

**Curriculum Management
And
Assurance of Learning
Handbook**

College of Business and Economics
California State University, East Bay

Approved by Curriculum Committee Fall 2018

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Mission, Vision, and Values.....	1
Program Learning Goals and Objectives	2
Curriculum Management.....	2
Curriculum Development and Revision Process	3
Curriculum Review Process.....	5
Assurance of Learning (AOL).....	5
AOL Process.....	6
Assessment Tools/Measures.....	8
Benchmarks.....	9
Data Collection.....	9
Program Committees	10
Program Committee Membership	10
Program Committee Operations.....	10
Direct Improvements	11
System Improvements	11
Improvement Recommendation Approvals.....	12
AOL Schedule Plans	12

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 when 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 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, they are interconnected, and AOL may be seen as a part of our overall curriculum management process.

Accreditation agencies play a key role in creating curricula management standards and monitoring how our practices meet those standards. This document is intended to comply with the standards of both of CBE's accreditors, AACSB and WASC. The AACSB is the accrediting body of the top business school programs in the world, while WASC is the regional accrediting body for four-year colleges and universities in the western United States.

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 like alumni, employers, or accreditors, 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 the management of our curriculum. These statements are available online at www.csueastbay.edu/cbe/about/miss-visi-valu.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 prepare graduates to be competent and effective. Learning goals are then translated into measurable learning objectives that specifically explain what graduates of the program should be able to do.

CBE's program learning goals and objectives have undergone three generations of evolution. Goals and objectives prior to 2012 were modified following the 2012 AACSB review to be more consistent with AACSB standards; many of these updated goals and objectives will be revised again in the Fall of 2018 as we convert from quarters to semesters (Q2S). The Q2S conversion process 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 online at <http://www.csueastbay.edu/cbe/about/assurance-of-learning/plan-and-conduct/learninggoals-and-objectives.html>.

Curriculum Management

The goal of curriculum management is to have mission-driven curricula that is 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 and economics, from stakeholders like students, faculty, administration and employers, and from the AOL process.

The CBE Curriculum Committee oversees the overall curriculum management process including AOL. Program committees focus on curriculum management and AOL at the academic program level. 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. The Manager of Assurance of Learning is requested to sit in on meetings where AOL matters are on the agenda. Program committees are authorized by the Administrative Council and include program directors and faculty from each academic department that participates in the teaching courses within the program. The Curriculum Committee reviews, approves, and forwards all curriculum and AOL related program committee proposals to the Dean.

In addition to the Curriculum and program 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 committees with faculty representatives from each department, coordinated by program directors.

Curriculum Development and Revision Process

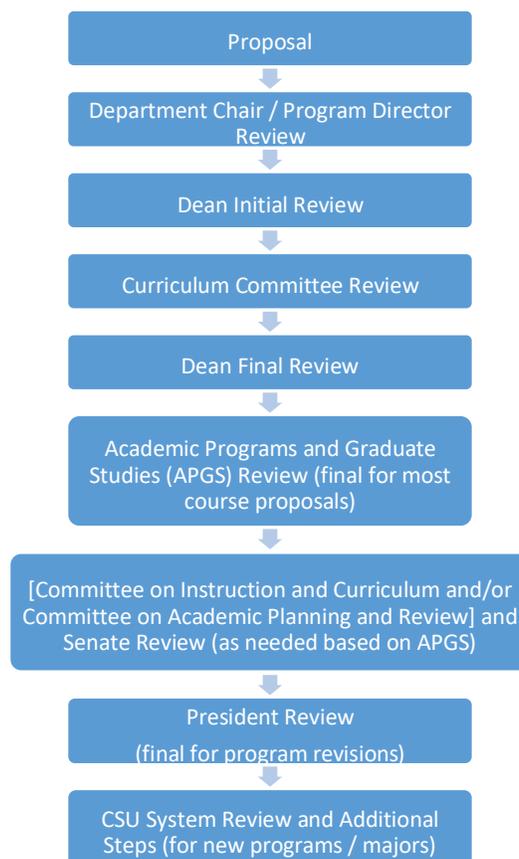
Curriculum development starts with our CBE mission, which provides a foundation for our academic programs. Program learning goals are then defined as the expected knowledge and skills that program graduates should possess. Curriculum development continues with the creation of program content, structure,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

Department and faculty members from programs and concentrations should continuously examine ways to improve curricula, taking input from not only other faculty, but also other stakeholders (e.g., current and former students, employers, governmental agencies, and the AACSB accrediting agency), business trends, curricula at other institutions, and AOL 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 shown in Figure 1. 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 for an initial review. After the initial review, the recommendation goes to the CBE Curriculum Committee for approval and then

back to the Dean for final approval within the CBE. This process of two reviews by the Dean has evolved over time to expedite reviews by minimizing delays later in the review process. The change request then 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 a final approval at this level (a course change) or it may need to pass through the CSUEB Faculty Senate before review by the President (new courses and program changes). New Program proposals must 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>.

The CSUEB process for completing 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 at the level of the entire California State University System is required. Documentation and procedure requirements for System-level approvals are also available in the CSUEB Curriculum Procedures Manual noted above.

Curriculum Review Process

A key component of managing curricula 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 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 subdivided into concentrations such as accounting, finance, marketing, etc.

In reviewing curricula, 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 then provide 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 occur on a less formal basis within each program and department either through faculty initiative, stakeholder feedback, or the AOL process. The formal program review process will document what occurs naturally over time as a result of these additional reviews. In addition, the formal reviews will provide the opportunity for a formal, focused examination of each program. 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 allow us to demonstrate to stakeholders that our students are learning

what we intend for them to learn, but it also helps to assure 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 Curriculum Committee. This body is the focal point of our AOL process and is tasked with reviewing assessment results, closing the loop analysis, and making improvement action recommendations provided by program committees. Program committees are expected to make program improvements and conduct other AOL work as needed.

AOL Process

The AOL process, summarized 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 while others may have more depending on what it takes to measure achievement of the goal.

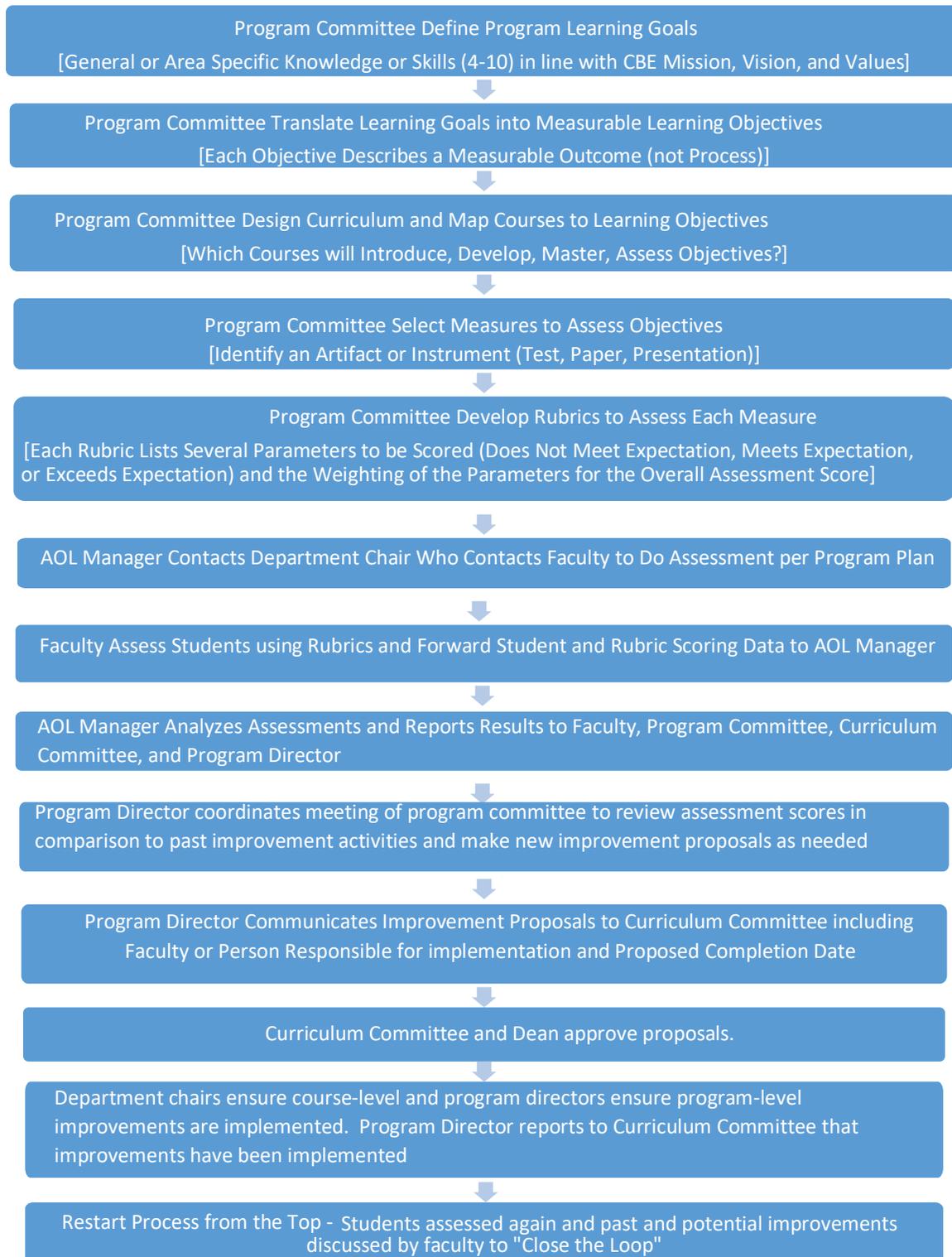
Assessment tools or measures are then identified for each objective. These assessment tools or measures use a sample of student work or output that is either assessed using a rubric, as for a writing assignment or oral presentation, or assessed based on the solutions in a test. In all cases, a benchmark level of performance is identified, so if a student scores higher than the benchmark, the student is considered to have met 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 for, direct measures. Course grades should not be used for assessment purposes.

For each program learning objective, assessment data from a representative sample of students 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 undergo 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.

Figure 2: Assurance of Learning Process



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, the dean, and stakeholders, generate program improvement ideas from faculty and others, implement approved improvement ideas, and reassess student work to measure the impact of improvement actions. This “closing the loop” thus continues with each successive set of assessments, improvements, and assessments.

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

- CSU East Bay CBE AOL web page available at <http://www.csueastbay.edu/cbe/about/assurance-of-learning/index.html>
- AACSB web site available at <http://www.aacsb.edu/>
- “AACSB Assurance of Learning Standards: An Interpretation” available at <http://www.aacsb.edu/publications/whitepapers>

For program-specific AOL-related documentation refer to the following:

1. Curriculum maps are available at www.csueastbay.edu/aol/plan-and-conduct/curriculum-maps.html
2. Assessment tools/measures, rubrics, benchmarks are available at www.csueastbay.edu/aol/plan-and-conduct/assessment-tools/index.html
3. Assessment results reports are available at www.csueastbay.edu/aol/analyze-and-discuss/index.html
4. AOL summary reports are available at www.csueastbay.edu/aol/close-the-loop/aol-summary-tables.html
5. AOL assessment plans at www.csueastbay.edu/aol/plan-and-conduct/assessment-plans.html

Assessment Tools/Measures

Assessment of individual learning objectives are first accomplished by identification of an appropriate student work sample, 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 sample of 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, faculty should analyze the results and consider possible improvements taking into consideration that improvements may take longer than one closing the loop cycle to take effect. 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 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, regardless of the results.

Data Collection

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

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

Program Committees

Following generation and reporting of the learning objective assessment reports, program directors shall assemble program committees to review assessment reports and make improvement recommendations. Other faculty, staff, or stakeholders may participate with the program committee as needed. The program director then takes these recommendations, which include the name(s) of the individual or faculty to implement the improvement and a target date for completion, to the Curriculum Committee for approval.

Subsequent assessment data collections will provide information for the program director and program committee to compare assessment results over time and to determine if previous program changes resulted in the intended improvements. Perhaps additional recommended changes 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. Program director and program committee review assessment results and implement changes the following year. Assessment then reoccurs in the third or fourth year.

Program Committee Membership

Program Committee members are typically composed of the program director and faculty, but may include additional members as needed depending on the complexity of achieving the learning objective. 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. The members should include representatives from all departments. If the program is offered online and/or in another location, there should also be appropriate representatives to reflect this. Curriculum committee members are encouraged to participate in the program committees as members in at least one program committee.

Program Committee Operations

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

Program committees 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 program committee's findings and recommendations should be reported by the program director to the Curriculum Committee with the name of faculty or persons responsible for making improvements and proposed dates of implementation. The Curriculum Committee and Dean will approve the proposals. The Dean will reply to the Curriculum Committee who shall notify the program director, department chairs, and AOL Manager.

The AOL Manager shall be responsible for proper record keeping, documentation, and website 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 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 program committees might have other data like indirect assessments from which to make recommendations.

System Improvements

The program committees 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, and 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 analysis, thus enhancing the continuous improvement process of AOL.

Improvement Recommendation Approvals

Improvement recommendations brought to the Curriculum Committee 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 Curriculum Committee representatives (or anyone on the Curriculum Committee), or even directly to the Curriculum Committee in its meeting. The recommendations will then advance to the Dean. Sometimes recommendations may require resources not (yet) available, or there may be constraints not apparent to the program committee. Some improvements may take longer to be evident than one improvement cycle; the committees (and other bodies) may choose to keep the improvement in place even without solid evidence of improvement.

Program committees, department chairs, program directors, and the AOL Manager shall be informed of improvement recommendations approved by the Curriculum Committee. 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.

AOL Schedule Plans

The program-level assessment and assessment plans are maintained on the CBE AOL website. These 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.