California Community Colleges

IEPI INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

Targeted Marketing and Communications for Strategic Enrollment Management

2019 Spring SEM Program, 2nd Edition

We wish to acknowledge the many contributions made to this resource guide by the following individuals:

- Anne Krueger, Director of Communications and Public Information, Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District
- Coni Chavez, District Director of Public Affairs, Yosemite College
- Cherie Colin, Director of Community Relations and Marketing, Skyline College
- Daniel Garza, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, San Jose City College
- Guisselle Nunez, Director, Public Relations, Marketing and Government Relations, Chabot-Las Positas Community College District
- Brandy Howard, Director of Marketing and Media Design, Contra Costa College
- Jack Beresford, Director or Communications and Public Relations, San Diego Community College District
- Jan Bernstein-Chargin, Public Information Officer, Gavilan College
- Lauren Johnson-Milbourne, Coordinator of Media Relations, Cuesta College
- Peter Griggs, Director of Marketing and Outreach, Shasta College
- Peggy Cartwright, Associate Vice Chancellor of Strategic Communications and Institutional Advancement, Riverside Community College District
- Sue Michaels, Supervisor of Marketing and Public Information, Sierra College
- Timothy Leong, Director of Communications and Community Relations, Contra Costa Community College District

Table of Contents

Preface

The Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Project. The SEM Project began in 2016 as part of the suite of resources, tools, and professional development opportunities in the Professional Learning Network provided through the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI) at the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The SEM Project was developed by a core team of community college educators with collective expertise, i.e., instruction, student services, business and finance, and institutional research and planning. The SEM Core Team spent approximately one year researching the field of enrollment management in higher education, and worked with an advisory group comprised of college representatives from across the state of California and across constituent groups. Some of the resulting tools, resources, and services include:

- SEM Institutional Self-Assessment and Facilitator's Guide
- Nine resource guides and companion materials covering various SEM topics
- A bank of SEM Promising Practices
- A one-year cohort-based SEM Program in which 15 colleges participate in a two-day SEM academy and receive support from a team of SEM coaches on their SEM project.

Background: Intentional Focus on Completion. In order to align the California Community Colleges (CCC) system with the national student completion goals, in 2017 the Chancellor's Office spearheaded the development of a new strategic vision and imperative for the CCC system of colleges entitled, *Vision for Success* (http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/portals/0/reports/vision-for-success.pdf). This new strategic vision brought a deeper, more intentional focus on the holistic needs of students and a greater call for student completions. The goals for the system through 2022 in the Vision for Success (VFS) are to:

1. Increase by at least 20 percent the number of CCC students annually who acquire associate degrees, credentials, certificates, or specific skill sets that prepare them for an in-demand job

2. Increase by 35 percent the number of CCC students transferring annually to a University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU).

3. Decrease the average number of units accumulated by CCC students earning associate degrees, from approximately 87 total units (the most recent system-wide average) to 79 total units—the average among the quintile of colleges showing the strongest performance on this measure.

4. Increase the percent of exiting Career Technical Education (CTE) students who report being employed in their field of study, from the most recent statewide average of 60 percent to an improved rate of 69 percent—the average among the quintile of colleges showing the strongest performance on this measure.

5. Reduce equity gaps across all of the above measures through faster improvements among traditionally underrepresented student groups, with the goal of cutting achievement gaps by 40 percent within 5 years and fully closing those achievement gaps within 10 years.

6. Reduce regional achievement gaps across all of the above measures through faster improvements among colleges located in regions with the lowest educational attainment of adults, with the ultimate goal of fully closing regional achievement gaps within 10 years.

In order to help the CCCs accomplish the goals in the VFS, the Chancellor's Office mandated two significant system-wide changes. The first one was Guided Pathways (GP), which creates a highly structured approach to student success and provides all students with a set of clear course-taking patterns and supports. The key principles of Guided Pathways include:

- Programs that are fully mapped out and aligned;
- Redesigned and integrated basic skills/developmental education classes;
- Proactive academic and career advising;
- Structured on-boarding processes;
- Responsive student tracking systems; and,
- Instructional support and co-curricular activities.

The second significant mandate was a change in the formula used to provide the CCCs their operational monies. Traditionally, funding had been allocated based on numbers of Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES). The Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) is a new way to allocate funding to community college districts. The SCFF supports access to funding through enrollment-based funding, as well as student equity. The SCFF targets funds to districts that serve low-income students and student success equitably by providing districts with additional resources for successful student outcomes. The SCFF includes the following three allocations:

Base Allocation. The Base Allocation is based on districtwide enrollments. The sum of the Base Allocation funding formula in the SCFF is comprised of: 1) the number of colleges and centers in a district, 2) the size in terms of enrollments, 3) the enrollments in credit, noncredit, and career development and college preparation (CDCP) noncredit courses, and 4) enrollment of special admit students and inmates in correctional facilities;

Supplemental Allocation. The Supplemental Allocation is based on the number of low-income students enrolled, as determined by the number of Pell Grant recipients, College Promise Grant recipients, and AB540 students; and

Student Success Allocation. The Student Success Allocation is based on the counts of successful outcomes in eight measures: 1) the number of Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs) granted, 2) the number of associate degrees granted (excluding ADTs), 3) the number of baccalaureate degrees granted, 4) the number of credit certificates (16 units or more) granted, 5) the number of students who complete transfer-level mathematics and English courses within the first academic year of enrollment, 6) the number of students who transfer to a four-year university, 7) the number of students who complete nine or more Career Technical Education units, and 8) the number of students who attain a regional living wage. Furthermore, through the Student Success Allocation, a district receives additional funds for the same eight outcomes attained by students who received Pell Grants and College Promise Grants.

Additional legislative efforts that augment and support the mandates noted above include: AB19 (College Promise), AB705 (Assessment Protocol Reform), SB1440 (Associate Degrees for Transfer) and the Strong Workforce Program.
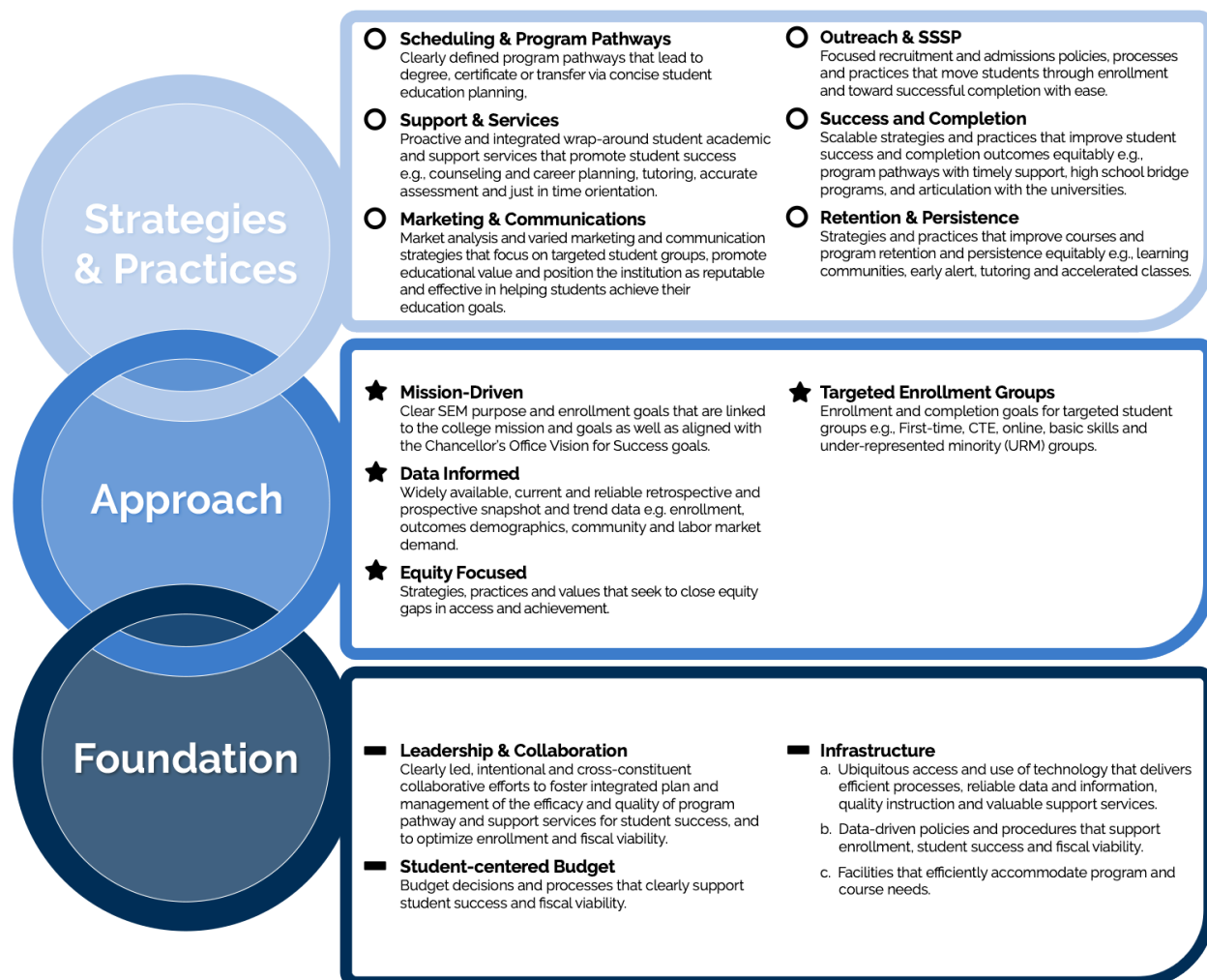
Reframing SEM. With the establishment of the Vision for Success, Guided Pathways, the Student Centered Funding Formula and other supporting initiatives, the SEM Project has continued to update and develop important tools, resources, and services that clearly align with these major statewide initiatives and legislation. The SEM Project continues to support college and district SEM efforts in order to help build and sustain healthy and dynamic community college environments. The strategies and practices for SEM are generally most responsive in a system that is open, dynamic, and responsive to its environment: accepting continuous input, analyzing this input in a timely manner, adjusting as needed in order to achieve organizational goals, and transmitting necessary information back out to the environment. To continue being a vital strategy for student success, enrollment optimization, and fiscal viability, SEM efforts must evolve alongside crucial changes that occur in community colleges.

The SEM Organizing Framework. The SEM Organizing Framework depicted in Diagram 1 was originally designed in 2016 to guide the development of the tools, resources and services for the SEM Project. It evolved out of research including an extensive literature review of SEM in higher education and primary research into current SEM practices in the California Community Colleges. It was revised in 2019 to more closely align with recent statewide initiatives and legislation (e.g., VFS, GP and SCCF), which in turn helped to guide the revisions of the SEM Project tools, resources and services. As the California Community Colleges work to implement these initiatives and legislation, the SEM Project continues to support these efforts through the variety of resources, tools, and services.

The SEM Organizing Framework exemplifies a holistic approach to SEM, and represents conditions for excellence in SEM. It contains three core dimensions: Foundation, Approach and Strategies. Each dimension contains multiple components of SEM that together define the essential elements of SEM.

Diagram 1. SEM Organizing Framework

Strategies & Practices

Scheduling & Program Pathways
Clearly defined program pathways that lead to degree, certificate or transfer via concise student education planning.

Support & Services
Proactive and integrated wrap-around student academic and support services that promote student success e.g., counseling and career planning, tutoring, accurate assessment and just in time orientation.

Marketing & Communications
Market analysis and varied marketing and communication strategies that focus on targeted student groups, promote educational value and position the institution as reputable and effective in helping students achieve their education goals.

Outreach & SSSP
Focused recruitment and admissions policies, processes and practices that move students through enrollment and toward successful completion with ease.

Success and Completion
Scalable strategies and practices that improve student success and completion outcomes equitably e.g., program pathways with timely support, high school bridge programs, and articulation with the universities.

Retention & Persistence
Strategies and practices that improve courses and program retention and persistence equitably e.g., learning communities, early alert, tutoring and accelerated classes.

Approach

Mission-Driven
Clear SEM purpose and enrollment goals that are linked to the college mission and goals as well as aligned with the Chancellor's Office Vision for Success goals.

Data Informed
Widely available, current and reliable retrospective and prospective snapshot and trend data e.g. enrollment, outcomes demographics, community and labor market demand.

Equity Focused
Strategies, practices and values that seek to close equity gaps in access and achievement.

Targeted Enrollment Groups
Enrollment and completion goals for targeted student groups e.g., First-time, CTE, online, basic skills and under-represented minority (URM) groups.

Foundation

Leadership & Collaboration
Clearly led, intentional and cross-constituent collaborative efforts to foster integrated plan and management of the efficacy and quality of program pathway and support services for student success, and to optimize enrollment and fiscal viability.

Student-centered Budget
Budget decisions and processes that clearly support student success and fiscal viability.

Infrastructure
a. Ubiquitous access and use of technology that delivers efficient processes, reliable data and information, quality instruction and valuable support services.

b. Data-driven policies and procedures that support enrollment, student success and fiscal viability.

c. Facilities that efficiently accommodate program and course needs.

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Operational Definition. The SEM Purpose Statement was created by the SEM Core Project Team in conjunction with the SEM Advisory Committee. It reflects the same values, principles, and approach found in the Vision for Success (VFS) and its implementation framework, Guided Pathways (GP). Ultimately, the overarching purpose of SEM, VFS, and GP is to increase program completion, transfer, and gainful employment, and to close equity gaps in access and achievement. In addition, SEM, VFS, and GP use a holistic, integrative and collaborative approach for developing and implementing related strategies and practices. SEM also includes a focus on optimizing enrollment and maintaining fiscal viability, both of which are conditions needed in order to fully support the VFS goals, GP implementation, and align with the Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF).

SEM Purpose Statement. As open-entry institutions, California community colleges serve a diverse student body with wide-ranging educational goals. We must regularly adapt our programs and services to meet the changing needs of our students, and to facilitate the achievement of their educational goals. At the same time, we must maintain our fiscal viability to ensure that we can support our communities now and into the future.

SEM is a holistic concept and process which enables the fulfillment of an institution's mission and its students' educational goals[1]. SEM directly supports the Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Vision for Success and related goals. As it focuses on all aspects of the student experience, it coincides with the four pillars of Guided Pathways: 1) Clarify the Path, 2) Enter the Path, 3) Stay on the Path, and 4) Ensure Learning. Moreover, with its attention to financial stewardship in service of students, SEM supports colleges by ensuring adequate resources to improve equitable access and student outcomes through the Student Focused Funding Formula.

The purpose of SEM is to:

- Establish comprehensive student enrollment goals that are aligned with the college's mission, and core plans;

- Promote student success by improving access, engagement, persistence, and completion of program pathways;

- Ensure fiscal stability and viability by optimizing enrollments and integrating SEM into the college financial planning, budgeting, and allocation processes;

- Offer quality and relevant programs with clear educational pathways, course offerings, and appropriate student support;

- Implement strategies that lead to equitable access and outcomes;

- Create a data-rich environment to inform decisions and evaluate strategies;

- Design and implement communications and marketing with internal and external stakeholders to increase understanding of SEM and to meet SEM goals; and,

- Increase collaboration among departments across the campus to support the enrollment management program.

---

[1] Adapted from: Bontrager, B., and K. Pollock. 2009. *Strategic enrollment management at community colleges. Applying SEM at the Community College.* Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

Background

Conventional wisdom tells us that students choose a college based on a variety of factors including location, cost, available financial support, the educational programs of interest, the day, time, modality, availability of classes, as well as the reputation of the institution. A college can influence a student's decision path to apply, enroll, and stay enrolled through successful completion or achievement of an education goal, but it requires a coordinated series of complex and multi-layered tactics. Moreover, at each step along the decision path, there are potential touch points where a college can influence a student's decision, positively or negatively. Once a college understands this decision path, the college can identify where they may be losing students (e.g., at the beginning of the application/enrollment process or during the enrollment/retention process). Once the college identifies the loss touch points, it can then implement practices or tactics to prevent the loss. Diagram 2 below illustrates the student decision path and potential touch points for marketing and communications.

Diagram 2. Touch Points for Marketing and Communications

Awareness → Recruitment → Application → Registration → Onboarding → Course & Events Attendance

Colleges continue to face ongoing pressure to increase enrollments in an increasingly competitive education market space, while maintaining fiscal viability. Consequently, the new imperative is to operate more strategically and efficiently. A logical solution for optimizing enrollments and helping students along their pathways to success is a well-planned, concisely coordinated strategic enrollment management (SEM) approach that is both holistic and collaborative, and includes marketing and communication as a central component. The key to a successful marketing and communications effort requires developing a marketing and communications plan and having a designated budget for marketing and collaboration.

Marketing and communications plans include clear goals and a logical set of tactics that contribute to the overall institutional effort for optimizing enrollment, while improving student success. Such plans should always be part of a larger institutional SEM effort. In this manner, it becomes an integrated approach, which is particularly effective for promoting the myriad of programs and services offered at a college, and/or designing and restructuring program offerings. While general marketing and communications planning can provide valuable information for supporting overall college brand awareness (e.g., logo, tag line, language, color, and reputation),

it may not provide the precise goals and tactics needed to reach specific groups of students that represent target enrollment groups for the college (e.g., day, evening and online students, military veteran students, career technical education students, older adult students, and non-credit students).

Assessing the college's environment, both internally and externally, is a useful place to begin the planning endeavor. Included in this environmental assessment is the determination of target enrollment groups. Target enrollment groups, in essence, are affinity groups that share common characteristics (e .g., demographics, course-taking behaviors, priorities, interests, values and perceptions), and that will be more responsive to marketing and communication tactics that target their unique characteristics. Target enrollment groups can be identified by conducting an environmental scan of an SEM plan or through any other comprehensive planning activity (e.g., strategic or master planning, Strong Workforce Program, or Guided Pathways planning), or identified separately as part of a targeted marketing plan. Effective targeted marketing requires a clear understanding of a college's target enrollment groups. Consequently, by identifying the target enrollment groups or segments in the population a college is better able to reach the right student segments with the appropriate tactics.

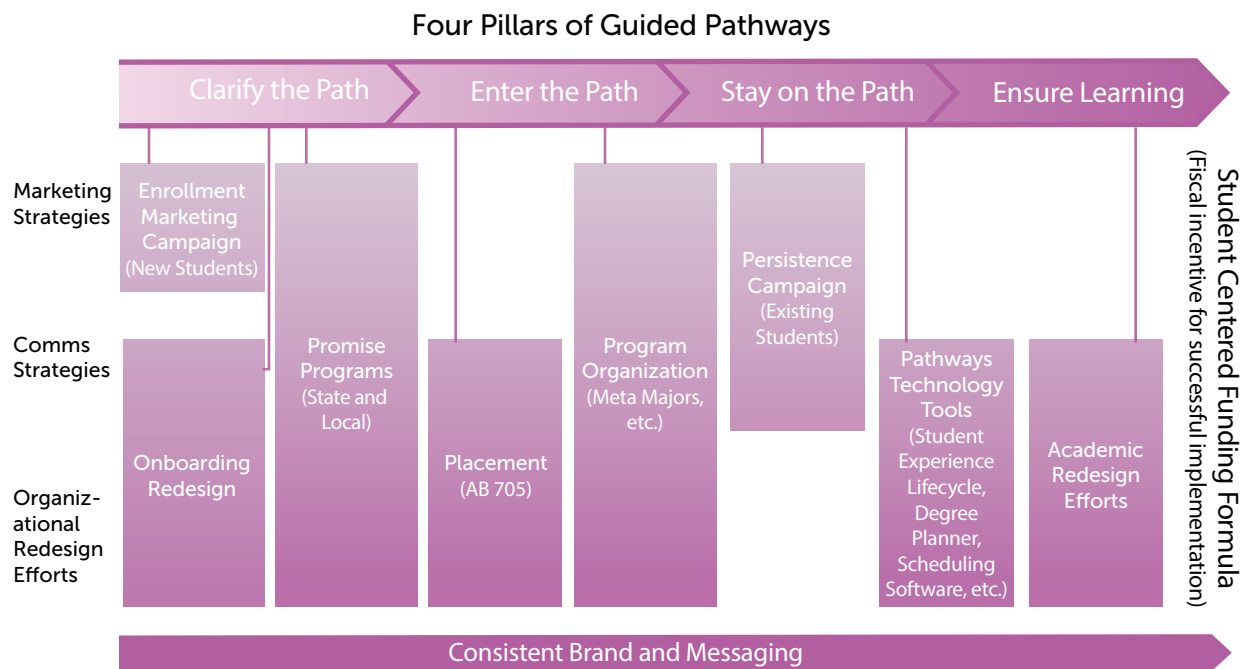**The Changing Role of Marketing Communications**
The changing environment in which colleges operate requires a new paradigm for the future. Greater understanding and appreciation of the marketing and communications role, and how it contributes to the organization's success. The role of marketing and communications is not just for the marketing director (or the like), but rather a function of the whole organization. All employees are brand ambassadors who willing represent (paid or unpaid) the college brand in a positive light and by doing so help to increase brand awareness and enrollment. The changing role and expectation for both the marketing director and the organization brand ambassadors requires additional professional development and training in marketing and communications.

Integrating Your Marketing Strategies
As of recent, our marketing plans may have only been focused on enrollment, but with the new Student Centered Funding Formula and Vision for Success goals, we now need to consider three core elements to our marketing and communication strategy: 1) enrollment and assessment, 2) financial aid, and 3) student retention and success. Consequently, we will need to build three integrated marketing and communications campaigns. These campaigns should include the integration of tactics, messaging, and perhaps even creatives (the material used to generate leads and sell advertising for marketing) as much as possible in order to optimize budget and achieve the desired outcomes.

In addition to the Student Centered Funding Formula, there are additional initiatives (e.g., Guided Pathways, AB705 and College Promise) that need to be integrated and ensure alignment with the college or district brand. Figure 3 is an example of how marketing and communications can be integrated into college-wide initiatives.

Diagram 3. SEM Marketing and Communications Strategies

Four Pillars of Guided Pathways

Clarify the Path	Enter the Path	Stay on the Path	Ensure Learning

Marketing Strategies

Enrollment Marketing Campaign (New Students)

Persistence Campaign (Existing Students)

Comms Strategies

Promise Programs (State and Local)

Program Organization (Meta Majors, etc.)

Pathways Technology Tools (Student Experience Lifecycle, Degree Planner, Scheduling Software, etc.)

Organizational Redesign Efforts

Onboarding Redesign

Placement (AB 705)

Academic Redesign Efforts

Student Centered Funding Formula (Fiscal incentive for successful implementation)

Consistent Brand and Messaging

Impact

Promoting a wide variety of diverse programs and services using mass marketing tactics can often be costly and prove ineffectual for some student groups. Mass marketing strategies and tactics may be appropriate for general marketing and communication campaigns that effectively build brand awareness, and can help increase overall enrollment, build charitable contributions, and attract new employees. However, these mass marketing strategies and tactics may be less effective for reaching a diverse population with varying and unique characteristics and needs; general messaging may not resonate with such target student groups, while targeted messaging will have a greater influence on their enrollment decisions.

Each target student group has different preferences for receiving and reacting to messages. Understanding these characteristics has the potential not only to save thousands of dollars in ineffectual marketing campaigns, but to increase enrollments and retention. Consequently, understanding the specific characteristics (e.g., demographics, course-taking behaviors, personal values, attitudes, and media preferences) of multiple student groups is critical in helping to focus marketing and communications efforts. For example, knowing which communication channels the older adult student population responds to (e.g., bus ads vs. radio spots vs. movie theater ads), can help a college grow and sustain this segment of the student population.

Like other SEM efforts, marketing and communication efforts are most impactful when understood and supported by the college leadership and when there is collaboration across departments and constituent groups. The capacity to cross-pollinate efforts and integrate marketing and communications efforts with other SEM efforts will help fortify the ability to improve enrollment and student success For example, information gathered by the outreach and recruitment professionals at a college, such as appropriate collateral material is vital for informing effective marketing and communications campaigns . Equally as important is the consistency of messaging across the college. The marketing and communications messaging must overlap with those shared by counseling and others involved in the outreach and onboarding processes, for example.

Marketing and communications tactics have an important effect on bringing potential students to the college and retaining students through their successful achievement of education goals . However, even the best marketing and communications plans cannot generate enrollment   or retain students without cross-collaboration by other areas of the college. As with most SEM efforts, it takes a college-wide effort to optimize enrollment and improve student success . The marketing and communications tactics become even more potent when targeting specific student groups and aligning with a college's effort to close equity gaps in access and achievement.

> Target marketing may in fact be one of the more potent retention and success strategies that a college deploys. Consider, for example, how email campaigns to targeted student groups — about relevant open courses, late start classes, new programs, or events — can have a powerful impact on students' decisions to enroll and stay enrolled.

Description

This resource guide provides a structure for developing a targeted marketing and communications plan that contributes to the overall institutional strategic enrollment management effort. The guide contains concise descriptions of critical components for a targeted marketing and communications plan including: developing target enrollment groups or market segments, sample marketing   and communications tactics, criteria for prioritizing tactics, creative messaging, a sample communications platform mix, building a marketing budget, and a glossary of terms .

Strategies & Practices

CONDUCTING A MARKET ANALYSIS

As with any planning effort, the critical first steps in developing a targeted marketing and communications plan are to gather key data, analyze these data, and then transform the data into usable information The information from an environmental scan used for strategic planning (e .g ., student and community demographics, the high school pipeline, enrollment patterns, student outcomes, economic and workforce trends, and competing programs from other colleges) can provide much of the foundational information needed for a marketing and communications plan . Moreover, by using this same information and its assumptions, it ensures better alignment between the goals in the marketing and communications plan and the college mission and strategic enrollment management goals. Besides the information in an environmental scan, additional data may be needed for determining market segments or target enrollment groups. The information about target enrollment groups will provide the clarity of focus needed to determine target marketing and communications tactics.

There are a variety of techniques that can be used to segment students into target enrollment groups. These groups are in essence affinity groups that carry with them common characteristics and are generally created through market segmentation techniques. Market segmentation techniques can be done through statistical analysis that incorporates hard evidence (quantitative data) often extracted from student records or data that evaluate student preferences, perceptions or attitudes (e .g., surveys and focus groups). The resulting information can be used to place students into affinity groups according to matched characteristics or similarities among a variety of characteristics, and to build psychographic profiles or student personas for each target enrollment group.

There are essentially four types of market segmentation data used to identify target enrollment groups:

1. Geographic data – May include student residency status (i.e., in-state/out-of-state/ international) and zip code to establish service area or non-service area resident
2. Demographic data – May include student characteristics such as gender, age, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, occupation, and education levels
3. Psychographic data – May include lifestyle preferences or habits, value perceptions, and attitudes
4. Behavioral data – May include course-taking patterns and enrollment history, student learning objectives, learning community participation, college event participation and accessing of support services (e.g., financial aid)

Another important data point to consider is the applicant-to-enrollment yield rates. This rate is determined by the number of applicants who actually enroll in a given term. This information is vital for understanding the enrollment patterns of specific target enrollment groups, and for intervening early in the enrollment cycle (e.g., by contacting students who have applied but haven't yet registered or enrolled) in order to improve enrollment and retention.

A final data point worth mentioning is the analysis of the competitive landscape. This may be looked at in a variety of ways depending on the purpose of the marketing and communications goals. Generally, a comparison of the degree and certificate programs offered within a college's region, and the number of awards conferred by college by program, will provide a quick snapshot of how saturated the market might be or where there are gaps when compared to labor market demand and job openings. This type of information may be very useful for determining where   to commit marketing and communications resources.

For more information on techniques and processes used for market segmentation, applicant-to-enrollment conversion rates and competitor analysis, please see the *SEM Data Tools and Metrics for SEM* resource guide posted on the IEPI SEM website.

Developing Marketing and Communications Goals

Once the market analysis is complete, the next step is to define the goals for the marketing and communications plan. In all likelihood there will be some overarching goals related to college brand awareness and optimizing enrollment, along with goals that are specific to the target enrollment groups. There are many ways in which a college can establish goals, and doing so for a targeted marketing plan should be no different from the process a college uses when developing goals for other plans or initiatives (e .g ., strategic plan or SEM plan). Table 1 demonstrates a sample action plan as part of a targeted marketing plan, and includes the integration of other strategic enrollment management components.

Table 1. Sample Action Plan

GOAL	TACTIC	TARGET STUDENT GROUP	RESOURCES	DISTRIBUTION	INTEGRATION
1. Create and implement marketing and communications tactics that contribute to increasing FTES of each target enrollment group.	1.1 Implement a targeted print campaign for each of the top three target enrollment groups.	1.1.1 First-time to college students 1.1.2 Evening only students 1.1.3 Older adult students	• People • Budget • Facilities • Technology	1.1.1 New student orientation	• Outreach • Counseling • Instructional departments

Forming the Creative Concept

The purpose of building and running a campaign is to instigate a specific change in the target audience's behavior. The campaign introduces a solution that will solve a particular challenge, such as helping students decide whether to apply/enroll, or driving them to reach out to the college for more information. The important thing is to think about the target audience and build the creative concept with the end result in mind. This includes consideration of the concept in its entirety: the reasoning, the execution, and the results in a logical progression. Moreover, the words, design, look, and feel of a campaign need to match the medium (tactic) used to deliver the message to the target audience. Communicating to a younger audience on Facebook or Snapchat, for instance, might be a short snappy image-based message or video, compared to an older target segment who may prefer a more formal message (e .g ., centered layouts, less jargon, professional photographs, traditional typefaces, and printed materials) .

The following items go into building a creative concept and messaging:

- Background: Summarize the information surrounding your solution. Show the problems faced by the target market, how the solution meets their challenges, and why that matters in terms of expected benefits.

- Theme: Lay out the core ideas that carry your message to the audience. Explain how those elements shape the interpretation of your message.

- Execution: Explain how the campaign's content and design will work together to deliver the message and persuade the audience to take a particular course of action.

- Tone: Exhibit a clear personality or tone through your campaign to the world at large. Describe how this influences the transmission and reception of your key messages.

Determining the Communication Platform Mix

This section of the targeted marketing and communications plan describes various marketing and communications tactics within a promotional mix. A promotional mix includes a variety of tactics that cover a range of channels depending on the intention and desired impact. Generally, these tactics are combined or layered in order to have maximum impact, and will vary depending on available resources, purpose, and target audience. It is not uncommon to have multiple tactics for a single marketing campaign. Changes to the promotional mix of tactics will also depend on shifting trends (e .g., new programs, new target enrollment groups, responding to increased demand for online courses), and the trends or changes in communication channels .

It is important to remember that as with other college-wide SEM efforts, marketing and communication is a cross-functional effort that requires the input and collaboration by departments and constituents from across the college. This will help to ensure that the promotional tactics are relevant and consistent. Table 2 provides a sample of various tactics under each of the categories in a Communication Platform Mix.

Table 2. Sample Communication Platform Mix

ADVERTISING	PROMOTION	EVENTS	DIGITAL MARKETING	DIRECT MARKETING	PUBLIC RELATIONS	WORD OF MOUTH MARKETING	OUTREACH
Bus ads	College Fairs	Sports*	Social media	Catalogs and schedules	Annual Reports	Friends, family, and co-workers*	HS visits*
Theater ad	College Visits	Dance & Music*	Google AdWords	Mailings: Postal & email*	Community Events	HS counselors*	
Radio spots		Lectures*	Blogs*	Website	State and local lobbying*		
Online ads			Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	Social Media			

*Indicates tactics that likely do not require funding from a marketing budget

There are multiple marketing channels to choose from when creating your plan, but most marketers will recommend an integrated approach (mixing methods). Here are a few channels that every modern marketer should consider as part of their promotional mix:

Digital Marketing

- Website development: Investing in development can go a long way. Whether you're starting from scratch to create a new website or you're improving an existing one, users can always appreciate a site that has top-notch user-experience design (UX) and updated features;

- Display advertising & pay-per-click (PPC): Advertising via search engines and partner websites is becoming increasingly commonplace as technology advances. Display advertising is an economical online advertising method, offering the opportunity to display graphic banner ads on website categories of your choosing. PPC, while more costly, is extremely customizable; advertisers can specify bids, ad copy, display time of day, location targeting;

- Email marketing: This is a standard among most organizations. There are still realms to explore in the world of email marketing, including experimenting with email workflows to capture leads and incorporate responsive elements to heighten engagement metrics ;

- Social media advertising: For marketers who have established a strong social media presence for their organization, social media advertising is an excellent tactic to incorporate; and

- Search engine optimization (SEO): Optimizing your website for search engines is becoming increasingly important.

Public Relations and Social Media
Public relations and social media marketing are standard for most organizations. Content marketing (e.g., video and Facebook live) is a tactic that has grown in popularity in the past few years; this avenue allows organizations to produce in-depth industry content that draws in a new, more targeted audience.

Traditional Marketing Channels
Traditional marketing methods such as direct mail, event marketing, television spots, and print advertising are just a few tactics that are still a core focus for many marketers. However, these channels may be costly, and may or may not fit into the overall budget and goals.

Building an effective promotional mix may first require a communication audit in order to determine where there are gaps and overlaps in tactics, and to assess the effectiveness of various tactics. A good rule of thumb for building and evaluating the promotional mix of tactics is to consider the following five determining factors:

1. Target Audience: Identify which target enrollment group(s) the tactic will target;
2. Intended Message or Outcome: Clarify if the tactic is intended to build awareness, inform, and/or promote decision or action;
3. Environment: Observe relevant internal and external trends that impact the intended outcome, and evaluate how they may support or inhibit the tactic;
4. Available Resources: Qualify the staffing and funds available to achieve the desired outcomes; and,
5. Enrollment Potential: Forecast or estimate the impact on enrollment overall and/ or by target market.

Table 3 is an example of how a promotional mix might be created for a target enrollment group.

Table 3. Tactic Selection Criteria Tool

TARGET AUDIENCE	INTENDED MESSAGE OR OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENT	AVAILABLE RESOURCE	ENROLLMENT POTENTIAL	PROMOTIONAL MIX
First-time-to-college students	Starting a career path	Diminishing high school pipeline	HS database Website	2,500 headcount	• HS visits • Social media • College fairs

Prioritizing marketing and communications resources can be extremely challenging, particularly when there are an abundance of programs and services that need to be promoted, but limited resource . It may help to establish a task force or committee comprised of constituents who have marketing and communications expertise, program and service subject matter knowledge, data savvy, as well as the necessary leadership and decision-making power. This group would also benefit by ensuring cross membership with a college-wide SEM group to help provide a

broader perspective on the SEM efforts across the college. The group could offer input and help to prioritize and integrate marketing and communications efforts, and improve efficiencies in this area. The group could also be an important advocate that helps to galvanize the college around the marketing and communications efforts.

Building a Marketing Budget

According to a recent report from Inside Higher Ed2 the average marketing budget for public and private institutions of higher education varies widely, ranging from 1 .5-6 .0 percent of the institution's annual operating budget . A budget which outlines the costs should be included in the marketing plan. Costs vary from tactic to tactic and location to location. Marketing on every platform is the ideal circumstance. However, for organizations with small budgets, this may not be realistic.   In most situations it will be necessary to prioritize marketing needs. One suggestion would be to start with the most costly endeavors and choose the tactics that are the most effective at generating leads, then go from there . Once the tactics that require the most funding have been implemented, the rest of your budget can be balanced between more cost-effective tactics. Ultimately, there is no magic formula . However, the marketing budget should be a mix of different methods, based on the resources available and the target audience. Below are critical questions in order to build a budget, and Table 4 provides an example of a marketing budget matrix .

Table 4. Sample Marketing Budget Matrix

TARGET AUDIENCE	GOAL	CHANNEL	PLATFORM	TACTIC	EXPENSE
First-time-to-college students	500 clicks, 30 conversions (conversions in this case are visits to the application webpage)	Digital marketing	Google AdWords	PPC (pay per click)	$3,000/mo.

2 https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/call-action-marketing-and-communications-higher-education/ total-marketing-spend-hard-questions

? Guiding Questions

For Discussion

1. What are your short-term or long-term marketing goals?

2. Who is your college trying to reach and where can you find these people?

3. Which is the preferred channel and platform for this target audience?

4. What is your college's total budget for the year or for the specific campaign?

5. How many clicks or new leads do you expect this tactic to generate?

6. Who else needs to be involved with the marketing communications strategy development, delivery and results for this tactic?

Measuring the Impact

A final component of the targeted marketing and communications plan contains the intended ways in which the goals and tactics will be measured.

> Multiple measures for each tactic is optimal and may include things such as; enrollment trends, retention rates of students who received email messaging, number of applications, hits to the website or designated campaign webpage, visits to the campus, application to enrollment rates, and identify steps where potential students drop out of the enrollment process.

In addition to tracking and measuring the goals and tactics, assessing the value of each target enrollment group can provide valuable information for leveraging resources. For example, a college may find that their first-time-to-college student pipeline generates fewer FTES or dollars over the student's college life than the student who returns to college job retraining or upgrading and to build career technical skills on an intermittent but regular basis. Consequently, the college may decide to invest more marketing and communications dollars in the tactics that target the skills-builder student population.

What happens after you bring the prospective student to the door? A Note about Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Customer Relationship Management systems, or CRM, are frequently used for tracking target market segments. These systems use relational databases to track communication touch points with individual students and can be integrated into the college's enterprise resource planning system. CRM is a viable strategy for enrollment and perhaps even more so for retention because it allows the college to monitor student enrollment patterns and interactions more closely. While all of the tactics up until now have focused largely on getting the students to the college and enrolling in courses, a CRM system gives a college the opportunity to track students' behaviors and needs in a nuanced way that other systems or research cannot provide. Assuming the target marketing and communications plan is for external marketing – growing your prospective pool of students – the second part of this effort is to build an internal campaign for moving the prospective students from application to enrollment and then to retain the student to completion .

Practical Applications

CLUSTER ANALYSIS FOR MARKET SEGMENTATION (DEANZA COLLEGE)

College Fast Facts

Fall 2017 Headcount: 20,192

Fall 2017 FTES: 5,545

Fall 2016 FTEF: 883

Location: Cupertino, CA

Structure: Multi-college district

Background and Purpose

To better identify the various student populations served by De Anza College, the college's Office of Institutional Research and Planning collaborated with consultants to conduct a statistical analysis of enrolled students in fall 2016.

Process and Procedures

De Anza College's Office of Institutional Research and Planning (hereafter, IRP office) employed a two-step cluster analysis to identify meaningful groups of students that share common demographic and academic characteristics. (See Table 5).

Table 5. Characteristics used in Cluster Analysis

CHARACTERISTIC NAME	CHARACTERISTIC NAME	CHARACTERISTIC NAME
Age	CalWORKS status	Full/part time status
Credits attempted (in fall 2016)	Orientation completion	Low income status
Cumulative GPA	Selected a major	Financial aid awarded
Cumulative credits attempted	Educational plan completion	Visa status
EOPS status	Selected an education goal	Applied for financial aid
DSPS status	Highest education level attained	Taking a physical education course

Note: Term units and cum units are averages; all other indicators are yes/no responses.

The Two Step Cluster Analysis takes both categorical and continuous data and uses them to separate individuals into groups, called clusters. Analysts completed the two step cluster analysis using SPSS. With an unduplicated file of student data loaded into SPSS, analysts selected Analyze from the menu bar, and then selected Classify and Two-Step Cluster Analysis from the resulting drop down menus. Within the new window that appeared, the analysis then added the student characteristic variables (See Table 5) and then selected "Specify Fixed Number" under the "Number of Clusters" heading and entered the number five. Finally, the analysts selected "Output" and then selected "Pivot Tables" and "Create cluster Membership Variable" to include a new variable to indicate into which cluster each student was placed.

The results reveal the percentage of each variable to land in each cluster (for categorical variables), what this means for each variable is for each cluster (for continuous variables), and if there were any outliers that were not included in any cluster. The cluster quality was considered fair and the most accurate of all of the cluster analyses run — SPSS runs the cluster analysis with several competing variable inputs to find the best combination for model goodness-of-fit. The five clusters accounted for 97 .2% (n = 20,179) of individuals in the data set, with 2 .8% (n = 575) remaining as outliers who did not fit into any cluster and were excluded from the analysis. (See Table 6). It should be noted that some percentages in table 2 do not add up to 100% due to rounding. Special programs include Veterans, CalWorks, EOPS, DSPS and Foster Youth.

Table 6. Cluster Analysis Results

LABEL	LABEL DESCRIPTION	DESCRIPTION	N(%)
Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Lower Income	Full-time students with a goal of transfer who are receiving financial aid	These students are enrolled full-time with a transfer goal and are largely Asian and Latino/a. The majority of students receive financial aid. It is the second youngest group with the second highest term units enrolled and have the second highest GPA (behind the Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Higher Income cluster). The majority of all EOPS students are in this cluster, and two-thirds receive financial aid. Almost all of the cluster's students have completed an educational plan and over half had attended orientation.	5,642 (28.0%)
Part-Time, Possible Transfer, Lower Income	Part-time students who may want to transfer who are receiving financial aid	This is the second youngest group enrolled part-time and is comprised of Asian and Latino/a students. Half of the students within this cluster were receiving some type of aid, with about 2/5 of students identifying as low income. Nearly 75% of students declared a transfer goal, and 50% attended orientation and/or an education plan. About half of all students enrolled in special programs at the college are in this cluster.	5,576 (27.6%)
Part-Time, Returning Students	Part-time students who have a bachelor's degree	These students are enrolled part-time (about one course per term) and tend to hold a bachelor's degree. Sixty percent of college students with a certificate as a goal are located within this cluster. Students within this cluster are predominantly Asian or White, and tend to be older in age than students in the other clusters. This cluster is also defined by students who do not receive financial aid, have not completed orientation, and who are not enrolled in a special program.	4,301 (21.3%)
Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Higher Income	Full-time students with a goal of transfer who are not receiving financial aid	These students are enrolled full-time and tend to enroll in more units per term than students in the other four clusters. Students within this cluster have higher GPA's than students in other clusters and 90% plan to transfer. Moreover, these students have completed the college's matriculation process. Almost no students in this cluster applied for financial aid or belonged to a special program. This cluster is predominantly Asian, and students within this cluster tend to be younger than students in other clusters. The majority of international students are in this cluster.	4,146 (20.5%)
DSPS and Adaptive PE Students	Students enrolled in ADPE courses and the DSPS program	This is the oldest group of students who are largely White. Almost all are part-time and have the lowest cumulative GPA of all groups and enrolled in the lowest number of term units, but have the highest number of cumulative units. The majority are enrolled in DSPS and half received financial aid. 1% of course enrollment is online for this group.	514 (2.5%)

Outcomes and Effectiveness

Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Lower Income: This cluster is the largest of the five derived clusters, and is characterized by students that tend to be enrolled full-time and plan to transfer; however, students within this cluster have a lower GPA and lower success rate than the Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Higher Income cluster . (See Table 7). Students within the Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Lower Income cluster are connected to EOPS and financial aid and have fully matriculated. These students have a similar persistence rate as the Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Higher Income cluster but have a higher course withdrawal rate.

The IRP office suggested that the college ensure that these students are aware of resources to help them remain enrolled full-time and be successful.

Table 7. Cluster Success and Retention Rates

Label	Success Rates – Fall 2016	Withdraw Rates – Fall 2016	Persistence Rate to Winter 2017	Cumulative GPA
Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Lower Income	75%	11%	89%	2.75
Part Time, Possible Transfer, Lower Income	65%	16%	65%	2.46
Part-Time, Returning Students	76%	12%	55%	2.79
Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Higher Income	81%	7%	90%	3.01
DSPS and Adaptive PE Students	96%	2%	87%	2.38

Part Time, Possible Transfer, Lower Income: Students within this cluster hold an intent to attend college part-time. This group has a high withdraw rate (16%) which should be of concern. The Institutional Research Office (IRP) suggested that because only about half of the students in this cluster enrolled in a special program, it may be worthwhile to reach out to the other half and see if they are eligible for assistance. Moreover, the IRP office suggested that students within this cluster may also benefit from completing an educational plan to help them stay on track, as well as being connected to financial aid options that are available to part-time students, as only 52% of this population is receiving aid.

Part-Time, Returning Students: Students within this cluster tend to take one course per term, and have been at the college for around three years. This cluster of students persist from term to term at a lower rate than other identified clusters, and only about 30% of students have completed an educational plan. The IRP office advised that students within this cluster meet with a counselor to help them stay on track to meet their educational goal.

Full-Time, Transfer Bound, Higher Income: This cluster contains the highest achieving group of students, with a success rate of 81%, a persistence rate of 90%, and a cumulative GPA of 3 .01.

The IRP office suggested that students within this group be tapped to serve as mentors or tutors for students in other clusters.

DSPS/ADPE Students: Students in this cluster have completed more units than students in other clusters, with all units from special education and adapted physical education courses.

The IRP office suggested that the college ensure that this cluster of students has a way to continue to enroll in courses after the repeatability requirements come into effect.

OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT, MARKETING AND LIFELONG LEARNING (COLLEGE OF THE SISKIYOUS)

Fast Facts

Fall 2017 Headcount: 3,344

Fall 2017 FTES: 1,083

Fall 2016 FTEF: 162

Location: Weed, CA

Structure: Single-college district

Background and Purpose

College of the Siskiyous has increased its recruitment, services, and program offerings in a number of ways in an effort to increase access to several populations. Our target audience is based on our Student Equity Plan in order to address access gaps and to meet the needs of our community. Therefore, our target audiences include under-represented groups, especially Hispanic and Native American, economically disadvantaged, non-traditional students, transfer students and Siskiyou County high school students (dual enrollment and graduating seniors). Data used to identify our target audience is from the Chancellor's Office Datamart and County census data. These sources identified those experiencing completion gaps and the County's demographics.

Process and Procedures

The College initiatives listed below support the college mission by providing accessible services and promoting learning by providing academic excellence for the students of Siskiyou County, the State of California, the nation, and the world.

1. Financial Aid, SSSP Advisors, and the Student Equity Specialist conducted college and FAFSA application workshops at county high schools in the fall and winter, followed by orientation sessions at these sites in the spring. This allows the college to reach students in their home towns. This academic year, family members will be invited to participate in the workshops in an effort to reach beyond high school seniors. For the fall and winter terms, FAFSA application workshops will be conducted on the Weed campus for continuing students with email invitations going out to targeted groups.

2. The Executive team belongs to many of the local service organizations and community services Boards, which helps to build relationships within the community and assures that they remain responsive to their needs.

3. Student Ambassadors reach out to applicants via phone calls, emails, and post cards to alert prospective students of upcoming registration opportunities and to answer questions. In Fall 2017, the Student Ambassadors will make phone calls to current students who have not yet registered for winter or spring semesters.

Prospective students visit campus one of two ways: via coaches or Student Ambassadors. The Student Ambassadors give their own one-on-one tours, often taking time over the weekends and evenings to meet with visitors.

Other prospective students may request a tour/visit by calling the Student Ambassador phone-line or by completing/submitting our online tour request form. Student Ambassadors contact the visitor and make all of the arrangements, based on the visitor's request. Tours often include a tour of campus, the opportunity to meet with an instructor or visit a classroom, and then meet with a counselor or advisor. Student Ambassadors do their best to accommodate the visitors' request.

4. In Fall 2016, the Siskiyou Promise was initiated, which offered Siskiyou County recent high school graduates free tuition and $200 per semester book vouchers. The program is eligible to recent high school graduates who must be enrolled full-time and maintain academic standards. In Fall 2017, returning Siskiyou Promise recipients were also awarded free tuition and book vouchers. The Foundation and Student Equity fund the Siskiyou Promise program via direct services to students. The Foundation implemented a fundraising campaign to continue the support of the Siskiyou Promise. The Foundation is building an endowment fund for the Siskiyou Promise program. College of the Siskiyous has a recruitment budget which funds visits to the high schools. Since the college is small, they also fund part of the advisors' salary and fully fund the Student Ambassadors and Marketing.

5. The College has developed and offered a variety of Life Long Learning courses to reach out to community members who may not be seeking a degree or certificate at this time. These courses range from Communication in the Workforce to Senior Theater

6. Marketing includes a billboard, social media (e.g., website, Facebook, SnapChat), radio, and newspaper advertisements to increase the college's presence in the community and awareness of the various offerings.

The Associate Dean of Student Services oversees the on-site orientation sessions. Academic Advisors and the Student Equity Specialist conduct the sessions. The Director of Marketing and Public Relations oversees all aspects of marketing. The Admissions and Records Director oversees the Student Ambassador program.

Outcomes and Effectiveness
The College documents the number of new students served at each high school campus. The College examines the number of high school students registered for each fall term and recently reviewed the Student Equity goals via information from their datamart. They also monitor FTES on a regular basis and compare it to the previous year.

The cost of the new students divided by the cost of the marketing effort is difficult to measure because of the indirect costs and impact. However, no new staff or department was added.

- We already employ student workers. The Student Ambassadors evolved from former student worker positions.
- Efforts are shared among departments and tasks and duties were added to existing positions and budgets.
- Counseling, Admissions and Records, Student Equity, Student Services and Marketing collaborate and share costs.

We monitor enrollment for the current term on a regular basis, (at least weekly). We also monitor applicants' progress through ISIR, orientation and registration. Efforts will be reflected in our 17-18 program reviews (percentage of yield of applicants by cohorts). The Integrated Plan will also include data regarding these efforts.

Benefits

Siskiyou County is very rural and has a 21% poverty rate, with a county population of just over 43,554. By providing on-site orientation, the college is able to provide greater access to under-resourced students. Additionally, they have reached under-represented Student Equity access goals to increase Native Americans, Hispanics and economically disadvantaged students. These student groups often live an hour or more away from the Weed campus, which has made it difficult for them to matriculate.

By providing free tuition and book vouchers, the college is able to assist economically and under-represented students. Additional assistance, such as student supplies and food pantry, are offered to eligible students as identified by the Student Equity Plan.

The College has limited resources so it approaches this effort from a family" attitude. We acknowledge that we mutually benefit from the success in student access and work together to achieve common goals. We are in constant communication and every student is important to us.

SEM Resource Guide in the Series

- A Roadmap for Strategic Enrollment Management Planning

- Understanding and Calculating FTES and Efficiency

- Data Tools and Metrics for Strategic Enrollment Management

- Developing and Managing the Class Schedule

- High Impact Retention, Persistence, and Success Practices for Strategic Enrollment Management

- Support Services for Strategic Enrollment Management

- Targeted Marketing and Communications for Strategic Enrollment Management

- Understanding CCC Budget and Reporting Part I (CCSF-320 Report)

- Understanding CCC Budget and Reporting Part II (Exhibit C, Fifty Percent Law, and FON)