty of CBE (five total members currently). The Curriculum Committee reviews, approves, and forwards all curriculum and AOL Subcommittee proposals to the Dean.

In addition to the standing Curriculum and AOL committees, ad-hoc committees may form on an as-needed basis to work on curriculum proposals. Examples of these ad-hoc committees include departmental faculty committees coordinated by department chairs or program-level committees with faculty representatives from each department coordinated by program directors.

**Curriculum Development and Revision Process**

Curriculum development should start with our CBE mission which provides a foundation for our academic programs. Program learning goals are then defined as the expected knowledge and skills that program graduates are intended to possess. Curriculum development continues with the creation of program content, structure, organization, pedagogy, and learning assessments to feed into our AOL process.

Each program, concentration, department and faculty therein should continuously examine ways to improve curricula taking input from not only other faculty, but also other stakeholders (current and former students, employers, governmental agencies, AACSB accrediting agency), business trends, curricula at other institutions, and assurance of learning results. Improvements could be at the program-level which might include new programs, new concentrations, or new required or elective program courses. Improvements could also be at the course-level which might include modifying course descriptions or content, teaching or delivery methods, or prerequisites.

When a curriculum change is proposed it follows a defined process explained here and shown in Figure 1 below. A change first goes to the department chair with administrative
responsibilities for the course or, in the case of a program change, to the program director in conjunction with potentially affected department chairs. If approved by the department chair and, if necessary, program director, the recommendation next goes to the Dean. If approved by the Dean, the recommendation goes to the CBE Curriculum Committee for approval and then back to the Dean. If approved by the Dean, the change request leaves the college and goes to the office of Academic Programs and Graduate Studies (APGS). Depending on the type of request, the proposal may receive final approval at this level (a course change) or may need to pass through the CSUEB Faculty Senate before review by the President (new courses and program changes). New Program proposals will need to pass an additional review at the CSU level.

**Figure 1: Curriculum Development and Revision Process**

The documentation and procedures required for the approval of curriculum development and revision proposals are mandated by California State University, East Bay (CSUEB) and are in the CSUEB Curriculum Procedures Manual available at [http://www.csueastbay.edu/academic/colleges-and-departments/apgs/cpm/index.html](http://www.csueastbay.edu/academic/colleges-and-departments/apgs/cpm/index.html). The CSUEB process for filling out program and course proposals, including both the proposal of new or the change of existing programs and courses, and the process of approving and forwarding
proposals is managed online via CSUEB’s Curriculog system available at https://csueastbay.curriculog.com/.

In some cases, as with new programs, approval of the California State University System headquartered in Long Beach, CA is required. Documentation and procedure requirements for System-level approvals is also available in the CSUEB Curriculum Procedures Manual noted above.

Curriculum Review Process

A key component of managing curriculum is a periodic review of program learning goals and objectives, overall program and course structure, course content, delivery modes, teaching methods, and how the curriculum reflects of our mission, vision, and values. At CBE, our undergraduate curriculum is composed of the B.S. in Business Administration and B.S. in Economics programs. Our graduate curriculum includes the M.B.A., M.S. in Accountancy, M.S. in Business Analytics, and M.S. in Economics. Some programs are further separated into concentrations such as accounting, finance, marketing, etc.

In reviewing curriculum, we formally examine each program as part of CSUEB’s Academic Program Review administered by the Committee on Academic Program Review (CAPR). These reviews serve three primary functions: accountability, program improvement, and resource alignment.

As part of this review process, the CBE Dean’s Office and faculty develop a five-year plan and follow up this plan with annual progress updates. The five-year plan includes the following information and analysis: accreditation documentation and review findings, program changes and improvement plans, review of student success and learning (AOL), review of faculty, resources needed, and a response to an external reviewer’s comments. Annual updates to the five-year plan include a report on progress to plan goals and summaries of AOL results. More detailed information on the CAPR review process can be found at: http://www.csueastbay.edu/faculty/senate/committees/capr/index-capr.html.

Additional curriculum reviews and improvements can and do occur on a less formal basis within each program and department either through faculty initiative, stakeholder feedback, or the AOL process. So the formal program review process may simply document what occurs naturally over time.

The formal review process does, however, provide the opportunity for a formal, focused examination of each program, in particular to share findings with faculty and staff throughout the CBE. It is expected that the findings from each review will be presented to all interested faculty and staff (and any other interested party).
Assurance of Learning (AOL)

The goal of our AOL process is to demonstrate that students are achieving program learning goals and to promote the continuous improvement of our programs. AOL not only provides the assessment data that allows us to demonstrate to stakeholders that our students are learning what we intend for them to learn, but it also helps to ensure our stakeholders that we are working to improve student learning by using assessment data to identify areas in need of improvement and then taking actions to make those improvements.

The AOL process is overseen by the AOL Subcommittee, a committee that includes at least one faculty member from each department, the Associate Dean, and the Director of AOL. This body is the focal point of our AOL process and is tasked with review of assessment results, closing the loop analysis, and improvement action recommendations. In addition, faculty improvement teams may be formed to review assessments, propose program improvements, or conduct other AOL work as needed for the AOL Subcommittee.

Assurance of Learning Process

The AOL process, shown in Figure 2, starts with our CBE mission, vision, and values. From these, we create program-specific goals that are translated into measurable objectives. Some goals may have only one objective whiles others may have more depending on what it takes to measure achievement of the goal.
Figure 2: Assurance of Learning Process

1. Faculty Define Program Learning Goals
   [General or Area Specific Knowledge or Skills (4-10) in line with CBE Mission]

2. Faculty Translate Learning Goals into Measurable Learning Objectives
   [Each Objective Describes a Measurable Outcome (not Process)]

3. Faculty Design Curriculum and Map Courses to Learning Objectives
   [Which Courses will Introduce, Develop, Master, Assess Objectives?]

4. Faculty Select Measures to Assess Objectives
   [Identify an Artifact or Instrument (Test, Paper, Presentation)]

5. Faculty Develop Rubrics to Assess Each Measure
   [Each Rubric Lists Several Parameters Scored such as "Does Not Meet Expectation," "Meets Expectation," or "Exceeds Expectation" and the Weighting of the Parameters for the Overall Assessment]

6. AOL Director Contacts Department Chair Who Contacts Faculty to Do Assessment per Program Plan

7. Faculty Assess Students using Rubrics and Forward Student and Rubric Scoring Data to AOL Director

8. AOL Director Analyzes Assessments and Reports Results to AOL Subcommittee and Program Director

9. Program Director Communicates Assessment Results to Faculty and Coordinates Improvement Action Teams to Make Program Improvement Proposals

10. Program Director Communicates Improvement Proposals to AOL Subcommittee with Faculty Name, Improvement Action, and Proposed Completion Date

11. AOL Subcommittee and Dean approve proposals.

12. Program Director reports if improvements implemented.

13. Restart Process from the Top - Students assessed again and past and potential improvements discussed by faculty to “Close the Loop”
Assessment tools or measures are then identified for each objective. These assessment tools or measures use a student work or output that is either assessed using a rubric as for a writing assignment or oral presentation or assessed based on the questions in a test. In either case a benchmark level of performance is identified so if a student scores higher than the benchmark, the student is considered as meeting expectations for that objective.

Our primary assessment of learning objectives should be done using direct, in classroom, measures of performance. Indirect measures of assessment like student, alumni, employer, or other stakeholder surveys may be used as supplements to but not replacements of direct measures. Additionally, special attention should be taken to not use course grades for assessment purposes.

The assessment data for a sampling of students for each program learning objective is collected, the percentage of students meeting learning objective expectations is reported to faculty and stakeholders, and, where appropriate, program improvements are recommended, implemented, and later re-assessed. Using assessment data as a feedback loop to assess previous improvements and to determine if further improvements are needed is known as “closing the loop.”

The expectation is that every learning objective will go through a “closing the loop” process at least once every five years between AACSB reviews, promoting a process of continuous improvement of our programs and student learning.

While each program at CBE has its own goals, objectives, and assessments, the overall structure of the AOL process is the same: define goals, objectives, measures and rubrics, assess student work, report assessment results to faculty, dean, and stakeholders, generate program improvement ideas from faculty and others, implement approved improvement ideas, and reassess student work to see impact of improvement actions. This “closing the loop” thus continues with each set of improvements preceded and followed by assessments.

For additional information including FAQs and terminology definitions please refer to the following:

- AACSB web site available at [http://www.aacsb.edu/](http://www.aacsb.edu/)

For program specific AOL related documentation refer to the following:

2. Assessment tools/measures, rubrics, benchmarks are available at

3. Assessment results reports are available at
   http://www.csueastbay.edu/cbe/about/assurance-of-learning/analyze-and-discuss/index.html

4. AOL summary reports are available at
   http://www.csueastbay.edu/cbe/about/assurance-of-learning/close-the-loop/Closing%20the%20Loop%20at%20CBE/index.html


Assessment Tools/Measures

Assessment of individual learning objectives is first accomplished by identification of an appropriate student work such as a test, paper, or presentation and then measuring each student’s work using a rubric which lists certain parameters or traits on which to assess the student work. Each work is then scored on each rubric trait as “below expectations,” “meets expectations,” or “exceeds expectations” (rubrics may have more scoring categories depending on faculty desires) relative to a benchmark level of performance agreed upon by the faculty.

Benchmarks

Every learning objective and rubric trait should have a benchmark that defines an acceptable percentage of students that meet expectations for each assessment. If the percentage of students who meet expectations on a learning objective or rubric trait is less than the benchmark, program improvements should be made to correct the deficiencies. Benchmarks may be based on internal or external standards or historical trends. Benchmarks can also change over time as in a program that is consistently meeting a benchmark which may wish to raise the benchmark in an effort to improve.

As CBE’s AOL system continued to develop, we realized that adding an additional benchmark would facilitate AOL discussions when it comes to reviewing data results and discussing corrective action measures. This secondary benchmark applied to rubric assessments and set the aspiration that less than 10% of assessed students will be scored as “below expectations” on any individual parameter/trait on a rubric. For individual parameters that had more than 10% of assessed students scoring “below expectations,” those individual parameters became a topic of discussion among faculty reviewing data.

For example, if X% of students met or exceeded expectations, that program has met its benchmark for that learning objective. Now if we take the Oral Communication assessment
example from the prior section and applied it here, we would then say that our students met the benchmark on Oral Communication. This result does not provide much room for discussion on how we can further improve. By having a secondary benchmark, the additional data can help in directing our attention where it is needed. In the same example, by using our secondary benchmark we may then find that more than 10% of assessed students scored “below expectations” on parameter/trait No. 2: Exemplifying distracting behavior and over use of ‘ums.’ This provides context for an area that can still be improved, despite an overall positive assessment. This allows us to continuously improve no matter the results.

**Data Collection**

Each quarter or semester, the Director of Assessment contacts the Department Chair where faculty are scheduled to do assessments in their courses. The Department Chair, with input as needed from the Director of Assessment, will arrange for faculty to do assessments. These faculty members are responsible for using the pre-approved assessment measures (rubrics, test questions, etc.) as supplied by the AOL Director.

Faculty provide the results of their assessments to the Director of Assessment within four weeks of the end of term. The Director of Assessment then analyzes the assessment findings for each learning objective and prepares a report of the results that show, at a minimum, the number of students assessed and the percentage of students meeting or not meeting the benchmark by rubric trait.

**Improvement Teams**

Following generation of the learning objective assessment reports and acceptance of the reports by the AOL committee, program directors shall assemble a team of faculty to review assessment reports and make improvement recommendations. The program director takes these recommendations, which include the name of the faculty to implement the improvement and a target date for completion, to the AOL Subcommittee for approval.

The following assessment data collection cycle will provide information for the program director and faculty improvement teams to compare assessment results over time and to determine if program changes resulted in the intended improvements. Perhaps additional change recommendations will be needed or other learning objectives will require attention. The most recent assessment then becomes the new baseline and the cycle is repeated. Normally, an assessment will occur over the course of a single academic year. Improvement teams review assessment results and implement changes the following year. Assessment then takes place again in the third year.
**Improvement Team Membership**

Improvement teams may be as small as the program director and one appropriate faculty member who is intimately involved in teaching the learning objective or with AOL in their program or department, or they may be larger pulling multiple faculty members as needed depending on the complexity of teaching the learning objective if it is taught across multiple instructors and multiple courses in the curriculum map. Teams may be formed to study one learning objective or a group of learning objectives like all those that were assessed the previous year for a particular program. The key is that teams are flexible depending on what works best for the program yet still satisfies the needs of the AOL process.

**Improvement Team Operations**

The program director will provide the learning objective assessment report(s) to the improvement team and work with the group to examine all data. If necessary, the group may ask the program director or director of AOL for additional data or analysis.

Improvement teams should examine not only the overall scores for each learning objective, but also the scores on each individual rubric trait. For example, if there are five traits on a rubric that measures a particular learning objective, each of these five traits should be examined individually.

The team should examine current assessment results and determine if new improvement opportunities exist, but they should also see if previous improvement actions have had their intended effect. The key task of the team is to identify one or more items needing improvement and to make recommendations.

The improvement team’s findings and recommendations should be reported to the Program Director and AOL Subcommittee with the name of faculty or persons responsible for making improvements and proposed dates of implementation. The AOL Subcommittee and the Dean will approve the proposals and reply to the improvement teams through the AOL committee which will inform the program directors that the proposal has been approved and should be implemented. The AOL Subcommittee will also inform the AOL Director for proper record keeping, documentation, and web site update. Depending on the nature of the recommendation, implementation may require use of the curriculum revision process to be begun by the appropriate faculty and department chair.

**Direct Improvements**

Recommendations for improvement are either systematic or direct. Direct improvements are those that are intended to improve student learning. They could be something as simple as faculty reinforcing particular ideas or concepts in class or a recommendation for additional
assignments. They could also rearrange the order of content delivery within a course or even move content between courses. Since learning goals and objectives may be covered in multiple courses, recommendations may be for courses prior to the one in which the assessment actually occurs (perhaps even courses outside the CBE in the case of transfer students and their courses at local community colleges). Not all improvement adoptions will see improvement in the next assessment cycle. Some curricular improvements, for example, may take multiple years before actual improvement is noted. The key point is that a continuous improvement process around student learning occurs. It should also be noted that improvement teams may have other data like indirect assessments from which to make recommendations.

System Improvements

The improvement team may make recommendations for system improvements that impact the AOL process of when, who, how, or what is assessed. Recommendations might include changes to rubrics (or any measures of assessment—test questions, etc.) if they are perceived to be inadequate. They may also include a change to benchmarks, the timing of assessments, the course where an assessment occurs, how to increase student motivation to do an assessment, and many other improvements of this type. It may be system-wide recommendations (across multiple learning objectives) or ones involving a single rubric item. Such systematic improvements are intended to improve data gathering and analyzing, thus enhancing the continuous improvement process of AOL.

Improvement Recommendation Approvals

Improvement recommendations brought to the AOL Subcommittee by faculty and program directors shall be reviewed and if necessary more input may be requested. Interested faculty may comment or provide input to their AOL Subcommittee representatives (or anyone on the AOL Subcommittee), or even directly to the AOL Subcommittee in its meeting. The recommendations will then flow to the CBE Curriculum Committee and then the Dean. Sometimes recommendations may require resources not (yet) available or there may be constraints not apparent to the improvement team. It should be noted that some improvements may take longer to be evident than one improvement cycle; the team (and other bodies) may choose to keep the improvement in place even without solid evidence of improvement.

Improvement teams, department chairs, and program directors shall be informed of approved improvement recommendations approved by the AOL Subcommittee. The Chair of each department will ensure that faculty are aware of proposed changes, in particular for those recommendations that impact faculty and courses which are housed within their department.
Assurance of Learning Schedule Plans

The program-level assessment and closing the loop schedule plans are maintained on the CBE AOL website. Note that these schedule plans can change. Every effort should be made to keep to this schedule, events such as instructor changes may occur that may necessitate changes. The key is that we complete two assessments in every five-year period, with a closing the loop cycle in between.

Accreditations

The CBE is accredited as a business school through AACSB and as part of CSUEB through WASC. The AACSB is the accrediting body of the top business school programs in the world. WASC is the regional accrediting body for four-year colleges and universities in the western United States.