Overview

Interviews were conducted as primary resources for the development of the *Mt. SAC 2018 Educational and Facilities Master Plan*. Approximately 170 faculty, staff, managers, and administrators representing 75 Instructional Programs, 20 Student Services, and five Administrative Services units met with members of the master plan consultant team twice, once in fall 2017 and again in spring 2017. During these interviews, representatives of each unit collaborated with consultant team members to develop the unit descriptions that constitute Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of this document.

One component of each unit description is a section on challenges and opportunities. Interview participants were asked to identify challenges and opportunities that they are currently addressing or anticipate addressing in the coming decade. Their responses were analyzed to identify the common themes.

This chapter presents a synthesis of the challenges and opportunities that were most often described during the interviews. This chapter is not a comprehensive summary of the master plan interviews. This chapter is also not a list of strategies that have been approved for implementation. The Master Plan Interview Themes are included in this document as one source of information for the College's future planning, and are presented with the intention of stimulating further College-wide discussion.

The six sections of this Chapter are:

- Themes from Master Plan Interviews with Instructional Programs
- Themes from Master Plan Interviews with Student Services
- Themes from Master Plan Interviews with Administrative Services and Human Resources
- Themes from Master Plan Interviews with Student Focus Groups
- Themes from Master Plan Discussions in Community Meetings
- Themes from Master Plan Interviews with President's Cabinet

methods, professionals anticipate and look for issues, concerns, or roadblocks that could be a barrier to student success rather than waiting for problems to occur.

<u>Examples</u>

- Align the most effective tutoring best practices with the unique needs of diverse student populations in the Learning Centers
- Embed counseling and/or tutoring with course content and delivery in credit and noncredit courses in disciplines and programs such as English, Mathematics, Television, Photography, Adult Basic Education, Short-term Vocational, Economics, Earth Sciences, Physics, Astronomy, Business Management, and American Language
- Expand the WIN Center to provide stronger academic support in Athletics and align counseling support with athletes' schedules
- Embed information competency training with content courses that require research, such as Library with English, Psychology, and Sociology
- Locate Counseling offices and Learning Centers near related instructional areas

<u>Implications for facilities</u>

If the College chooses to focus on increasing intrusive/proactive counseling and tutoring as strategies for improving student success and equity, new and remodeled facilities should include some or all of the following features.

Active Learning
/ Space allowing for interaction in classrooms and offices
/ Easy to rearrange

More Open Computer Labs
/ Increase space for Library, Learning Centers, and open access computer labs
/ Include open access time for students
/ Specific software programs for coursework
/ Access to printers

Appropriate Adjacencies
/ Courses sharing resources located together
/ Space for counseling, Learning Centers, and independent study close to instruction
/ Student resources and support together

Flexible Space
/ Both instructional and office space
/ Flexibility in the amount and configuration of space

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Mathematics prerequisites in increasing students' successful course completion rates in Physics

<Note to Emilie: there no implications for facilities for interview theme #2. How can we show that?>

Theme #3: Expand interdepartmental collaboration

Rationale

In the coming decade faculty and staff plan to integrate activities between and among the various Instructional Programs as well as between Instructional Programs and Student Services in order to expand and enrich the College's environment for student success.

Mt. SAC faculty and staff want to support students' understandings of course content by expanding the traditional definitions of instructional disciplines through interdepartmental collaboration on assignments, degrees, and certificates. By integrating lessons from multiple courses into a connected, cohesive body of knowledge, students are more likely to successfully use their education for creative expression, problem solving, and decision-making as well as to advance within a discipline.

Another type of interdepartmental collaboration that benefits students is the partnership between Instructional Programs and Student Services. By integrating counseling services, financial aid, and library and tutoring services with course content, as in the Bridge program, students are more likely to persist to completion of their educational goals.

Examples

- Expand collaboration between
  - Instructional and student services experts on onboarding processes, such as assessment and placement in Mathematics and English
  - Noncredit and credit programs, such as Adult Basic Education and Short-term Vocational programs with corresponding credit programs

- Share space and equipment, such as:
  - Physics, Engineering, Industrial Design, and Anthropology share three-dimensional printing technology
  - Graphic Design and Illustration, Photography, and Aeronautics share an outdoor netted laboratory for unmanned aerial vehicles
  - Welding and Art share welding facilities and equipment for functional and artistic purposes

Flexible Space

/ Both instructional and office space

/ Flexibility in the amount and configuration of space

/ Space for periodically scheduled activities for larger groups, such as film viewing, lectures, and exhibits

Office/Collaboration Space

/ Office space for adjunct faculty

/ Office complexes with collaboration space

/ Include small group rooms and alcoves

/ Easy access for student-faculty interaction

/ Larger professional development center

Makerspace/Innovation Lab

/ Shared between programs

/ Open for all students

/ Includes a variety of technology

/ Supports research and innovation

Outdoor Instructional Space

/ Outdoor science labs

/ Research space

/ Fabrication labs

/ Maximize wildlife sanctuary

/ Educational signage

Appropriate Adjacencies

/ Courses sharing resources located together

/ Multi-use laboratories to be shared between/among disciplines

/ Student resources and support together

Theme #4: Expand opportunities for distance learning

Rationale

Distance learning offers students the flexibility to adapt their course work to their schedules and learning styles. Without the requirement to be on campus on a particular day and time students may persist in college and move toward completion of their educational goals while also fulfilling employment and family responsibilities. Distance learning also serves various learning styles more flexibly because students can set their own pace of when, where, and how to study, typically with unlimited opportunities to review the material.

/ Access to printers

Office/Collaboration Space
/ Larger professional development center

Theme #5: Expand opportunities for experiential learning

Rationale
Mt. SAC faculty, staff, and administrators support integrating classroom instruction with laboratory and other types of experiential instruction as a way to increase student engagement, retention, and success. Teaching and learning methods that combine instruction and observation with practice are especially relevant given the diversities in Mt. SAC's student body and the College's focus on student equity. Experiential teaching and learning methods create a more level playing field because every individual learns from a similar set of experiences regardless of their socio-economic status, prior academic experiences, and learning styles.

Other advantages of experiential pedagogy include:

- Practice in critical thinking: Students engage in cause-and-effect thinking by observing events and developing conclusions.

- Real-world lessons in the classroom: Hands-on exercises result in a functional understanding of concepts and tools, such as problem solving, project management, and teamwork. Projects requiring teamwork mimic the demands for collaborative work that students are likely to encounter in the workforce.

- Student engagement: The more active students are in a learning environment, the more likely they are to be interested in the course content and the more likely they are to complete courses, certificates, and degrees.

Examples
Mt. SAC faculty in several disciplines described the ways they would like to expand students' opportunities to engage in experiential exercises and assignments.

- Simulation laboratories for disciplines such as Aeronautics, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration as well as in both credit and noncredit health care programs
- Video-editing for disciplines such as Anthropology that will be shared with other departments

More Open Computer Labs
/ Instructional labs for three hour blocks
/ Can also be scheduled for open hour use
/ Specific software programs for coursework
/ Access to printers

Makerspace/Innovation Lab
/ Shared between programs
/ Open for all students
/ Use for hands-on project work
/ Includes a variety of technology, such as three dimensional printers
/ Supports research and innovation

Simulation and Virtual Reality Labs
/ Current and future instructional technology
/ Laboratories that mimic industry settings

Outdoor Instructional Space
/ Outdoor science labs
/ Research space
/ Fabrication labs
/ Maximize wildlife sanctuary

Theme #1: Expand tailoring student support services to students' unique needs

Rationale

Many Mt. SAC students arrive on campus without the necessary preparation for success in college-level work. They bring unique sets of academic and personal challenges such as competing priorities created by work and family obligations as well as family members' lack of experience with and/or support of students' higher education goals.

These challenges are illustrated in this profile of Mt. SAC students in fall 2015 drawn from data in Chapter 2:

- 43.8 percent first-generation college students
- 60.2 percent 24 years old or younger
- 52.7 percent part-time
- 38.0 percent of the households speak English only at home
- 78.0 percent of credit students received financial aid

To successfully complete courses, students often need support in navigating the processes and jargon of higher education. The College places a high priority on student equity with a focus on reducing the achievement gap by tailoring support to meet the unique needs of underprepared and underrepresented students. To advance toward greater student equity, the College faculty and staff envision expanding the modes of delivering student services and tutoring to include methods that are more intrusive and proactive than the traditional approach of making information and support available to students who are motivated to seek these services. With proactive methods, professionals anticipate and look for issues, concerns, or roadblocks that could be a barrier to student success rather than waiting for problems to occur.

Student Services is presently focusing on ways to coordinate particular program activities and interventions in order to maximize resources as well as to develop a more holistic approach to meeting the needs of diverse students who qualify for multiple specialized support programs.

Examples

- Keep pace with the College's growing enrollment while also providing the personal attention necessary to meet the unique needs of students who are underprepared for college and are underrepresented in degree and certificate completion data

Implications for facilities

An example of further collaboration between Instructional Programs and Student Services is the proposal to embed student services with certain courses. By integrating counseling services, financial aid, and library and Learning Centers with course content, as in the Bridge program learning communities, students are more likely to persist to completion of their educational goals.

Examples

- Expand collaboration with faculty on onboarding processes in disciplines such as Mathematics and English
- Collaborate with Instructional Programs to develop and implement strategies to integrate course content with services, such as Counseling and Career and Transfer services
- Develop and implement strategies to cross-train staff
- Monitor community demographics to ensure that specialized support services meet student needs

Implications for facilities

If the College chooses to focus on increasing interdepartmental collaboration as a strategy for improving student success and equity, new and remodeled facilities should include some or all of the following features to increase dialogue and interaction among students, between/among students and faculty and staff, and among faculty and staff with different areas of expertise.

Flexible Space
/ Follow an open space, flexible-with-options model to allow for the fluid rotation of staff members and workstations
/ Flexibility in the amount and configuration of space
/ Space for periodically scheduled activities for larger groups, such as film viewing, lectures, and exhibits

Office/Collaboration Space
/ Office complexes with collaboration space
/ Include small group rooms and alcoves
/ Easy access for interactions with students
/ Outdoor collaboration space

Appropriate Adjacencies
/ Student resources and support together
/ Cluster related services to support students access

student success and equity, new and remodeled facilities should include some or all of the following features.

More Open Computer Labs
/ Increase space for Library, Learning Centers, and open access computer labs
/ Include open access time for students
/ Specific software programs for coursework
/ Access to printers