California Community Colleges

Retroactive Placement: Helping Colleges Reach Students

This document offers guidance for colleges communicating to students about Retroactive Placement (RP). RP Processes are generally similar to Guided Self-Placement (GSP) processes. They should already be established and available to students by the time these messages are necessary. Receivers of the listed communication points are existing students who need to go through the RP process to update placements in alignment with AB 705. This entails students who have already been placed in courses below transfer-level. Primary senders of these communication points are Registrar's Offices and counselors. While each sender is designated a specific communication channel, there will be overlap between them.

Registrar

Registrar's Offices are noted as communicating primarily through email or in-person through office staff. They will be informing students of updated placements and any required support courses.

Registrar: Information to Communicate

- Students who need to go through the Retroactive Placement process should be notified as soon as possible after they are identified.

- Email communication should explain the following:
    - The Retroactive Placement process will improve their chances of success;
    - Previous systems may have placed students in courses that increased their time to graduation, this wording should be careful not to suggest that placements were mistaken;
    - The process can be completed in a few short minutes;
    - Updated placements may include required supports like corequisites or tutoring;
    - What specific information students will need in order to complete the process.

- Office staff should be able to explain that Retroactive Placement is designed to help students succeed in transfer-level courses and graduate faster.

- Office staff should be able to:
    - Explain that Retroactive Placement is designed to help students succeed in transfer-level courses within the first year and graduate faster;
    - Direct students to the appropriate parts of the Registrar's website containing information about Retroactive Placement;
    - Direct students to any on-campus computer labs where they may complete the process.

Registrar: Information to Communicate

- Registrar's Offices could offer printed materials mirroring information about Retroactive Placement state on their website.

Counselors

Counselors are noted as communicating primarily in-person during student appointments.

Counselors: Information to Communicate

- Counselors discussing Retroactive Placement should be reassuring to students who are questioning or otherwise discussing their placement.

- Counselors should be careful not to give the impression that a mistake had been made in a student's previous placement.

- Overall messaging should be of improved placement that offers greater support and less time to graduation.

- Counselors should be able to explain the following:
    - General information about AB 705 and transfer-level courses;
    - Even if students had previously placed into remedial courses, they have a greater chance of success in supported transfer-level courses;
    - Information about any specific required supports like corequisites or tutoring.