

Pathway Completion Cross-functional Inquiry Team Proposal

CFIT Title

Communications with Students to Encourage Persistence

Helping students ensure they are on the right path and then provide guidance and encouragement to stay on a path toward completion. Currently, students can make it all the way to their graduation evaluation before talking to anyone. What if we had a system in place to contact students and build meaningful relationships early in their Cerro Coso experience?

Charge

Determine most effective points in time and forms of meaningful contact with students that helps students be on the right path to completion after their first term and beyond.

Anticipated Research and Discussion

Sub-questions to consider:

- When could be the best time to proactively reach out to students over the course of their time with us?
- What is the best method for this communication?
- Who could yield the most effective meaningful contact for the students?
- What content could/should be a part of each contact with the students?
- Should the contact be documented and if so where?
- Consider the differences in our types of students and their location.

Anticipated Output / Recommendations

A recommended program concept (white paper?) that is supported by faculty or staff who might be involved based on the research and discussions.

Team Composition

Administration - (1)

Faculty - (4) - Counseling, site rep, CTE, and LaS. Ben will put out a call for Volunteers after Chad sends him specifics

Classified - (2) - perhaps from financial aid, perhaps from student services or instruction

Student - (2) - maybe, student government, or one student researcher

Specific member recruitment:

- Chad Houck
- Rene Mora
- Fabian Meneses
- Julie Cornett
- Andrew Burch
- Valerie Karnes
- Tanner Barnett
- Micah Pearson - student ambassador (invite still)

-Suggestions from SSSP - consider “opt in/out” for students who may not want to be included

Cerro Coso Community College
Cross-functional Inquiry Team Proposal
Updated 09/19/23

CFIT Title

Developing the First Generation Student Experience

Charge

The purpose of this CFIT is to conduct inquiry into the experience and particular needs of our first generation students. As of the 22-23 Fast Facts for Cerro Coso, first generation students make up 38% of the population of students. While this percentage is lower than for Bakersfield College (47%) and Porterville (56%), this is up for Cerro Coso 10% from the prior year. We know from our Equity Data, that first generation students have equity gaps in outcomes like Persistence from One Primary Term to Another (45% FG VS 59% Overall) and gaps exist for FG students in all of the following metrics:

- Completed Transfer Math and English in First Year
- Attained Vision for Success Goal in 3 Years
- Transferred to a Four-Year School in 3 years

In this context, SEAC has recommended this CFIT to conduct research and inquiry into our first-generation student populations and recommend strategies along the continuum of the student experience for improving outcomes for this student population.

First Generation Definition- There are many definitions out there for first generation. For the purposes of this CFIT, we would align with the Chancellor's Office definition of any student whose parents never attended college.

Note to Jess- is this how it asked on CCC Apply?

Anticipated Research and Discussion

This CFIT will include:

- Review of local, state and national data
- Student inquiry, including surveys, quick polls and student focus groups
- Literature and research review

What sub questions will you answer?

1. What data do we currently have on FG students?
2. What data do we need to assess outcomes along the continuum of the student experience?
3. What are the unique needs of FG students?
4. What do we currently have in place for FG students?
5. What are the momentum and loss points for FG students?
6. What are the unique challenges FG students?

Data needs-

First generation student data disaggregated by-

1. Age
2. Ethnicity
3. Socio-economic status
4. Location
5. Modes of delivery (online/onground)
6. Major

Anticipated Output / Recommendations

Specific strategy recommendations to improve the experience and outcomes identified above for First Generation Students.

Possible deliverables-

1. Designed support pathway
2. Communication plan
3. Mentorship models
4. Cohort models
5. Instructional strategies
6. Additional resources or supports, including learning supports

A process

CFIT defined, but needs to include a focus on gathering input and the student voice of SG students

A product

CFIT defined

Action items

CFIT defined

Team Composition

Volunteers-

1. Katie Bachman- Chair
2. Debilyn Kinzler- English faculty, SEAC Rep
3. Franki Gregor- Director of Outreach
4. Julie Cornet- Librarian Faculty, SEAC Rep
5. Marilyn Turrietta-A&R Tech (classified), First Gen
1. Ivan Ibarra-Outreach Program Coordinator, Spanish speaking
2. Faculty- I will be asking Yvonne for two more
3. Alex Muya- FA Technician

4. Melody-FA Student Worker
5. Amie Becker
6. Student- Need to recruit 3-4
 - Frank Guevara?
 - Representation from counseling and Access

Resources-

<https://firstgen.naspa.org/>

<https://www.kccd.edu/resources/assets/documents/Institutional%20Research/IR%20Reports/fast-facts/2022-2023/CC%20Fast%20Facts%202022-23%20First%20Draft.pdf>

Body of literature review from Andrew- available in Sharepoint

Final Report: Cerro Coco's Cross-Functional Team-Developing the First-Generation Student Experience.

Introduction:

Charge

The purpose of this CFIT is to conduct an inquiry into the experience and particular needs of our first-generation students. As of the 22-23 Fast Facts for Cerro Coso, first-generation students make up 38% of the population of students. While this percentage is lower than for Bakersfield College (47%) and Porterville (56%), this is up for Cerro Coso 10% from the prior year. We know from our Equity Data, that first-generation students have equity gaps in outcomes like Persistence from One Primary Term to Another (45% FG VS 59% Overall) and gaps exist for FG students in all the following metrics:

- Completed Transfer Math and English in First Year
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In this context, SEAC has recommended this CFIT to conduct research and inquiry into our first-generation student populations and recommend strategies along the continuum of the student experience for improving outcomes for this student population.

Cerro Coso's Cross Functional Team embarked on a comprehensive research project conducted over the fall and spring terms, focusing on the experiences and support mechanisms for first-generation college students. The team conducted research into four crucial areas: student data analysis, student communication strategies, website research on resources, and conducting a student poll to gather first-hand insights, including conducting two student focus groups. This report encapsulates the findings, recommendations, and actions undertaken by the team.

Student Data Analysis:

The backbone of our research was the meticulous analysis of student data provided by the Institutional Research (IR) Team. This data provided valuable insights into the demographics of our first-generation student population and their success rates. Through this analysis, we gained a deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by first-generation students and identified areas for targeted support interventions.

Data Points: First-day, census, headcount, retention & SCC Rate, Special Program (Disaggregate), Primary Language, GPA, SAP-status (disaggregate), Financial Aid, EOPS, matriculated- counseling, Attended orientation, Campus, student demographics.

Data dashboard link: <https://us-west-2b.online.tableau.com/t/kerncommunitycollegedistrictinstitutionalresearchreporting/views/Spring2024FirstGenerationExperienceSurveyResults/Results>

Data Visuals: Along with the dashboard information, visuals were created to show examples of how we can share and easily explain data annually.

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:715689c4-ec17-3030-aef4-085786baf012>

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:ab0aa2b5-052e-3ca7-8436-d496b61c8db8>

Recommendation: Continuous collaboration with the IR Team to regularly update and refine our understanding of first-generation student demographics and student success metrics. Provide information to SEAC committee members to assess and target areas of improvement and strategies around supporting our first-generation college students. It's also recommended to provide updated data and visuals for faculty during flex and presentations to better inform faculty of specific student success areas students are struggling in. SEAC can support and recommend interventions to faculty and staff, supporting many areas of the data provided by the IR Team.

Student Communication Strategies:

Effective communication is important in providing support to first-generation college students. A sub-committee explored various communication channels including flyers, faculty interactions, Canvas emails, and website content to reach and assist students in need. By tailoring messages to resonate with the experiences and challenges of first-gen students, the goal is to enhance engagement and support mechanisms.

The sub-committee researched departments supporting students and the types of information being presented to students who identified as first-generation. The committee assessed ACCESS, Outreach, Counseling, Financial Aid, and Admissions flyers and email communications. Many of the items were similar in content but were not aligned with supportive information and or tone of the overall message and or flyer to students. The sub-committee determined it would be appropriate to align all communications and flyer content into one ongoing theme, which would be to guide and support students more effectively.

Flyer content was created as an example for SEAC:

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:97283a5d-340b-3df9-8535-a5ead950d454>

Another topic discussed was the idea of creating a Canvas course where all first-generation students and new students could be automatically enrolled in to provide real-time support and contacts for students. Like the Wellness Central course currently offered to students, this course would be tailored for this student demographic. In addition to Canvas, the committee discussed

other ways to communicate with students through Canvas such as Canvas inbox, Pronto, Syllabus statements, and class resource page. It was determined that students obtain several different communication methods that can be overwhelming to the student, specifically in their first year.

The final communication method was looking at the website and researching what information was available on the site. Currently, there is a lack of presence of first-generation support information, contacts, and resources for students. In addition, provide Spanish links and informational tabs for our Spanish-speaking population.

Communication strategies were informally discussed with the Academic Senate Executive Committee on Thursday, November 30, 2023, by Melissa Bowen, below are some of the suggested strategies:

- Faculty supported the idea of students being automatically enrolled in the Wellness Central Canvas course. The administrator of that course could potentially send messages to students using Canvas inboxes.
- Outreach could create a pamphlet with information about all resources, including the first generation, to be handed out or sent out virtually. These pamphlets could be given to all faculty. English and Math instructors could specifically be asked to pass these out as students are likely to take those courses in the first year.
- Succinct, standardized language about resources including Wellness Central could be provided to faculty for potential inclusion in syllabi.
- The Canvas alert system could potentially be used to communicate information about resources.

Recommendation: Implementing a multi-channel communication strategy with personalized messaging to cater to the diverse needs of first-generation students. Align the communication and messaging between faculty and students no matter the modality of communication and provide faculty with current resources and contacts to share with students. To build a cohesive college campaign around providing students with tips for success in their first year to better align departments with consistent information regarding support on campus.

Website Research:

A sub-committee dedicated to website research examined the online resources and support available for first-generation students at several California Community Colleges. This comparative analysis identified best practices and innovative approaches adopted by peer institutions. Insights gathered from this research informed our strategies for enhancing the accessibility and visibility of support services on Cerro Coso's website.

The committee research strategies from 5 colleges: [1. Research on all CCC.xlsx](#)

Strategies included:

- Summer bridge program or summer mixer-Student and parent information, meet and greet, and mini resource fair.
- First-Gen Directory-Identify staff and faculty who were also first-generation college students. Add photos in the directory to better identify supportive staff to students.
- Student Club
- Peer to peer support
- Message from the President
- Transfer information.

Recommendation: Revamping the website to prominently feature resources and support services tailored to the needs of first-generation students, drawing inspiration from successful models at peer institutions, and adopting the recommended strategies from above. Provide staff and faculty contact information, with identifying photos for students to utilize for additional support. Also, provide helpful quick links such as registration information, FAFSA/CADAA links, scholarships, counseling, and more student support. Add Spanish links and informational tabs for our Spanish-speaking population.

Student and Student Focus Groups:

An important aspect of our research was the direct engagement with first-gen students through a comprehensive survey. By soliciting feedback on their experiences at Cerro Coso, we gained invaluable insights into the challenges, concerns, and support needs of this student demographic. The poll enabled us to tailor our support initiatives to address specific pain points and enhance the overall college experience for first-generation students.

Student Survey Results: <https://us-west-2b.online.tableau.com/t/kerncommunitycollegedistrictinstitutionalresearchreporting/views/Spring2024FirstGenerationExperienceSurveyResults/Results>

The survey was sent out to every currently enrolled student attending CC in the Spring of 2024, we only had 113 students respond to the survey. 44% of students who took the survey identified as first-generation because neither parent had ever attended college. Within the survey, there was a particularly high awareness of student support services available to students, particularly with financial aid assistance (93.5%), academic advising (77.2%), Library Workshops (84.8%), and Tutoring Services (79.3%). But in comparison, the usage of all listed student support services was very low. Notably, Tutoring Services was rated high for awareness but for usage, the percentage was 17.86%. 7 of the 11 mentioned services are rated below 25%, very concerning to the committee.

Another focus of the survey was the different types of challenges the student may have faced during their first year. 51.6% of students surveyed stated physical or mental health was a primary challenge during the first year, again referring to the student usage question, only 9.52% of students used Coyote Care/Telehealth services, which was alarming.

In addition to awareness and usage, the committee wanted to ask students what they felt would be most beneficial to them within their first year if it was available to them. Seven different recommendations for support were asked, and the three highest experiences or support were Library Support (Research Skills Course, 45.59%), Workshops (scholarships, transfer, internships, career, study skills, 42.65%), and Student Activities (clubs, athletics, on-campus events, student government, 42.65%).

The survey also allowed for responses to two open-ended questions asking how faculty can support the student inside and outside the classroom and if the student wanted to provide additional feedback regarding their experience. The responses are in the survey link above.

The last piece of the research was to talk to the students who took this survey and ask additional questions about the results of the survey. The committee established focus group questions, see the attachment in the CFIT Final Recommendations Folder within SEAC SharePoint.

Two separate focus groups were held on 04/09/24 and 04/10/24 at 6 pm. Students who attended were previously identified when they took the survey and indicated they would participate in a follow-up communication. The student responses from both focus groups are in SharePoint.

Five topics were focused on in these student discussions: Communications, Tutoring/Library, Faculty Support, Knowledge of Resources/Utilization, and Student Activities. Notable recommendations from each topic include:

- **Communication:** Canvas communication from Faculty weekly and occasional emails/texts regarding events and information is preferred. Website created specifically for first-generation college students with faculty names, photos, a list of resources, ESL support, easy support quick links.
- **Tutoring/Library:** Imbedded tutoring is not known, all students in focus groups were not aware. Confusion about what it is and how it works. Possibly add in Canvas a clear resource tab specific for tutoring.
- **Faculty Support:** Have a resource list of faculty members who are first-generation and will support other first-generation college students. Faculty to be more encouraging of office hours and clear on why students should attend. Open to responsive communication for students in need of support.
- **Knowledge of Resources/Utilization:** Making more resources available online. Appreciates counseling and one single point of contact to ask questions but wishes counselors reached out more. Ask faculty to remind students more regarding on and off-campus resources. All stated finding information on the website was too complicated.
- **Student Activities:** Summer bridge program for students and families to be better informed regarding resources and services on campus. More encouragement for on-campus engagement for first-generation students and first-of-the-semester “need to know” information.

Recommendation: Conducting regular student polls to gauge the evolving needs and sentiments of first-gen students, facilitating responsive and adaptive support mechanisms where students are indicating the most needs. Particularly focusing on website information, improving student engagement and awareness, identifying supportive faculty who were first-generation college

students to work with students and groups of students, and creating in Canvas a clear channel of support and resources students can utilize.

Conclusion:

The collaborative efforts of Cerro Coso's Cross Functional Team have produced invaluable insights and actionable recommendations to better support first-generation college students at all our campus locations. By leveraging data analysis, targeted communication strategies, website enhancements, and direct student engagement, we are eager to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students, regardless of their background or circumstances. Moving forward, sustained commitment and collaboration across departments will be pivotal in realizing our vision of fostering academic success and holistic development for first-generation college students here at Cerro Coso.

Team Composition

Volunteers-

1. Katie Bachman- Chair
2. Debilyn Kinzler- English faculty, SEAC Rep
3. Franki Gregor- Director of Outreach
4. Julie Cornet- Librarian Faculty, SEAC Rep
5. Ana Mora-ACCESS Faculty Counselor, Spanish-(Bilingual)
6. Patricia Morland-Ed Advisor, ESCC Campus
7. Marilyn Turrietta-A&R Tech (classified), First Gen
8. Ivan Ibarra-Outreach Program Coordinator, Spanish-(Bilingual)
9. Melissa Bowen- Psychology and Human Services Faculty
10. Frank Guevara- Child Development Faculty, Spanish (Bilingual)
11. Alex Muya- FA Technician
12. Melody (Yiwen Liang)-FA Student Worker
13. Amie Becker-Basic Needs Student Worker
14. Alesia Von-ACCESS Student Worker
15. Bryan King-IR Analyst



Cross-Functional Inquiry Team Clarify the Path

Presented to the Student Success and Support Program Committee, April 3, 2019

Background

The Cross-functional Inquiry Team (CFIT) for Programs was created upon request from the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) committee. SSSP developed the following charge for the team to address: SSSP requests that the CFIT for Programs make recommendations on the following:

1. A defined process for departments to implement for updating, designing, and expanding the pathway to completion of a degree or certificate. This process should be adoptable by a department and should minimally include the following documents:
 - a. Mapping of recommended general education courses for a major (where appropriate)
 - b. Development of a long-term schedule
 - c. Development of core/common courses within a department/area of interest/discipline
 - d. Development of pathway recommendations or patterns for part-time students
 - e. Integration of dual enrollment/articulated course opportunities
2. A recommended format for communication of pathway information for students on degrees/certificates, including:
 - a. Online
 - b. In-print
 - c. In-catalog
 - d. Marketing outreach brochures
 - e. For counseling and advising

Members

Missy Gross, chair
Corey Marvin, chair
Fabian Meneses
Steve Rogers
Matthew Wanta

Proceedings

The team met throughout the 18-19 academic year. During this time, the team met bi-weekly after SSSP meetings. The first semester meetings consisted of addressing part 1 of the charge, and concluded with creating a one-page guide for faculty chairs to use when updating their majors and planning long-term schedules.

The second semester meetings addressed part 2 of the charge. Outside of meetings, the team members reviewed the Cerro Coso website for academic, major, and class information. The team also researched other college websites to generate ideas on ways to improve the Cerro Coso website. In addition, the team led two student focus groups in early March. In these groups, students reviewed academic information on the Cerro Coso website and other college websites. The team recorded student input and included student recommendations in the concluding report.

1. Updating, Designing, and Expanding Program Pathways (“Refreshing the Path”)

Introduction

One key element of the guided pathways approach is the development of clear program requirements (key element 8 of the self-assessment tool). This is accomplished when the college clarifies course sequences for programs of study, including key milestones, and creates predictable schedules so that students can know what they need to take and plan course schedules over an extended period of time. While program pathways have been used at the college for approximately five years, it is time to revisit the pathways and refresh the long-term schedule based on those course sequences.

The following recommendations were finalized by the CFIT in its December 2018 meeting and presented to faculty chairs on January 8, 2019. The task and timeline were discussed, and the deans were charged with carrying out the updating of each pathway at each campus by the end of the fall 2019 semester.

Recommendations

TASK: Revisit and revise program pathways for each program offered at each campus location and in distance education mode.

Review program demand. Using 3-year enrollment trend data, geographical and demographic pattern of major declarers, completion statistics, employment information, and institutional goals, determine the following:

- Is a program ready to be started at a new campus? (Reminder that a substantive change proposal is required to be filed with ACCJC when a program is started at a new campus or via distance education, unless in the prison or through dual enrollment.)
- Is a program is no longer viable at a current campus?
- Is a program ready to be transformed into an online/onsite hybrid program?
- Are a program’s offerings at different campuses ready to be combined/started through iTV?

Revisit the program pathway. Create a new 2-year long-term schedule for each major class at each campus. The highest consideration for scheduling classes is productivity that still meets the minimal requirements of the program in a reasonable time to completion. As a general guideline and target, program sections should average 23 or more students (with certain exceptions defined by authorizing agencies).

- How often can each class be offered at each location? (Generally once a semester, once a year, or once every two years.)
- To what extent are students *required* to take some classes before others? (*Preferred* sequence below.)
- Are there more elective options than students strictly have to take? Is enrollment strong enough to justify multiple elective offerings?
- Can classes be offered so students start in spring as well as fall?
- What happens if a student has to take English and Math in the first semester?

- How many survey classes are needed at the start to provide enough students at the end? Are multiple classes better offered in one semester or over several semesters?
- To what extent will online offerings “cannibalize” campus offerings?
- Could or should summer be a required program term given campus and major demographics?

Fine tune. Provide students with suggestions that stop short of being requirements:

- To what extent is there a preferred sequence through the 2-year program for full-time students?
- To what extent is there a preferred sequence through the program for part-time students?
- What are the best general education classes for students to take? Consider two levels: strongly recommended and recommended.

TIMELINE: All departments complete review and revision of all program pathways by end of Fall 2019 semester (December 6, 2019). Program pathway revisions will go into effect Fall 2020 and be revised on the website to coincide with the release of the 2020-2021 catalog.

2. Communication of Pathway Information (“Clarifying the Path”)

Introduction

In addition to clear course sequences and predictable schedules, another part of the key element of clarifying the path (key element 8) is that students can easily see what is required to complete their educational plans and how close they are to completion. This means clear the presentation of program requirements in the form of web pages, maps, diagrams, and other visual aids.

Historically, Cerro Coso Community College’s program pages have come about through the irregular accretion of changes to the website rather than a concentrated effort to design clear, informative, and attractive pages. To address this, the members of the CFIT did their own “audit” of the degree and certificate information on the website, researched degree and certificate pages at other colleges, and ran two student focus groups who described what they liked and didn’t like about CC’s current format. Recommendations are below.

Recommendations

The CFIT Team recommends that the Vice President of Instruction work with appropriate faculty and staff to

1. Revise program information on the college website
 - a. Create a splash page that explains in clear and accessible language the differences between the different awards. (cf Pasadena City College or Lake Tahoe CC)
 - b. If not on the same splash page then on the next click, present awards clearly so that the different campuses are instantaneously understood and programs can be filtered by award type and by campus (cf College of the Redwoods)
 - c. Answer these questions about each award in clear and accessible language:
 - 1) Add a big “Apply” button on every program page (cf. Antelope Valley)
 - 2) What are the career options? For those careers, what are the average salaries?
 - 3) What will I need to take?

- 4) How long will it take and how much will it cost? Are there additional costs?
- 5) How much financial aid can I get?
- 6) Will my credits transfer?
- 7) Provide a clear link to the more catalog-like program narrative
- 8) Provide a clear link to faculty program expert and advising specialist
- d. Create a page one click away that explains and shows how students can still complete major prep for majors the college does not strictly offer—accounting, pre-med, global studies, biotechnology, engineering, and geriatrics, etc.
- e. Update the information on when classes are offered (e.g., “Offered every fall semester at Ridgecrest”) to align with the long-term schedule (including language about summer). Wait until departments have finished refreshing their programs.
- f. To the extent possible, highlight career options in presenting award information: Make careers the ultimate end point, not the degrees or certificates.
- g. Throughout, use the terms “major,” “degrees,” or “certificate” instead of “program”
2. Return to the practice of creating one program pathway per award per campus.
 - a. Make these clear and attractive—the same document whether handed out in a counseling session or viewed online.
 - b. Include the department’s recommendations for general education courses and summer as appropriate.
 - c. Include a timeline of actions (FAFSA, apply to transfer school, etc.) (cf. Roane State)
3. Downplay or even remove the department pages on the college website. This is an operational structure of the college; students do not care about departments.
4. Add an “Apply” button to the top of every page on the college website
5. Develop a timeline and process for making changes to program pathways. It must be kept in mind that that students may have developed educational plans and selected courses to take at least two years out, and so sufficient time must be built into the change. Also, all appropriate parties must be communicated with.
6. Develop a timeline and process for what happens when there is an unavoidable deviation in the long-term schedule: who gets notified, what actions are taken, how are students contacted, etc.

The CFIT Team further recommends that the Vice President of Student Services work with appropriate faculty and staff to

1. Create advising specialists at the IWV campus for particular programs (CTE, STEM, Arts and Humanities, Allied Health, etc.) to assist students at IWV and online; at other campuses, given the lower number of programs, counselors and advisors will continue to be generalists.