2020 Annual Program Review

Program Name: Enrollment Services-Admissions and Records

Program Review Author: Esau Tovar

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 Admissions and Records Office at Santa Monica College provides comprehensive services to prospective and continuing students—in-person and online—aimed at facilitating their onboarding and progression. We support student success through comprehensive and timely services that impact their admission, enrollment, progression, graduation, and transfer. Services are provided through evolving and innovative technology and communication tools that keep students connected to the institution. In addition to providing initial point of inquiry support, the Admissions and Records Office helps to support the College's mission and enrollment management strategic plan. Through our partnerships with the Welcome Center, Success and Engagement Center, and Counseling, we assist students with the matriculation process to ensure the best opportunity for success.

Admissions and Records is responsible for many areas, among these include: admission application process; residency determination and reclassification; enrollment process; maintenance of grades (grade changes, academic/progress renewals); transcript maintenance, orders, and archival; academic records evaluations (degree/certificate/general education/major); grade appeals; Commencement; enrollment reporting for the National Student Clearinghouse; SMC Promise eligibility and data systems; enrollment verifications; subpoena and records requests processing; athletic eligibility; assistance with publication of class schedules and college catalog; communications with students and faculty; MIS data elements reporting and corrections; development and maintenance of WebISIS programs to support area functions across WebISIS, Corsair Connect, and mProfessor with the assistance of MIS; oversight of technology tools such as SMC GO—the official college app; articulation rule-building for MyCAP; etc.

Effective with Fall 2020, a student communications unit was added to Enrollment Services. This unit is comprised of the Dean of Enrollment Services and a Student Communications Coordinator. The role of student communications starts and ends with providing information throughout the student journey through various communication platforms, such as email, text, telephone, college app, and more. The goal of student communications is to effectively engage the student with these communications so they may take the appropriate actions called for by these messages. Effectiveness can be measured in actual numbers, such as open rates and enrollment numbers, but it also exists in the more difficult number to tally of positive impacts communications can make in assisting students in reaching their own goals and in improving their experience at Santa Monica College.

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
Develop and implement policy and related technology to identify and block fraudulent admission applications	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	In conjunction with MIS and Network Services. (1) Updates now prevent the processing of applications lacking valid permanent and/or mailing address (manual processing for homeless status apps). (2) Removed ready

		access to ".edu" email account for new applicants, which was the main reason for application submission (individually and through bots. SMC email addresses were being sold in the black market). Applicant can now only email and receive email from another "smc.edu" account. Access is expanded upon enrollment, 2-weeks prior to start of term. This change resulted in the elimination of tens of thousands of fraudulent apps.
Update and implement policy on student access to Office 365	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	In conjunction with MIS and Network Services, developed and institutionalized a policy that restricts access to Office 365 to officially enrolled credit and noncredit students. Policy went into effect in Fall 2019. Access is automatically activated for students who are officially enrolled two weeks before the term begins; lasts through Monday of Week 3 of the next regular semester (i.e., fall or spring); once student enrolls in classes in the next major term, their access will continue; will be disabled anytime students drop all courses—they are no longer actively enrolled.
Develop policy and implement preferred/affirmed first name in Corsair Connect and other administrative systems	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	Dean of Enrollment Services authored policy in consultation with faculty, administrators, and students. The preferred/affirmed name has been integrated in Corsair Connect, Canvas, and class rosters available to faculty on mProfessor. Systems used by College staff in their interactions and communications with students will integrate the preferred or affirmed name as these systems are updated. The "Student Record" WebISIS program, available to Admissions, was updated to include preferred first name and to make changes when needed. Students may update their preferred name in Corsair Connect once per term and request notification of change to their instructors. The student's legal first name will continue to be used where required by law, industry standard, or strong business need.
Implement Gecko Chat and Gecko Bot Technology to Replace Ask SMC Platform	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	Access to information is important, particularly useful information. For this purpose, a new chat bot was launched. It required collaboration across the campus and a week of intense initial effort, but even then, there was much work to be done. The chat bot launched with Pearl as the avatar and was instantly a success. Our website search has notoriously been a challenge, and now there was a way to instantly get information and links through a positive exchange. The chat bot can be accessed anytime through many different mediums, including the website, SMC Go app, Twitter, Facebook, and even through a text. Things change, and with COVID-19 every part of the bot needed to be combed through. Words like "visit" suddenly were a red flag as the campus shut down. It was a giant effort, aided by a team of student workers and then again with staff from various departments across the campus, but the chat bot was able to be updated, meaning students could get updates in real time. It is also worth mentioning that on numerous occasions our chat bot and the innovative ways in which we created responses and interactions was set as the example by Gecko (the company behind the bot) for their other accounts to

		follow. We have received much praise from Gecko for being a trailblazer in this regard. Pearl's knowledgebase is expanding as students ask questions that Pearl cannot answer. Areas of greater emphasis have been Admissions, Financial Aid, Counseling, and technology resources. Launching the live chat aspect on SMC's Pearl chat bot, was an early sign during the beginning of COVID-19 to our students that SMC is still here and SMC cares. For some students it meant a place to express their frustrations, but for most it was a voice on the other end that listened and assisted during a time when we were all forced into isolation. Our staff and especially our student workers are to be commended for their efforts in assisting their peers. Launched in mid-February 2020, and now in its second version, Pearl has answered over 19,000 messages in the past three months alone with a success rate of 73% and has saved approximately 328 hours of staff time that would have been required to answer those questions. The first version of Pearl, which covered the months of February through early April, answered over 8,500 messages with a 72% success rate and saved 129 hours of staff time.
Develop and deploy Student Connections Survey	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	As part of the college's Redesign Team's efforts, the Dean of Enrollment Services authored the Student Connections Survey for first-time college students entering fall 2019 and beyond. The survey is deployed in Salesforce/TargetX. A Student Connections communication plan was also created to advise students of pertinent resources at SMC to help their transition and success. The communication plan was deployed over 7 weeks after the Fall and Spring terms started. Direct outreach to students with housing and food insecurity workflow was developed, in partnership with the Center for Wellness and Wellbeing.
Add a feature on mProfessor to batch-email waitlisted students	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	In conjunction with MIS. Upon faculty request, added an option to batch-email students on a class waitlist on mProfessor for instructor use.
Consolidate versioning of the SMC transcript to minimize maintenance. Update formatting and content of official and unofficial transcripts	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	The official and unofficial SMC transcripts were revamped significantly. Prior to this update, four versions of the unofficial transcript were maintained by MIS, resulting in more work and sometimes content discrepancies occurred. A single version of the unofficial transcript was created to accommodate the needs of staff, counselors, and students. The new transcript versions (official and unofficial) now have the same content, albeit not layout (for security reasons). Major changes included the addition of general education certifications, general education areas for each course, in-progress/enrolled coursework for up to two consecutive upcoming terms, noncredit certificates and coursework, and grades/progress indicators for noncredit courses. A separate report containing only noncredit coursework was created and made available to department chairs and

		other programs so they may expedite the processing of noncredit certificates.
As mandated by law, implement AB 1278	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	In conjunction with the Director of Wellness and Wellbeing, implemented AB 1278--Public postsecondary educational institutions: public services and programs: internet website notification. Updated the Health and Wellbeing webpage to include resources mandated by AB 1278, among them information pertaining to the CalFresh program, county or local housing resources, and county or local mental health services. As mandated by the bill, a link called "Food, Housing, and Mental Health" was also added to Corsair Connect's Quick Links section.
Develop policy and plan for implementation of AB 1504— Student Representation Fee	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	This project implemented AB 1504 that required California Community Colleges with a student body association to collect a student representation fee of $2 at the time of registration. The new fee was created in WebISIS and a process was created in Corsair Connect to permit a student to opt-out of paying the fee. Of the $2 collected, $1 goes to the SMC Associated Students and $1 to the Chancellor's Office for distribution to the statewide student association.
Develop a mechanism in Salesforce/TargetX CRM to allow unsubscribed students to re-opt-in to email subscriptions	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	By law, any email communication from an entity has to give the option to the recipient to no longer receive those emails. This has long been a burden and challenge for SMC. One "bad" message from any department could cause large amounts of students to opt-out from future messages from ALL departments, causing students to not receive important updates such as graduation, deadlines, and more. While it has been easy for a student to choose not to receive messages, the opposite was not so easy, until now. Student communications created several solutions for students, as well as a dedicated website with instructions and a unique campaign to inform potentially impacted students, resulting with their return and reinstatement to receive messages. The Dean of Enrollment Services devised a mechanism to allow students who unsubscribe from SMC emails sent through Salesforce/TargetX to opt back in by completing a FormAssembly form, which when matched to the Salesforce student record displays a listing of all email subscription lists. Once the student opts back in to any or all subscription lists, they immediately can begin to receive notifications.
Develop policy and process in WebISIS to reverse fee credits and allow for refunds	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	In conjunction with MIS, the Dean of Enrollment Services devised a mechanism for WebISIS to allow Cashier's Office staff to reverse a refund credit that is auto-applied toward

		a future term, so that students may instead get a refund. Process may be requested by student or Admissions personnel but is enacted by Cashier's Office staff only.
Develop and implement a process to apply multiple contracts to student fees	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	The Dean of Enrollment Services collaborated with MIS to develop and test a mechanism to allow for charging of student enrollment fees to multiple sources—contracts. WebISIS was originally designed to allow a single contract to always pay student fees. However, currently some students qualify for both a Veteran Administration contract and the SMC Promise contract. This conflict caused several WebISIS processes to "break." A new "z" (lower case) contract payment process was developed and after extensive testing, it appears to be working successfully.
Develop a Pass/No Pass grading contracts rescission program in WebISIS	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	Developed a mechanism in the *Credit/No Credit Grade Processing* WebISIS program to rescind Pass/No Pass contracts after a grade for the class has been submitted and revert the P/NP to the original grade assigned by the instructor. Grade posts to transcript immediately upon processing.
Develop a SMC Promise Deadlines Module in WebISIS to streamline reporting and transactions	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	Developed a Dates and Deadlines module in the SMC Promise WebISIS program to derive applicable SMC Promise deadlines based on term specific Census 1 dates. These formula-driven deadlines are now available to SMC Promise program administrators, Bookstore staff, Accounting, etc. Derived deadlines include Opt-In, Award Date, Voucher Starts-Ends, Voucher Billing, Voucher Payment, and "z" Payment Contract Applied. The Dean of Enrollment Services sets up these deadlines as part of the Admissions and Records Production Schedule and SMC Calendar setup processes.
Develop a dynamic SMC Promise Eligibility dashboard in Corsair Connect to keep students informed of program eligibility status	☐ Not Completed ☐ In Progress ☒ Completed	Given many complaints from students who were uncertain of their ongoing eligibility for the SMCP, an eligibility dashboard that displays student's current standing and eligibility in SMCP is displayed in Corsair Connect. Deadlines for eligibility and pertinent messaging is shown.
Continue to support the ESL department in the ongoing implementation of AB705	☐ Not Completed ☒ In Progress ☐ Completed	The ESL Department held internal discussions on the development of a Guided Self-Placement. Feedback from Institutional Research personnel, Stacey Jones, and Esau Tovar over how the GSP was crafted, its length, and the logic over how items on the GSP were to be presented to students, how it was scored, etc., was provided, albeit largely disregarded. Data was collected in Winter 2020 so we could determine how to proceed. Subsequent analysis

		by the IR staff determined that none of the 18 background questions (not counting the GSP itself) had predictive value on a recommended placement decision. It was also noted that cut scores could not be established on the basis of performance on the GSP and the course placement recommended by the department faculty. Work was stopped when the college decided to move to remote operations given that we no longer had adequate time to refine the GSP in time for summer/fall enrollment. Direct aid was provided by the Dean of Enrollment Services to implement two new courses the ESL Department developed to better align with AB 705 requirements. These two courses (ESL 19A and 19B) replaced three ESL courses (ESL 11B, 21A, 21B). The Dean developed prerequisite sequencing and course repetition slashing rules in time for summer 2020 enrollment—when the new courses started being offered. Stacey Jones worked with MIS to also revise the course placement report. Discussions have also continued over concern that the ESL Department is bleeding enrollment because students are opting to take the English guided self-placement. Revisions to screening questions were recently made and will be proposed to a larger group in the coming weeks for consideration. Once approved, the Dean of Enrollment Services and SEC Supervisor, Stacey Jones, will work with MIS to implement the new screening questions, which the ESL department chair hopes will lead more students to test in ESL.
Collaborate with Network Services to integrate Student Directory Information to SMCGO to avail select student and academic services programs the opportunity to directly message program participants via the app	☐ Not Completed ☒ In Progress ☐ Completed	The process was initiated in fall 2019. However, Network Services ran into a problem with SSO authentication, and while it has been over 5 months, the problem has yet to be resolved. This is holding us back significantly, too, with the release of Modo Marketplace for students.
Communications Unit: Gain proficiency in the various communication platforms utilized by Enrollment Services to communicate information to prospective, new, and continuing students. Among these platforms are: Salesforce, TargetX, SMS Magic, SMC Go, Blackboard Connect, Gecko Engage .	☐ Not Completed ☒ In Progress ☐ Completed	The overarching goal of these platforms is to communicate to students through various mediums, and that goal has been very much achieved. Students receive engaging and informative communications in a timely manner through email, text, SMC Go app, phone calls, and through collaborations with other departments, such as Marketing, Counseling, Outreach, and, of course, Admissions. Where this objective would still be "In Progress," would be when it comes to utilizing the platforms to their fullest. As with any software that upgrades, there is always a level of proficiency that must be maintained, not just achieved. The challenges of COVID-19 changed some of

		the initial intention for some platforms as well; some were not used, such as Gecko Talk (even though much of the groundwork had been done), and then others were called into action, such as live chat on Gecko Engage. On the very positive side, even though some initial plans had to be changed, it is because these platforms were ready and available prior to the crisis that communications were able to adapt and continue, even with all the changes and challenges COVID-19 presented.
Communications Unit: Oversee the development and day-to-day operation of the Student Success Ambassador Call Center, which includes the supervising and directing of student workers in order to establish a "call center" to reach students of interest.	☐ Not Completed ☒ In Progress ☐ Completed	The actual Call Center has not been established, mainly due to the interruption of COVID-19. Materials, supplies, space, and software understanding had been established, but the key component—student workers using telephone communications—was not possible due to the closure of the campus. However, an alternative solution was quickly established, and instead of a call center, there became an unofficial chat center. This chat center first had the task of updating our automated chat bot (more on this in Achievements) in order to give students updated information regarding all the changes due to COVID-19. A large part of this update also included communications staff to train and assist students in using the Gecko Engage platform, which all had to be done remotely. Once students became familiar with the platform and informed on all the updated policy changes, we began the live chat. Those visitors who used the automated chat bot were then engaged with a live person (SMC staff and student workers) in real time in order to better address their issues and questions. This personal interaction had great results, and was soon adopted by other departments.
Communications Unit: Coordinate and maintain priorities and processes to ensure consistent, thoughtful, and timely messaging of communications, including writing, editing, producing, monitoring, updating, and collaborating in such communications.	☐ Not Completed ☒ In Progress ☐ Completed	This objective is at the core of student communications; the need and the importance to both have and advance this objective has shown more than its worth in these times of crisis. Standard goals have been achieved, such as increases in enrollment and record numbers of students paying their fees. Internal goals have been achieved, such as informing staff and departments of changes in order to 'open the doors of our silos' so that we are all better informed to serve our students. Effective goals have been achieved, such as aligning and collaborating goals amongst departments to 'be on the same page'. And then there were the goals of seemingly endless crisis, which were more challenging to set as they were ever-changing, ever-demanding, and always a priority. These needs went beyond just COVID-19, and included DACA, Black Lives Matter, F-1 students, and so many other challenges our students had to face this year. These everchanging landscapes that are unknown and difficult to navigate make success something difficult to measure in the moment, but it can at least be said that student communications has had a significantly positive impact in informing and supporting our students in a way previously not had before.
Communications Unit: Expand adoption of and	☐ Not Completed ☒ In Progress	Some of the highlights of the year include SMC GO. While still very much in progress, a lot of the groundwork and obtainable

sustained communications with SMC Go, including content, interface, integration, personas, opt-in channels,	☐ Completed	potential has been established. Opt-in channels, which are exclusive communication channels for various departments and areas, were launched. This took some effort in establishing guidelines and training materials and workshops for those users, but the results were very positive. Included in these channels is "Food Bell," which is a way to better help students struggling with food security. Any SMC staff member, not just those with an Opt-in channel, can use Food Bell to alert students of available food. There was also successful collaboration with our design students as they took on the challenge of finding ways to improve SMC GO, which is now part of the groundwork and potential referred to earlier for changes planned in the coming year. While COVID-19 did cause a shortage of resources, namely hours in a day due to new priorities and assisting other departments/parts of the institution, there are plans to bring design students on as members of the team in the fall to pick up where these plans left off. Another project for SMC GO, but also suddenly needed to be halted, is SMC Marketplace. A way for students to make exchanges with each other through the app for goods, housing, and services. SMC Marketplace was well on its way to being a reality, and is still an option once social exchanges become as we once knew them. Another positive addition to SMC GO is the ability to chat with Pearl, anywhere, anytime, from the app. Answers to common questions are easily accessible. Also planned for the fall is the launch of "Pearl's World." This too had much of the groundwork developed and is in the pipeline for deployment. Pearl's World will bring a unique approach to communications as it has a student 'voice', rather than an institutional one (more on Pearl in Achievements below).
Communications Unit: Assist in the coordination, planning and implementation of student on-boarding activities, and enrollment plans to enhance participation.	☐ Not Completed ☒ In Progress ☒ Completed	For years, and even still, an internal SMC criticism has been that we work in silos, meaning each department does their own thing going straight to the student in a 'line'. In the program description above is stated how student communications focuses on being a circle, and not a line. The idea of gathering and collaborating is one of the major goals of student communications, which includes create bridges and channels within the institution. Much of this began with the start of the SMC GO Opt-in channels. It brought awareness that new and unique communication efforts were being made and drew in many enthusiastic responses. Establishing student communications has given a focal point, a role that should always be included when planning and discussing about getting information to students. The results have been positive, with purpose, and dare to state, with hope. Hope that these kinds of exchanges will continue and will improve. Some example highlights include: messaging from our President regarding COVID-19 and other social events that have upturned the year, messages on behalf of other departments such as Financial Aid, Black Collegians, EOPS, Welcome Center, IEC, CARES, Scholarships, Transportation, and many more, as well as a solid

		foundation being established with Marketing to echo each others' goals and purpose, which started with the Start@SMC campaign, and the huge undertaking of launching our automated chat bot which required many departments to be trained and then provide important information from their areas for students to then access at any time.

III. ACHIEVEMENTS

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

Second Largest Graduating Class in SMC History—Virtual Commencement
Board Goal and Priority: 1, 2. The work conducted by Admissions & Records personnel in evaluating academic records, especially through the ongoing implementation of the "Awards Without Petition Initiative," have directly impacted volume of degrees and certificates awarded.

Notwithstanding the many challenges that the coronavirus pandemic brought before the College and our students, Santa Monica College graduated the second largest class, with nearly 8,200 degrees and certificates awarded to 5,567 students. Given the pandemic, the traditional in-person commencement ceremony was replaced with a virtual event. Thanks to Enrollment Services, Admissions and Records, and Marketing, DSPS, Bookstore, and Events, the ceremony was by all accounts a success. The ceremony's content was pre-recorded and watched on nearly 6,000 devices on the date of the event (June 26, 2020), and by hundreds more in the days that followed.

New components were introduced to Commencement, particularly in the form of digital assets; among these were a personalized tribute video that graduates could download to commemorate their graduation. Students had the opportunity to upload a personal message, photo, and video to include in the tribute video. A SnapChat filter, 15 graduation-themed digital stickers for use on Instagram and Facebook, digital backgrounds for Zoom, Teams, and other platforms where students and college staff hosted watch parties were available for download from the Commencement website. Thanks to Associated Students, over 900 "graduation in a box" kits were also sent to graduates residing in the U.S. The kit included a cap, tassel, an "I did it" sign, and a Commencement progr,am.

Special thanks go to the Admissions and Records evaluation team for their hard work in processing thousands of graduation petitions and posting thousands of degrees and certificates to student transcripts.

A profile of the graduating class follows.
- 8,169 degrees and certificates awarded to 5,567 students
- 19 Bachelor of Science in Interaction Design awarded (third graduating class)
- 4,181 Associate degrees awarded, including 1,360 Associate Degrees for Transfer
- 3,882 Certificates of Achievement awarded
- 87 Noncredit Certificates of Completion awarded
- 2,602 students graduate with more than one degree or certificate Class of 2020
- 1,840 students graduate with honors, 661 with high honors, and 178 with highest honors
- The youngest graduate was 16 years old and graduated with an Associate degree in Liberal Arts; three graduates were 17 years old and graduated with Certificates of Achievement or with an Associate Degree for Transfer. The oldest graduate was 85 and graduated with an Associate degree in Music. The average age for all graduates is 26.
- The graduating class included 840 international students, 445 students with disabilities, 157 EOPS students, 86 undocumented students, and 2 foster youths.

- The graduating class was: 61% female; 39% male; 6% African American/Black students; 16% Asian students; 37% Hispanic/Latinx students; 27% White students; 14% Other.

The Top 10 Associate Degree Programs were:
- 1. AA in Liberal Arts – Social and Behavioral Science
- 2. AA in Liberal Arts – Arts and Humanities
- 3. AA in General Science
- 4. AST in Business Administration
- 5. AAT in Communication Studies
- 6. AAT Psychology
- 7. AAT Political Science
- 8. AS Business
- 9. AAT Sociology
- 10. AAT in Economics/AS Registered Nursing (tied)

Awards Without Petition Initiative
For the sixth year in a row, the number of degrees and certificates has continued to grow thanks to the efforts of MIS who assists Admissions and Records in identifying candidates, and to evaluators who perform graduation eligibility checks for each identified candidate—without students having to petition.

This year (2019-2020), 42% (N=3,436) of the total degrees and certificates awarded were processed without petition. A total of 13,838 degrees and certificates have been awarded in these six years. This corresponds to 36% of all awards in the same period.

Moved Admissions and Records to QLess Line Management System
Effective July 20, 2019, the Admissions and Records Office was placed on the QLess system to facilitate access to the Office by students. They can join the line remotely through the office's website and through the QLess kiosk outside the office. Records show that 35,220 visits were recorded between July 20, 2019 and June 30, 2020 among 19,188 unique students.

Email-Based Transactions Have Become the Norm
Although students have been sending email requests to Admissions and Records for a long time, it appears that students are exercising this option to solicit assistance. In the past year alone, we have responded to tens of thousands of email requests, on top of the in-person, queue line, and phone calls. Some of our services had to move to an email-based system given the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Admissions Mailbox: between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020, we answered 30,868 email queries, including the processing of petitions and various other individual requests.

- Concurrent Enrollment Mailbox: between March 18 and June 30, 2020, we answered 5,673 email queries, including the processing of high school concurrent enrollment applications.

- Residency Enrollment Mailbox: between March 18 and June 30, 2020, we answered 934 email queries, including the processing of residency reclassification requests, but excluding requests submitted directly to the residency specialists.

- Enrollment Verifications Mailbox: between March 18 and June 30, 2020, we answered 913 email queries, including the processing of residency reclassification requests, but excluding requests submitted directly to the residency specialists.

Admissions Visit Student Feedback

As part of our unit outcomes assessment, Admissions and Records implemented a survey soliciting feedback from students. All students joining the Admissions QLess line get a message asking for their feedback. Since approximately, August 2019 when the survey launched, 1,002 students have completed the online survey using a star-rating system (1 to 5 stars). In describing their experience with the Admissions Office staff, students largely expressed favorable opinions when asked "How was your visit today?" as noted below:

- The issue or problem I discussed was resolved: average 4.6 stars
- The Admissions staff answered my questions: average 4.7 stars
- The Admissions staff was knowledgeable: average 4.7 stars
- The Admissions staff was courteous: average 4.6 star7

Hire and train Student Success Communications Coordinator

After a three-year wait, an eligibility list for the Student Communications Coordinator position was established by the Personnel Commission following an interim working out of class assignment in fall 2020. Cleve Barton, previously an Academic Records Evaluator was appointed to the permanent Coordinator role in February 2020. Mr. Barton went through a series of trainings provided by the Dean of Enrollment Services both in fall 2019 and later in Spring 2020. He also attended a two-day training offered by TargetX in Oakland. Mr. Barton has now assumed most day-to-day messaging responsibilities and is proficient in the use of TargetX (email), SMS Magic (text messaging in Salesforce), Blackboard Connect (email, text messaging, and robo-calls), and SMC GO, the college's official app.

Continue to Expand and Implement a Communication Plan for Admissions and Records and Other Services

Revisions were made to the Admissions and Records communication plan. We expanded, for example, the number of messages leading to the nonpayment drop deadline. We also were proactive throughout the year in advising students of policy changes (e.g., no more postponements, student representation fee implementation). We also edited and instituted a seven-message drip campaign for students completing a newly designed Request for Information form captured in Gecko Forms and synced to Salesforce from where it deploys daily, although we focused only on two populations—first-time in college and out-of-state. Additional campaigns still must be developed for other populations. We also implemented a dip campaign for high school concurrent enrollment students who take classes in the summer. This was part of a collaborative effort with counselor Aimee Lem.

Continue to Support the ESL department in the Implementation of AB705

The ESL Department held internal discussions on the development of a Guided Self-Placement. Feedback from Institutional Research personnel, Stacey Jones, and Esau Tovar over how the GSP was crafted, its length, and the logic over how items on the GSP were to be presented to students, how it was scored, etc., was provided to the department, albeit the GSP implementation ceased when the college moved
Direct aid was provided by the Dean of Enrollment Services to implement two new courses the ESL Department developed to better align with AB 705 requirements. These two courses (ESL 19A and 19B) replaced three ESL courses (ESL 11B, 21A, 21B). The Dean developed prerequisite sequencing and course repetition slashing rules in time for summer 2020 enrollment—when the new courses started being offered. Stacey Jones worked with MIS to also revise the course placement report.

Discussions have also continued over concern that the ESL Department is bleeding enrollment because students are opting to take the English guided self-placement. Revisions to screening questions were just made and will be proposed to a larger group in the coming weeks for consideration. Once approved, the Dean of Enrollment Services and SEC Supervisor, Stacey Jones, will work with MIS to implement the new screening questions, which the ESL department chair hopes will lead more students to test in ESL.

Student Communications Impact and Equity
One of the major points of interest in student communications has been equity, to change student assumption into student guidance. "Students don't read…students are entitled…they should know…" are not excuses for effective communications. Internally we know and understand the role of departments, steps involved, and the significance of deadlines. Student communications is an opportunity to lend a hand (referenced earlier) and show the way, rather than telling the way. For example, Residency. Residency is something which is not intuitive. A student goes to SMC for over a year, rents an apartment and 'lives' here, and yet their fees never change. The burden is on the student to change this, but how, why, and shouldn't there be a better way. Student communications has allowed us to reach out to students early on in order to inform and assist them, be on their side, and show that we understand their challenges. Another example is COVID-19 shutting our doors, which could have greatly hindered our spring graduation petitions. Through effective student communications our new workflow was relayed to students in such a positive way that even during an epidemic we still saw our second largest group of graduates in history.

Pearl's Debut
Pearl started as an experimental idea, and although simple in premise, Pearl has already shown success by expanding rapidly and growing into SMC culture. The premise and purpose of Pearl is for students to connect to the institution in a way that did not feel institutional. Also, as a communication tool, the goal was again to equitize this medium by avoiding things like race, status, and bias while still finding a positive and logical connection to SMC. Pearl's debut was as the name and face of our automated chat bot (more below). Right from the start Pearl had a positive response. Pearl has become part of Marketing designs and is now common vocabulary around campus. The fact that Pearl is a communication tool, but many would not instantly associate it as such, means that the experiment of Pearl is successfully meeting the goal.

Pearl's World
This is an achievement in progress. As mentioned, the goal of Pearl is to connect and communicate with students in a way that doesn't seem institutional. By taking a step to the side and letting the same kind of information come from another voice is very positive. It's like a second opinion, hearing it from a friend, and finding a different way to connect. This ties in with equity goals and is an opportunity to inform and guide students through a 'peer'. Once launched, Pearl's World will be a part of SMC GO, and will have two goals. The first is to be an essential digest of information and resources for students. If students only check one place, and that place was Pearl's World, they would be very well informed. The other goal is to draw students to SMC GO and all its other resources, such as Opt-in channels, chatting, Marketplace, and more.

SMC GO Opt-In Channels
Letting go is never easy but giving access and trusting in collaboration can either find success or failure. Opt-in channels were one such venture and has already shown enormous promise. SMC GO and its 23K+ users deserve to be engaged, and that engagement cannot always come from one channel. Opt-in channels give access to departments and programs to communicate to students directly through the app in their own way. Also, students have control over their messaging. This is truly unique as a collaboration as both the sender and receiver have given agency to the communication. To be honest, COVID-19 did halt a lot of the progress that was made. Many messages revolved around events, which were suddenly canceled. Yet, some of the programs with an Opt-In channel quickly shifted messaging to promote services they provided to students, albeit remotely. The pandemic also required focus and resources to go elsewhere, taking away from the ability to truly use the channels for engagement. However, as we now better understand the challenges and needs of students moving forward, so will we be able to adapt the use of our opt-in channels. Look for a revival this fall!

Established Food Bell
One of the campus-wide initiatives that emerged with greater voice in 2019-2020 is food security, and Food Bell was one of the early resources. The idea was that any student that opted-in to this channel could receive an instant message anytime there was food available for free on campus, and any staff member could send the notice through a simple web link. While invisible to the staff member posting a message, several technologies had to be used to make direct

messaging possible without having to have an account to the developer platform we use to manage SMC GO. Along with SMC's zero waste goals, Food Bell gives the opportunity for food to go to hungry students rather than being sent to waste. Highlighting both the popularity as well as the student need for such a resource, Food Bell is the #1 Opt-in channel with over 500 students. There is still a ways to go, and food security has unique challenges due to COVID-19, but the goals and functions has been established for Food Bell, and the potentials are still something to be very excited about. Though not exclusively related to Food Bell, the Communications team has partnered with the Foundation and the Center for Wellness and Wellbeing to promote food drive through and homelessness resources.

Collaborations in Student Communications
 Effective communications and engagement involve planning, good planning. It can occur where those brought together are merely there to assist the visions of others, which has its place. But there are also times when a collaboration of goals not only brings about better results, but also a sense of trust and community within the institution. These are the bridges and channels that student communications strive to create in order to unite visions, to strengthen and support each other, and to align the student experience. This kind of planning has a profoundly positive impact for students, as the messages they receive are resonated across departments and mediums. For example, the creation of Pearl. Pearl started as an idea from student communications, including designs, possible placements, and beyond. In order to truly make Pearl a part of the institution, student communications reached out to Marketing very early on with the project. But, not just as a one-way ticket for design, which is often the case, but as a full collaboration so that Pearl could meet the needs of student communications as well as future Marketing efforts. What you see today looks quite simple, but even something simple can have a complex reasoning and development, such is true with Pearl. The results speak for themselves as Pearl is now seamlessly used in various places to meet multiple and future goals and is shared amongst the institution. Other examples of collaborations include Start@SMC (a campaign to promote SMC across the county), Summer Success (a specific set of messages for high school students to improve their experience at SMC—an often neglected student body now getting direct resources and guidance), FAQ videos (visual guides to some of the most common student frustrations—including a video on how to apply to SMC), design student collaborations (giving SMC students agency in the resources offered to them and welcoming their input—such as with SMC Go), and many more. All of these were a true collaboration where every stakeholder had a voice to meet our mutual goals, together!

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.

The last few months presented a major challenge in dealing with the coronavirus epidemic to SMC in general, and certainly with Admissions and Records and the Success and Engagement Center. Both offices were not well equipped to move to remote operations when the College gave such orders. While a Business Continuity Plan was developed for each area, operationalizing and implementing them was a major challenge. Staff were not properly setup at home to work remotely and about half lacked the hardware to perform their jobs adequately. While the College in the end provided a Chromebook to those who needed it, and laptops were borrowed from other departments when possible to lend to staff, these devices have proven difficult for remote work for extended hours and often prevent proper access to resources that Admissions and SEC staff need to perform their job well.

Either because of equipment, lack of effort or capacity (in some cases), some staff in Admissions and Records fell behind in their work when operations moved remotely. Some staff's performance and direct assistance to students has suffered significantly. This was especially the case in the Evaluation and Residency units. Given this, four evaluators were recalled to work in the office part of the week—exercising social distancing. However, the graduation evaluation deadline given to them in preparation for Commencement was not met; even after extending the deadline by an additional eight days.

Staff have cited unstable access to broadband, old equipment, small screens (e.g., chromebooks), lack of software needed to perform tasks (e.g., Adobe DC to create and edit PDF documents), to name a few issues.

In the case of Residency, one of the specialists has fallen severely behind her work—to such degree that the Dean and Supervisor frequently receive complaints from students, parents, staff, etc., over the lack of timely response and decisions While efforts have been made to provide assistance and training on key software, not to mention assisting her directly with her caseload, improvements have not been achieved. It is not unusual to hear "I am doing my best given my setup or access…." Some concerns expressed by staff over having to work remotely are certainly valid, and the management team and area VP have gone through lengths to provide support and resources, but these efforts sometime have no impact. Working with Human Resources, we have attempted to resolve staff productivity, albeit that has not borne significant improvements yet. The result of this is other area staff having to step in and do more than their fair share. In the end these staff members do it because of the students.

On another front, Admissions and Records continues to operate at diminished capacity yet expectations from Senior Staff to continue to provide the same level of service remain high. Entering the 2019-20 fiscal year, we were down 5 positions. The promotion of Cleve Barton to Student Communications Coordinator left yet another evaluator position open. A request to fill the position permanently was placed on hold. This will only be exacerbated upon the retirement of another evaluator in September 2020. A Student Services Assistant who had been on extended medical and unpaid leaves, on and off over the past three years, returned from leave for a few weeks, only to once again fall to "old habits" and was finally placed on a 36-month re-employment list by HR. However, this position remains vacant, as are two Student Services Clerk positions, another evaluator position, and an Administrative Assistant I position. Following a two-year medical leave, the Administrative Assistant II returned from a two-year leave. This has assisted us to a degree, though retraining and relearning have been top goals for this employee in the past few weeks.

In response to the above challenges, the department's leadership has had to assume a greater role in resolving issues that students, parents, faculty and staff, and even Board members bring to our attention—on top of daily responsibilities.

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	Replace Academic Records Evaluator position vacated by Cleve Barton. Replace Academic Records Evaluator lost to the retirement of Karen Sasaki in September 2020. Replace Student Services Clerk positions vacated by David Milano two years ago. Replace Student Services Assistant position resulting from the loss of Cael Edwards who was placed on a three-year rehiring list. We would also like to rehire our student	Admissions and Records cannot provide adequate and timely service to students given our current staffing and many demands. Our staff has decreased by 5 full-time positions, yet we are seeing more students and providing more services in a manner that is more accessible to students. If positions are not replaced, complains will continue to mount for lack of timely response. It is not unusual now that 2-3 weeks pass before an email is answered during heavy enrollment periods. This is

	workers. They have been an invaluable part of the team and provide direct support to students. They assist in managing incoming calls and emails.	unacceptable, yet staff hours are limited.
Facilities *(info inputted here will be given to DPAC Facilitates Comm.)*	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Equipment, Technology, Supplies *(tech inputted here will be given to Technology Planning Committee)*	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Professional Development	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

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.

Development of Business Continuity Planning
At the request of the Emergency Operations Team, the Admissions and Records leadership team (Dean, Supervisor, Senior Enrollment Services Specialist, and Senior Academic Records Evaluator, Success and Engagement Center Supervisor) developed a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan for Admissions and Records and the Success and Engagement Center as part of our response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Per said plan, and once the College ordered personnel to work remotely, staff were trained of technologies available to us, such as Microsoft Teams and Outlook, to fully transition our services online. While the process was not easy, and we only had a few days, the Admissions and SEC staff have aided thousands of students since—even when not having all the equipment they need at home.

Student Workers in the Communications Unit
Normally having student workers would be considered part of the norm, but during COVID-19 it can be considered an achievement. In order for student workers to actually work, they must check in, use SMC computers, be logged in to special accounts, use SMC phones, and the list goes on. In a remote environment, they cannot log in or use almost all of the normal functions they were hired to assist with in the first place. Their work is not only essential to our offices, but also to their own livelihood and personal sense of purpose. To ensure that our student workers still had tasks that could be completed while remote, both assisting our functions as well as still being able to be employed to make their ends meet, student communications took on all of Enrollment Services' student workers and together forged through the uncharted waters of working together remotely during a pandemic. Count them, sixteen in total, more than some offices, found ways to be of purpose and of course production. Many of their efforts have been mentioned, such as updating the chat bot and exchanging in live chat. They also helped lay much of the design and content for the future deployment of Pearl's World. Examples such as these are part of our dedication to our students, as we stand side by side through adversity. While the Enrollment Services areas had these student workers in Admissions and Records, Communications, and Success and Engagement Center, we now have zero student workers to assist since we have not been approved to hire any of them. This is likely one of the reasons why mailboxes such as the admissions@smc.edu mailbox is constantly flooded , often times with 600-700 messages per day—a figure we cannot keep up with current staffing that is involved in direct service provisioning through phones, emails, and remote line queues on QLess.

Student Communications and Increased Workload
One of the unique paradoxes to communications, is as they improve, so do the expectations. Particularly with our

younger student body, there is an assumption that some things exist, and a frustration when they don't. Being able to do EVERYTHING through a phone and through a secure portal that both saves and can be optimized would be one example. Some of these expectations can be met, in theory, but they require resources and time to establish and then maintain.

Increased workload came in several forms, all of which were understandably unexpected. The crafting and disseminating of messages dramatically increased, as there was a constant need to inform and update students regarding circumstances and resources. There were updates, surveys, letters, reminders and more from multiple departments across campus that relied on student communications to meet these needs. Senior staff requested emails to be sent to students late at night, for a prolonged period of time even though, in some case, decisions had been made early in the day and sometimes the day prior. The urgency of messages was paramount, consuming any and all hours of any day. Last minute changes and edits became commonplace, and once a green light was given there wasn't a moment to delay in getting information to our students. The Communications team (Dean and Coordinator) had to be available late at night to lend assistance, yet this effort was invisible to the SMC community.

Other challenges related to the lack of access to technology. Much, if not all, of communications is tech driven. Sometimes the needs are not met due to lack of funds to acquire and/or maintain these tech resources; sometimes the restrictions are internal, such as not being able to grant student workers access to Teams, having a SSO (Sign Sign-On for login and authentication) to various platforms such as Marketplace; and sometimes the technology just needs more human support (in the form of staff and/or student workers) in order live chat, provide graphics and content, maintain databases, and progress whatever needs an objective requires. Yet, we have zero support at this juncture to hire student workers to help us help their peers.

Remote Trainings
There is no substitute for hands on or having someone right there to guide you. However, being remote took those advantages away. Several trainings for staff and students needed to be conducted (Gecko Engage, TargetX, ModoLabs, Teams), and like many others Zoom was one of the go-to resources. However, Zoom can only do so much. To supplement these trainings, shared documents were created which pre-contained instructions, links and more, as well as pre-recorded training session which were available at any time. Users could watch a video, have a resource, and then join a live Zoom session for their questions, and then follow-up at any time. A lot of time and effort went into preparing these kinds of resources, but the positive results show their effectiveness in a remote setting. Yet, some staff members not only expected, but demanded, that they be trained one-on-one and put in writing every aspect of training conducted on Zoom. This was unreasonable given the timing between Senior Staff giving the order to move to remote operations and having to identify and implement systems that would allow us to shift operations to a remote environment.

Loss of Technology and Resources
This is a very broad area, including access to software, phones, computers, and even space. Admissions and Student Communications rely heavily on these things for success, and so adapting without what was once familiar took some effort. Student workers were basically shut out from all of their access. Home computers for staff were not up to the speeds and power to match previous performance had on campus, and no longer having a space to plan, exchange, and execute were all significant hurdles. To resolve these issues, the best out of what was available was made. Student workers were given a plethora of resources for support (could always be more), computer and space adjustments were made to adapt, and overall an understanding of limitations, rather than giving up because of them, was made so that a focus could be set on finding solutions. These proactive perspectives keep things moving forward with positive results. An example is in the shifting of the call center. No longer was a space available including phone capable hardware and software. To meet the needs of staff and students, another platform was utilized in what became a remote chat center. Access to Admissions phones was also problematic given the College was completely unprepared and had no immediate plan for how staff could both answer and contact students by phone. The Admissions Supervisor immediately investigated the option of using Google Voice. Every staff member was setup with a Google number, which they could

use on their college-provided Chromebooks. A few weeks later, the IT department was able to provide access to college phone lines via Jabber.

Enrollment-Related Policy Changes

Given the pandemic and the suspension of regulations by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the Dean of Enrollment Services was tasked multiple times with developing policy (in concert with others) and then work with MIS to spec out changes for WebISIS, Corsair Connect, and mProfessor systems to implement policies related to enrollment, withdrawals, fees, grading options, etc. These included developing a system by which students could drop courses without a grade or financial penalty, delaying deadlines not only through the spring semester but after the semester. The Admissions Supervisor had to post over 3,000 individual and manual transactions when systems could not be fully automated. This included grade changes or retroactive withdrawals once the student learned of their final grade. Records show that in the end, over 17,000 course drops were processed using the systems developed by the Dean and MIS, which equated to 2,151 FTES.

All of the changes above also required ongoing communication with students, faculty, and staff.

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 • 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.
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.

CONGRATULATIONS – that's it! Please save your document with your program's name and forward it to your area Vice President for review.

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

****

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_erica@smc.edu). If you have any questions, please contact us!

Thank you for your input!