



Education
Advisory
Board

Student Success Collaborative
for Community Colleges

Assessing Opportunities at Cerro Coso Community College



Cerro Coso Opportunity Assessment

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Road Map for Discussion



1 | Executive Summary

2 | Onboarding

3 | Academic Planning

4 | Counseling Services

5 | Student Communication

6 | Next Steps

7 | Appendix

Assessment Methodology

Observation methods and data sources



Best Practices



- Community College faculty and staff interviews
- Student Interviews
- Community College 'secret shopping' results
- Insights from over 1,000 colleges and universities
- Community College Executive Forum members

College Observations



- Student Onboarding Process Mapping
- Program Selection Process Mapping
- Leadership team insights
- Campus staff interviews
- Student Services Offerings
- Online information and resources

Third Party Research



- State Community College Information Database
- College Institutional Research
- National Student Clearinghouse data
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement
- Institutional Postsecondary Education System

Executive Summary



Problem Statement

Cerro Coso is home to one of the largest service areas among California Community Colleges, measuring nearly 22,000 square miles. It has struggled to proactively engage this diverse student body and help direct students towards timely completion of their educational goals. The student body is economically and regionally separated across east-central California and historically struggles with the following missteps during their education.

1. **Off Track Onboarding**
2. **Poor Academic Planning**
3. **Low use of Counseling Resources**
4. **Unclear Student Communication**

Due in part to these pitfalls, the college has experienced reduced retention and completion rates as compared to their peer colleges in California. These losses result in reduced tuition, and **are most clearly evidenced by the 40.3% student loss from registration to course census.** Demographically, enrollment has likely plateaued and the college must focus on retaining its students to ensure solid funding.



Observed Strengths



High School Partnerships

Directly link graduating high school students to Cerro Coso's educational opportunities

- On-location application and registration services
- Parental outreach through open houses
- Financial aid form assistance on site at local high schools
- Regular staff presence at high schools near each campus



Multi-Campus Resources

Assistance available remotely and to students on all campuses

- 1-Stop financial aid and counseling assistance on each campus
- Dedicated kiosks for application and registration
- Dedicated phone lines to financial aid office at each campus
- Tech-friendly campus with remote tutoring and student service options
- College success courses offered for all students



Engaged Foundations and Community

Generous grant opportunities for local students to complete their education at Cerro Coso

- Strong community support
- Local foundations (Eastern Sierra, and others) supporting the college's mission
- Connection to local mission at each site (military, continuing education, etc)
- Strong college foundation supporting new initiatives



Project Planning Timeline

Configuration Milestones

September-December 2014

January-March 2015

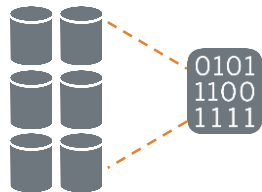
April 2015

Review Student Onboarding Process

Customize Onboarding Process

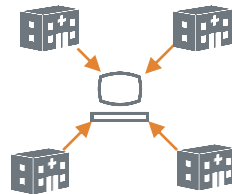
Pilot Test Platform

Technology Integration



- Gain access to student data warehouse
- Review previously created templates in Degree Works
- Confirm student access requirements
- Main tasks will be handled at the district office

Build Teams



- Various subject-area teams review and implement process improvements
- Teams will work to solve identified process gaps
- Teams will complete customization work for the software platform

Process Improvement



- Review all student-facing information for accessibility
- List various regular reports of student group progress
- Identify departmental staff responsible for maintaining course and program descriptions

Inform Stakeholders



- Create a compelling story relating the importance of change to campus
- Communicate across various media at each step in the process
- Create schedule for communication 'release dates' based on progress



Core Build Teams

Executing a new vision



Onboarding Build Team

Helping reorganize the student onboarding process to a clear path

- Determine onboarding order
- Financial aid
- Assessment
- Orientation
- Platform descriptions



Academic Planning Build Team

Guiding students to the best-fit program and speedy completion of required courses

- Program descriptions Identified
- Major classifications
- Career Services
- Registration guidance
- Degree Works Templates



Counseling Services Build Team

Ensuring students are prepared, supported and aware of campus resources.

- Student life support
- Pilot testing management
- Platform help page configuration
- Ongoing student services descriptions (tutoring, library, etc)



Communications Build Team

Enhancing communication with students and promoting platform adoption during full launch.

- Manage campus communication plans for launch
- Craft campus welcome messages
- Review web descriptions to ensure clarity
- Remove 'college knowledge' information
- Create glossary of terms as needed for instructions

Road Map for Discussion

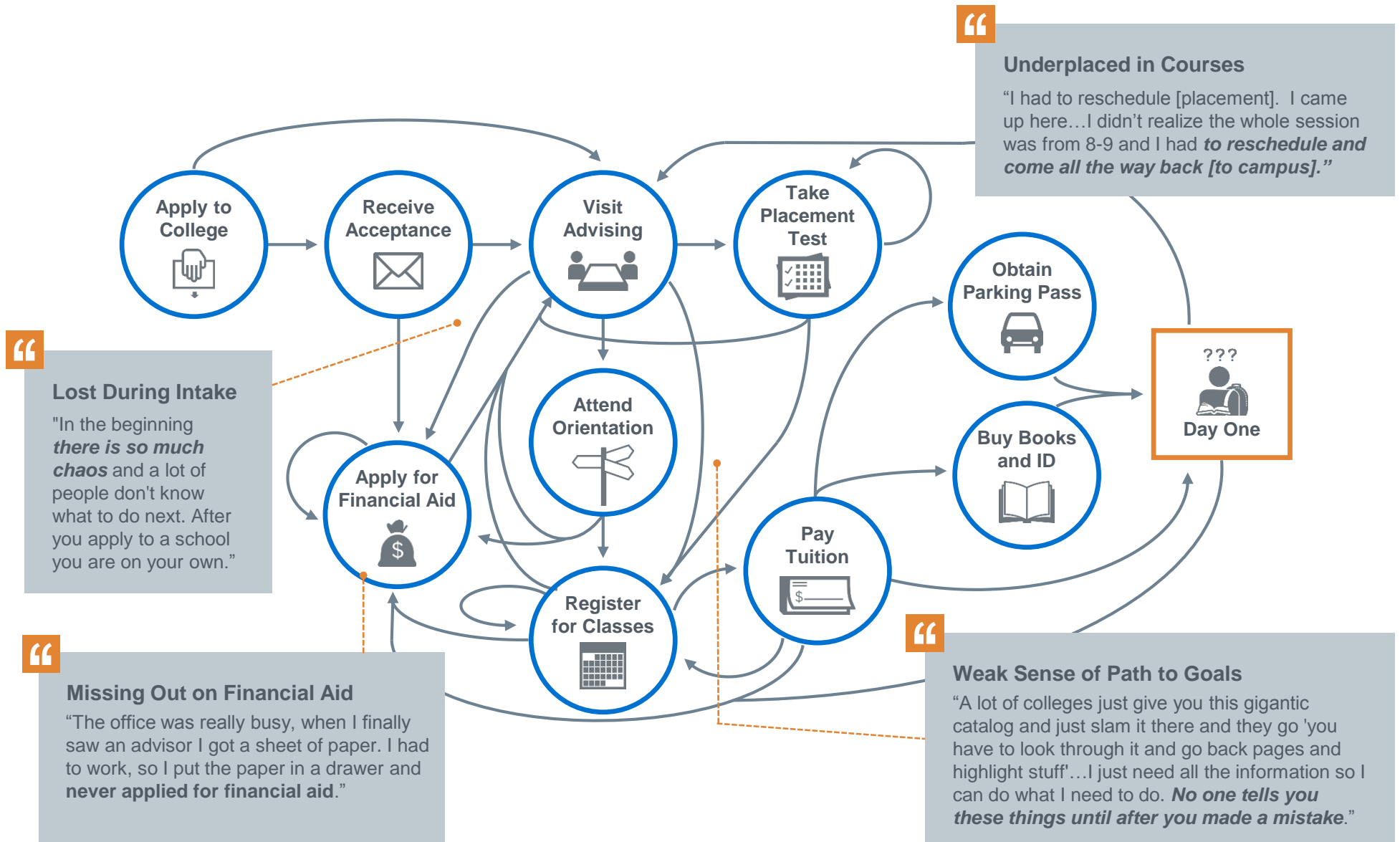


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Disordered Onboarding



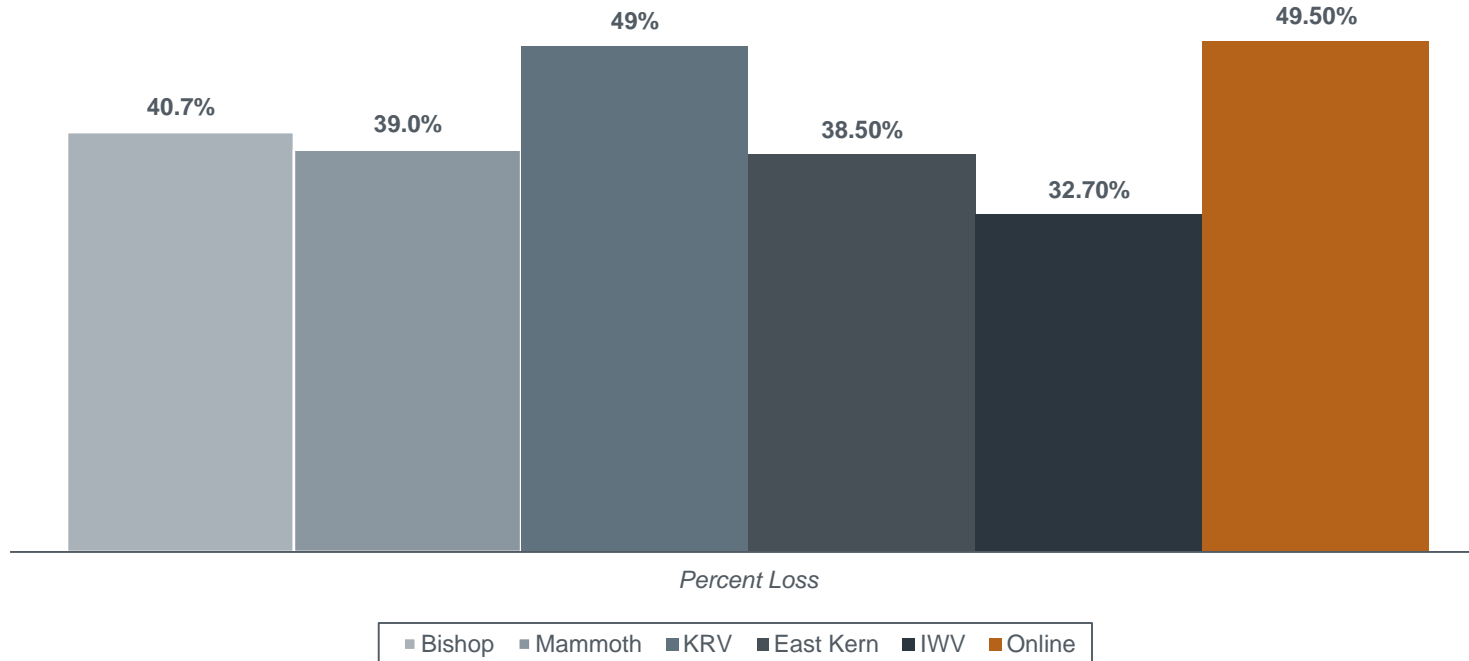
Students fall through the cracks navigating a difficult process





Students Giving Up Early

Student losses before census day



Source: KCCD Institutional Research



40.7%
Overall College Bleed



??
Students lost from application to registration

Standardized Student Experience

Straight Line Approach



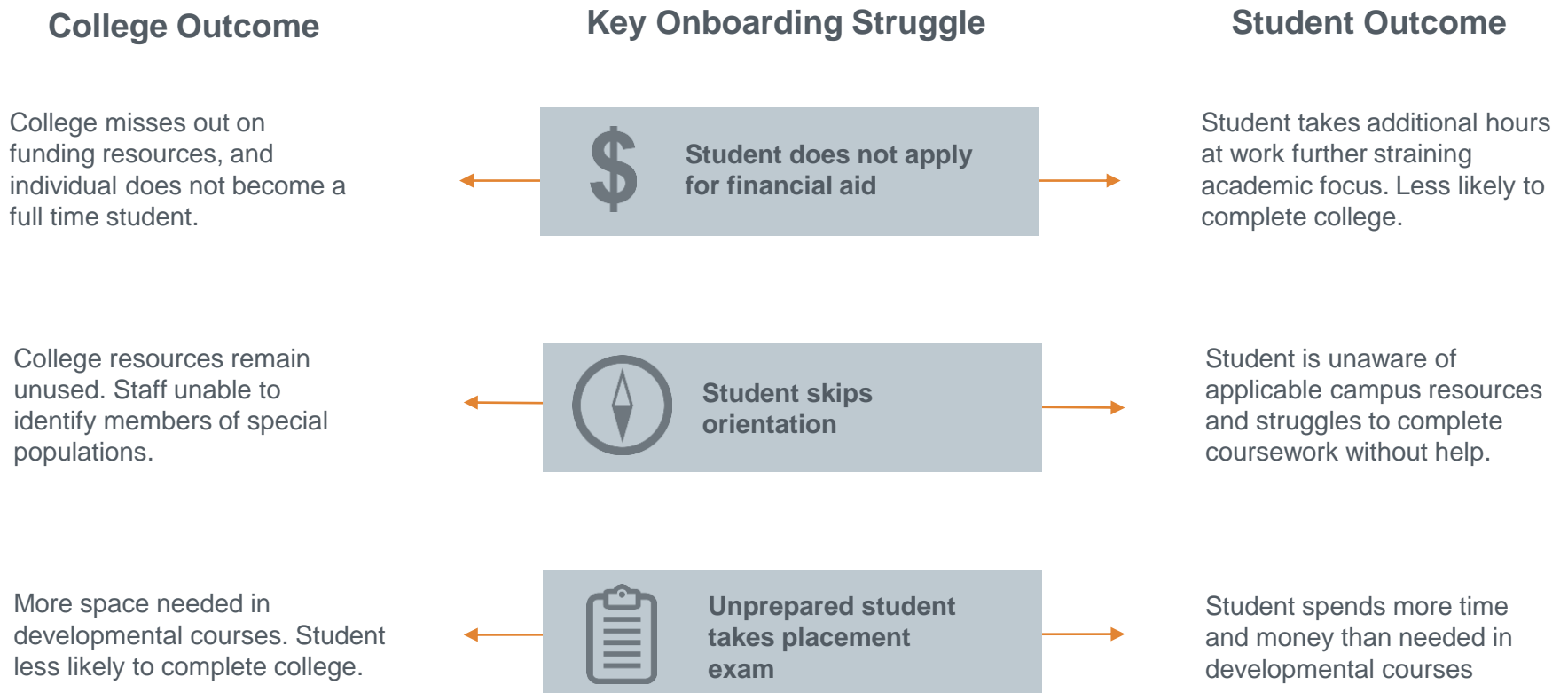
- Admissions and Welcome
- Campus Navigation
- Placement Testing
- Orientation
- Counseling and Career Center
- Financial Aid
- Scheduling and Registration
- Payment and Prepared for Classes

Onboarding Pain Points



Students and Colleges lose at each skipped step

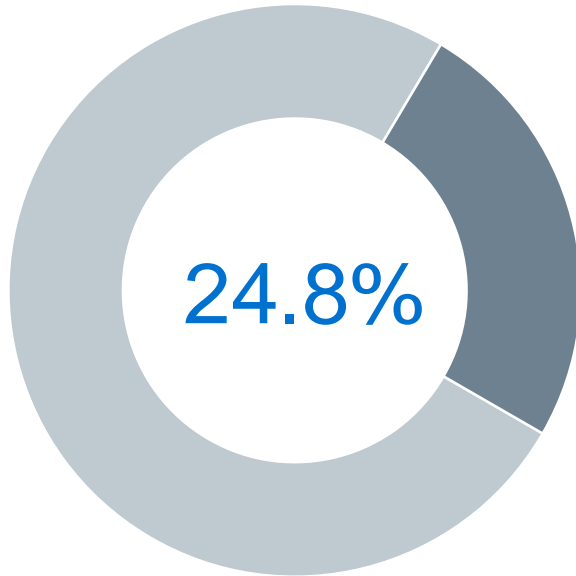
The first steps a college student takes in the onboarding process are all built around distinct priorities. Properly placing students into courses, educating about campus resources, and having access to funding for their education create the ideal foundation for college success.



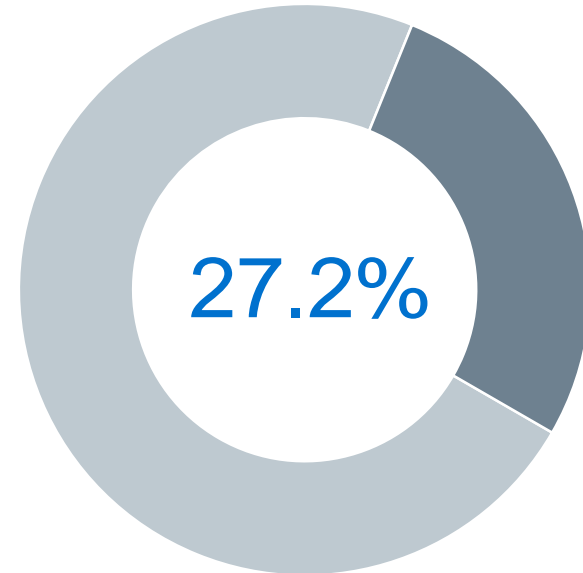


Developmental Student Proportions

Completion lags college-ready peers



English



Math

Source: IPEDS and KCCD Institutional Research



Developmental Challenges

Developmental students comprise a growing proportion of community college students. These students often have lower completion rates than other cohort members.

15% Developmental Math Students
Credential within 5 Years

28% Students Are Improperly Placed
by Placement Exams

Source: Reengineering Developmental Math--EAB



Assessment Testing Gaps

Identifying what students don't know about assessment



Placement Testing remains one of the most high-stakes activities during onboarding. Students need a greater understanding of the repercussions when they do not place at college level. Model colleges work extensively to completely communicate times and methods of testing available to all students.

Knowing the Importance of Placement

Many students are unaware of the financial and completion implications of placement

- No visual reminder of the additional time and money developmental courses require
- No description page for program/certificate information
- No ready access for students to review their scores online at their convenience
- No requirement to take developmental courses immediately
- No written reminder of re-test policy before taking the exam

No Test Preparation Services Offered

Students, especially adult students, who briefly review topics tend to do better on exams

- No direct link to online test preparation
- No clear place within order of onboarding for assessment
- No clear listing of program offerings by campus

Assessment Action Items



Reminding students of the impacts of scores

Prepare students for assessment



Better student preparation

- Communicate *when* students should take assessment during onboarding
- Clearly list the varying methods to place into college-level Math and English
- Assemble and promote practice test materials
- Explain, in plain writing, the implications of exams before beginning—including re-take policies
- Create a reminder comparing the money saved by students being properly placed into college-level courses
- Create a check-list for students choosing to complete testing via proctoring

Drive student's next actions



Improve access and understanding for online learners

- Review results sheet and ensure it clearly outlines a student's next steps for registration
- Create clear language for different placement results
- Define placement performance to course eligibility
- Create an overview of the re-take policy for placement tests



New Student Orientation

Showing students Cerro Coso's resources

College navigation is a challenge at any school, specifically at Cerro Coso these challenges are amplified by the distributed nature of the student body. This challenge is even more acute for students who take the majority, or all, of their courses online.



Low awareness and promotion of benefits

Students need to understand why they should be completing orientation

- No requirement for students to complete orientation
- No survey of students not completing orientation
- No additional 'why' beyond full matriculation communicated to students
- No obvious pairing with other onboarding activities to promote 1-stop matriculation activities
- No distinct push for online students to complete orientation
- No clear place for orientation within onboarding tasks

More students completing orientation

Since 2009 Cerro Coso has markedly increased the number of students completing orientation by 34%; **over 47% of all students completed orientation in the 2013-2014 academic year.**

Orientation Action Items



Improving student's introduction to campus

Enticing students to attend or view orientation programs



Students who do not choose to attend an orientation session have easy access to the online tutorial—the struggle is motivating students to complete the process. Students should understand what they *lose* by not completing orientation. The benefits of matriculation do not seem to be enough for some students

Key tasks:

- Create a plan to target non-required students to complete orientation
- Survey students who are *not* completing orientation
- Create reminders for students about the benefits of priority registration and clearly define what they need to do to qualify
- Define orientation goals for each campus (and online) to give all staff personal targets

Regular reminders to increase student awareness and engagement



The SSC platform will further the mission of informing and reminding students of the importance of orientation. Additionally, the 'nudge' functionality will help counseling staff remind students to register for, or complete, orientation.

Platform preparation:

- Creating a 'due date' for orientation that is in advance of key registration windows
- Craft language for a 'landing page' with facts about orientation
- Consider language and timing for text messages or emails to students who have not completed orientation

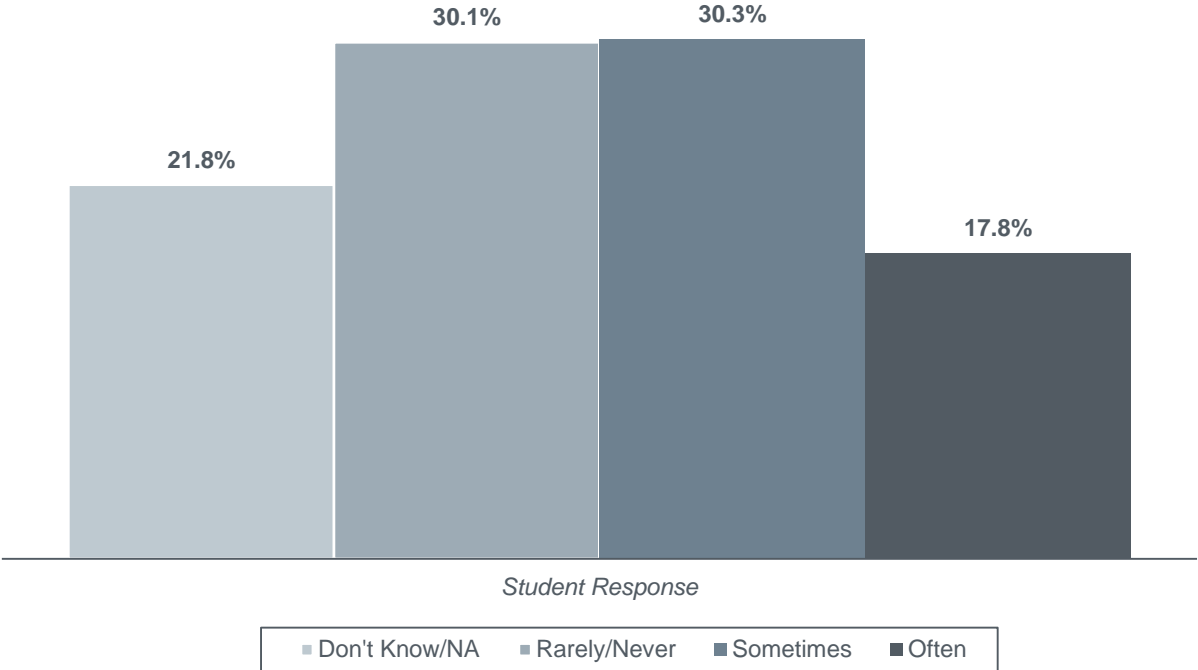
Opportunity to Adapt

As the college looks to improve awareness of orientation benefits to students, it is important to get an accurate idea of why some students have chosen to not participate in orientation—despite its easy availability.



Cerro Coso Financial Aid Usage

How many students don't know about college resources?



33%
Cerro Coso Students
Received Aid in 2013-2014

Source: Cerro Coso Institutional Research

Students satisfied with financial aid services
Cerro Coso students who use the college's financial aid resources remain satisfied with the assistance provided by staff. **Over 50% of students using services are "Somewhat or Very Satisfied"**.

Source: 2014 Cerro Coso CCSSE Report

Financial Aid Confusion



Financial aid impediments for students



Many students are unaware of the availability of aid funds to pay for their community college courses, or those that do seek funds are ill prepared for the application process. At Cerro Coso there are numerous potential aid sources at the local, state and federal levels that students must navigate.

Lack of awareness

Abbreviations , Documents and various deadlines prevent students from applying

- Unclear language describing aid sources
 - FAFSA, AB450, etc
- No checklist of details or necessary paperwork provided to students before applying
- Unclear eligibility descriptions for online students
- No clear master timeline of application deadlines presented to students

Confusing applications and deadlines

Students lack 'college knowledge' to help them understand various educational terms

- Counseling staff unaware of when to use BOG waivers or not
- No clear disbursement timeline presented to students
- No obvious starting point for new students on college home page
- No communication of aid implications of dropping courses

Financial Aid Action Items



Financial Aid improvements

Inform and prepare students for a successful aid application



Many students are unaware they can benefit from financial assistance like Pell grants and other funding. Ensuring that students are prepared and encouraged to apply will help increase aid rates.

Key financial aid changes:

- List information about eligibility for online students
- Provide FAFSA worksheets and checklists for students before they apply online
- Promote help-desk hours online for distance students online
- Offer dedicated terminals in labs or offices at each site to apply for aid
- Create a 'cheat sheet' for advisors to guide students through FAFSA, DREAM and BOG waiver process

Consistent and clear reminders



Students often forget to re-apply for aid each year, as well as the various deadlines for scholarships and other grants. Further, various groups of students may be eligible for funding, but unaware it exists.

Platform preparation:

- Create reminder timeline for completion of FAFSA and apply for state aid
- Craft reminder messages for students to re-apply each aid year
- Refine language to students to self-identify as Foster Youth, Veteran or other eligible population as applicable



Scholarships and Foundation Funding

Many Cerro Coso students receive generous funding from outside organizations. The build committee should work with these partners to ensure all information properly captured and promoted to students on the platform.



Onboarding Build Team Tasks

Building a standardized path to day one



Overall Onboarding

- Order milestones
- Deadline dates
- Reminder messages
- Required tasks



Assessment

- Preparation
- Call to action
- Explaining results
- Developmental direction



Orientation

- Promotion
- Surveying Student needs
- Online platform reminders



Financial Aid

- Clear explanations
- Promotion of benefits
- Reminders to apply
- Re-applying guidance



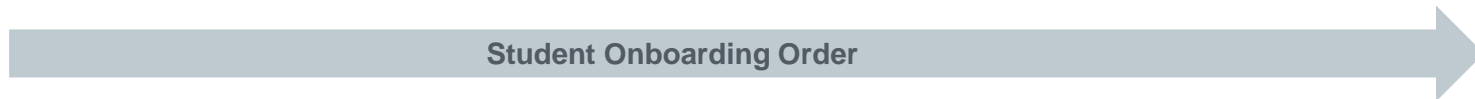
Bursar's Office and Payment

- 10 days to pay warnings
- Reminders
- Hold descriptions



Matriculation Components

Paying for Classes



Onboarding build team outcomes

- Clear path for all students
- Known due dates for tasks
- Assessment preparation
- Developmental direction
- Orientation promotion
- Clear financial aid instructions and reminders
- Payment instructions and reminders

Onboarding Build Schedule



Preparing the college and platform for launch



The onboarding team will oversee key first step student services like financial aid, assessment, and orientation. Additionally they will help create the overall order for the onboarding process. This team will help configure the overall platform landing pages and help ensure process changes are well communicated to all campus stakeholders

Team Active: Present-September 2015

Key configuration tasks

- Configure platform homepage
- Determine overall onboarding order
- Create financial aid support documents (FAFSA, etc)
- Review assessment instructions and preparation resources
- Create orientation platform page

Launch team outcomes

- Home page complete by March 1
- Financial aid page complete by March 1
- Assessment page complete by March 1
- Financial aid resource documents created by March 15
- Assessment preparation steps completed by March 15
- Survey questions about orientation to counseling team by April 1

Road Map for Discussion



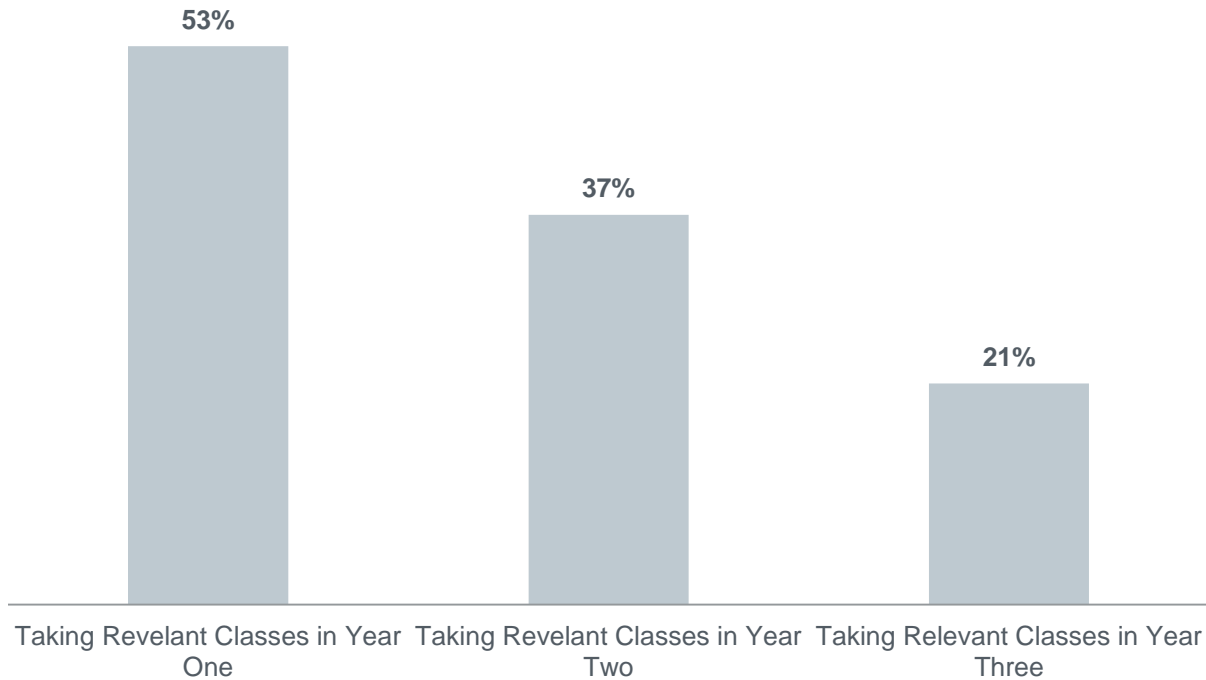
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Choosing the Right Classes

Lack of direction leads to poor choices

Students often choose classes based on interests without knowing if they will count towards their intended program of study—or worse, delay essential or developmental coursework. Each of these simple missteps drastically reduces the student's chances of completing their education



Year 5 Outcomes by Start of Progress Towards Credential

(% Completed Program or Transferred)

n = 11,328 Students



An Overwhelming Number of Choices

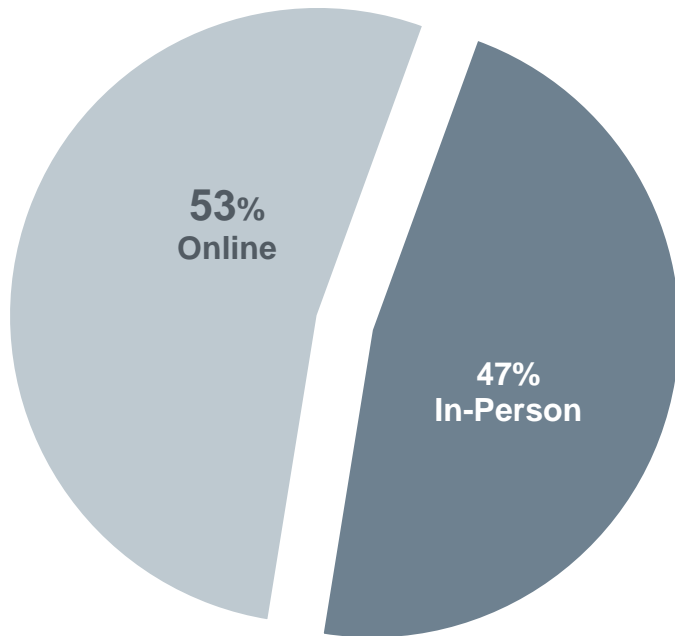
75 Average number of programs offered at community colleges



College Student Population

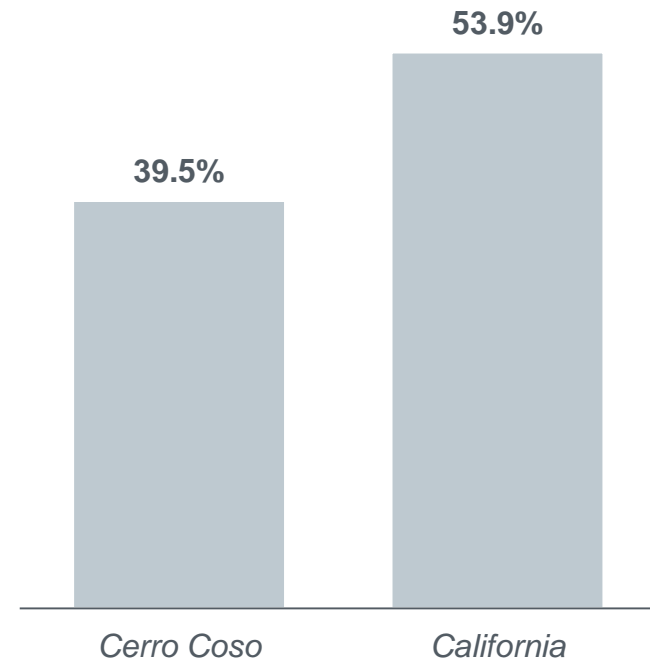
Instructional type and program of study variances

Instructional Type Enrollment



Source: KCCD Institutional Research

Career and Technical Education



Source: 2013 IPEDS Report



Online Completion Rates Lag

22.3% Lower

In comparison to in-person students in developmental courses.

Source: CCRC Online Course Outcome Brief

Certificates of Achievement

From 2009-2013 Cerro Coso increased awards of certificates by 192%

Source: KCCD Institutional Research



Choosing a Program

Matching interests and abilities to education

Many students rely on a variety of information to choose their major and program of study. These varying sources of information are often inaccurate and give students the wrong guidance. This leaves students choosing programs that may not connect to their career goals, or a program they are not likely to complete.

Students left unguided

Students must navigate a confusing maze to find a 'right fit' educational program

- No clear connection between program and career goals
- No job information tied directly to program
- No mention of IGETC/CSU pathway differences in online program descriptions
- No details about who is good for each major
- No clear warnings about limited access programs
- Intimidating amount of detail in the course catalog
- Confusing program path information in the course catalog
- No information about potential careers or current employment statistics



Students Asking for Help

72% Cerro Coso students sometimes or never talk to faculty about career goals

49% Cerro Coso students saying the college has helped them create only some (or no) career goals

Source: 2014 Cerro Coso CCSSE Report

Course Selection



Finding the right classes to succeed



The course registration process is a difficult process for students with numerous pitfalls that dramatically affect an individual student's success. Whether it be a lack of knowledge about the process, taking the right courses, or even signing up for classes on the right campus, even the most promising students have found difficulties.

Preparation and next-step instructions

Many Pitfalls await students during and after the registration process

- No instructions for students on 'how to' use banner
- No checklist of details or necessary paperwork needed before registration
- No clear instruction on SEP changes when classes are full
- No notification a student is enrolled from a waitlisted course
- No confirmation message sent to students following successful registration
- No description for holds or registration error numbers
- No communication of aid implications of dropping courses

Unclear names, times and locations

Abbreviations , Multiple locations, Pre-requisite requirements

- Too many acronyms used, with little explanation
- Confusing '12 click process' to register for courses

Course Selection Action Items



Preparing and guiding students to the right courses

Prepare Students to Schedule Classes



Pre-registration checklist

- CRNs ready
- Confirm course locations
- Banner instructions

Clear Instructions

- Abbreviations glossary
- Location and instructional type reminders
- Plain language descriptions

Greater Access

- Dedicated terminals for registration
- Staff available for quick answers
- Successfully registered message



Guide Registration



Inform Students of Problems

Create a better explanation of what each hold 'code' could mean and directly contact the appropriate office for resolution.



Consistent and Clear Reminders



Wait Listed Courses

- Instructions for students on wait lists
- Notification when placed into course

Educational Plans

- Reminders for students to complete AEPs
- Remind students to adjust SEP based on course registration

Semester Update Forms

- Review current prompts to change program of study
- Guide students to information about various other programs

College Knowledge

- Review program descriptions to ensure clear, plain-language wording is accessible to all students

Academic Planning Build Team



Team tasks and outcomes

Process Improvement

Program Selection

- Clear program description
- Clear instructions to change program of study
- Glossary of differences “AA/AS vs. Certificate”

Registration Support

- Step-by-step instructions
- Hold descriptions
- Dedicated lab time
- Successful registration notice
- Glossary of terms
- Waitlist instructions

SEP Support

- Better student preparation
- Reminders to convert AEP to CEP
- Update instructions based on course availability

Team Outcomes

Pilot 1 Outcomes

- Clear program descriptions created in plain language for students
- Review course descriptions
- Degree plans created within Degree Works for student use
- Onboarding order and due dates created
- Registration instructions created and available for students

Pilot 2 Outcomes

- Identify key reminder topics and due dates
- Craft messages to students about important tasks

Platform Preparation

Program Selection

- Create program descriptions
- Validate course descriptions
- Confirm geographic location employment data

Registration Support

- Confirm degree plans
- Complete DW templates for key programs
- Create priority registration and open registration instructions
- Create registration reminder messages

SEP Support

- Confirm degree plans as initial educational plans
- Create description of SEP approval process

Academic Planning Build Team



Preparing the platform and college for fall launch



The academic planning team will have two key areas to focus their efforts on as we look towards full campus launch of the platform. First, will be focused on ensuring all programs have simple descriptions, and matching Degree Works templates. Next the team will work to create step-by-step registration instructions to support students registering for classes.

Team Active: Present-October 2015

Key configuration tasks

- Create and/or confirm program descriptions
- Schedule Degree Works template build dates (based upon need)
- Confirm course description update process (for banner listings)
- Review assessment instructions and preparation resources
- Create orientation platform page

Launch Team Outcomes

- Program description timeline confirmed by February 15th
- Pilot program templates in Degree Works by March 1st
- Review and confirm course description update process by March 1st
- Registration instructions updated and posted by March 15th
- All program templates created in Degree Works by October 1st

Road Map for Discussion



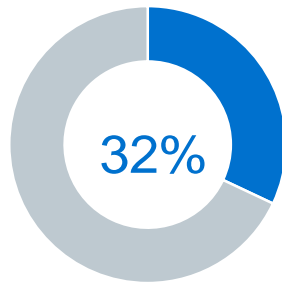
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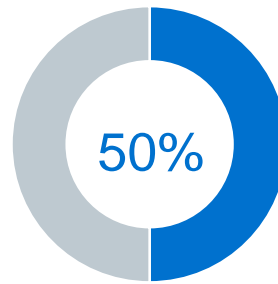
Counseling Services

Students are not seeking support

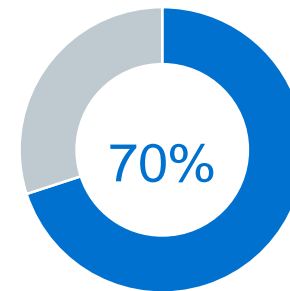
Students Who Report 'Rarely' or 'Never' Utilizing Counseling Resources



'Rarely' or 'Never' use academic advising services



'Rarely' or 'Never' use career counseling services



'Rarely' or 'Never' discuss career plans with faculty or advisor

Source: 2014 Community College Survey of Student Engagement
n=684 2-year institutions



41.3%

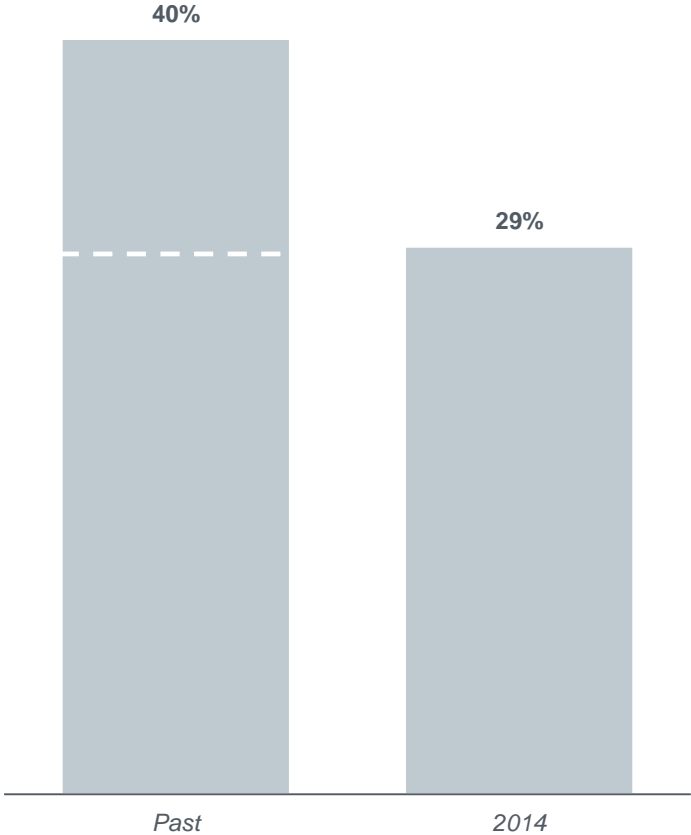
Cerro Coso students 'rarely' or 'never' use academic counseling services

Source: 2014 Cerro Coso CCSSE Report



Student Education Plans


Most students are not completing SEPs



Source: Cerro Coso self-reporting

Counselor Availability

Year-to-Year shifts in enrollment can strain counseling staff at any ratio. Cerro Coso's recent drop in SEP completion shows that current processes are not scalable with sudden population growth.



516:1

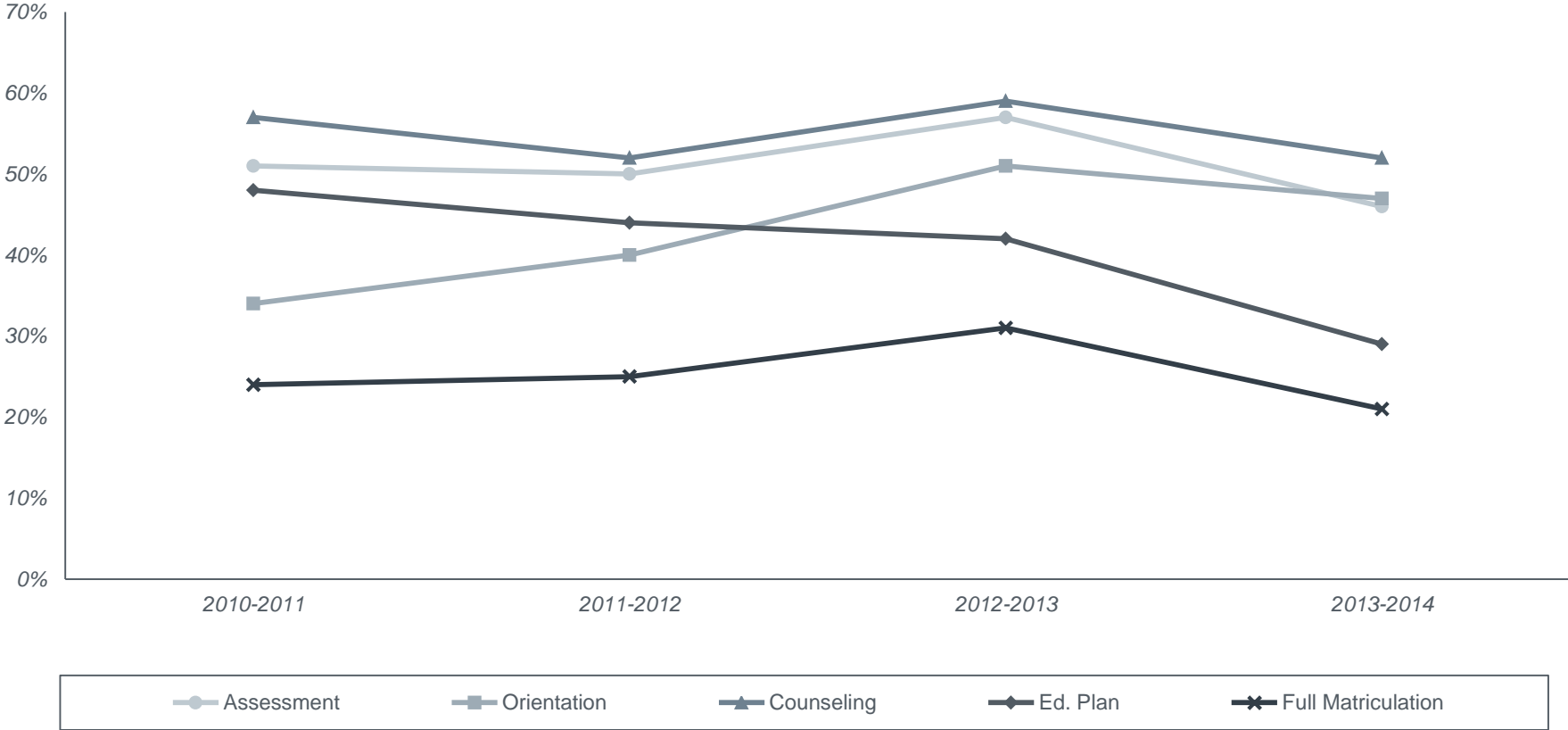
Cerro Coso Student to Counselor Ratio

Source: California Chancellor's Scorecard



Student Matriculation

Full matriculation nears all-time lows



Proportion of Students Completing Matriculation Steps 2010-2014

Source: Cerro Coso Counseling Services Institutional Research

Matriculation Rates Remain Low
Student population shifts account for step completion variance; similar raw numbers complete each step annually. **Full matriculation rarely tops 30% of all students.**

Counseling Services



Students are not making the most of meeting time



During peak registration times counselors rarely have more than 15-20 minutes to speak with students and help incorporate their personal backgrounds and goals into their educational planning process. Restricting counseling sessions to solely create SEPs is not the best use of a counselor's skill set.

Student educational plan completion

Many students do not complete a Comprehensive Education Plan

- No time to complete SEPs for all students during in person orientation sessions
- Fewer students convert partial Education Plans into CEPs
- Staff unable to complete educational plans during enrollment spikes (not able to scale)

Students unprepared for counseling meetings

No preparation lists provided prior to meetings

- No 'know before you go' list
- Difficult navigating website to schedule meetings for remote students
- Many students completely unaware of career services opportunities

Priority Registration

Roughly 30% of Cerro Coso students were eligible for priority registration last year, down from previous years. Students must complete all 4 steps of Assessment, Orientation, Counseling and Student Education Plan creation to be eligible to register early.



SEPs: Only the Tip of the Iceberg

Advising for the whole student lifecycle



41%

Cerro Coso Students who
Rarely or Never use academic
counseling services

Source: 2014 Cerro Coso CCSSE Report

Counseling Action Items

Empowering students to have productive meetings



Challenges in Current Processes



Students Prepared for meetings

Most students are not properly prepared for meetings. This reduces the effectiveness of the brief time with staff members.



Student Educational Plans

SEP's should increase student success, but staff constraints limit the ability to scale efforts during peak times.



Converting Partial Plans to Complete Ed. Plans

Most students will need to update their educational plans based upon course completion



Build Committee Improvement Tasks

Know Before You Go:

Checklist of necessary tasks and documents prior to meeting with a counselor

Information Collection

Create Degree Works templates to help students draft initial ed. plans

Nudge Students:

Remind students to update or complete their educational plans during 'quieter' times for staff counselors.



Connecting education to professional goals

Many students struggle to connect their educational goals to their professional experiences. It is important that a student understands how their education will lead towards more robust career opportunities. Career services fills this gap for all students, from CTE to transfer-oriented.

Student to professional life

Many students need more assistance to help with job placement

- Few students accessing career services information
- Information not always up-to-date
- No requirement for all students to review career offerings
- No information directly available on CC website (must link to Career Café)
- Opportunities mostly housed in Ridgecrest only

Showcasing opportunities

Best practices of helping connect students to current opportunities

- College promotes on-campus employment
- College showcases local current job opportunities
- College partners with local employers



Students Unaware of Resources

57% Cerro Coso students believe career counseling is 'very important'

60% Cerro Coso students don't know about or never use career counseling services

Source: 2014 Cerro Coso CCSSE Report



Student Services

Guiding students to all campus resources

The college has a robust offering of student services, many students in community college are unaware of the opportunities present on campus. From student activities to tutoring, each campus offers a wide variety of services that help increase student success. The challenge is ensuring students take advantage of these opportunities.

Supporting the full student lifecycle

Many students aren't aware of the great resources available to them

- No required survey of student interests and needs
- No regular direct-to-student reminders outside of email
- No specific messages for students based on campus/instructional type
- Fragmented pathways (How do I find that?)
- Sea of links to services online—few obvious descriptions
- Robust in-person college success courses available at each campus
- Highly available on-campus technology resources for students



47%

Cerro Coso students have taken, or plan to take, a study skills course

Source: 2014 Cerro Coso CCSSE Report

Cerro Coso Student Services

- Tutoring
- Library Services
- Student Activities
- Career Center
- Transfer Advising
- Special Populations
- Proctoring
- Book Store



Improving Access to Services

Showing students the great resources on campus



All Student Services

- Promote services students feel they need most
 - Track interest through analytics
- Empower instructors to refer more students to tutoring services
- Ensure all student services are promoted regularly outside of orientation
- Use instructors to showcase campus resources
 - Library tutorials, workshops

Career Services

- Provide up-to-date information on career trends
- Link academic programs to career projections
- Show students near and long term outcomes of differing levels of education
- Connect local employers to students for short and long term employment options
- Showcase on campus employment

Cerro Coso Student Listing of 'Very Important' Services

Career Counseling: 57%

Job Placement: 35.7%

Tutoring: 43.2%

Skills Labs: 47.6%

Computer Labs: 52.6%

Child Care: 26.7%

Source: 2014 Cerro Coso CCSSE Report



Campus Employment Encourages Success

Many colleges and universities report over **10% increases** in completion for student employees when compared to the general student body.

Source: EAB "Meeting the Completion Challenge"

Counseling Build Team

Guiding students to success at each step



The Communications team will partner with EAB staff and resources to ensure the message of the platform is well-communicated to all campus stakeholders. The team will review all work to ensure the language is accessible and clear to all students. In addition to the preparation work the committee has completed over the past two months, they will ramp up their efforts as the platform nears full roll out.

Team Active: Present-September 2015

Key configuration tasks

- Create 'Help' and 'Counseling' platform pages
- Refine language regarding SEP updates
- Oversee full matriculation reminders and promotion
- Craft 'Know before you go' instructions for students meeting with counselors

Launch team outcomes

- Counseling page complete by March 1
- Help page complete by March 1
- Pilot students recruited by March 15
- Facilitate pilot testing April 14-16
- Formulate strategy for Pilot 2



Road Map for Discussion



- 1 | Executive Summary
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Unclear Communication to Students

Students missing clear call to action at key steps

Student communication is a key aspect to onboarding and ensuring long-term persistence. Clear messaging must be unified across each campus and instructional method, allowing all students to know the resources at their disposal. Communications span every medium from signage, college websites, hard copy mailings and text messages. Top institutions must find the balance of frequency and content for each message they send.



Campus Welcome



College Navigation



Ready for Classes

Platform Adoption

The communications team will also be heavily involved in helping communicate the impetus and benefits of the platform to various stakeholders across campus. They will target specific audiences at each stage of the rollout process, from pilot testing, through expanded launch, and finally to full campus launch.

Admissions and Welcome



Better guidance for students from day one



Process mapping and exploration onsite uncovered key gaps in student communications during their very first interactions with Cerro Coso. Setting students on course from day 1 is an essential element in allowing them to perform to their full potential. When comparing the Cerro Coso student experience to EAB 'Secret Shopping' and best practice research these key gaps were identified:

No college welcome message

Welcome students to college and give next-step direction

- Current message directs to outdated portal
- Students are not told they are accepted
- No clear owner of message and update process

No standard onboarding experience

Students don't have a clear go-to point for help during onboarding.

- No clear direction or monitoring of student progress towards onboarding
- Patchwork of groups involved in process at different points
- Most steps wait for students to reach out to

Low opt-in rate for special populations

Many students are unaware of the benefits they are eligible to receive and do not self-identify.

- Foster youth
- Veterans
- EOPS
- First generation

Campus Welcome Action Items



Creating a clear welcome to college

Craft new student welcome email



The acceptance email builds excitement for a student's educational journey and gives clear next steps. The message needs to have clear instructions for next steps and call the student to log-into the college's online platform

Key welcome message traits:

- Exciting and immediate response to student
- Strong reminder for students to note
- Clear next-step directions to log into the online portal and begin onboarding
- Direct students on where to get help

Create list of self-identifying student populations



With the current application process a great deal of information about each student is collected for internal use; however, many students neglect to share personal information that qualifies them for additional financial and support benefits.

Platform readiness steps:

- List Cerro Coso's opt-in populations for intake survey self-selection (Foster Youth, Veterans,)
- List all available student services (Child Care, ESL, tutoring, etc)
- Create descriptions for add/drop and withdraw deadlines

CCC Apply

If Cerro Coso transitions to the joint CCCApply system, admissions and records staff will identify additional data collection needs through the SSC platform.

Campus Navigation Difficulties



Unclear messages to students



College Navigation is a challenge at any school, specifically at Cerro Coso these challenges are amplified by the distributed nature of the student body. This challenge is even more acute for students who take the majority, or all, of their courses online.

Too many abbreviations

Abbreviations of Campuses, Buildings, Programs and classes lead to confusion

- No description page for program/certificate information
- IWV/Ridgecrest/Main campus used interchangeably throughout website
- Abbreviations of days of the week also unclear during registration 'R=Thursday'

No clear direction to FAQ page

No clear place for online help during onboarding

- FAQ currently buried within student services
- Questions not spread across website based off of current stage within onboarding
- No obvious 'need help?' direction to FAQ

Low accessibility for new students

Students lack 'college knowledge' to help them understand various educational terms

- Too much higher education and CC-specific jargon
 - "C6 Accelerated Programs"
- No obvious starting point for new students on college home page

No campus-specific pages

Various hours and availability of services across instructional sites enhances confusion

- No obvious home for distance learning students
- Campuses with additional instructional sites also create confusion
- No clear listing of program offerings by campus



Navigation Action Items

Creating 'One Cerro Coso' for all students

Create clear and accessible language



Starting college is often a confusing time for students, it is important to ensure that each direction provided is clear to all audiences. Student service descriptions should be provided to ensure full understanding.

Clear campus instructions

- Reduce Abbreviations—standardize terms across sites
- Distinguish each campus in clear terms for all students
- Clearly list each location's hours
- Describe each student service in plain English



One Cerro Coso

Each campus and instructional type has important differences; language and direction must be streamlined so students can easily understand their next steps.

Foster inclusion for remote students



Over 50% of Cerro Coso's students are online students. Additionally, these students have some of the lowest completion rates overall. Providing clear direction, digitally, at every 'turn' is essential.

Improve access and understanding for online learners

- Inform students of potential challenges for distance learning
- Offer specific 'landing pages' for online resources and assistance
- Promote online chat and other distance education resources

Online 'Help Desk'

Directing students to the right place for help is a key step to ensuring a successful onboarding. Crafting 'ask an advisor' and FAQ lists will be an early step in configuring your platform.

Students Unprepared for Classes



Final details missing or unexplained



After a student navigates the always difficult journey to their first day, there are key processes that must be completed before classes. It is important to give students an accurate guide with regular reminders so all tasks are completed well in advance of beginning coursework.

Books, Passes and Administrative Tasks

Many pitfalls await students during and after the registration process

- No campus-by-campus instructions for book purchasing
- No checklist of things needed for day 1
- No direct-to-student reminder to check campus email before classes
- No notification a student is enrolled from a waitlisted course
- No clear notification if a student is dropped for non-payment
- No easy to understand description of financial aid implications of dropping courses
- No direct notification of enrollment in waitlisted courses

Campus Navigation

Abbreviations , multiple locations, pre-requisite requirements

- Too many acronyms used, with little explanation
- Confusion about campus differences
- No easily accessible map of each campus



Preparing Students: Action Items

Ensuring preparation for the entire student lifecycle

Prepare students for day one



Many students feel rushed during the registration process and make errors they will not uncover until the start of classes.

Key preparation tasks:

- Create clear book purchase instructions for students using financial aid
- Notify instructors of book availability issues during first week of courses
- Create a check-list for students to review the week before classes begin
- Create a reminder for students to check their college email before classes begin
- Create notification process for students dropped for non-payment (10-day window)
- Refine 'punch list' tasks students complete before day 1 of classes

Consistent and clear reminders



The SSC platform will allow greater access to remind students of important milestones leading up to the start of a term. It will be important to define this ideal timeline and craft messages to be sent to students.

Platform preparation:

- Create language for start of term reminders
- Review Add/Drop deadline reminder language
- Review withdraw deadline reminder language
- Compile due dates for each 'punch list' task before term begins
- Review and update campus map and descriptions as needed

Communications Team Tasks



Helping better communicate to and with students



The Communications team will partner with EAB staff and resources to ensure the message of the platform is well-communicated to all campus stakeholders. The team will review all work to ensure the language is accessible and clear to all students. In addition to the preparation work the committee has completed over the past two months, they will ramp up their efforts as the platform nears full roll out.

Team Active: Present-September 2015

Key configuration tasks

- Create communications materials and collateral for Cerro Coso staff
- Craft welcome email to new students
- Review final platform language for clarity
- Ensure college website reflects clear and accessible communication vision
- Update and execute communication plan according to established timeline
- Assist in recruiting pilot student 'poster children'

Launch team outcomes

- Communications plan complete by March 1
- Welcome letter created by March 15
- Assist in creation of pilot student survey questions
- Pilot stories and feedback analyzed by June 1
- Communicate to Cerro Coso faculty during summer 2015
- Execute student outreach plan during fall 2015

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Pilot Build Process

Preparing your platform

Onboarding



- Orientation
- Placement
- Onboarding order
- Financial aid information

Academic Planning



- Program descriptions
- Degree Works templates
- Course descriptions

Counseling Services

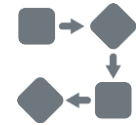


- Student pilot testing
- Student services information
- Academic advising
- Matriculation support

Communications



- Language clarity
- Faculty engagement
- Student marketing



Initial platform build
Deliver: April 2015

Build Tasks



Key Milestones

- Pilot program templates logged into Degree Works
- Onboarding order chosen
- Onboarding resources entered
- Communication stakeholder plan created



Student Pilot Testing

Ensuring your platform meets student needs

Pilot 1



Pilot 2

Onboarding Focus:



- Students review new onboarding process and steps.
- Insights into gaps in current process sought.



Full Student Lifecycle

- Updated onboarding descriptions and instruction
- Best-fit schedule focus

Students test onboarding features:



- Goals and expectations
- Program picker
- Student service nodes and links



Students test full academic planning features:

- Academic plan showcased
- Scheduler
- Updated student services nodes
- Program picker adjustments



Student feedback from pilot testing

- “Yeah, usually I have to go all over campus for all these things. But it’s all right here. All the information you need is right here.”
- “I think it would help A LOT for new students. The college website is confusing, so this would be so much better.”

Pilot Testing Dates

Pilot 1: April 14-16

Pilot 2: Summer 2015

Pilot Testing Cohort

CTE students and those in top-enrolled majors taking college success courses. Students will be given incentives to participate in the pilot testing experience

Student Feedback

Students will have an opportunity to share feedback about their onboarding experience at the college. This allows additional insight into future focus areas for improvement.

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Onboarding Build Schedule



Preparing the college and platform for launch



The onboarding team will oversee key first step student services like financial aid, assessment, and orientation. Additionally they will help create the overall order for the onboarding process. This team will help configure the overall platform landing pages and help ensure process changes are well communicated to all campus stakeholders

Team Active Present-September 2015

Key configuration tasks

- Configure platform homepage
- Determine overall onboarding order
- Create financial aid support documents (FAFSA, etc)
- Review assessment instructions and preparation resources
- Create orientation platform page

Launch team outcomes

- Home page complete by March 1
- Financial aid page complete by March 1
- Assessment page complete by March 1
- Financial aid resource documents created by March 15
- Assessment preparation steps completed by March 15
- Survey questions about orientation to counseling team by April 1

Academic Planning Build Team



Preparing the platform and college for fall launch



The academic planning team will have two key areas to focus their efforts on as we look towards full campus launch of the platform. First, will be focused on ensuring all programs have simple descriptions, and matching Degree Works templates. Next the team will work to create step-by-step registration instructions to support students registering for classes.

Team Active: Present-October 2015

Key configuration tasks

- Create and/or confirm program descriptions
- Schedule Degree Works template build dates (based upon need)
- Confirm course description update process (for banner listings)
- Review assessment instructions and preparation resources
- Create orientation platform page

Launch Team Outcomes

- Program description timeline confirmed by February 15th
- Pilot program templates in Degree Works by March 1st
- Review and confirm course description update process by March 1st
- Registration instructions updated and posted by March 15th
- All program templates created in Degree Works by October 1st

Counseling Build Team

Guiding students to success at each step



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Sample Welcome Message to Students



Vanguard
Community College

10100 Forest Trails Drive, Carrolton, VA 20287 • 800-555-5555 • Vanguard.edu

Charlotte Lopez
9630 Worswick Ct.
Washington, DC 20002

Your VCC Student ID: 5260927

Dear Charlotte,

Congratulations! You have been accepted to Vanguard! We are so happy to welcome you to our community, and we look forward to helping you achieve your goals. Here at Vanguard, we pride ourselves on offering outstanding educational opportunities, with our small class sizes, partnerships with local employers, and outstanding professors.

You are already on track to achieve your goals. Next, please use your student ID above to log on to www.mypath.vcc.edu as soon as possible to see your personalized list of next steps, which include:

- Sign Up for Mandatory Orientation
- Send in Transcripts to admissions@vcc.edu
- Apply for Financial Aid
- Complete Placement Exams

Additional information about each of these steps will be available when you log in to mypath.vcc.edu.

Have questions or need help? Many of your questions will be answered during VCC's orientation. We will be helping you navigate through the first few steps on mypath.vcc.edu, including course registration.

If you cannot attend orientation, you must visit or contact our admissions office at 800-555-5555 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM. You may also email us at admissions@vcc.edu. These contacts may also be used if you have any further questions for us between now and VCC Orientation.

We'll see you soon! Again, congratulations on your decision to pursue higher education, and welcome to the VCC family!

Sincerely,

Dean John Doe
President, Vanguard Community College

Key Message Traits

- Gives student ID Number
- Shows acceptance to college
- Review final platform language for clarity
- Drives student action
- Shows next onboarding steps
- Offers help options

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