

Ready for Formatting

Themes from Master Plan Interviews with Student Services

Theme #1: Expand the student support services tailored 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. (Refer to Chapter 2 for profiles of Mt. SAC students.)

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. **The College is committed to addressing institutional disparities in student success, especially for specific student populations.**

As illustrated by the variety of unique programs in the Specialized/Caseload Management-Based Services cluster, Student Services has successfully developed and implemented a number of specialized student support programs to meet the needs of diverse groups of students. 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

- General Support Services and Specialized/Caseload Management-Based Services: 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 under-represented in degree and certificate completion data
- Specialized/Caseload Management-Based Services: Monitor community demographics to ensure that specialized support services meet student needs
- All Student Services Clusters: Expand programs to promote students' affective development, such as online education plans, infusion of career development at the earliest stages of student enrollment, and embedding ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and identity development into support services interventions

Implications for facilities

If the College chooses to focus on tailoring student services to students' unique needs as a strategy for improving student success and equity, new and remodeled facilities should include some or all of the following features. **Facilities need to be created that establish work environments that are welcoming and that value open access, capitalize on similar services and programs that have physical adjacencies, respect students' rights and privacy, and create space for active engagement.**

Active Learning

- / Space allowing for interaction in classrooms, tutoring space, and offices
- / Easy to rearrange

Welcoming and easy access for students

- / Space that is welcoming at the same time that it protects students' confidentiality
- / Ensure access through the use of Universal Design principles, ergonomic accommodations, and special accommodations such as service animals
- / Outdoor space, visible locations

Flexible Space

- / Flexibility in the amount and configuration of space
- / Increased space for Student Services programs
- / Well equipped to meet a variety of needs

Appropriate Adjacencies

- / Co-locate Student Services to increase student access to and comprehension of the services
- / Space for counseling, Learning Centers, and independent study close to instruction
- / Student resources and support together

Theme #2: Expand interdepartmental collaboration

Rationale

In the coming decade Student Services faculty and staff plan to integrate activities between and among the various student services as well as between instructional programs and student services in order to expand and enrich the College's environment for student success. **To address student success, equity, and inclusion, collaborative support strategies and integrated services will need to be strengthened.**

An example of needed program integration within Student Services is the alignment of these initiatives: Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), Student Equity, and Basic Skills. Such

a multi-faceted and coordinated approach to supporting students leverages the available fiscal and human resources.

An example of expanded collaboration between instructional and student services is the proposal to embed student services with certain courses. As described in Theme #1 for Instructional Programs, students often need support in navigating the processes and jargon of higher education in order to successfully complete their educational goals. **Collaborative learning will incorporate instructional approaches and study centers with support services and strategies.** To advance toward greater student equity, the College envisions expanding the modes of delivering student services 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. **To that end, universal access will be incorporated throughout the campus, from instructional facilities to the provision of support services.**

Examples

- In-take/Processing/Transactional: Expand collaboration with faculty on onboarding processes in disciplines such as Mathematics and English
- General Support Services and Specialized/Caseload Management-Based Services: Collaborate with Instructional Programs to develop and implement strategies to integrate course content with services, such as Counseling, Career and Transfer services, and learning communities
- All Student Services: Develop and implement strategies to cross-train staff
- All Student Services: Integrate services across programs to maximize resources for students

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.

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
- / Easy access for interactions with students

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

Large Assembly Space

- / Support a wide variety of activities, such as **orientations, workshops**, training, recognition events, and group activities
- / Flexible room sizes
- / Could be used by the community

Theme #3: Expand ~~the use of~~ efficiency and access to technology

Rationale

In recent years a number of statewide initiatives have been initiated as part of the effort to address the completion agenda and the achievement gap (refer to Chapter 1). The question is whether or not these initiatives will have an impact on student access and successful completion of degrees and certificates. The College needs to track student outcomes and document program effectiveness in order to accurately tell the story of student success and identify the most effective approaches to continue, expand, and institutionalize.

If the College chooses to prioritize the documentation of program effectiveness, experts from Student Services, Information Technology, and Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness must collaborate on designing and implementing standardized methods of tracking student and program outcomes. **Technological advancements will be maximized to improve communication and engagement with students, including keeping them informed of critical information and providing procedural and advising updates. Students will be enabled to track and chart their own progress (dashboards), resulting in students' increased ownership in reaching their educational and career goals.**

Based on the demographics of the students served from the College's local communities, access to technology will assist in reducing the digital divide and address barriers to student success. Implementing technological strategies to measure and track outcomes, is critical to the College's equity and success efforts, especially with specialized student populations served by caseload-management designed programs and services.

Examples

- In-take/Processing/Transactional: Collaborate with Information Technology and the Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness to develop and implement technology solutions to
 - Measure outcomes of service interventions
 - Scan, archive, and retrieve documents
 - Process electronic transcripts from high schools and other colleges
 - Download and upload student information for accountability and compliance purposes
- In-take/Processing/Transactional and General Support Services: Collaborate with Information Technology to develop and implement a dashboard system that allows students to understand and track their own progress and receive critical information in a timely manner
- General Support Services: Maximize emerging technologies to improve communication and engagement with students **and enhance access to technology through extended-hour open labs with computers and printers and increased wi-fi**
- General Support Services and Specialized/Caseload Management-Based Services: Collaborate with Information Technology and the Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness to develop and implement technology solutions to measure outcomes of service interventions and for accountability and compliance purposes

Implications for facilities

If the College chooses to focus on expanding the use of technology as a strategy for improving student success and equity, new and remodeled facilities should include some or all of the following features.

More Open Computer Labs

- / Increase student access to computers near Student Services Offices
- / Include open access time for students
- / Specific software programs for Student Services
- / Access to printers
- / Technology for tutoring and study space embedded in Student Services