December 1, 2011

Chairs and Program Directors:

Learning Outcomes Data for the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities

Working with Academic Affairs, the Faculty Senate is initiating the implementation of the “Policy on Instructional Program Priorities” (www.csus.edu/acaf/AcademicAffairs/2011 AP IPP.pdf). This policy sets criteria by which to sort Sacramento State’s academic programs into quartiles for the purpose of informing the process of resource allocation. One of the four variables within the “Primary Criteria” refers to: “Clearly developed learning outcomes,” [and asks] “Has the program moved productively to clarify for students enrolled in it what they can expect to take away from the program and how that outcome is assessed? Has the program made curricular adjustments based on its assessment efforts?” The other “Primary” and “Secondary” criteria will be addressed in a separate document. The objective presently is to provide the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities, which will implement the quartile process, with a fairly standardized presentation of learning-outcomes efforts across instructional programs.

This document includes a template for reporting to the Senate Committee the status of your program’s (or, in many cases, programs’) efforts to identify and assess ongoing accomplishment of the desired learning outcomes of the program’s curriculum. There are two significant foci: 1) describing the link between your program’s desired learning outcomes and the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals (www.csus.edu/acaf/ge); 2) describing the program’s desired learning outcomes, the manner by which to assess their ongoing accomplishment, and the effect of assessment data on continual review and potential adjustment of the program’s curriculum.

What is a “program” in the present context? It is a curriculum offered via the General Fund (i.e., “stateside,” not through CCE), the completion of which leads to a bachelor’s or master’s degree, a credential, a minor, or a certificate. (Not included among programs in the current context are curricula leading to doctoral degrees.) Most departments on campus have at least one bachelor’s program. Some offer both the BA and BS; these will be treated as separate programs in the current context. Some offer the bachelor’s with official “concentrations” (e.g., BA in Communication Studies with a concentration in Digital Media) ultimately noted on the graduate’s transcript. Many departments offer minors and certificates. Many departments also have a master’s degree program; some departments have only master’s degree programs. In addition, we have some stand-alone interdisciplinary programs that lead to a bachelor’s or master’s degree. Credential programs are offered by departments in the Colleges of Education, Health and Human Services, and Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

For a complete list of the degrees (including official concentrations for which learning-outcomes should be pursued), minor, certificate, and credential programs in question, please access the University’s web site, proceed to “Academics” (www.csus.edu/Academics/index.html), and then to the lower left corner of the page, to the section on “Degrees and Programs” (undergraduate, graduate). Important Note: Some of the degree concentrations and options on the list are not “official,” i.e., are not noted on the graduate’s transcript. These presently will not be considered “programs.” Don
Taylor will be in touch with the chairs of departments with such concentrations and options to clarify their status.

*Please complete the template on the following pages for every program on the list cited above, even if the same goals and assessment processes apply to each program under your department’s umbrella. If for some reason your program has not been listed, please contact your dean and Don Taylor (dtaylor@csus.edu) immediately.*

Every department or stand-alone program offering an undergraduate degree must have designated learning outcomes and direct or indirect measures by which to determine whether or not the desired outcomes are being achieved. Nearly all such departments and programs have on record an “assessment report” submitted to Academic Affairs in July, 2011. Information provided on the template below should be in harmony with the information provided in that report. Some departments and programs were permitted to forego submission of a report in July because they were in the process of an accreditation review which seeks information on learning outcomes and assessment efforts. Each is asked now to complete the template, translating accreditation information into information comparable to that provided by the other programs completing the template.

While undergraduate degree programs clearly fall within the learning-outcomes framework, the situation regarding graduate and credential degree programs is less clear. They presently vary (are permitted to vary) in the extent to and manner in which they set desired learning outcomes and assessment strategies. Graduate and credential programs are asked to complete the template to the degree applicable; if entirely inapplicable, please so indicate at the top of the template and provide a statement that clarifies the reasons for the inapplicability. Include in the statement of inapplicability reference to item 6 in the template.

Minor and certificate programs also vary in attention to learning outcomes and assessment strategies. Such programs are asked to complete the template to the degree applicable; if entirely inapplicable, please so indicate at the top of the template and provide a statement that clarifies the reasons for the inapplicability.

*Please download and complete the template and send it electronically to Don Taylor (dtaylor@csus.edu) by January 25, 2012.*

Thank you.

Joseph F. Sheley, Provost
Template

Program: Undergraduate/Minor

Department: Criminal Justice

Number of students enrolled in the program in fall, 2011-76

Faculty member completing template: Hugh Wilson, Chair  Date: January 25, 2012

Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present

1. Please describe your program’s learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program?

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less]

The Criminal Justice offers a concentration of the curriculum to students wanting a Minor in Criminal Justice. The minor requires 21 Criminal justice units, and students must be a declared CRJ major or minor. The curriculum, periodically reviewed by the Curriculum Committee has evolved in concert with changes made to the wider curriculum. Admission to the minor may be restricted in Fall 12 due to impaction status of the Division.

To date, no formal program assessment, including data collection, has occurred specifically in respect to the Minor.

2. Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes (“takeaways” concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.

a)

b)

c)

d)

[Please limit your response per outcome to 300 words or less]

3. For undergraduate programs only, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible.

[Please limit your response to 400 words or less]
4. For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:
   a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.
   b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.
   c) Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.
   d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

   [Please limit your response to 200 words or less per learning outcome]

   (If the requested data and/or analysis are not yet available for any of the learning outcomes, please explain why and describe the plan by which these will occur. Please limit your response to 500 words or less.)

5. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

   [Please limit your response to 200 words or less per item]

   a) 
   b) 
   c) 
   d) 

6. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

   [Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

7. Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization?

   [Please limit your response to 300 words or less]
8. Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less]
9. *For undergraduate programs only*, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible.

**[Please limit your response to 400 words or less]**

10. For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:

   a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.
   b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.
   c) Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.
   d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

   **[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per learning outcome]**

   *(If the requested data and/or analysis are not yet available for any of the learning outcomes, please explain why and describe the plan by which these will occur. Please limit your response to 500 words or less.)*

11. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

   **[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per item]**
   a)
12. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur. [Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

13. Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization? [Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

14. Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment? [Please limit your response to 200 words or less]