Alana Bachor [00:00:00]:

Honestly, the way that we could see these students through is just showing them support. Like, just showing them support and not just, you know, from one person. If everywhere they turned, they felt like they had a team member that was, you know, really seeing them and really wanting to encourage them and genuinely see them succeed, I think that's all that they need, because that's all that human beings need, right? To feel seen and to feel supported.

Chisa Uyeki [00:00:30]:

Welcome to the Mount San Antonio College Podcast. I'm Chisa Uyeki, a Mount SAC professor and librarian, and I'm pleased to be your host for this season. Our goal is to keep you connected to our campus by bringing you the activities and events you may not have time to attend to share the interesting things our colleagues are creating and innovative ways they are supporting and connecting with Mount Sac students. Join me as we explore Mount sac.

Ivan Sanchez [00:01:04]:

Do you have questions about the transfer process or how to support students on their transfer journey? I'm Ivan Sanchez, one of your co hosts on the Mount SAC podcast. And today I sit down with Josh Louden, the director of the Transfer and Completion center, as well as one of our many wonderful counselors, Alana Bachor. Both are interested in exploring ways faculty can play a bigger role in assisting students with their transfer goals and also nurturing a positive transfer culture on campus. We'll dig in on transfer opportunities like the tag and highlight ways we can all be a bigger part of our students. Transfer stories. Thanks for listening. So, first off, tell us a little bit about yourselves.

Josh Louden [00:01:43]:

Yeah, go ahead, Lana.

Alana Bachor [00:01:44]:

Oh, okay. Hi, everyone. My name is Alana Bachor. I am a counselor here at Mount sac. I work in the general counseling department. I'm going on my 10th year here as a tenured faculty member in July, and so yay. And then a little bit about me. I enjoy the beach.

Alana Bachor [00:02:03]:

And since we're talking about transfer today, I am not a transfer student, but I'm deeply passionate about it because I do think, especially our community college students, like, that is what they're working for, and especially our younger students that are out of high school coming into the community college. It's such an important time of their life. I think developmentally and socially, that what happens here and how they get the encouragement to go on for their educational and personal goals, it just really impacts them. And so I'm really passionate about transfer, even though it is a small part of my job, because as counselors, we do personal counseling, we do academic, academic, counseling, and we also do career counseling. But, yeah, I think I'm just happy to Be here and happy to be talking about transfer because it is one of my passions.

Josh Louden [00:02:51]:

Yeah. And I'm Josh Louden. I'm the director for Transfer and Completion center here at Mount Sac. I also have been here not 10 years, but I've been here about a year and a half. And I was a transfer student from Mount Sac. I transferred to Cal State Fullerton and have a bachelor's in linguistics and anthropology and a master's in anthropology. Professionally speaking, I came back to Mount Sac to teach back in 2022. I do have a class or two at night every semester in cultural anthropology or language and culture, which are areas of love and passion for me.

Josh Louden [00:03:35]:

And then when I got hired here as the director, it stems from my 12 years of academic advising and advising leadership experience at the Cal State level. So that's where I found another side of higher education that I am, you know, really passionate about. And, you know, as far as, you know, what I like to do. Oh, you know, Alana didn't mention that both of us are wrapping up our third year in our doctoral studies. Alana's at UCLA and I'm at Cal State Fullerton. So we're both really hitting the dissertation hard right now. So. Yeah, so that's where we're at.

Josh Louden [00:04:15]:

And that's pretty much all I focus on in my life.

Alana Bachor [00:04:19]:

Yeah, I realized. Oh, I didn't talk about that because I actually. Yeah, I am doing my dissertation.

Ivan Sanchez [00:04:25]:

That's a big part of your life, right?

Alana Bachor [00:04:27]:

Yes, I am. And actually my study is on transfer related practices in the classroom from faculty at Mount Sac. And so I was very, very lucky and blessed to be able to interview part time, full time and retired faculty from Mount Sac to get their thoughts and their ideas and their transfer related practices that they do. And it's been really eye opening and really wonderful to just hear how much faculty just really want to support students in their goals. And since so many students do want to transfer from Mount Zach, their dream schools to go on to get their dream jobs, it's been really, really nice. That part has been the writing, not so much, but it's been really nice and, and glad that I could be talking about that today.

Ivan Sanchez [00:05:14]:

For folks who might not be familiar, can you walk us through what the Transfer and Completion center does and who's it for?

Josh Louden [00:05:22]:

So, yeah, the Transfer and Completion center, the. We're actually separated on the second floor of building 9B. So completion is on the west side and the transfer is on the east side. And Transfer center is really about supporting the students who intend to transfer, who are thinking about it or just informing students who don't know about it and haven't thought about it that it is a possibility. So we, we do host a lot of workshops in our space. We visit classrooms, we when invited by faculty throughout the year, typically during semesters is when we do the most of those presentations. We offer drop in advising application support throughout the year because there are actually applications are going on all the time. The big ones that we hear about are the Cal State and UC application periods with those deadlines.

Josh Louden [00:06:19]:

But actually a lot of private institutions, out of state institutions, they might have year round admissions processes or application opportunities. We're hoping all throughout the year when we have computers in our area for transfer so that students can work on the application in our space and ask questions as they're doing it. Then just quickly on the completion side, we're really about helping those students who are wrapping up certificates and degrees, connecting them with counseling and making sure they apply for their grad application so that they don't miss that opportunity to actually earn the degree they've been working on so long.

Ivan Sanchez [00:07:00]:

Wonderful. And I also want to hear about some annual events that faculty should keep an eye out for.

Josh Louden [00:07:07]:

We have a few big ones starting in the fall. We always have our transfer fair. So that's when we invite universities to our campus and host a fair where there's anywhere from 65 to 70 representatives from different universities here. And students for about a four hour period can just walk through and talk to any representatives that they want to. So this is actually set up every year by the UC Office of the President to make sure that all the UCs can make it to the community colleges as much as possible. And then the Cal states, they join in on that. And then all the private and out of state schools will do it too. We also celebrate transfer during it's the Transfer Awareness Week.

Josh Louden [00:07:57]:

It's a national week for transfer students and we do a lot of different workshops. We will be doing a spotlight on a transfer faculty member who's going to share their transfer experience and how they got to where they're at now. So we'll always have at least one of those during that week. And yeah, so it's definitely an opportunity to celebrate what transfer is and what it means to people. And then in the spring we have Transfer Fest which used to be known as TransferCon or Transfer Conference. And so we have a lot of workshops and guest speakers and food and everything to really encourage students and faculty to learn more about the transfer process. As it is today. And then celebrating transfers is what we do at the end of spring, usually a week or two before the actual commencement, as it is right now.

Josh Louden [00:08:53]:

And then we celebrate all the students who got an admission letter to a university so they can sign up. Then we recognize them. They get a medal that they can wear at commencement or just have for their own personal use. And they get to sort of have that celebration because 30% of our students who transfer actually don't earn a degree, so they're not eligible for commencement. So we like to celebrate them in that way. But also, all the students who do get to go to commencement, we also want them to come and celebrate their transfer achievement as well. So that's the transfer achievement celebration. And this year it'll be June 3rd.

Josh Louden [00:09:33]:

Starting at 5 is a reception, and then at 6 is when we start the program where we have a student speaker and start recognizing students. And this year, we'll also be recognizing any of the transfer champions that the students nominated. So when they sign up for the transfer achievement celebration, they get to say, like, was there a faculty or staff member who, you know, helped you on this transfer journey? And then they can do a name and a little bit about why they would name that person. And so we want to also recognize those champions, so they'll get a little something from us, and we'll put their names out there as well.

Ivan Sanchez [00:10:13]:

Getting there, it can be a mystery sometimes for some folks. What do you all think are some of the biggest myths students or even instructors have about the transfer process?

Alana Bachor [00:10:24]:

I'm going to jump in here and say that students don't think they qualify. So they don't think they qualify either to get accepted into the school. They don't think they're going to qualify for financial aid. They're not going to, you know, and then also just think that they may not be able to do it. And so many students, you know, it's having those conversations and having them talk through. Do you believe you can go to a UC school? Do you believe you can apply to usc? You know, a lot of the times bringing up those conversations can be very scary. But once they start to see that they can do it and that it's been done before, and my motto is, like, let's worry about getting in, and then we can worry about the financial need right after. Like, let's do it in steps.

Alana Bachor [00:11:07]:

And the best problem to have is that you get into all the schools you apply to, and then we'll worry about with that dilemma once we get there. But I think that's probably one of the biggest myths and that students feel like they can't do it, like it's not something that they're able to do. And so I think that's one and I think for students and I think the other one for instructors, from what I have seen is that I think instructors believe that the associate degree for transfer that we have here at Mount Sac, the ADT's, I think they believe that if a student gets that degree, then they've met all requirements for all schools and private schools, you know, it's different. The UCs don't really necessarily give the same advantages that the CSU schools do. And so. And it all gets very technical. And I think that's where the counselors and the transfer specialist and the transfer center and the completion center, you know, that's where we all can come in with the technicalities. But I think if general statements are being made in the classroom like that, it gets a little bit tricky.

Alana Bachor [00:12:11]:

Just because the ADTs are meant more for the Cal states.

Ivan Sanchez [00:12:16]:

I'm going to throw another abbreviation at you, the tag. So what is the tag and how can students use it?

Josh Louden [00:12:25]:

So, yeah, the TAG is a UC opportunity. It stands for Transfer Admission Guarantee. So a student can, as a community college student, they can pick a UC and a major for that campus. And then as long as they sign up for the tag, enter their information and then apply at the appropriate time before the deadline with the GPA requirement that the major needs. As long as they have that GPA and they've tagged and they apply, then they will get that admission offer. There are some limitations. So not all the UC campuses participate. It's all but UC San Diego, UC Berkeley and then ucla.

Josh Louden [00:13:12]:

They do not participate in tag. And then per campus, there might be different majors that are excluded as well. So the UC website is very helpful with that. And we always answer questions about that. We host TAG workshops throughout the spring and then throughout the summer as well. We'll be having some TAG workshops for students so they can learn about it and know if that's what they want to do.

Alana Bachor [00:13:37]:

I will also add that TAG changes every year. So we'll have students that will be like, oh, my friend, TAG UCI. You know, and then the year. So, you know, students really just have to Google, right? UCI tag, fall 2025, whenever they're going to be applying. And. And it does get updated. So the nice thing is that information is pretty accessible. And so what would be really great if students, you know, kind of just try to go on the website, read it, and then come in and ask questions.

Alana Bachor [00:14:04]:

That's a more fruitful conversation because then at least the student has a little bit of grasping and we're just clarifying what the concept is and then getting them ready for it. Okay, let's, let's take this math this term. Let's, you know, let's get ready for this English in this summer. But it's a really great program and many students don't realize that the UCS.

Ivan Sanchez [00:14:24]:

Offer that the TAG applies to ucs. Is there something similar for Cal States?

Josh Louden [00:14:30]:

Cal States do have. It's called a dual admissions program called the Transfer Success Pathway. The difference is tag. You can do it basically at any point that you're ready to as a community college student. The Cal State Dual Admissions Opportunity, the TSP is really for first time freshmen in their first semester. So they get to pick their major and campus. But they have to do it this year. They have until October 31st of their first semester.

Josh Louden [00:15:03]:

And so as long as a freshman is coming in and they have a really good idea about their major and what campus they want to go to, then it's a great program because they are guaranteed admissions as long as they finish the major requirements and transfer requirements by their third year. They have three years to do it. And so that, that just started two years ago. And so that's one thing the original tag was the ADT for Cal States. It did come with a sort of admissions guarantee. Basically, if you apply to a Cal State and they don't have room for you, you'll get moved to a second choice. And as long as they have room, then you'll get that admission offer. So that was the ADT's promise.

Josh Louden [00:15:50]:

And what we've seen is over the years, because the ADT started back in 2014, is since then we've had a decline in high school students. Right. Just the population in general has changed. Cal States really have been increasing the number of transfer students they admit. Other universities have been doing it too. The data now is showing that students with ADTs are finishing their bachelor's faster. That's another benefit for the Cal State system is that if a student comes in with an ADT, they're 10 or 12% more likely to finish in two years or less.

Ivan Sanchez [00:16:33]:

Wonderful. Thanks for that. Additional information. Is there a student's story that really captures the spirit and purpose of the Transfer Center? And if you would please share it with us.

Josh Louden [00:16:44]:

I thought about this. Really, all of our transfer stories are really amazing. Follow us on Instagram. And you'll see where, especially the end of spring, we really, like, promote, hey, the student's going here, the students going there. But, yeah, there are a lot of individual successes that we learn about. I've had students who, as a professor, they came to me asking if they should try to transfer. I was like, yeah, you're a great student. Like, you should, definitely.

Josh Louden [00:17:14]:

And then it works out for them, right? And, you know, when you earn a bachelor's degree, even research done in 2024 still shows that it's great. It's a great investment to earn a bachelor's as far as, like, the career earnings, you know, in your lifetime is still higher if you have a bachelor's than if you didn't. So I guess that's the great part about this job. It's probably why I love working with transfer students is, you know, we're seeing lives change every day. So I will say that every transfer story really is amazing to me.

Alana Bachor [00:17:54]:

Yeah, I know this is a podcast, but I would say if you really want to experience almost like that joyous feeling and actually witnessing it is going to the transfer Achievement celebration to see the students, you know, just so ecstatic that they reach their goals and to be there with the people that they get to, you know, nominate of, who help them on their transfer journey here at Mount Zach. It's a really great event to go and just to celebrate their successes. And while I was interviewing faculty here at Mount sac, I learned that there are many faculty that came to Mount Sac, transferred out, got their bachelor's degree, got their master's degree, pos. You know, some of them have their doctorate degree, and they're teaching back at Mount sac. And so when I'm done. When I'm done with school, I'd like to, you know, interview those folks, because if you want a great story, there it is. I don't know if they used the transfer center while they were here, but I think it would be good to hear from them because, like, how amazing is that that they. They did it and then now they're helping other students and at Mount sac, it's pretty awesome to hear.

Ivan Sanchez [00:18:59]:

That is amazing. And, yeah, there are so many stories that inspire us. Right. And in your experience, what kinds of roadblocks are really common for transfer students? And how have you seen them get through them?

Josh Louden [00:19:15]:

When I look at where we're at, right. Only, like, 80% of students who apply to Mount Sac State on the application that they intend to transfer. And that's also the national average for Community colleges, but only 25% of each cohort are getting out of here in four years or less. So there's definitely a lot of roadblocks happening. And some of them are external circumstances, but some of them are institutional and things that we should look out for. I was thinking about the units. If a student thinks they need 85 units of coursework before they can transfer, maybe they didn't see a counselor for a year and a half. Right.

Josh Louden [00:20:05]:

So they took all these classes that they didn't need or they didn't understand what was required. So there's sometimes just like a curriculum thing. There could be misunderstandings with general education patterns. You know, we've had like five over the last 10 years, and we'll talk about another one coming up. So there's that going on. And then, yeah, there's a lot of part time students at Mount Sacred who need more time to finish. And so getting out of here, although that's still their. Their intention, it's a much slower process and we want to make sure that those students especially are not taking units they don't need.

Josh Louden [00:20:47]:

Right. So, yeah, I think there's a lot we can look out for. And Alana might have some others.

Alana Bachor [00:20:53]:

Yeah, no, I mean, totally agree with you, Josh. And I would add that our students are amazing and they're dealing with a lot of. Right. We are a community college and that's part of why we're here, to help those that are looking to really help themselves and, you know, enrich their lives, better their lives. And so, you know, our students have families, they have jobs full time, part time, sometimes several jobs. They have family responsibilities. You know, they're taking care of their younger brothers or sisters or picking them up. You know, they're dealing with a lot of mental health.

Alana Bachor [00:21:23]:

They're dealing with the state of the country. I mean, we have so many populations already that are underrepresented and underserved. And now with the way things are going, even educators, now we're worried about the state of education. And so if we're worried about it within our own jobs, can you imagine the students? And so it is so much. It's so much. And I think honestly, the way that we could see these students through is just showing them support, like just showing them support and not just, you know, from one person. If everywhere they turned, they felt like they had a team member that was, you know, really seeing them and really wanting to encourage them and genuinely see them succeed, I think that's all that they need because that's all that human beings need, right, to feel seen and to feel supported. And so I think it's thinking about how can we do that when Mount Sac especially is so large.

Alana Bachor [00:22:22]:

We're such a huge school and we're working in our silos and we're just trying to stay above water. You know, faculty are like, I just, I gotta get them these subjects, right? I gotta get them through this chemistry. Because part of what I learned is that faculty are trying to teach their subject and prepare their student because in their mind that is doing the transfer work because they are getting them ready for the next step, because they know what they're going to face in the next step, you know, in their major or in their related careers. And so I think being as supportive, supportive as we can, being as empathetic as we can and just saying, hey, it's okay, you know, like if you have to take this semester off to focus on your family or focus on your mental health, go ahead and do that. But know that we're here and we're going to pick right back up, you know, when you're ready to come back. And so I think the students feeling like they have a huge support where they say, hey, I know the counselor in the counseling department, that's who I see. Oh, you know, and then I know the transfer specialist over, you know, and I'll meet with them just to kind of make sure I'm on, you know, track or talking about what the school offers. And then, hey, oh, in the financial aid, I do my FAFSA every year, you know, and I always see the same person there in the financial aid lab and they've always helped me out.

Alana Bachor [00:23:36]:

And then in my classroom, my faculty, they talk about their experiences, they talk about how it may have been hard for them, right? Because I think sometimes as professionals we forget how hard it was for us. And then it's remembering what is it that they're seeing in the moment, right? Because they're seeing us quaffed and educated and you know, and with our PowerPoints and you know, looking like we have it all together because that's what we do as professionals, right? But they didn't see all of the struggle that it took to get there. And so I think talking about it and saying, hey, I was there once, just keep going, you know, the little things like that, I think even doing the check ins, like how's everybody doing? Even if there are surveys on canvas, I think those are the things that they're the little things that are doable because I know we're all busy. It has a greater impact, I think, than we can ever know. There's studies on this, but I think that, yeah, it has a greater impact than we'll ever, ever really know. I think if we can provide that for students, I think it'll really help them.

Ivan Sanchez [00:24:44]:

So what are some simple ways instructors can support students who want to transfer? Are there things instructors can do maybe in class or on their syllabus, whether it's an online class or in person class, that can help build a transfer minded culture?

Alana Bachor [00:24:58]:

Josh and I are kind of laughing just because this is what was, you know, this is what I'm trying to study. So that way we could, you know, continue to do it at Mount SAC and bring it to maybe faculty that want to help but don't know how. And so, yes, talking about stories, but very specifically about just their struggles, not only the successes, right? Oh, I have my degree in this. But not only the successes, but the struggles. Even wearing their alma mater attire during the National Transfer week that Josh was talking about earlier in the fall. That's always the third week of October. And so even just wearing it during that time, the transfer center does send out an email, but I know it probably gets buried. But, you know, if we kind of just, you know, do this every year so that they visually see where they're and it can start a conversation, right, in office hours about, hey, you went to Fullerton, I didn't know that.

Alana Bachor [00:25:47]:

And they start asking questions, right? I also think that from what I learned, that faculty are already doing, they use their agency to contact other faculty that either they know from their graduate programs or they've worked with before with articulations in class and MOUs, just to connect that student and there's that warm handoff to the school. So the student, either they introduce them, they will meet them on the campus and introduce them. And I think, oh my gosh, wow, that's. You're doing that on your weekends. That's amazing. And that's something pretty, I don't want to say extreme, but it's a pretty committed thing to do, right? But there are faculty doing it. There's faculty that are writing letters of rec. I know that that adds more work, but if there's a system that they could have in place where they have questions provided to the students so that way they can, you know, make sure that the students really shines through in their letter of rec, I think taking goal surveys at the very beginning so they know their audience.

Alana Bachor [00:26:47]:

So some classes, the students are There for their degree. You know, that's another reason why the community college exists. And I think, you know, absolutely. But especially in the general education courses, you know, you want to see, okay, who's looking to transfer, who's looking to get an associate degree, who's not sure, right? And if you're not sure, the counseling website is on my syllabus. The transfer completion center is on my syllabus. You know, you go and talk to them. And so just even small referrals and little reminders in the class. There's so many things that people have done.

Alana Bachor [00:27:20]:

They've done transfer boards in their departments. They request the transfer specialist to come do presentations in their classroom. And they can do that by just requesting it off of the website, the transfer center website. Really easy thing that they can do is to sign up for the transfer center faculty listserv. And so if they do that, they will receive emails directly from either Josh or I with information that they can share with students. And so they. They might be email templates where that literally says, hey, class, if you're thinking about transferring this fall, you can go here. And so all they have to do is basically cut and paste it into an email to their class, or they can cut and paste it into an announcement on canvas.

Alana Bachor [00:28:08]:

And that way, really, they're just helping share the information. And the information will direct the students to who's going to best serve them, whether it's going to be financial aid, the transfer completion center, the counseling center, the fair. And that would be one really, really easy thing that faculty can do in helping promote a transfer sending culture here at Mount Zach.

Josh Louden [00:28:30]:

There's no one else on campus that has more trust from a student, more time with the student than the faculty. So if a faculty member is like, yeah, like, check out this university or check out this program at this school, or if they follow the transfer center, then they'll know about when we do tours around California. And I mean, I would love to have a faculty member say, hey, you guys are going to ucr? Like, I'd love to go with you, because that's where I went. I could tell the students, you know, what I did or what I. Yeah, so anything like that would just be amazing. But just letting students know about what's going on is like coming from a faculty member. A student will pay attention a lot more than they would an email blast. So, yeah, I would say, go on our website request.

Josh Louden [00:29:20]:

We can do really short presentations in classrooms. We don't have to take up a lot of time and Then join our listserv on the website, because that's where you get the information that we're doing these tours or these workshops. And so, yeah, it could be really helpful.

Ivan Sanchez [00:29:35]:

I want to turn to the calgetc and talk about that a little bit. Can you break down the changes that are coming with calgetc in plain terms? What's changing and why it matters?

Josh Louden [00:29:46]:

With calgetc, the goal that the state wanted to see was that the Cal State and UC general education pattern was aligned. And so that's where Calgetc is, and it is effective fall 2025. So we're especially wanting to make sure our new students coming in are familiar with calgetc right away. And then what changes with calgetc from the traditional Cal State, you know, CSUG pattern that we're used to is we're losing the lifelong learning area and we're losing three units of Arts and Humanities. Yeah, those are the big ones. Those are the big ones. And the other change that isn't so obvious in a lot of the information that I see is that you need a C or better in everything. It used to be with the Cal State csug, like for Intro to Social Science, for example, if a student got a D, it still satisfied the requirement.

Josh Louden [00:30:50]:

That will not be the case with calgetc. And as far as a list of courses, we're actually still like, I think all the community colleges still in California are waiting for our courses to be approved by the Chancellor's office. So I don't think we have all of the courses officially approved in all the areas. We're waiting for that. And then once we have that, we'll start promoting like, these are the courses for each of the calgetsy areas.

Ivan Sanchez [00:31:20]:

Wonderful. Thank you for that explanation. Are there any changes that instructors should be paying attention to when it comes to the calgetc?

Josh Louden [00:31:30]:

My big thing is understanding that the numbering is different. So if you're used to the CSUGE pattern, it's a little different now. So, like, Arts and humanities is 3A and then humanities is 3B. So as you're promoting your class on your syllabus, you know, saying that it's CSU transferable, you'll want to make sure you're including the calgetc number as well. Especially for our new students coming in, they're not going to know about the old ways. So making sure that they're aware of what calgets the area this class fulfills, that is helpful when they're thinking about.

Alana Bachor [00:32:08]:

Preparing for transfer, if that's not enough. Also, AB 1111 is coming in where the the common course numbering for community colleges is being implemented. And so like all Poly and Speed speech prefixes will be updated to polls and CoM respectively to align with the new course numbering. So for example, Poly 2 will be changed to polls 2 and Speech 7 will now be changed to Com 7. And then for fall of 2025, that's where these common course numbering changes are going to be coming in. And so not only did students go from two menus to choose from to one menu, but now the menu is limited and has some different class numberings. And so I think the first classes that are going to be changed is for the numbering is going to be English 1A, English 1C, Math 110, Psych 1A and Poly 1 and then Speech 1A and all their honors classes. And so there's going to be a lot of changes coming.

Alana Bachor [00:33:14]:

The one thing that I will say, because there's a lot of mixed feelings about this, and rightfully so, because many of the hands on art classes are being eliminated from the general education pattern with this new CalGETC. And so the whole point of general education was for students to be able to kind of try classes out right where it still counted. And so if we're limiting that for students, it is concerning, right, to me as a counselor and I'm sure it's very concerning to the faculty that are teaching these classes that are now not part of the general education pattern for students entering fall of 2025. So I will say that as a counselor in the general counseling department, we have had these discussions, we are concerned about it and I just want to say within my own practice, I'm still showing students all the courses that we have. Even though I'm very passionate about transferring, it really is about the student, what is it that they want? And I will suggest, hey, if you're thinking about this, even though it's not on the calgetsy, it may be, you know, worth your time to figure out if you do want to go into ceramics, right? If you do love painting, if that's something that that's going to bring you peace in your first year of school. We want you to enjoy it, right? And talk about the power and the education in that where students are learning about themselves and what is it that gives them joy and that motivates them to continue on with their goals. And so I think a really big fear is that, okay, we all put them on one track and it's this and we're going to bypass all these other programs.

Josh Louden [00:34:59]:

Right?

Alana Bachor [00:35:00]:

That's not the case. And knowing my colleagues, we are having those conversations with students and making sure that, you know, we are picking up the certificates, we are looking at associate degrees along with looking at transfer. Because if that's what is going to be best for the student and if that's what the student wants, we're not going to deviate them away from that just because we're like, oh, look, it's easy. There's one path, you know, just go. It's not that way. People are more complicated. I know when the gps, those mappings came out, where basically lays out the course sequencing for classes for the different programs, you know, people would say, like, well, what are you going to do now? Like, like, what's going to happen to your job? It's kind of like, well, people are more complicated than that and life's more complic than that. And so it's very individualized.

Alana Bachor [00:35:44]:

And I hope you know the faculty that are listening to this, we are well aware of the benefits, but also the limitations of this new change that has been mandated by the state.

Ivan Sanchez [00:35:55]:

What does a campus with a strong transfer culture look like? Maybe you can talk about how we can work together to make our transfer culture stronger.

Josh Louden [00:36:05]:

One of the things that I've been really trying to do here is work more with our instruction, our faculty. I think we have so many amazing stories of successful transfer right here on campus. And if 80% of our students really intend to transfer, I think if we have a really good transfer culture, then that's a question people are asking on campus. Like, hey, are you thinking about transferring? I don't want to be the only faculty member asking my students, and I don't want to be the only transfer center director asking if I could talk to the academic senate or if I can talk to deans or associate deans or things like that. We should want to share our stories and understand students and what they can do. One thing I was thinking about, if a faculty member helped a student with their UC application, reviewing their PIQs with them, the personal insight questions like that practice of learning about your student in that way, you probably will never forget who that person is in that student's story. And then when they come back and they say, like, thank you so much. I got the admission, that is such a great opportunity to know that what we're doing is meaningful to changing lives.

Josh Louden [00:37:30]:

And students are seeing improvements in their lives and in their communities because of the small things that we do as faculty and as staff here on campus.

Alana Bachor [00:37:42]:

I would say from the outside, I think if we had a really strong culture, I think the look of it would be during applications, it'd be on the marquee. There'd be signs up, transfer time, more banners around campus. We'd have student transfer success profiles, maybe in the quad, have their pictures up and where they were transferring to. I think everybody would know about the resources on campus, especially the transfer completion center, and not just faculty, but staff managers. I think people wearing their alma mater, like, it's like a thing that everybody does during the third week of October. I mean, even at the bus stop, even if the bus driver was wearing, like, you know, you want to transfer Dr. You know, a counselor or like, I mean, there's advertisements where students, like, it's just part of their everyday experience at the community college of, you know, being reminded of it. And I do think that sometimes that does cause a little bit of anxiety in students, but that's the point of it.

Alana Bachor [00:38:44]:

Like, when you face it and you say, okay, well, what is it that I really want to do? And let's talk about it, right? It helps them to then make the first step, because it's really, choosing a major is hard because there's that implication for the rest of your life, and you want to make sure you're making the right choice. And so I think knowing that we do have major success workshops on campus where students can help figure out how to choose a major, which then can really then help them decide, okay, do I need to transfer? Do I not need to transfer? Can I get my degree at Mount Sac? So I think just having a lot of signage and a lot of knowledge, like, everybody being a little bit knowledgeable just about the transfer application time, like the main time, and then even just asking the question, you know, like having more conversations like that. If I think in the classrooms, if all faculty are doing surveys so they kind of know what their goals are for their students, and that way they can give advice or give stories accordingly. To me, it's just so odd because Mount Sac, we're always in the top 10 transfer community colleges, like schools that send students to the. To the CSUs. I think this last year we were, you know, number one. And it's great, right? Like, oh, yay. It's great to be number one.

Alana Bachor [00:40:01]:

But, like, in my mind, whenever there's given to me, it's like, those are students, right? Those are students. And Mount Sac is so big. We should be number one all the time, right? Because our size, like, when we're just looking at sheer numbers, like the amount of students that come in wanting to transfer. And even our completion numbers should be high because we're in a single district, right? We're one school in a single district. So to me, it's always surprising when we're not. And it's kind of like, what else can we do, right? And so I think doing little practices in the classroom, so that way it's normalized that faculty are asking about transfer or talking about graduation or talking about the center that we have, talking about the celebration that we had. I would love to see the Transfer Achievement Celebration as a really big celebration. It should be just as big as commencement, but yet, you know, commencement is the big thing, which I think should be.

Alana Bachor [00:40:54]:

But I think because the function of community college is either to transfer, get a degree or certificate, or continue education, there's those three things that we mainly provide the two of them with. Transfer and commencement should be equal, I think, in size and celebration and knowledge. And many, many people don't even know that we have a Transfer Achievement Celebration. So I think visually, you'd be able to feel the culture because you put time and effort on what's really important, right? And so, yeah, I don't necessarily see that on the outside. And I do think everybody, for the most part, needs to get to the same vision and want to collaboratively do that. And I, like I said, the faculty that I interviewed, you know, they're amazing. They're so tired, and they're doing all these things because they know it had helped students. And I think many of them are like, just tell us what we need to do.

Alana Bachor [00:41:53]:

Like, if I can do it, I will do it. And so I think we maybe have a task force, right? And maybe it's starting with this podcast of getting a group to say, okay, how can we help people help students reach their transfer roles? I think it needs to become a bigger priority that can be seen and felt on campus.

Ivan Sanchez [00:42:14]:

Last question, we'll leave with. What would you say to a student who's the first in their family to go to college and isn't sure transfer is even possible for them?

Josh Louden [00:42:24]:

I tell students, try it. There's no harm in applying and finding out what you can get at the university and what you can do there? That was another roadblock that we forgot to mention was, like, tuition costs, like, on a website, especially for private schools and even uc, seem a little intimidating. But when you really look at it as a student with financial aid and scholarships and. And fee waivers and things that the universities offer that sticker price really shrinks. And so, yeah, we've had students who were really intimidated by that. But, yeah, I always tell students, try it. You know, I'll help you with the application. Go to the transfer center.

Josh Louden [00:43:09]:

Our specialists are amazing. They'll walk you through what it looks like, what it feels like, and, you know, they'll give you tips on how to prepare. And counselors do the same thing. They are always really helpful with transfer questions. We can always trust that a counselor will talk to students about transfer, if it's even in question.

Alana Bachor [00:43:29]:

Yeah. What would I say to a student who's the first in the family go to college? I mean, I'm first going to be like, yes, yes, you go, we can do this, right? That's the first thing I'm going to say to them. I'm going to commend them, like, you know, hey, good for you, right? Like, this is scary, and you're paving the way. And a lot of times I'll ask, do you have, you know, younger siblings? And many times they're, you know, students are like, I do. You know, and I'm the first. It's like, okay, well, you know what? You're. You're kind of taking the hit, right? You're. You're going to be the one taking the hit for your younger brother, your younger sister.

Alana Bachor [00:44:00]:

But you can do it. And don't worry, like, we're going to help you. I'm going to take you as far right as I can go. We're going to work on this stuff. Like me as a counselor, I'm going to work on it. A lot of times I tell students I know a little about a lot of things, but I'm going to refer you to the faculty because they are the subject experts, and they know a lot about their subject, right? They've gone to school for many, many years, and that's why they really care, right, about teaching you well, because they really care about their subject. And so that's what I would say that we need to build your team on campus. You need to ask questions, right? The mouth that doesn't open does not get fed.

Alana Bachor [00:44:37]:

And so, like, you need to advocate for yourself, like, this is the time. We're not in high school anymore. Nobody's gonna remind you to talk to a counselor. Nobody's gonna remind you to turn in your homework, right? Like, you can't, you know, bribe professors with burritos, right? And turn in all your stacks of paper at the very end. You know, we're Gonna. They're gonna eat the burrito and then fail you. Like, it's different, Right? So, yeah, the other thing that I tell them is I will go 150% for you, but you need to go 150% for yourself, especially since you are the first. Right.

Alana Bachor [00:45:07]:

And it's not necessarily fair, but you can do it. Right. And so has incredible resources with tutoring, you know, financial aid services with the Success Lab. Many of our services are open till 7 o' clock. There's so many people at Mount Sac, faculty, administrators and staff members that just want to help you. So take advantage of that. And so it's having them think in that way. Okay, who's going to be your team on campus? Because if I'm not available, where are you going to go? Right.

Alana Bachor [00:45:39]:

Who you're going to talk to? And I tell them to make sure that they are talking to their faculty members, that they're getting to know them, because networking is very important. And just making sure that that idea. Oh, is it possible? Oh, 100% it's possible. And it's really up to you. Like, how are we going to do this? And when students say, well, I'm working, or this, that's okay, we're going to strategize. So today we're strategizing how you're going to do it. So, yeah, I think the encouragement, the way that you could see the tension, the fear kind of change, like, you know, in their body when the conversation is strictly like, yeah, there's no question that you're not going to do it. We are going to do it.

Alana Bachor [00:46:19]:

Let's figure out how we're going to do it for you. So, yeah, that's what I would say.

Ivan Sanchez [00:46:24]:

Well, Alana and Josh, I just want to thank you so much for sharing your perspective, your expertise, your experiences. All of this, I think, was incredibly helpful and insightful. And I am sure others listening will feel the exact same way. So thank you so much.

Josh Louden [00:46:43]:

Well, thanks for even offering to have an episode on Transfer. That's awesome.

Alana Bachor [00:46:47]:

Yeah, Ivan, thank you. And we know that you're a transfer champion on campus, so thank you for all your transfer work that you do in your classroom and in your office hours.

Ivan Sanchez [00:46:57]:

That's right. So thank you again, and you all have a good one.

Chisa Uyeki [00:47:04]:

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