Although there are myriad and complex reasons why assessment at CSUSB was viewed negatively by most faculty and staff, most adverse feelings appeared to stem from perceptions of assessment as:

- Top-down, meaningless mandates
- Exercises in box-checking
- Only about accountability and/or accreditation
- Wasted time
- Wholly unconnected to teaching and learning
- Prescriptive

With this model, there was little to no time or cause for reflection, no intrinsic drive to delve into programs’ effectiveness, no space for discussion or improvements…and any focus on students was completely lost in the process.

To shift existing negative connotations surrounding assessment, faculty and staff needed to see the value in adopting a continual improvement process, one that honored their areas of expertise, leveraged the good work they were already doing, and kept students front and center.

The approaches highlighted here—along with a strong desire to empower offices and departments to take charge of their own assessment efforts for the betterment of their own programs—has enabled campus to move forward in terms of establishing a culture of assessment. More faculty and student support services professionals are engaging in thoughtful reflection and conversation, building their own bridges for continual improvement.

Keywords:
- program design
- assessment
- continual improvement
- building assessment capacity

Contact
Joanna M. Oxendine, M.Ed.
Institutional Effectiveness Associate
Office of Institutional Research
Joanna.Oxendine@csusb.edu
(909) 537-3750