

2020 Annual Program Review

Program Name: Counseling Department

Program Review Author: Laurie Guglielmo, Chairperson

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: In one or two paragraphs, provide a description of the primary goals of your program or service area. Attach an appendix to describe your program or service area in more detail, if needed.

Note: If no changes have occurred, feel free to copy and paste from your last review. If it exists, feel free to copy the brief description of your program from the college catalog: <http://www.smc.edu/CollegeCatalog/Pages/default.aspx>

The Counseling Department is committed to student equity, learning, awareness and development. We actively contribute to the broader, academic mission of the college by fostering a safe, inclusive and diverse learning community through instruction and counseling service. Counseling addresses the educational, career development and psycho-social needs of Santa Monica College students. Instruction of the counseling curriculum is also provided to the entire student population. Our curriculum covers a wide range of course topics, including study skills, an orientation seminar, career development, job search skills and overall student success skills, just to name a few. Our UC/CSU transferable Couns.20 (Student Success Seminar) course is very popular, in the Fall term, it is routinely the 2nd or 3rd most popular course. In this course alone, we enroll approximately 3500 students in 120 sections per academic year

General academic and personal counseling services, workshop presentations and specialized referrals are provided in twenty-four different locations, both on and off-campus. Special Programs are subject to their own program review processes, but all of the below-listed counseling services are ultimately under the auspices of the Counseling Department. The twenty-four centers, satellite campuses, departments and/or programs that involve specialized counseling services are:

- Associated Students
- Athletics Program
- Bachelor's Degree – IxD Counseling & Design Technology Programs- CMD
- Black Collegians Program
- CalWORKs
- CARE (Cooperative Agencies and Resources for Education)
- Career Services Center
- Center for Wellness and Well-Being
- Center for Students with Disabilities
- Dreamer's Program
- Early Childhood Education (Teacher Academy)
- EOP&S (Extended Opportunities, Programs & Services)/CARE Program
- Financial Aid
- Guardian Scholar's Program
- Health Sciences/Nursing
- International Education Counseling Center
- Latino/Adelante Program
- Non-Credit ESL program (Bundy Campus)
- Outreach Program
- Pico Partnership
- Scholar's Program
- STEM Program (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

- Transfer/Counseling Center
- Veteran’s Resource Center

II. PROGRESS SINCE LAST REVIEW (LAST YEAR’S OBJECTIVES)

Identify the original objectives from your last review, as well as any objectives that emerged during the year (if applicable). For each objective, determine status and explanation for status.

Objective	Status (Check one)	Status Explanation
Implement “Area of Interest” focused counseling services, infusing this specific counseling approach throughout the department, so that students can receive Area of Interest and pathway program counseling <u>anywhere</u> within department. Examine “theming” to the extent possible, for our Career Counseling course, Couns.12, around the seven areas of interest.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed	In Fall 2020, we will launch the first-ever area of interest counseling group- the STEM area of interest Counseling cluster. We are also in the process of recruiting and training Peer Mentors (SMC students) to serve specifically in the STEM area of interest as of fall 2020. STEM counselors are located throughout the dept, in most counseling programs and areas. It is anticipated that the college will work on launching additional areas of interests incrementally. Obviously, the COVID-19 pandemic and the new “All Remote” environment has interrupted progress towards fully establishing all areas of interest at SMC. We currently have two Couns.12 sections which are themed around the STEM A.O.I.
Improve our existing online counseling services by executing the addition of self-serve appointment scheduling capability to our counseling appointment program as well as adding a "real time" counseling chat feature to our video counseling modality for drop-in students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed	We have now fully implemented a self-serve appointment booking interface which lives on Cosair Connect. The interface is connected to the majority of counseling areas and programs. We have also launched “Video Express” counseling so that students can drop-in to see a video counselor and the chat function is fully available. In addition, we have fully implemented a Drop-in virtual queue (Q-Less) so that students can sign up to see a counselor on a drop-in basis and receive a telephone call back.
Switch all Counseling 20 sections to Online Education Resources instead of the customized textbook by Fall 2020, in order to mitigate textbook costs for our students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed	This goal has now been accomplished! We couldn’t be more happy about it either, given the new “exclusively remote” environment we are now in. We would not want students to have to pay shipping charges on top of \$95 for the customized text!
Click or tap here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed	Click or tap here to enter text.

III. ACHIEVEMENTS

(Optional) List any notable achievements your program accomplished in the last year.

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Like all departments/divisions on campus, the Counseling Department had to move at warp speed to convert all of our services and classes to the online modality in Mar 2020 and many services continue to be added and improved in order to best address the needs of our students. We provide drop-in and appt counseling via the telephone and video, we offer a fully array of online services including preliminary transcript evaluations and online educational plan reviews and all of our classes were reimagined in an online format. We also acclimated to a brand new early intervention system in the Spring via the Starfish GPS program, which involved targeted follow-up and close tracking of students who were referred to Counseling via a substantial pilot group of instructors.

The phrase “Necessity is the mother of invention” never rang truer. Some surprising lessons have been learned in this complete online conversion. The remote counseling environment appears to **increase** student demand as opposed to decreasing it. At times during the first two weeks of Summer/Fall enrollment, we had 3-4 hour waits on the Q-Less service. Perhaps this increase was due to the convenience factor of not having to commute in and be on campus to receive most counseling services. We experienced a 17% increase in counselor-student contacts overall during Spring 2020, in comparison to Spring 2019. Secondly, **the quality of our services**, in the eyes of our students, has been largely maintained according to our “virtual counseling satisfaction” survey this Spring. Most importantly, 87.6% of our Black/African-American & LatinX/Hispanic students rated our virtual counseling (telephone and video combined) as being the same or of better quality as our in-person counseling services. Finally, it appears that **remote counseling services enhance our efficiency**, given that we are actually seeing more students via the telephone and video counseling services than we did when we were primarily operating via in-person counseling services.

IV. CURRENT PLANNING AND RESOURCE NEEDS

Part 1: Narrative

Broadly discuss issues or needs impacting program effectiveness for which institutional support or resources will be needed for the next academic/fiscal year.

Now that we are operating entirely as online services, we will continue to have a high need for support and communication with our Information and Technology services divisions. Fortunately for us, they have been very responsive and solution-oriented. We will need to continually analyze, as we have been doing, student-counselor contact data which continues to display a higher student demand for our services since the move to virtual services.

In Spring 2020, we were also in the process of recruiting a new FT counselor for our International Education Counseling area as well as two general counseling positions for the department. Unfortunately, the search process for all three positions was discontinued, due to the pandemic. This does not mean that our department no longer has a great need for these three full time positions however. Moreover, our department conducted our annual FT hiring ranking process in early March 2020 and due to impending retirements and other anticipated needs, prioritized the following six additional FT counselor requests for 2021-22: 1) Athletics Program Counselor 2) General Counseling Counselor #1 3) Career Services Counselor 4) Latino Center 5) General Counseling Counselor #2 6) DREAM Program. These six positions are request IN ADDITION to the three pending Full time Requests for 2020-21.

Although the International Education program has been decreasing in enrollment due to COVID-19 and all current travel and visa restrictions, the long-time faculty leader for the program is planning to retire either by

December 2020 or the end of Spring 2021 at the latest. We cannot leave such a critical program and key income generator for the college insufficiently staffed. The COVID-19 situation will ultimately resolve, and given ongoing international student interest in our college, we must remain ready to fully receive and embrace this population with dedicated counseling support.

In the General Counseling and Transfer Services area, one full time Counselor took the Supplemental Retirement Incentive in Spring 2020, and even though we have now combined our Outreach, Welcome Center and General Counseling areas all into one big area, which serves all non-special program participants, our FT/PT FTE ratio is still dismally low and insufficient.

Presently, we have just 11.4 FT FTE for counseling in the General Counseling and Transfer Services area. We 27.2 PT FTE. This is an unworkable FT/PT FTE ratio of approximately 29FT/71PT. This is even more of a shocking FT/PT FTE ratio when you consider that three of the full- time positions are devoted to departmental and campus-wide functions: The Department Chair role, the Campus-wide Articulation officer role and the Transfer Faculty leader role- these faculty members have primary responsibilities other than day to day counseling. Removing these three positions from the calculation reveals an appalling 23.5 FT/77.5 PT ratio. Given that we are the department that is primarily relied upon for the college's Pathways Redesign, as well as proactive interventions for the newly launched GPS early intervention program, it seems unthinkable that the district would not support more FT counselor additions in Counseling.

Part 2: List of Resources Needed

Itemize the specific resources you will need to improve the effectiveness of your program, including resources and support you will need to accomplish your objectives for next year.

While this information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning, the information does not supplant the need to request support or resources through established channels and processes.

Resource Category	Resource Description/Item	Rationale for Resource Need (Including Link to Objective)
Human Resources	A minimum of two Full Time General Counselors and one IEC Full time Counselor	Please see Narrative
Facilities (<i>info inputted here will be given to DPAC Facilitates Comm.</i>)	We are most happy with our new student services building and just wish we could return to it!!	N/A
Equipment, Technology, Supplies (<i>tech inputted here will be given to Technology Planning Committee</i>)	Computer video cameras with Mic attachment for all counselors who need them to work remotely at home.	The chrome books provided by the district to faculty members are really not sufficient for video counseling.
Professional Development	Continuing Professional development for online instruction	We have many returning adjunct Couns instructors who have not been on campus since the move to the remote environment.

V. CHALLENGES RELATED TO SPRING 2020 COVID-19 CRISIS AND RESPONSE:

List significant challenges your program faced in Spring 2020 due to COVID-19. Please also Include your responses and

solutions to this crisis.

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Spring 2020 was unlike any other semester in our institutional history. Who could have ever anticipated that we would have to move all Counseling services from a mostly "in person" modality to "exclusively online" environment in a matter of weeks? As with all other areas of the campus, this brought many unanticipated challenges and huge obstacles, which had to overcome in a very short window of time.

The Counseling Department, however, rallied in a way never seen before! The most time-critical need was complete access to student records and transcripts off-campus, and the Counseling Subsystem, in order to provide any counseling services remotely. On Mar.10th, we repurposed the institutional flex day to provide intensive training for counselors, to enable them to video counsel. We also trained the counselors on utilizing SMC student information system via citrix. Simultaneously, we worked with the IT division to create "Phone Appts" in web-ISIS so that students could book telephone and video appointments with counselors as needed.

In addition, we created the "How to Connect with a Counselor" webpage: [How to Connect with a Counselor](#) so that all students could find their respective Counseling program and how to access a counselor on one unique page. Once we begin serving students remotely in mid-March, student traffic was rather slow, as students grappled with suddenly having all of their classes delivered remotely. We also did not initially have a way for students to reach staff members "live" via the telephone. We encouraged all counseling programs to start utilizing our existing online booking interface, which allows students to book appointments online via their Cosair Connect accounts. Pre-pandemic, not all counseling programs/services were using the online booking interface but it soon became apparent that this needed to be the primary way for students to make appointments in the remote environment.

We also quickly recognized that for the "General student" population (who aren't part of a special program and is the majority of our student body -approximately 70%) we would have to create a "first-serve, first-come" virtual drop-in counseling service once we began Summ/Fall 2020 enrollment. We already knew that operating on an appointment only basis would never meet the student demand during our peak enrollment period. Fortunately, we have already been using the Q-Less virtual queueing program on campus and discovered that we could easily establish access to this queue for students off-campus. A "Q-Less CallBack button" was created that students could easily locate and sign in on via our webpages in order to wait for a counselor to call the student back.

Moreover, we realized that we could no longer engage in front-end sorting of students into the Outreach, Welcome Center and General Counseling locations, since students were able to sign themselves up in the Q-Less queue from home, without going through a staff member first. We started to meet with the leadership from the Welcome Center and Outreach groups to discuss combining all counselors from these areas with the General Counseling & Transfer Services counselors, to see all non-special program participants in one queue. This merging of counseling teams was quickly adopted, since all teams realized there was no efficient way for students to sort into separate queues, based solely on whether or not the student had completed 30 units or less. We then provided training sessions for counselor usage of Q-Less, for all general counseling, welcome center and outreach area counselors, as well as counselors in other programs- ex. the Latino Center, Black Collegians, EOP&S, the Intl Center, Scholars, etc. We launched off-campus Q-Less access in the General Counseling area as of April 3rd and piloted the service for two consecutive Fridays; counselors and students very quickly acclimated to this new process.

With the help of our classified staff and administrators in the Outreach/Welcome Center areas, we launched a chat service, which involves having student workers respond to questions via live chat on the Welcome Center, Outreach and General Counseling webpages when students visit these pages. This service has been very helpful

for directing students to the correct services and for answering non-counseling questions.

We also launched "Video Express" counseling around the beginning of April, so that students could utilize the video counseling option on a "drop-in" basis as well. We have found all new modes of service to be well-utilized and effective. For our International Education Center counseling service, after a few weeks of utilizing Q-Less, it was quickly determined that Video Express would be needed, since the Q-Less process works by the student submitting a phone number which the counselor can call back. Many of our F-1 visa students were trying to reach a counselor while out of the country and could not be called back due to inputting an international phone number. This summer, they have switched "Video Express" mode instead and have experienced great success with this service.

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VI. THE NEXT SECTION IS FOR CTE PROGRAMS ONLY

PARTNERSHIPS:

Part 1: Industry advisory meeting dates and attendance for 2019-2020.

Date of Meeting	# of SMC Attendees	# of Non-SMC Attendees
Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 2: Employer partnerships/collaborations for 2019-2020. Identify the most salient partnerships or collaborations.

Employer Name	Type of partnership or Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory attendance • Internship site • Donations • Job placement • Other 	Optional: Additional information about partnership or collaboration
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
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CONGRATULATIONS – that’s it! Please save your document with your program’s name and forward it to your area Vice President for review. Please CC or send a copy to Stephanie Amerian and Erica LeBlanc.

The following section will be completed by your program’s area VP

Vice Presidents:

First, please let us know who you are by checking your name:

Christopher Bonvenuto, Vice President, Business and Administration

- Don Girard, Senior Director, Government Relations & Institutional Communications
- Sherri Lee-Lewis, Vice President, Human Resources
- Jennifer Merlic, Vice President, Academic Affairs
- Teresita Rodriguez, Vice President, Enrollment Development
- Michael Tuitasi, Vice President, Student Affairs

Next, please check this box to indicate that you have reviewed the program’s annual report Provide any feedback and comments for the program here:

Click or tap here to enter text; the box will expand when you enter text.

Finally, please **save the document** and email it to both Stephanie Amerian (amerian_stephanie@smc.edu) and Erica LeBlanc (leblanc_eric@smc.edu). If you have any questions, please contact us!

Thank you for your input!