Question 6

Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program Review; Assessment; Use of Data and Evidence

**6.1 Assessment**

***6.1.1 Annual Assessment (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)***

6.1.1.1 History of Annual Assessment - Since 2006, departments offering majors for undergraduate degrees and graduate programs have been required to conduct annual assessments focusing on one on or more Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs). All department PSLOs are published in the University Catalog as of 2008. The oversight of assessment has evolved on the campus. From the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Fellow (LOAF) position created in 2008, to the combined efforts of the LOAF and the GE Assessment Coordinator (both appointed faculty positions), into the Director of Assessment in 2012, the campus has placed an increased amount of attention to assessment and assessment practices and policies. In 2014, the campus hired a University Assessment Specialist, a full-time staff position devoted solely to all assessment efforts on campus. While assessment oversight has continued to evolve over the years, assessment efforts on campus have continued to evolve as well. Over the last five years, colleges, departments, and programs have worked to refine missions and PSLOs, create curriculum maps, and develop sustainable assessment practices. It is important to note that early efforts of the LOAF and GE Assessment Coordinator were integral to shifting the culture around assessment activities and encouraging departments and programs to ask assessment questions that were meaningful to them. The LOAF also worked with departments on annual reports that described how student learning was measured, the results of the assessments, and how these assessment findings led to improvement of student learning. By 2012, the majority of departments were submitting annual assessment reports, which meant that the process had become part of the culture at CSUSM.

After a year of planning in 2012, assessment timelines were developed by all programs, ideally to align with Program Review activities which are typically on a five year cycle between reviews. Departments assess all PSLOs in the five-year period, and then have one year to integrate findings to support their next program review. Regular assessment processes resumed in 2012 and numerous collaborative workshops were held by Academic Programs and the Faculty Center to support further PSLO revision and timeline development by departments. For example, in Fall 2012 forty faculty members attended a three-hour assessment workshop conducted by Dr. Michelle Saint-Germain (from CSULB) to begin work on assessment plans. Throughout the 2012-2013 academic year “Help from Hands-on Workshops” were held with the Director of Assessment (44 faculty attended at least one of these additional workshops). And a very successful Discovery Café focused on University wide learning outcomes was held in September 2013 (65 attendees). Eight follow-up mini workshops were also held during Fall 2013 with 28 faculty attending at least one workshop.

6.1.1.2 Assessing the Assessment System **-** In March of 2013, CSUSM’s Director of Academic Assessment was selected to be a member of Cohort IV of the WASC Assessment Leadership Academy (ALA). As her culminating project for the WASC ALA, the Director of Academic Assessment engaged in a comprehensive review of CSUSM’s existing assessment system, resulting in the preparation of a Campus Assessment Self-Study Report (possible Appendix 6.x 6.x – Self-study Report) in January of 2014. The report concluded that data were being generated by the campus but were not consistently used for evidence-based decision making, a finding that reflected considerations shared by the [WASC Interim Report Committee](http://www.csusm.edu/wasc/reports/wasc_interim_report_committee_action_letter_121207.pdf). The Director’s report also offered recommendations for improvement, including the establishment of a committee with university-wide representation to oversee assessment efforts, the identification of assessment leads within programs, increased investment in assessment training for Faculty, and better channels of communication with key decision makers across the campus.

The Director of Assessment left the position in January 2013, and recognizing the necessity to have an administrator oversee this role, CSUSM’s Dean of Academic Programs became the WASC Accreditation Liaison Officer and assumed oversight of campus assessment efforts. Following up with recommendations from the WASC Interim Report and the Director of Assessment, in May of 2014, a University Assessment Council (UAC), comprised of the Dean for Academic Programs, Associate Deans and appointed Faculty from each College, and other key contributors, was convened with the goal of distributing oversight of and accountability for assessment of student learning. The council’s charge, delivered by the Provost, is to: a) lead and coordinate campus assessment efforts; b) disseminate best practices; c) develop a central repository for assessment resources, information, and materials; d) review assessment plans and reports, and share results with the campus community; and e) investigate assessment software that may be appropriate for CSUSM’s assessment needs (possible Appendix 6.x – Minutes from UAC Meeting on 5/2). Subcommittees, each with specific goals, were formed at the first Fall 2014 meeting of the UAC (possible Appendix 6.x – Minutes from UAC Meeting on 9/15).

In June of 2014, CSUSM began a search for a University Assessment Specialist, a new role to reside in Academic Programs. The job description was shaped after a similar position in the College of Education, Health & Human Services (CEHHS), which was filled in November 2013 to address assessment needs related to the College’s multiple discipline-specific accreditations. The search for the University Assessment Specialist culminated in the successful hire of an experienced assessment professional in August of 2014. The University Assessment Specialist serves as an expert in assessment, an educator in assessment practice, and a resource for Faculty, staff, and administrators engaged in assessment activities across the University. This marked a significant departure from CSUSM’s previous model, in which one Faculty member was released from coursework in return for both overseeing and supporting the campus’s varied assessment initiatives. In the new model, the UAC will provide the needed oversight and the University Assessment Specialist will provide expertise and support.

Funding for assessment also increased with the 2014-15 academic year. CSUSM continues to offer funds annually to degree programs engaged in PSLO assessment, and is now also providing three units of release time, per semester, to the six Faculty members serving on the UAC. Furthermore, the University continues to offer stipends and cover the cost of training for Faculty serving on the Core Competency Team, which is responsible for assessment of CSUSM seniors’ written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, and information literacy. Additional funds have been approved to be used for assessment training, including travel to and attendance at assessment conferences, and Academic Programs will continue its practice of partnering with the Faculty Center to deliver on-campus assessment workshops to assist Faculty with annual assessment activities and enhance assessment literacy (possible Appendix 6.x – Workshop Description and/or Schedule).

6.1.1.3 Current State of Annual Assessment - CSUSM has made considerable progress in developing, evaluating, and revising its assessment system in an effort to make the process of assessing student learning both manageable and meaningful. These efforts have dramatically improved participation in annual assessment, increasing from 66% participating in AY 2009-2010 to 88% participation in AY 2014-15. In 2013-14, we returned to a regular cycle of PSLO assessment planning and reporting. The UAC reviewed the reports submitted by programs in May of 2014, and the results are promising. Selected highlights follow (these examples could be placed in an Appendix 6.x if space is needed):

* The Bachelor of Science in Business Administration used a combination of rubrics and tests to assess three of the PSLOs. Based on data from the Fall semester, the program implemented mid-year interventions and observed improvement in students’ ability to orally communicate in an effective and professional manner (Appendix 6.x or Link – BS Business Administration 2013-14 Assessment Report).
* The Bachelor of Arts in Women’s Studies used a rubric to assess senior students’ performance on a semester-long capstone project and discovered that students’ performance was less than satisfactory in the area of intersectional analysis; these results will be shared with the Women’s Studies faculty and with interested students in Fall 2014 in order to develop specific action items (Appendix 6.x or Link – BA Women’s Studies 2013-14 Assessment Report).
* The Bachelor of Arts in Human Development designed a multiple choice instrument to measure students’ understanding of the psychological and biological factors that impact development, and found that students’ scores on psychological factor items significantly improved from year one to year four, but scores on questions about biological factors did not (Appendix 6.x or Link – BA Human Development 2013-14 Assessment Report).
* The Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies used the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines to determine that students in upper level foreign language courses demonstrated the required intermediate-high proficiency level in a second language, but they observed that students did not always use their skills to gain further knowledge of other cultures. Resulting recommendations included increased visibility of the learning outcome in course syllabi, and a workshop or colloquium focused on the teaching of culture and associated learning tasks (Appendix 6.x or Link – BA Global Studies 2013-14 Assessment Report). This program is also undergoing program review and will revisit these recommendations in Spring 2015.
* The Master of Science in Computer Science gathered data from a variety of course-embedded assignments to assess student learning in a course offered online for the first time. The program used its findings to reflect on the effectiveness of the online modality in supporting student learning. The program ultimately decided to discontinue the online version of the course; instead, the program intends to collaborate with CSUSM’s Instructional & Information Technology Services (IITS) to increase the hands-on nature of the traditional course (Appendix 6.x or Link – MS Computer Science 2013-14 Assessment Report).
* Trends across programs have also been observed, with multiple programs indicating that their assessment efforts indicated room for improvement of students’ abilities to apply appropriate theoretical frameworks to research (Appendices or Links - BA Political Science, MA LTWR, MA Psychology 2013-14 Assessment Reports).

6.1.1.4 Annual Assessment Looking Forward **-** The variety of approaches used by programs to assess student learning demonstrate ingenuity and curiosity with regard to assessment, and the additional support provided by the UAC, University Assessment Specialist, and workshops will help faculty to refine their methods and become even more proficient assessment practitioners. In particular, the University recognizes that it needs to continue to develop infrastructure for the campus community to share results and best practices across divisions and departments. Another area that we have identified needs further work is helping departments to “close the loop” on their assessment activities. The new University Assessment Specialist and the UAC will be key components in providing a structure to support departments and colleges to share their findings and make improvements within their majors and courses. Work has already begun to refine assessment activity, developing methods that are sustainable and informs pedagogy, curriculum, and the program. The University Assessment Specialist meets with departments one-on-one to assist with the review of the collected data and to develop targeted programmatic improvements that impact student learning.

***6.1.2 General Education Assessment (CFRs 2.2a, 4.1)***

Like other programs on the CSUSM campus, General Education has had to undergo much self-evaluation in order to ascertain goals, learning outcomes, and an overall collective understanding of the purpose and value of programmatic assessment efforts.

CSUSM’s General Education program is rather large (400+ courses) and it is no small effort to establish policy and procedure while allowing for faculty input, revisions, and more input. A process to develop a general education assessment system was first addressed in 2008 when the CSU Chancellor’s office mandated that all GE programs in CSU align with the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) goals developed by AAC&U. On the CSUSM campus, this transferred into articulating each GE area (A, B, C, etc.) and course faculty identifying course learning outcomes that supported the specific GE area. The General Education Committee (GEC), an Academic Senate standing committee, was tasked with developing a method for courses to report the alignment of the course learning outcomes (LOs) with LEAP outcomes, as well as the GE area. In addition, as a result, the GEC was tasked with certifying new GE courses and recertifying over 100 existing GE courses, ensuring that each aligns with the appropriate GE area. [Appendix 6.x GE forms (C1, C2, C3, etc.]

In Fall 2013, nine GE Program Student Learning Outcomes (Appendix ?.xGEPSLOs), enveloping the five “Core Competencies” as noted by WASC, and intended to provide a basis from which GE programmatic assessment could be developed, were accepted by the GEC and taken to the Academic Senate by the GEC chair. The GEPSLOs are considered a “working document” and were also accepted by the Academic Senate with the understanding that the GEPSLOs are to be continually reviewed and revised when necessary.

Meanwhile, development of University Learning Outcomes (ULOs) was begun in Fall 2013 through the initial work of a small team of faculty and the Dean of Academic Programs with input from faculty across campus via a “Discovery Cafe.” A draft of the ULOs was presented to the Academic Senate in Spring 2014, followed by several revisions. In Fall 2014, a final draft was presented to Academic Senate, and the Senate voted to adopt the ULOs as Undergraduate Learning Outcomes only. Therefore, development of Graduate Learning Outcomes (GLOs) has begun in Spring 2015. As a result of the ULO adoption, learning on campus has been aligned, and a clearer compass for where assessment of student learning is headed on campus is provided in [APPENDIX 6.X XXX].

GE Going Forward - Assessment of the General Education program on CSUSM’s campus has been inconsistent, at best. However, with the adopted GEPSLOs and ULOs, the campus can finally move forward with a plan to systematically measure student learning in General Education courses.

A proposed plan was developed by the University Assessment Specialist (UAS) and is based on a triennial schedule that will sample both, upper and lower division courses in each General Education area (A, B, C, D, and E). The plan will cycle through all nine GEPSLOs in a 3-year period, giving each assessment activity two years to evaluate data, recommend and implement changes, and re-measure to close the loop. The complete plan is available in [APPENDIX 6.X XX] but briefly outlined here:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year 1 | Planning, aligning courses, developing tools | GEC, Academic Programs, UAS |
| Year 2 | Phase 1 – Assessment of Area B courses | GEC, course faculty, UAS |
| Year 3 | Phase 2 – Assessment of Area C & E courses  Phase 1 – Collect and aggregate data from Phase 1 | GEC, course faculty, UAS |
| Year 4 | Phase 3 – Assessment of Area A & D courses  Phase 2 – Collect and aggregate data from Phase 2  Phase 1 – Implement any recommended changes to  Phase 1 | GEC, course faculty, Dept/College curriculum committees, UAS |
| Year 5 | Phase 1 – Re-assess changes in Area B courses  Phase 1 – Assessment of Area B courses (next sample)  Phase 3 – Collect and aggregate data from Phase 3  Phase 2 – Implement any recommended changes to  Phase 2 | GEC, course faculty, Dept/College curriculum committees, UAS |

***6.1.3 Other Assessment Activities (CFR 2.11)***

6.1.3.1 Student Affairs - To enhance the partnership between academic coursework and co-curricular programming offered through Student Life & Leadership, Associated Students, Inc., and Residential Education programs, a Co-Curricular Model (CCM) was developed in 2012 and implemented in 2013 after being vetted through various campus constituent groups. The CCM identifies five learning competencies which guide the development and assessment of co-curricular programming:

* Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility
* Leadership & Interpersonal Development
* Career & Professional Development
* Critical Thinking & Ethical Reasoning
* Holistic Wellness.

These competencies are built upon the AACU LEAP initiative and compliment the CSUSM General Education Learning Outcomes, which are also informed by the LEAP initiative. To assess the impact of the CCM in the aggregate, relevant survey items from the 2011 and 2012 NSSE, CIRP Freshmen and Senior Surveys, and NCHA II surveys were identified and form a baseline benchmark for ongoing longitudinal analysis (see Appendix 6.x item).

6.1.3.2 First-year Programs – The Office of First-Year Programs (FYP) designs, implements and supports programs to help first-year students achieve academic excellence in the classroom and develop a deeper understanding of, and commitment to, long-term academic goals. They are dedicated to helping students make a successful transition from the high school classroom to the academic world of higher education. The current goals of FYP is to have first-year students:

* Develop the foundational academic skills necessary to thrive in the Cal State San Marcos lower-division curriculum
* Understand university graduation requirements, including the All-University Writing Requirement and Language Other Than English Requirement.
* Satisfy the CSU English Proficiency Requirement, CSU Mathematics Proficiency Requirement, and the Cal State San Marcos Computer Competency Requirement by the end of their first year.
* Develop and commit to a specific academic plan
* Develop greater participation in the campus community and an increased sense of connection to fellow first-year students and faculty

To support these goals, FYP administers an array of programs to support student learning and the professional development of instructors who teach first-year students. This includes comprehensive college success courses such as GEL 101 (The Student, The University, The Community), summer proficiency programs, an annual professional development conference for instructors teaching first-year students, and a growing number of First-Year Student Learning Communities. FYP works closely with the office of Institutional Planning and Analysis (IPA – discussed in 6.3.1) to assess the effectiveness of many of their activities. These programs have been very successful in increasing retention rates, especially among first-generation students and under-represented minorities (Appendix 6.x ; Fig. 6.x). Based on the assessment data, and student and faculty feedback, GEL has been encouraged to continue growing and to develop specialized sections and learning communities to serve specific groups of FTF.

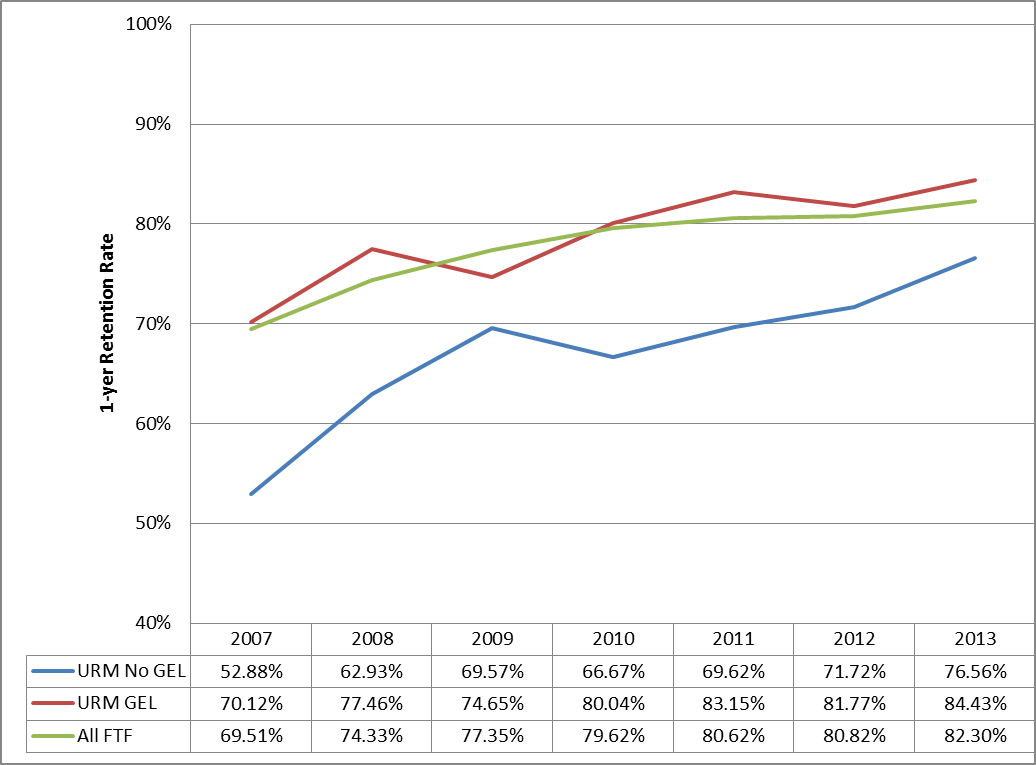


Figure 6.x – One year retention rates of all first-time freshmen (FTF) and under-represented minorities (URM) who did or did not take GEL 101.

**6.2 Program Review**

***(CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7)***

6.2.1 History of the Program Review Process – The CSUSM Degree Program Review (DPR) process was originally implemented in 1997, and revised in 1998 and 2001. In alignment with our aim to strengthen the role of assessment at all levels, and combined with feedback from the last WASC review cycle, the policy was revised significantly in 2011 (for summary of major changes see [PR comparison chart](http://www.csusm.edu/assessment/programreview/senate/1pr_old_new_compare_chart_final040611.doc)). As outlined in [Section III. Principles](http://www.csusm.edu/assessment/programreview/senate/programreviewpolicyapproved.effective_2011Aug18.pdf) of the document, our most recent policy highlights the importance of DPR in academic planning, budget and resource allocation. It also recognizes the workload required to deliver a quality program review and dictates financial support from the Provost’s office. The senate approval of our latest DPR Policy, along with the creation of a central Degree Program Review campus website, was commended in the 2012 WASC interim report.

Current Degree Program Review Process - The current review [timeline](http://www.csusm.edu/assessment/programreview/prog_rev_timeline_flowchart.doc) takes approximately two years and includes input and communication with multiple campus groups and support from the Academic Senate Program Assessment Committee (PAC). In the semester prior to commencement of the program review, an initial planning meeting occurs to support the organizers of the program review and to identify needed data. The first year focuses largely on the writing of a self-study (SS) and some administrative review, and the second year includes the external review, further administrative review, and development of a MOU ([detailed flowchart](http://www.csusm.edu/assessment/programreview/prog_rev_timeline_flowchart.doc)).

To assist the development of the SS, IPA provides the program a [Program Data Notebook](http://www.csusm.edu/assessment/programreview/senate/1pr_appendix_a_datanotebooks_final040611.doc) that includes detailed information about students in the major and program faculty. The in-depth review required by the SS includes 1) introduction to the self-study, 2) achieving educational outcomes, 3) developing and applying resources (capacity review), 4) additional themes or special issues selected by the program, and 5) planning for the next five years. This in-depth review of a program’s process toward achieving its stated educational outcomes and programmatic goals, is a critical step for program-level quality assurance. A report and reflection on annual assessments of PSLOs and program-level changes that faculty have implemented based on annual assessment findings is central to the Achieving Educational Effectiveness section of the PR’s SS. The SS also includes a future plan for growth and for addressing program weaknesses and challenges identified in the review.

In addition to the SS, the DPR includes assessments of the program’s strengths and challenges as well as recommendations for its future direction from external reviewers, the Deans of the Library and Instructional and Information Technology Services, the College Dean, and the PAC. The PAC also recommends the length of the next review cycle based on the following criteria specified in the Program Review Policy and Guidelines:

* program adherence to the terms of the previous MOU;
* the degree to which the annual assessments have generated useful data and whether assessment results have been used to make appropriate changes;
* the strengths and challenges identified by the review of educational effectiveness and capacity; and
* the degree to which the five-year plan explicitly and appropriately addresses program challenges and enhances or preserves program strengths.

The three possible recommendations for the length of the next review cycle are:

* **Recommendation to Continue a Program with Notation of Exceptional Quality:** Approval is recommended without reservation and with a notation of specific areas of program promise and excellence. These programs will be recommended for a seven-year review cycle.
* **Recommendation to Continue a Program of Quality and Promise**: Program approval is recommended with identification of specific areas that need to be further developed and a notation of specific areas of achievement. These programs will be recommended for a five-year review cycle.
* **Recommendation of Conditional Continuation**: Conditional approval is recommended with identification of specific areas requiring significant improvement and a reasonable period of time for making these improvements. These programs will be placed on a five-year review cycle with an interim report to be delivered to the AVP-PAA in three years. The contents of the interim report will address the issues raised in the previous review.

The DPR culminates in an MOU, agreed upon by all parties to the review, consisting of steps for improvement to be taken by the program and administration during the next review cycle. Items agreed upon during the MOU process, especially those with resource implications, are then included in College Strategic Plans and submitted to Academic Affairs.

The 2011 PR policy MOU process has resulted in agreement about significant changes for program improvement to be undertaken by program faculty and the University administration. The most common changes include: additional resources for tenure-track faculty and staff hires; enhanced facilities (including laboratories) needed to deliver program curricula; PSLO development and mapping PSLOs to courses on PSLO matrices; development of meaningful assessment strategies that follow the University practice of focusing Annual Assessments on student mastery of program PSLOs; use of Annual Assessment data for program-level change; program restructuring and curriculum development; revisiting inclusion of particular courses as well as the overall extent of program participation in GE.

6.2.2 Status of new DPR process - By the end of the 2014-15 AY nearly half of all academic programs will have completed their reviews under the new policy ([calendar of reviews](http://www.csusm.edu/assessment/programreview/calendar_of_reviews.html)). To this point, the new DPR process appears to be effective as measured by faculty acceptance of the new Policy and appreciation for improvements compared to the previous review process. In particular, faculty recognize that the intent and spirit of DPR is to encourage meaningful reviews consisting of candid assessments of program strengths and challenges and to support efforts to achieve program improvement. Yet, key to determining the effectiveness of the DPR process is the extent to which the results of DPR will actually be used to inform decision making and to improve instruction and student learning outcomes. However, because programs and the administration are still in the process of implementing the terms of the first round of MOUs, the effectiveness of the review process cannot yet be fully determined. Thus, the campus will reach an important milestone at the end of AY 2017/2018 for assessing the effectiveness of the review process when the programs that have undergone review under the new Policy report on the extent to which they and the administration have adhered to the steps agreed upon in the previous review’s MOU. A few minor policy changes have been made to improve the process and timing issues (give details?).

Case Study – Program Review

The B.S. degree in Biology was in the first cohort to undergo the revised DPR process. One of the key findings of the external reviewers, and a noted action item in the MOU, was that the Biological Sciences Department was lacking faculty in a specific instructional and research area. As of Spring 2015, an active search is underway to hire a new tenure-track faculty to fill this noted void.

**6.3 Data Collection, Analysis and Dissemination**

***(CFRs 2.10, 4.2-4.7)***

CSUSM has a strong commitment to make data-driven decisions. This institutional aim requires a coherent and consolidated system to satisfy the needs of campus data aggregation, reporting, analysis, and delivery. The data used for assessment, degree program review, and other investigations are generated by several entities and programs on campus.

6.3.1 Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis - The office of Institutional Planning and Analysis (IPA) is the main office of institutional research for CSUSM. This office is staffed by four analysts and operates under the President’s division. Some of the major duties of IPA are to 1) provide the campus with official data based on student enrollment at census, 2) provide support to procure and evaluate various grants, 3) calculate retention and graduation rates, 4) provide data support for campus initiatives such as the Graduation Initiative, HSI, First Year Programs, OTRES and WASC, 5) oversee and administer local and national survey, 6) manage the faculty course evaluations process, 7) provide data for departments undergoing degree program review, and 8) provide data for IPEDS and for our system office. IPA maintains a comprehensive survey portfolio that, when combined with other institutional data, provides robust insight and analysis of high impact educational practices related to civic and community engagement (Appendix 6.x surveys). This portfolio includes national surveys such as the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE), the Higher Education Research Institution’s Freshman Survey (TFS) and the follow-up College Senior Survey (CSS). In addition, IPA administers a graduation survey as well as an alumni survey. These survey instruments, frequently referenced in literature, are proven best practices in assessing and improving the college experience and student learning outcomes. The Freshman Survey is conducted annually and the NSSE and College Senior Survey are conducted biennially, in opposite years. Results are shared broadly and used at all levels of administration and with all faculty to assess and refine practice. Starting in Spring 2015, the campus will add the Diverse Learning Environments Survey to its portfolio.

Case Study –Data Driven Decisions

The Undeclared Learning Community (ULC) was launched by First-Year Programs in Fall 2011 to support undeclared /undecided freshmen. These students were block enrolled into GE – Life Long Learning and Information Literacy (GEL 101) and GE –Oral Communication (GEO 102). IPA generated data illustrated the increased 1-YR retention of ULC participant (yellow bar) over all first-time freshmen (red bar) and all undeclared (orange bar). This finding, along with student and faculty feedback, led to the expansion of the ULC program in successive years.

Results from these surveys are routinely shared with Division Vice Presidents, deans, First Year Programs and other relevant offices on campus. Summaries of survey findings are posted on the IPA website. IPA also prepares specialized reports with disaggregated survey findings to meet the needs of specialized constituents such as HSI, the Gradation Initiative Steering Committee, Office of Undergraduate Studies and Program Review. Finally, IPA maintains a robust [website](http://www.csusm.edu/ipa/) to provide easy access to data such as information about new and currently enrolled students, retention and graduation rates, degree reports, Common Data Sets and information about the course evaluation process.

6.3.2 Instructional and Information Technology Services – The Instructional and Information Technology Services (IITS) division is responsible for the management and support of technology throughout the campus. The university’s commitment to be a learning organization and a data informed decision-making university was further institutionalized in the 2012 [Information Technology Strategic Plan](http://www.csusm.edu/president/plans/ITStrategicPlan2012.pdf). The governance structure of the IT Strategic Plan includes an information management steering committee, of which the vice president for community engagement serves as a member. Further, an interdisciplinary data team with representatives from Institutional Planning & Analysis (IPA), Instructional and Information Technology Services, the registrar, enrollment management services and other key data stewards regularly meet to review campus data needs. This collaboration facilitates the development of mechanisms for reporting, assessing and informing the campus about across key engagement practices, institutional planning, and student progress and success. The information management strategy is an exemplar of CSUSM’s commitment to measurement and assessment, and to alignment of these activities across key goals and institutional priorities.

One of the four themes of the Information Technology Strategic Plan is Theme B - Informing Decisions with Data. The aim of this theme is to use campus technology to collect, analyze and distribute data to inform decisions across the campus about metrics for forecasting course/facility/enrollment demand, student success, the efficacy of learning delivery models and financial reports key to fundraising activities. By providing dashboards for various data libraries, faculty, staff, students and administrators can have rapid and easy access to data.

One example of a data dashboard used on campus is the Reporting and Data Analytics Repository (RaDAR) program. Whereas IPA is responsible for census and survey data, the campus also utilizes “live” data in its decision-making. In 2009, it was recognized that there was a strong need for easy access to live data and self-service reports by a multitude of users. RaDAR was developed as a solution to this problem and IITS moved forward to provide a data warehousing environment where the primary goals of developing RaDAR were to 1) provide a central repository of relevant data and reports, 2) provide a mechanism of data retrieval accessible by the public and campus community, 3) allow for the timely retrieval of data while incorporating security, scalability and usability, and 4) allow for groups to retrieve data tailored to their programmatic level. Since 2009, the RaDAR project has created over 30 reports (Appendix 6.x). The reports are used by faculty, staff and administrators based on users’ security access. All reports are easily accessible through the RaDAR [website](https://radar.csusm.edu/). The current RaDAR data sources include PeopleSoft Student data (refreshed nightly with updated data) and static data including Enrollment Reporting System (ERS) files (based on census), applicant files (ERSA), and Degree files.

The use of RaDAR reports demonstrates the campus’ willingness to use data for campus decisions. We are able to monitor the number of reports run, which reports are run the most, and also who is using the portal. The top 10 reports (Appendix 6.x) are ones that provide the campus with data on program evaluation, student admissions and student enrollment. Compiling usage data allowed us to assess the utilization of RaDAR and revealed that although some individual users frequently use RaDAR, many who could benefit geatly from RaDAR data never use it. For example, several RaDAR reports are helpful for predicting course demand and enrollment growth; associate deans of the four colleges are among the top users, yet few department chairs use RaDAR. While the abilities of RaDAR have been presented to department chairs, it may take more one-on-one training to get them comfortable using this helpful resource.

RaDAR has also increase efficiency and timeliness of key data. For example, the RaDAR Team worked closely with IPA to development the Program Review Data Notebook with the information needed for DPR as well as reports that provide the latest degrees awarded. The RaDAR website also provides an online Data Request form that gets routed to the appropriate data stewards on campus. Since its inception in Spring 2012, the campus has processed over 200 data requests. Some requests are queries for individual use and other requests are RaDAR reports depending on the complexity and audience of the data.

6.3.3 Community Engagement Data - The CSUSM community engagement division maintains primary responsibility for tracking and documenting institutional engagement. This includes tracking and reporting on faculty engagement scholarship development grants and outcomes, institutional partnerships (as evidenced in the partnership grid template), community service learning using the S4 database http://calstates4.com/, and the use of other less formal systems to track engagement with community partner organizations and individuals. The data and information are used to assess the impact and effectiveness of new and continuing partnerships, develop communications, and construct the annual budget request for the university budget process for the Division of Community Engagement and/or campus-wide engagement initiatives. The campus still needs to develop a mechanism for tracking faculty engagement service or scholarship that falls outside of the engagement scholarship grants process. This must be integrated with the current faculty activity reporting system and the RTP process to ensure convenience of use and encourage accurate and complete reporting. Discussions are in the formative stage.

6.3.4 Data Looking Forward – CSUSM has a multitude of data programs, surveys, collection practices, and dashboards.   IITS is expanding the existing RaDAR system to provide more sophisticated data presentation layers to assist in the data analytics of Academic Predictors and High Impact Practices.  The goal is the delivery of dashboards and tools that answer questions required to improve graduation rates and identify at-risk students.  IITS is also in the midst of implementing Degree Planner, an interactive online eAdvising tool that functions in PeopleSoft to help students be more proactive with their course planning. The intent is to aid students in completing their degree quicker and more effectively while also providing the campus with course need information for enrollment planning.