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COMPLETE

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Page 1: I. Service Area Overview and Update

Q1

I.1 Department(s) Reviewed:

Financial Aid

Q2

1.2 Lead Author:

Ray Reyes

Q3

I.3 Collaborator(s) - List any person that participated in the preparation of this report:

Shirley Hughes

Q4

I.4 Dean/Manager:

Ray Reyes

Q5

I.5. Please summarize the changes, additions, and achievements that have occurred in your service area since the last program review. You can access the 2020 program reviews on the program review webpage.

After the Dept of Education (ED) On-Site Program Review of Title IV Aid Program was conducted in August 2019, there were several findings the department had to address. Over the first nine months of 2020, the FA Director worked with the ED Analyst and colleagues throughout the college and the District to find solutions to the findings and establish policies and procedures that would comply with ED's regulations. In September 2020, the ED Analyst submitted a final report and stated the Financial Aid Department addressed and resolved all findings satisfactorily and the program review was closed with no penalties. Although the review was closed, GCCCD is still resolving one finding on the student ledger. At the time of writing, the resolution is still being worked on by Ellucian and GCCCD. The major change in operations surrounded the COVID-19 pandemic. Business that has always been conducted on-campus had to quickly transition to remote services in March. This was a challenging period for all of GCCCD. In addition to the challenge of transitioning to remote services, the FA Department had to deal with a plethora of changes to federal and state financial aid. The college also received an allocation of \$1,459,361 of emergency aid for students from the Federal CARES Act. This aid was administered by a team composed of leads from FA, Student Affairs, and the VPSS Office. Administering this aid was extremely challenging as ED rules and regulations for this aid changed frequently and minimal guidance was provided. This was also a challenge as no systems were setup to award and disburse this volume of aid at a moment's notice. Awarding and disbursing did not happen as fast as we had hoped as resources to automate the process was limited due to the resource needs of the entire District during the first six months of the pandemic. However, by the end of December 2020, 99.6% of the allocation was disbursed to students: Spring: \$704k/1408 students. Summer: \$158k/316 students. Fall: \$592k/1184 students. The team also disbursed \$50k to 100 students for technology needs in December 2020. Through aid from community organizations, the department administered aid and delivered technology to our former foster youth students in our UP! Program. In 2020, the District and FA department also awarded 750 Promise students over \$230k in grants to help with basic needs. For 19-20, the department administered \$20.8M of federal and state aid and scholarships to 7173 students. These totals do not include emergency aid. Processing files and providing better and timelier communication to students has been a challenge for the FA department since transitioning to remote services. The department utilized updated technology to provide phone service and established a department email for students to submit documents and ask questions. However, the flood of emails being received 24/7 has increased our response time beyond the normal 72 hours. In July 2020, the department implemented the Financial Aid Chatbot which provides answers to general financial aid questions 24/7. The online FA Helpdesk will begin on 1/19/21 so students can have another avenue to speak with a staff member. Through all the trying moments during this period, the FA staff performed admirably as a team and individually, and at a high level to meet the challenges of this past year.

Q6

II.1. Student services and administrative areas collect data in many different ways. Please discuss the access, success, and/or other data that your service area is using to inform its plans for the year and/or to evaluate its progress. This may include student achievement data from comparison reports, service utilization data from SARS or another database, demographic information on the students your area serves, student or employee survey results, reports prepared by external organizations, or other data collected by your service area.

One report the department uses to track and evaluate our processing is the ADV_LIST_SPLIT report, or our Advisor's list. This list shows how many files an advisor has to review. It includes the date the file was complete so we can determine our estimated processing time. In normal years, we may be at 8-10 week processing times when the fall semester begins. The past two years, our processing time was around 4-6 weeks. However, August and September are when we get a wave of students completing their files. This increases our workload quickly and processing time falls back to 8-10 weeks and sometimes longer during this time. These reports are used throughout the year to provide any insight on our processing, to develop file processing goals, and to determine if changes need to be made to improve our file review process. We know historical data has shown financial aid students achieve higher student success rates than students not receiving financial aid. This is one of the points that drives us to improve our ways so students can get their aid sooner.

Q7

II.2. In light of the goals set in your program review, what are your plans to improve equitable student access and outcomes (enrollment, matriculation, success, retention, persistence, graduation, etc.) in the coming year?

As mentioned earlier, student success data has shown financial aid students perform at a slightly higher level than students not receiving financial aid. The main processing goal is always to process files in a timelier manner to get aid to students sooner. This starts with students understanding their financial aid file and what documents they need to submit all the way through to our department reviewing files and awarding/disbursing aid to students. To become more efficient in this process, the department's biggest project for 2021 is the implementation of StudentForms (SF) by CampusLogic. This will allow students to easily complete and submit financial aid forms online rather than in the office or through the mail. This will eliminate the need for students to wait in line to submit documents. SF will also assist FA Advisors with the verification review process. All points of this are extremely relevant as this will speed up the processing time so students can get their aid much sooner than they currently do and students will have a more positive experience with the financial aid process. By getting aid sooner, students can focus more on their academics and spend less time figuring out how to pay for their college expenses. Full implementation of SF will be in Spring 2021.

The department is also committed to helping all students, especially our students who are disproportionately impacted. We continue to have dedicated staff for programs such as Pathway Academy, UPI, and Umoja to better serve them. The FA Director is part of the Guided Student Pathways team and staff will be a part of the student success teams. With help from the student success teams, students will have a more positive and successful experience at Cuyamaca. We will continue to conduct FA/Scholarship workshops for all programs and classes when requested. The Financial Aid Chatbot which was implemented in July 2020 provides financial aid answers in English and Spanish at all hours and is available in all financial aid web pages. An Arabic option will be made available in 2021 as well. Teaming up with Grossmont Financial Aid, we conduct financial aid workshops to our local high schools. During the pandemic, no in-person workshops were allowed in Fall 2020 so online presentations were conducted for a couple of high schools.

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

OPTIONAL UPLOAD 1: Please upload any supporting documentation related to this section. You can upload PDF, Word, and image files.

Q9 **Respondent skipped this question**
OPTIONAL UPLOAD 2: Please include any additional documentation related to this section. You can upload PDF, Word, and image files.

Q10 **Respondent skipped this question**
OPTIONAL UPLOAD 3: Please include any additional documentation related to this section. You can upload PDF, Word, and image files.

Q11 **Respondent skipped this question**
OPTIONAL UPLOAD 4: Please include any additional documentation related to this section. You can upload PDF, Word, and image files.

Page 3: II. Student Learning Outcome/Service Area Outcome Assessment and Student Success continued

Q12 No, Please describe the department's plan to update them:
II.3. Are the SLOs and/or SAOs an accurate reflection of the department's major priorities? No. The department will need to do additional work to establish pertinent SLOs/SAOs. The department did initial work on SLOs/SAOs after initial meetings/trainings with Bri and Tania. However, the department was not able to make time to have follow-up meetings with Bri and Tania to finalize the SLOs/SAOs. The department will dedicate time for this in Spring 2021 and work with the SLO Coordinator to finalize our SLOs/SAOs.

Q13 No, Please describe your plan:
II.4. Does your service area have an SLO/SAO assessment plan on file with the SLO Coordinator (or the Outcome Assessment Committee)? Meet with the SLO Coordinator this spring to work on department SLO's/SAOs and finalize them by end of Spring 2021.

Q14
II.5. What are your key assessment findings over the past year and what have you changed (or will you change over the next year) as a result?

N/A

Q15 **Respondent skipped this question**
OPTIONAL: Please use the Upload button below to attach any additional documentation you would like to include.

Page 4: III. Previous Goals: Update

Q16

Goal 1:

Ensure compliance with college policies and procedures and federal, state, and district regulations (Annual goal).

Q17

In Progress - will carry this goal forward into next year

Goal Status

Page 5: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q18

Respondent skipped this question

Please describe the results or explain the reason for deletion/completion of the goal:

Q19

Respondent skipped this question

Do you have another goal to update?

Page 6: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q20

Action steps for the next year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g. submit technology request for new laptop computers).

The FA department is constantly reviewing news from the financial aid community nationwide to address changes in federal and state financial aid regulations. The FA Director is also reviewing the resolutions to the findings from the Department of Education On-Site Program Review of Title IV Aid Program to determine a course of action to maintain compliance. This will require working with departments throughout the college and District.

Q21

Yes

Do you have another goal to update?

Page 7: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q22

Goal 2:

Improve the Financial Aid Chatbot by utilizing the advanced features.

Q23

Deleted

Goal Status

Page 8: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q24

Please describe the results or explain the reason for deletion/completion of the goal:

The goal covers too many areas, has too many moving parts, and is not specific enough. Improving overall operations is something we continuously do and does not need to be tied to a goal.

Q25

No

Do you have another goal to update?

Page 9: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q26

Respondent skipped this question

Action steps for the next year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g. submit technology request for new laptop computers).

Q27

Respondent skipped this question

Do you have another goal to update?

Page 10: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q28

Respondent skipped this question

Goal 3:

Q29

Respondent skipped this question

Goal Status

Page 11: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q30

Respondent skipped this question

Please describe the results or explain the reason for deletion/completion of the goal:

Q31

Respondent skipped this question

Do you have another goal to update?

Page 12: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q32

Respondent skipped this question

Action steps for the next year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g. submit technology request for new laptop computers).

Q33

Respondent skipped this question

Do you have another goal to update?

Page 13: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q34

Respondent skipped this question

Goal 4:

Q35

Respondent skipped this question

Goal Status

Page 14: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q36

Respondent skipped this question

Please describe the results or explain the reason for deletion/completion of the goal:

Page 15: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q37

Respondent skipped this question

Action steps for the next year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g. submit technology request for new laptop computers).

Page 16: IV. New Goals

Q38

Yes

Would you like to propose any new goal(s)?

Page 17: IV. New Goals continued

Q39

New Goal 1:

Improve the Financial Aid Chatbot by utilizing the advanced features.

Q40

Student Validation and Engagement

Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Q41

Please describe how this goal advances the college strategic goal identified above.

By utilizing the advanced features of the Chatbot, this will provide better responses to students and enhance the student-Chatbot experience. With a better understanding of the financial aid process and requirements, students will be able to navigate through the financial aid process quicker and experience less frustration and confusion.

Q42

Please indicate how this goal was informed by SLO (student learning outcome) assessment results, PLO (program learning outcome) assessment results, student achievement data, or other qualitative or quantitative data (from any source):

This goal was established during the Chatbot implementation process. After having the Chatbot running for a semester, the next goal was to enhance this tool by utilizing the usage reports and student feedback along with implementing more advance features.

Q43

Action steps for this year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g. submit technology request for new computer hardware).

- a. Review and analyze chatbot data.
 - b. Solicit feedback from students.
 - c. Review bank of Q&A's. Update as needed.
 - d. Review additional Chatbot features and implement, if possible.
-

Q44

How will this goal be evaluated?

- a. Comparing features of the Chatbot implemented at the end of the year to the features when first implemented.
 - b. Data from the usage reports and student feedback will be analyzed to determine if the enhancements provided a better experience.
-

Q45

No

Do you have another new goal?

Page 18: IV. New Goals continued

Q46

Respondent skipped this question

New Goal 2:

Q47

Respondent skipped this question

Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Q48

Respondent skipped this question

Please describe how this goal advances the college strategic goal identified above.

Q49

Respondent skipped this question

Please indicate how this goal was informed by SLO (student learning outcome) assessment results, PLO (program learning outcome) assessment results, student achievement data, or other qualitative or quantitative data (from any source):

Q50

Respondent skipped this question

Action steps for this year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g. submit technology request for new computer hardware).

Q51

Respondent skipped this question

How will this goal be evaluated?

Q52

Respondent skipped this question

Do you have another new goal?

Page 19: IV. New Goals continued

Q53

Respondent skipped this question

New Goal 3:

Q54

Respondent skipped this question

Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Q55

Respondent skipped this question

Please describe how this goal advances the college strategic goal identified above.

Q56

Respondent skipped this question

Please indicate how this goal was informed by SLO (student learning outcome) assessment results, PLO (program learning outcome) assessment results, student achievement data, or other qualitative or quantitative data (from any source):

Q57

Respondent skipped this question

Action steps for this year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g. submit technology request for new computer hardware).

Q58

Respondent skipped this question

How will this goal be evaluated?

Q59

Respondent skipped this question

Do you have another new goal?

Page 20: IV. New Goals continued

Q60

Respondent skipped this question

New Goal 4:

Q61

Respondent skipped this question

Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Q62

Respondent skipped this question

Please describe how this goal advances the college strategic goal identified above.

Q63

Respondent skipped this question

Please indicate how this goal was informed by SLO (student learning outcome) assessment results, PLO (program learning outcome) assessment results, student achievement data, or other qualitative or quantitative data (from any source):

Q64

Respondent skipped this question

Action steps for this year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g. submit technology request for new computer hardware).

Q65

Respondent skipped this question

How will this goal be evaluated?

Page 21: V. Resources Needed to Achieve Goal(s)

Q66

Classified Resource Needs

What resources is your program requesting this year to achieve the program's goal(s)?

Page 23: Final Check

Q67

I am ready to submit my program review

Are you ready to submit your program review? If you would like to go back and review a section, select a section and click "Next."
