May 19, 2015

TO: PRAC

FROM: Student Access & Success Committee

RE: Student Access Data from Program Reviews

One of the charges of the SAS Committee is to review Program Reviews and provide feedback not only to the disciplines but also to PRAC. Specifically,

> *The committee will analyze the student access and success sections of the full Program Reviews in order to determine trends, provide supporting materials, and inform PRAC decisions related to resource allocations.*

What follows is a summary of trends in access- and success-related items from the 2014-15 program reviews and SAS recommendations relating to identified themes.

Summary of 2014-2015 Program Review Access & Success Sections

A number of themes are evident in the submitted Program Review documents. These include:
1. Student Preparation
    a. College-Ready Behaviors
    b. Math
    c. English
2. Transportation
3. Student Support Services

These themes closely mirror themes in the 2013-14 Program Review documents.

1. Student Preparation
Student preparation, in college ready behaviors, math and English, continues to be an issue impacting student success. Observations and recommendations here will hopefully resonate with and support the ongoing work of the Faculty Led Inquiry Team addressing a Basic Skills Master Plan, as well as other relevant initiatives.

   a. College-Ready Behaviors
   Whether it's redrafting papers or designing original art, programs noted students lack experience and preparedness for successful academic behaviors. One faculty noted, "Students who don't succeed often struggle with reading, completing assignments, demonstrating an

interest in the subject matter, and participating in classroom discussions. This is observed in many classes without distinction by discipline, different sections of the same class, on campus or online sections, or instructor." Strengthening orientation, expanding Summer Bridge and student success related counseling course work (3 new courses have been developed), additional learning community cohorts (Puente, FYE, and Umoja), and embedding complementary topics in basic skills courses can all contribute to students' college-ready behavior development.

Multiple programs again identified time commitment and/or time management as a barrier to preparedness and retention, including students having a realistic match of the demands/pace of their chosen discipline versus their availability and preparedness to meet the demands/pace (e.g., Nursing, Music, Medical Assisting, Kinesiology, EMT, Drama). Associated recommendations from program reviews include greater awarding of scholarships, early identifying at risk students, and offering help/encouraging students to utilize office hours. The Education Advisory Board's (EAB) Community College Student Success Collaborative platform, which COM will be developing a pilot version of this year, provides some opportunity to incorporate orientation with discipline specific demands and careers.

SAS recommendation: Expand enrollment in student success related coursework, including for students most at risk. Promote learning cohorts, and support preparedness related recommendations of the Basic Skills Master Plan Task Force (now called FLIT: Faculty Led Inquiry Team). Continue to promote use of COM CARES for early alert to student concerns. Whether through programs or collaboratively developed to embed in the EAB product, explore greater use of program specific orientations – including discipline demands and related career interests, to better ensure student-discipline fit. Consider having counselors have all around capabilities but also dedicated to specific disciplines. Finally, explore potential of a counseling/faculty speaker series where students interested in a specific field(s) could go to learn about what they would experience at COM as part of study in a specific field.

b. Math
Math continues to be a barrier to student success for a significant number of students, and was again cited in program review. Expanding programs such as Summer Bridge, or offering Fall 2015's proposed Math Jam, both of which provide intensive tutoring to enhance students' subject matter knowledge and confidence and prepare them for better placement outcomes, may be more impactful as they are grown/developed. Math Jam would offer comparable support for math for students

Providing any opportunities for students to prepare before taking placement exams will help ensure more accurate placement, even as the test itself is being sunset in favor of a new instrument, as well as recommendations around use of multiple measures for assessment, as part of the CCCCO's Common Assessment Initiative. Additional recommendations will be welcomed from FLIT when their work is done. Ensuring adequate tutoring is available at hours and locations convenient to students was also a theme of program review– for tutoring on a myriad of subjects, including math.

There has been recent discussion regarding transitioning Math 085 and Math 095 from the Math department to Basic Skills. If implemented, a key component of a successful transition would be strong collaboration between the Math and Basic Skills faculty on curriculum development and implementation so that students with passing grades may seamlessly move to the next level of math, such as done between non-credit and credit ESL and credit ESL and English. Requiring the placement test after successful completion of the lower course in sequence creates an unnecessary barrier to student progress.

<u>SAS recommendation</u>: Integrate existing efforts into the institutional approach to developmental math being formulated by the FLIT, as well as systemic approach for assessment being developed by the CCCCO's CAI. Support conversations, collaborative planning and coordination that promotes sufficient sequencing, placement options, and opportunities for accelerated learning where appropriate. Ensure adequate tutoring resources are provided to ensure availability to students, particularly in foundational subject areas such as math and subjects which incorporate math. Ensure these resources are sufficiently promoted to students inside and outside the classroom. To enhance student engagement, continue to explore opportunities to incorporate contextualizing math and its importance into pedagogy.

c. <u>Student Preparation—English</u>

Several Reviews pointed to writing and comprehension issues as barriers to student success. In addition to those referenced in Themes 1 & 2 above, Dental Assisting echoed sentiments about English preparation with a number of other programs, stating, "Although students have taken English 92 or 98, their reading/comprehension skills for subjects, such as basic sciences, anatomy, nutrition or office management fall short. These students struggle to keep up with the reading and class assignments, and have difficulty passing written examinations." Medical Assisting echoed these sentiments, noting "students may find it difficult to read long chapters in English." Suggestions include requiring students to complete a higher English prerequisite to program entry (or better enforcing current requirement), professional development of faculty to improve teaching-learning strategies, and greater use of technology in the classroom and lab.

The piloting of accelerated English courses has shown promise, with higher completion rates and positively comparable outcomes to those who enter English 150 from the traditional sequence of courses. Further research on sequences is planned. Also, there are opportunities to develop more sequence choices of both English and ESL as part of FYE, Umoja and FYE learning communities.

<u>SAS recommendation</u>: Continue to support the Accelerated Pathway Center (APC) concept – currently being formulated. Here again SAS recommends support for conversations, collaborative planning and coordination that promotes sufficient sequencing, placement options, and opportunities for accelerated learning where appropriate. In particular, a desired outcome would be offering students more pathways to participate in learning communities that complement their English and expands to include their ESL placement.

Additionally, review perquisites, co-requisites and advisories, as recommended in Student Equity plan, and in light of English and English Skills recent work on alignment of their

curriculum. Continue collaborative efforts with K-12, via COMPASS program and articulation efforts between faculty, to frontload remediation before college, especially with Common Core implementation.

2. Transportation

Transportation was again cited in this year's program reviews, including for commute to/from work, childcare / other family obligations. Access to transportation and convenient sequencing with courses and family/work obligations both present challenges. Students arrive late, leave early, or at times are unable attend at all due to transportation related challenges. However, at this writing, COM students just approved a required semester fee which would cover unlimited ridership on all routes at all times and expand routes that would make transit to COM campuses more efficient. (For financial aid students, the fee would be included in their financial aid eligibility and award.) Specific benefits would include:

- ✓ Unlimited ridership on all local bus routes with no per-trip charge throughout Marin County, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- ✓ Opportunities for transit expansion to campus, including a new direct route between the San Rafael Transit Center (SRTC) and the Kentfield campus and a new direct hourly service between Novato to the SRTC.
- ✓ For those choosing or needing to still commute via car, increased ridership will reduce traffic congestion.
- ✓ Increased ridership/reduction of car trips will help reduce carbon emissions and other environmental concerns.

There are other transportation challenges, including sufficiently serving those who live outside the county (e.g., many of our student-athletes, per Kinesiology, Health and Athletics program review). Coordinating other service provision with Marin transit will enhance the current initiative.

<u>SAS recommendation</u>: In implementing student transportation initiative, promote opportunity and financial support for initiative. Continue to increase accessibility and convenience of bus service and other means of positively impacting student transportation challenges, including for students traveling regionally.

3. Student Support Services

Most program reviews indicated that their students utilize the majority if not all student support services offered. Financial Aid, Counseling, Tutoring, Library, Student Accessibility Services, and computer labs were most consistently selected. Issues identified included evening and IVC availability of services (health center, student activities, transfer, career and job placement, testing, etc.). In particular, tutoring was both heavily promoted and requested for expanded service/capacity (e.g., by Architecture, Medical Assisting, Music, and the TLC's own program review).

Among student service program reviews, staffing needs (as well as space) were noted in each area. Assessment and Testing Center is currently interviewing for an additional 0.50 FTE position (funded by SSSP) to offer additional evening and IVC hours. Echoing other program reviews for expanded tutoring, the Tutoring and Learning Center has requested additional support staff as well as direct funding for

tutors. The Health Center continues to struggle to provide reasonable availability of services to two campuses with 1.0 FTE of nurse staffing and current support staff. At present, it is an inadequate staffing level to provide functional and accessible health services at IVC. Finally, Job Placement will see some benefits from planned co-location with Transfer and Career Center, but reducing the position to halftime will significantly limit progress on developing an internship program. It would support student completion efforts to then provide a full-time professional in Job Placement who would connect the students to the workforce. Given the potential pool and importance of meaningful internships for our students, we will need to provide sufficient staffing to support students so that they are job/ career ready as well as coordinating with local agencies and businesses to establish positive working relationships and clear expectations. Our involvement and commitment to the CTE Pathways Grant will also require a stronger connection between school and careers as we articulate our courses with our K12 partners and may provide future funding to support this area.

Software came up in a number of program reviews. Architecture noted that some students' computers are too old to manage the software they utilize and having discipline-specific software installed on library computers for students would increase accessibility. IT and SAS staff are continuing to install assistive technology software from SAS on library and laboratory computers, but the process has been challenging, e.g., availability of staff, software that can't be installed network wide but must be done individually. Lastly, software programs are available that could greatly enhance and electronically maintain Health Center and Tutoring and Learning Center records, leading to greater efficiency.

Program reviews cited student financial issues as a barrier to both access and success, including attendance due to family (often childcare) and work obligations. Other issues raised include: cost of textbooks; getting financial aid (including review of appeals) soon enough to buy books and life expenses; sufficient award packages to enable full-time study, and; insufficient funding's effect on preparedness and consequent effect on classroom participation. Availability and affordability of childcare is an overlapping issue, being able to get back from off-campus internships in time to pick up children, for example (Dental Assisting). With the implementation of Pay As You Go and Satisfactory Academic Progress policies, 2014-15 was a particularly challenging enrollment cycle for students.

__SAS recommendation:__
Regarding tutoring, evaluate how the structure of instructional learning assistance can be enhanced, including opportunities to provide centralized training to IS's/DT's consistent expectations for work, clarify job descriptions, market the service better, expand across disciplines, maintain scheduling and record keeping, etc. As an outcome, ensure sufficient staffing to respond to our students' learning assistance needs, including both campuses, evening and weekend hours.

With Student Accessibility Services' impending move, explore opportunities with Library, TLC and others to enhance space design to better serve students, including growing demand for tutoring, group study and other space needs complimentary to the services in the LRC. With potential additional hours and demand for assessment and testing at IVC, maintain sufficient computer lab facilities at IVC in order to deliver instruction, lab work and assessment testing.

Support continued effort to install assistive technology on lab and library computers. Additionally, work with academic programs to identify curriculum related software that may be beneficial but is not currently available on library or applicable lab computers. To extent possible, ensure services are

available for students in the evening and distributed across both campuses, and well marketed. Conduct regular student surveying and/or focus groups to monitor awareness and accessibility of as well as satisfaction with student support services.

Recommendations regarding Financial Aid:

- *Capitalize on recent Advancement progress to expand scholarship program, marketing to students and families and awarding.*
- *Educate students about financial aid, including resources available to subpopulations (e.g., DACA students, veterans, foster youth), as well as promoting financial literacy.*
- *Ensure all financial aid applications and appeals are reviewed and award notifications made in a timely manner.*
- *Educate students, staff and faculty on Satisfactory Academic Progress and provide timely interventions for at risk students to reduce loss / interruption of aid eligibility.*

Other recommendations:

- *Promote the Children's Centers and other childcare options for students.*
- *Continue development of textbook purchase and loan programs that reduce cost to students.*
- *Provide funding for electronic record keeping for Health Center.*
- *Recognizing the current budgetary climate, it is recommended that PRAC revisit both Job Placement and Health Center staffing levels in the upcoming year.*