**PERALTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
Counseling Program Review**

**Executive Summary**

Berkeley City College (BCC) has doubled in student population, while at the same time, the Counseling department has decreased in full time employees by 25% (there were four contract counselors, there are now three).

In order to meet the growing demand for counseling, the department will be adopting innovative and efficient counseling strategies to include online counseling, group counseling (short-term or semester-length classes), and one on one counseling (for confidentiality) . Furthermore, the counseling department has developed and will implement the “engagement counseling method” in order to increase retention and student success.

Due to our diverse student population, the BCC counseling department sees a tremendous need for psychological counseling and the adaptation of technology, e.g., maximize our SARS function, our electronic transcripts and electronic imaging, in general.

In order to meet the increasing students’ demand for counseling, the Department’s needs may be summarized below:

* Electronic imaging
* Psychological counseling services
* Increased full-time counseling staff to reflect 1 to 900 students ratio
* Equipment (i.e., panic buttons in counseling offices, ergonomic furniture/chairs, double computer monitors for each counselors.)
* Small meeting room for counselors
* State of the art computer technology to include division laptop
* Automated SARS calling service

**Introduction**

1. **Background Information**
2. Describe:
3. The Unit  
     
   The BCC Counseling Department is located on the second floor of the college. Drop-in and appointment counseling is available Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and on Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in order to provide access to all students, including working adults. BCC offers a wide array of professional counseling services for its students, such as:

* Academic Counseling
* Career Counseling
* Transfer Counseling
* High School Concurrent enrollment
* Veteran’s Affairs Counseling
* Basic Skills Counseling
* Probation and Dismissal Counseling
* Early Alert Counseling
* High School Liaison Program Counseling

1. Its History  
     
   Berkeley City College, formerly called Vista Community College, was founded in April 1974 as the fourth of the Peralta Community College District’s community colleges. In June 2006, Vista Community College’s name was changed to Berkeley City College to coincide with the new facility and central location. As the second largest college in the Peralta District it has consistently grown in full-time equivalent students (FTEs). With a growing diverse student population, the counseling department’s diversity has changed as well. A new database system was implemented in spring of 2008 throughout the Peralta colleges. PeopleSoft referred to as PROMT is the new student administration system. This system provides access to students and staff with records and registration. PeopleSoft replaced the District’s prior Legacy database system.
2. Purposes and Needs Assessed  
     
   Faculty Needs:
   * A small counseling meeting/conference room for training and meetings
   * Ergonomic furniture/chairs
   * An alarm button located on each counselor’s desk for safety
   * Increased counseling staff to reflect a ratio of 900 students per one (1) counselor

Equipment Needs:

* One laptop for counselor use in meetings, onsite and offsite
* 20 computer monitors (2 per counselor, full-time and adjunct, to better assist students when reviewing their transcripts, student education plans, etc.)
* One file cabinet
* Scanner for copying transcripts directly into computer – avoid papering collection

Technology/Software Needs:

* Electronic imaging system to increase communication through inter-departmental communication
* SARS, automated calling service for reminding students of their appointment and also self sign-in for drop in counseling

1. Current Components

BCC offers counseling in various areas, such as:

* Academic planning
* Career and personal goals advising
* Transfer counseling
  + Strong partnerships are maintained with neighboring four-year universities and colleges in order to receive up to date and accurate transfer information.
  + Concurrent enrollment gives BCC students the opportunity to experience the educational environment and workload at a four-year university/college for community college fees.
  + Transfer Admission Guarantee is a process completed for students to get their admissions processed early to guarantee acceptance.
  + High School concurrent enrollment
  + Veteran’s Affairs
  + Basic Skills Counseling
* The BCC counseling department continues to be creative and innovative by developing such programs as the PERSIST Program which is part of the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI).
* PERSIST works with the BSI students through a digital bridge academy curriculum which is a highly interactive, social justice and personal development curriculum designed to support the students who are supported with instructors and counselors working collaboratively.
* Probation and Dismissal Counseling
  + Through the Student Success Program implemented in 2007 students’ transition through a process where students meet with a counselor to address strategic tools to ensure success, develop a student education plan, and continuously meet to monitor students’ progress.
  + Early Alert counseling
    - An early alert system was implemented as a preventative measure to serve at-risk students who are possibly in jeopardy of failing a class. Collaboration with teaching faculty and the BCC counseling department to monitor students’ progress is key.
    - Due to the transition of the new student administration system implemented in summer of 2008, this aspect of counseling has not been reinstated because the program cannot handle this demand. It is anticipated that it will reinstate such program as soon as the software is able to complete such tasks.
  + High School liaison program counseling
  + Each full-time counselor is assigned to a local high school were pertinent information is shared such as concurrent enrollment policies and procedures as well as matriculation procedures to the community college.
  + The liaisons also act as recruiters to their prospective high schools. The department also currently has adjunct (part-time) counselors that are also high school counselors serving as a valuable resource to their respective high schools as current faculty at BCC.

1. Describe unique aspects of the program

* Confidential and competent one-on-one academic and personal counseling available to all enrolled and prospective students provided by an experienced, multicultural and multilingual counseling staff.
* BCC counselors are represented on the District online taskforce to develop policies and procedures for the development and implementation of a more comprehensive and complementary service.
* Basic skills counseling is high priority; 1.5 FTE (as well as other counseling staff) are available on a daily basis to meet with basic skills students. Basic skills counselors establish caseloads which encourages a more personal dynamic in the counseling process.
* Career counseling for enrolled students is provided by a counselor with 20 years plus career experience prior to joining BCC.

1. Describe your current resources  
     
   Enrollment data indicates a rapid increase in the amount of students served by the counseling department. According to SARS counselors saw 1,270 students in the spring of 2008. That number jumped to 4,089 in the fall of 2009. The number of counselors to serve students during this same period decreased from four full-time contract counselors to three.

Due to the fifty percent law, adding counseling faculty is low priority. Hiring full time counseling faculty is not anticipated in the foreseeable future. Electronic imaging would be a great asset to offset the lack of staff. Additional space would allow for centralization of counseling services that would facilitate co-training, better communication and improved/increased productivity.

1. Provide your program goals and show how they are measured (TABLE 1)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Goal** | **How is the goal measured? (indicators)** | **What are the expected outcomes?** |
| Primary goal – is to help students obtain the tools and understanding necessary to effectively navigate within the community college system and beyond. The combination of personal and academic counseling helps students develop personal power and improved self-esteem that enables them to communicate their thoughts and proactively engage in their academic and personal goals. | Students complete various surveys to assess counselor effectiveness in assisting students with the achievement of their academic goals. | That students will be able to make decisions regarding their major, class selection, etc. based on accurate information received from counselors. It is also expected that students will perceive counseling as a safe place and as a result will seek help when needed that will allow them to persist and succeed. |
| Expand the current orientation offered to incorporate counseling and instructional faculty. Develop a student/staff interactive orientation model that will facilitate student engagement while effectively providing critical information necessary to set a solid foundation for matriculation goals. | Surveys would be disseminated at orientation querying student regarding the information received, style of delivery and overall effectiveness. | That students who go through orientation will develop stronger relationships with counseling and instructional staff that will increase their success in persisting and successfully completing classes and programs. |
| Reinstatement of psychological counseling services on campus. |  | Students needing short-term psychological counseling will overcome and resolve difficulty thereby enabling them to proceed with academic endeavor(s). |
| Career Transfer Center should be moved in close proximity to counseling department and function as an extension to counseling services. | An initial assessment of counseling services with a small target group of students has been completed and will be expanded to a larger sampling of students to assess the effectiveness of our goals. The results will be compiled and analyzed for reporting in the fall 2011 semester. | The relocation would allow a seamless flow of related services from counseling to career/transfer center and vice versa |

1. How do you know that the program is meeting its goals? What are the indicators that measure your present goals? What are expected results of these indicators?

This will be addressed during spring 2011 when goals have been implemented and assessed.

**II. Student Demographics of Those Using Your Services (by numbers)**

1. Who do you serve?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2006-07** | **2007-08** | **2008-09** |
| **AGE GROUPS** |  |  |  |
| Under 16 | 47 | 103 | 41 |
| 16-18 | 376 | 520 | 698 |
| 19-24 | 1,484 | 1,879 | 2,278 |
| 25-29 | 713 | 856 | 986 |
| 30-34 | 438 | 488 | 550 |
| 35-54 | 1,085 | 1,141 | 1,200 |
| 55-64 | 311 | 304 | 323 |
| 65 + | 108 | 129 | 136 |
| **TOTAL** | **4,562** | **5,420** | **6,212** |
| **GENDER** |  |  |  |
| MALE | 1,774 | 2,124 | 2,412 |
| FEMALE | 2,740 | 3,266 | 3,474 |
| UNKNOWN | 48 | 30 | 326 |
| **TOTAL** | **4,562** | **5,420** | **6,212** |
| **ETHNICITY** |  |  |  |
| ASIAN/PAC ISLANDER | 685 | 864 | 1,027 |
| BLACK | 1,096 | 1,166 | 1,287 |
| FILIPINO | 71 | 109 | 127 |
| LATINO | 553 | 756 | 878 |
| NATIVE AMERICAN | 37 | 37 | 90 |
| WHITE | 1,471 | 1,740 | 1,865 |
| OTHER/MULTI | 649 | 748 | 938 |
| UNKNOWN |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL** | **4,562** | **5,420** | **6,212** |
| **SPECIAL POPS** |  |  |  |
| EOPS/CARE |  |  |  |
| CALWORKS |  |  |  |
| DSPS |  |  |  |
| MATRICULATED/FA RECIP |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL** |  |  |  |

**III. Student Performance and Feedback** A. How do students who receive services? Need some examples of how to measure this.

Success and persistence outcome measures for BCC matriculating students in the Fall of 2007 indicate that students who received counseling services performed slightly better than those who did not receive counseling services.  (2.81 GPA versus 2.65.)  However, the data also indicates that matriculating students who refused counseling services obtained the highest GPA (2.95).  There are an infinite number of variables that could have impacted these students’ performance, which make interpretation of these data results difficult.  An assessment tool to measure the impact of counseling services on a student’s academic performance will be developed with the Office of Institutional Research. The BCC counseling department is moving towards a “Student Engagement” model of providing services to those who need extra support in fall 2010 which should assist in tracking student progress and performance in relation to counseling services and its effectiveness.  
  
 The counseling department has developed SLOs that will shape these essential assessment tools to understand the counseling department’s impact.  Some examples of how to measure the link between academic achievement and counseling services would be to track students using student GPAs, persistence, retention and academic and progress probation rates as indicators of student performance and compare it with the number of visits and type of counseling services received

First we determine how many students have been seen for academic counseling.  Second we determine how many of those students saw a counselor only once as opposed to those who saw a counselor two or more times.   We then check to see how many of these students received a certificate, AA degree or transferred.   The data tells us if a higher number of students met their goals who saw counselors.

B. How do their counterparts who do not receive services perform? (If data is available).  
  
Please see III.A. above.

C. What do students have to say about student services?

Our part-time and full-time tenure track counselors are evaluated every semester by student evaluations.   Overall, BCC counselors have scored high in the responses to survey items such as,

* Counselor encouraged me to develop and clarify my goals.
* The counselor demonstrated adequate knowledge related to my educational goals, career plans, interests and/or abilities.
* The counselor made me feel comfortable and listened to my goals.

Listed below are student responses to the open question, “In what way was the counseling/advising session helpful?”

* The counselor has been so helpful, encouraging, and inspirational and has given me a lot of advice on how to succeed with educational endeavors.
* The counselor always makes me feel like I am a valuable student.
* Helped me clarify on what exactly what I needed to do and clarified my questions, she was really helpful.
* The counselor is well informed and gives information freely.
* She wants me to succeed and that is great.
* The counselor was very thorough in her response to my academic needs.

We need additional information on student satisfaction that reflects our current students.  It is critical that we conduct student-based satisfaction surveys of our counseling department to provide us with the insight needed to establish effective and efficient practices.  Conducting surveys where students can self-report their gains in knowledge, skills, and abilities as a result of meeting with counselors would also be helpful.  Additionally, developing a system to track the various services and departments that students use during their time here is an important aspect of serving and understanding our students. Two types of studies are needed:  1) Student satisfaction surveys and 2) Evaluation of the correlation between students ‘performance and counseling services received.

**IV. Program Effectiveness**

1. Interdepartmental/Program/Campus Collaboration
2. How does the unit (and committees in which unit participates) support other administrative, student services and academic units in the college?

The counseling department supports a variety of administrative, student services and academic units in the college. The Department Chair is a direct liaison with the instructional and administrative units, attending regular monthly meetings. Counseling is represented on all major college committees and task forces, including

* Title III – Basic Skills Initiative, PERSIST program,
* Online Advisement Task Force,
* PAAAA (Peralta Association of African-American Affairs),
* BRT (Business Readiness Team/functionality teams),
* Transfer Center Directors,
* CTE (Career Technical Education),
* SLO Task Force (Student Learning Outcomes),
* CIPD (Counsel for Instruction Planning and Development),
* College Planning and Budgeting roundtable,
* All counselors attend in-service training two times per year.

In today’s world with career changes, an uncertain economy and lack of basic skills education, the community colleges are brimming with students of varied socio-economic, diverse and educational backgrounds. The counseling center is working to provide a solid, consistent program for these students by collaborating with various college committees including Basic Skills, Curriculum, Matriculation and Scholarship.

Currently, the counseling department is in the process of reviewing basic skills classes at BCC and will pair basic skills students with counselors who will follow their progress throughout their tenure at BCC.

1. Quantity of program/department/service delivered (student utilization of services and student engagement)   
     
   We do not current know the overall effectiveness of our general counseling department because a program review and evaluation of our services has not been conducted in several years. The majority of matriculating students are required to meet with a counselor at least once after taking the Math and English assessment, but there are some that refuse services or come in once to remove a matriculation or pre-requisite hold. We need to conduct a research project to study the correlation between students receiving counseling services and their academic performance to determine our effectiveness. The BCC counseling department is moving towards a case management model of providing services to all students in fall 2010 which should assist in tracking student progress and performance in relation to counseling services and its effectiveness.  
     
   The counseling department developed SLOs that will help shape these essential assessment tools. Additionally, we need to survey students to determine if the services provided by the Counseling department are meeting their needs. Perhaps each student can be given a quick “entrance survey” when they come into the counseling area regarding their expectations and needs for the meeting and then the same student will complete an “exit survey” when their appointment is over to see how the counselor was able to assist them in meeting their goals (short and long term). Using the PeopleSoft/PASSPORT system to conduct e-surveys is also a viable option for collecting data from and on students. The system could be triggered to e-mail a survey to each student when they are “checking-in” at the reception desk or once student completes assessment and orientation, prior to coming to the counseling department for an initial meeting.
2. How many students do you serve (unduplicated)?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Semester** | **2008** | **2009** |
| Spring | 1,270 | 3,903 |
| Fall | 3,903 | 4,089 |

The counseling department serves the entire population of BCC. There were 6,212 students enrolled at BCC in fall semester of 2008 and enrollment in Spring 2009 reached 6,500.

1. How many appointments/contacts with students do you have on any given day?

On any given day, a counselor could be scheduled to meet with six to eight students for appointments. Appointments are typically 30 to 60 minutes sessions, depending on the needs of the students. During peak registration periods, it is not uncommon for a counselor to meet with four to six students an hour for a 10-15 minute drop-in appointment. During this brief drop-in appointment, students are encouraged to schedule a follow up appointment with a counselor to develop Student Educational Pans and discuss future goals.

Two types of studies are needed: 1) Student satisfaction survey and 2) Correlation between students receipt of counseling services/performance.

**V. Service Area Outcomes**

The counseling department has developed student learning outcomes that reflect the goals of the department and Berkeley City College’s institutional goals.

* Understand and evaluate available options and the process by which to obtain their desired goals (INFORMATION COMPETENCY)
* Understand and evaluate available options and the process by which to obtain their desired goals (CRITICAL THINKING)
* Understand the importance of and take personal responsibility for creating their academic, personal and professional growth (SELF AWARENESS AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS)

An initial assessment of counseling services with a small target group of students has been completed and will be expanded to a larger sampling of students to assess the effectiveness of our goals. The results will be compiled and analyzed for reporting in the fall 2011 semester.

**VI. ACTION PLAN: Using the results of the data collected and discussed in this program review, identify:**

1. The future needs of the program/service area.

* Electronic imaging
* Psychological counseling services
* Increased full-time counseling staff to reflect 1 to 900 students ratio
* Equipment (i.e., panic buttons in counseling offices, ergonomic furniture/chairs)
* Small meeting room for counselors
* State of the art computer technology to include division laptop
* Automated SARS calling service

1. The future goals and methods of assessment of the program/service area, including student learning outcomes service area outcomes

Provide confidential and competent one-on-one academic and personal counseling to enrolled and prospective students/student learning outcomes and counseling services will be evaluated via student surveys during the fall 2010 and spring 2011 semesters. A compilation of the survey results will be analyzed and reported during fall 2011 semester.

1. The strategies and actions to be taken by the program/service area over the next six years to strengthen the program and meet the strategic goals of the program and the college

* BCC is represented on the District taskforce to develop policies and procedures for a more comprehensive and complimentary online service/**spring 2011**
* Advocate for the hiring of more contract counselors and the dismantling of the 50% law/**ongoing**
* Request all equipment needs, identifying possible budget resources, in a timely manner to coincide with BCC time frames/**fall 2010 and spring 2011**

1. The support needed by the program/service area in order to address issues resulting from the self-study.

* Students may never reach the classroom without encouragement from counselors
* Students may prematurely leave the classroom without counseling support
* Counselors play a major and critical role in classroom enrollment management
* Students may never identify their academic goals without counseling support and expertise
* At-risk students may not receive referrals to community resources that would allow them to remain in school

The counseling department needs certain barriers removed such as the 50% law that minimizes the hiring of counseling faculty in comparison to instructional faculty. Recognition is warranted regarding the counseling department’s role in achieving the College’s mission to promote student success and transform lives.