Overview: What is the "CIP" and what does it do?

The course improvement plan (CIP) documents faculty discussion and analysis of course learning outcome (CLO) data. It captures proposed improvements to student learning. It also documents improvements to course assessment, including modifications to existing assessment tools and rubrics, suggestions for new assessment tools and rubrics and modifications to the course learning outcomes (CLOs).

Via program review, these improvements are documented and shared. They inform planning and, when appropriate, drive budget allocation. They are implemented the next time the course is offered.

Every time an MSJC course is assessed, at least three (3) CLOs are utilized. For each CLO, every section of the course uses the same assessment tool*. A single, common rubric is utilized to score every student*. Utilizing the same tool and rubric ensures comparability of student performance across all course sections. Unlike final course grades, which do not necessarily provide this "apples to apples" comparability, CLO data provides a "level playing field", promoting faculty discussion and analysis that lead to genuine, authentic and course-wide instructional delivery and support improvements. For both the course and program, this improves student learning, performance and achievement.

When improvements require funding beyond the annual program budget, the CIP, via program review, ties analysis of learning outcome results to district funding allocation through our Resource Allocation Proposal/Prioritization Allocation Rubric process (or, "RAP/PAR process", for short!).

*When online sections require different assessment tools and rubrics than the face-to-face sections, all online sections utilize the same assessment tool and rubric.

The Fall 2016 CIP Instructions Start Now!

Important: Before you can enter your responses in this template, you’ll first need to

1. e-mail the CIP data (Academic or CTE), CIP Input Template (download “CIP Input Template F16”) and assessment tool to all faculty who taught the course (to capture their input in the CIP),
2. collect the responses from these faculty members and
3. access eLumen to view the Sections Improvement Plans (SIPs) for the course (so this input is included in the CIP as well). Here are the instructions.

If you do not have a copies of the assessment tools used last semester, contact your department chair. If you chair does not have copies, Paul Hert might so contact him: phert@msjc.edu

The Fall 2017 CIP Template is housed in eLumen. Therefore you will need to log into eLumen (using Chrome or Firefox) to access the CIP template. Here’s a link to the instructions for doing so.

Once you have opened the template for a particular course (one template per course, please; do not enter responses for multiple courses in a single template), enter the dates the data discussion and analysis took place.
Step-by-Step Instructions for Completing the Fall CIP.  
Due Date: **21 April 2017**

For example, if you did the analysis in a department meeting on February 12, 2017, just put: “2/12/17 – Department Meeting”. If the analysis took place via e-mail from February 4 through March 20, say, just put: “2/4/17 – 3/20/17 via e-mails.” **Reminder: The CIPs are due 21 April 2017.** Enter your dates here (just click inside the text field for “Date(s)”, where you see light, not dark, “Response”, and start typing!):

![ACCT F16 CIPs](image)

**IMPORTANT:** Before you continue, you may have noticed that our example template from the Accounting (“ACCT”) courses in our Business program lists four courses: 076, 124, 124H and 128:

![ACCT F16 CIPs](image)

For each program, this “CIP list” contains all courses that were assessed last semester; therefore it indicates the number of times you are to complete (a fresh copy of) the CIP template. For ACCT, that will be four times, once for each of the four courses in the list. Within eLumen, once all four templates are complete, a single program document (i.e. the compilation of all the (four) individual course templates) will exist. So, please remember to fill out a separate template for each course; **please do not enter responses from different courses into one template.** Once you have completed the template for a course, save the draft ( or submit it if you are the only author), return
to the “Org Management” in eLumen, scroll down to the next course in the CIP list, and open a new copy of the template. Click here for instructions for doing so.

**NOTE:** Please save your work often by clicking on “Save Draft” at the bottom of the template. If you inadvertently transfer control from the template itself, you could lose everything you’ve typed!

Next, list the full-time faculty participants (including temporary full-timers) in the second text field:

Now enter the associate faculty participants in third text field. **NOTE:** If you had input from consultants, professionals or other non-full-time faculty members, enter their names and titles here as well:

Once you and your colleagues have viewed the CLO data, you can analyze it and suggest improvements to student learning and the assessment process. These improvements will be implemented the next time the course is taught and/or assessed. Once that discussion, which may occur as a face-to-face meeting, an e-mail thread (using the “CIP Input Template F16”) or phone conference is complete, you should be able to fill in the rest of the template.
Next, you are asked to provide feedback regarding the assessment process. Specifically, did the assessment tool and corresponding rubric function appropriately? Was this the case for every CLO? **NOTE:** There are typically three (3) CLOs assessed per course. Please include **all** these CLOs in your discussion and analysis below. Also, there are three (3) separate text fields for the assessment responses so you may wish to review them all now so you can organize your input by placing it in the appropriate boxes. Finally, please make sure you include input from the section improvement plans (SIPs) in eLumen; here is a link to those instructions.

First, with regard to the assessment tool (i.e. the paper, short answer or multiple choice questions, student project or performance (e.g. speech, dance), etc.), did it effectively measure student learning, performance and/or achievement of the CLO? Did it capture the fundamental values, habits, knowledge or traits embodied by the CLO? Were its instructions clear to all instructors and students? Did it measure more than just completion of a class assignment?

If not, did it cover too much or too little student learning? Are improvements to the assessment tool necessary to create a better rubric? For example, using a 3-2-1 rubric, does the assessment tool lead to a rubric that ensures every instructor can differentiate between strong (3), moderate (2) or poor (1) student learning, for every student?

Please document modifications or enhancements necessary to improve the assessment tools, for all (3) CLOs assessed, in the fourth text field:

Next, did the **rubric** (i.e. the common point scale used by all faculty) function adequately? If not, the next time the assessment is used, does the rubric need to be improved, perhaps by modifying the point scale range and/or the definitions for the individual scale scores?

For example, if the grading scale range is currently 1 – 4, should it be decreased (to 1 – 3 perhaps) or increased (to 1 – 5)? If so, why will such an improvement make the rubric easier for faculty to use? Why will accuracy in measuring student achievement increase?

If the grading scale is appropriate, perhaps the definition for individual scores need to be modified. For example, using a 1 – 3 grading scale, suppose the definitions for the “2” and “3” overlap or do not capture all possible "2” and "3” scores. Are the definitions unclear or too complex for an instructor to score consistently, or for different
instructors to assign the same score to similar student work? Explain how improving the definitions will simplify scoring for faculty and lead to more consistent scoring by each faculty member.

Please document these (and any other) improvements to the rubric here:

Now that the improvements to the current assessment and rubric have been documented, what about utilizing other assessment tools? Are there other assessments that should be considered for measuring these CLOs? Perhaps multiple choice questions are being used when a performance, project or paper would be more appropriate. Maybe the timing of the assessment during the semester needs to be changed. Please document the results of this discussion, including all proposed improvements, here:

NOTE: If the preceding discussion has indicated a change to the CLOs (download the CLO refresher “When is a CLO Not a CLO?” here) for this course (addition, modification, or deletion of one or more CLOs), please note that in the previous text field and contact Paul Hert (phert@msjc.edu). He will assist you in updating these CLOs.
If you are not sure whether a change to your CLOs is warranted, consider the following:

1. **If a CLO has an "and" that separates two important yet separate tasks, like "analyze and explain" or "compare and evaluate", an assessment tool that does both will likely generate a rubric that is too large or unwieldy.** For example, if a three-scale rubric is used, and a score of 2 is earned when the student completes one task but not the other, the rubric will fail to differentiate a student who only "analyzed" from one who only "explained". In this case, to determine whether more students failed to "analyze" than "explain", employing examples of actual student work will be required in addition to the CLO data to complete the assessment analysis.

2. **For many CTE courses, as well as sequential courses like those in math and foreign language, the CLOs may be very similar to the curriculum course learning objectives.** However, in general, the learning outcomes and course objectives should not be the same (word for word!). A course learning objective is typically intentional and broad; its statement may not be easily measurable and may contain an "and" that connects separate tasks, making it unsuitable for use as a (single) outcome. An outcome is achievable and tends to be more specific; its statement is measurable and concise, making it more likely to spawn assessment tools and rubrics that yield clear learning improvements.

3. **Particularly for general education (GE) courses, at least one CLO should not be course content-based.** By emphasizing behaviors or values imparted during the course learning experiences, this CLO, rather than focusing on the content, might use it as a vehicle to convey "life-long" knowledge, traits or preferences that transcend the course and, possibly, the program. CLOs like this more fully measure the long-term, permanent and fundamental knowledge gained by "life-long learners" and more easily tie to our core competencies (institutional learning outcomes).

4. **If a CLO yields only a two-scale rubric, which measures only whether a student completed a particular task or not, the CLO should be broadened (and associated assessment tool and rubric modified).** Reporting whether a student completed an assignment or not is not assessment of a measurable learning outcome! *If scoring your CLOs feels only like meaningless book-keeping or additional grading of course content, your CLOs probably need to be improved!*

**IMPORTANT: To ensure all instructors include the same CLOs in their syllabi every semester, the deadline for changing CLOs for use in the following semester is typically near the end of the current semester. This semester, the deadline for changing your CLOs for use in fall 2017 is 19 May 2017.**

Whew! That's it for the first six text fields; only five left! Not it’s time to document the discussion of the data analysis and resulting suggestions for improvement. After examining and discussing the aggregate CLO scores, **how will student learning, performance and achievement on these CLOs be improved the next time this course is offered?**

**NOTE:** If your CLO scores were lower than you had hoped, and the CLO data alone is insufficient to identify student learning deficiencies, looking at actual examples of student work should help. These are housed by Institutional Effectiveness; contact Paul Hert (phert@msjc.edu) and he will send them to you!

Your response is documented in two parts. First, what changes to the pedagogy, curriculum, student support, faculty support or other changes are being considered?

**IMPORTANT:** Over time, it is crucial that your assessment analysis produce improvements. If your current assessment tools, rubrics and CLOs are not producing improvements, implementing the changes you've documented above should do so the next time the course is assessed. Otherwise, please take time with your colleagues to identify potential improvements (e.g. curriculum modifications, changing textbooks, scheduling a
class to from regular length to short-term (or vice versa) or to meet more often (or less often) each week, utilizing learning communities, supplemental instruction or student tutoring, etc.) and include them here:

Next, when the above adjustments are implemented (the next time the course is taught), what will the expected improvement in student learning be? Will students write or communicate more effectively, or more often complete an algorithm of necessary steps completely, and in order? Please be specific and enter that response here:

Is there any additional funding, above and beyond the program’s current budget, needed to facilitate the adjustments that will lead to improvement(s)? If so, you'll need to fill out a RAP (Resource Allocation Proposal)!! Please note this here (and contact Paul Hert for assistance (phert@msjc.edu) completing the RAP template):
Almost there! Nine text fields down, two to go...

The final two questions move beyond course-level to program-level and institutional-level assessment. The first of these involves curriculum mapping. An appropriate curriculum map ensures that a CLO is introduced in introductory courses, then practiced in intermediate courses and later mastered in advanced courses.* If your current curriculum map needs fine-tuning, to ensure that students experience the necessary learning in your courses and this occurs at an appropriate pace and in an orderly fashion so learning of the CLO is maximized by the time they finish the course sequence, please indicate this is and how the curriculum map will be modified:

*One way to measure this improvement is to use the same CLO at all three levels, utilizing a rubric whose scale encompasses the range of learning achieved throughout the course sequence.

Finally (and this is the end...really! The end is not just near...it's HERE!), do any of your CLOs need to be modified to better "align" with your program learning outcomes (PLOs) or the institution's core competencies (CCs, formerly ILOs (Institutional Learning Outcomes)). That is, do your current CLOs naturally connect to/support/buttress your PLOs? When students score well on a particular CLO, do those students now better demonstrate or more fully embody one or more of your PLOs?
Is the same true for your CLOs as they relate to the institution’s CCs? Does success on the CLOs make students more likely to practice critical thinking skills, communicate more effectively, display increased social awareness and be more responsible, both personally and civically? If not, what modifications to the CLOs need to occur to more tightly connect them to the MSJC CCs? Please enter your response for CLOs and their connection to both PLOs and CCs here:

Congratulations! You are all done! Thank you for your participation! If you have questions, comments or suggested improvements, please send them to Paul Hert: phert@msjc.edu.

**SUGGESTION:** If you have not done so already, include your students in the planning and improvements of our CLO assessment process. Share your rubrics with them and get their feedback. You will likely find that once they know exactly what you expect of them, they will meet your expectations more often!

31 March 2017, v2