

Introduction

II. Collegewide Student Services Integration and Coordination

E. How effective the programs are in enabling success for underprepared and underrepresented students?

SCE serves a few different special populations of students. In terms of English proficiency, SCE students normally have enough proficiency to succeed in our classes (excluding our ESL students). However, our career/technical education students that are deemed—either by standardized, counselor, or instructor assessment--to not have enough language ability to succeed are referred to our basic skills and ESL programs for remediation assistance, while being allowed to continue enrollment in their program of choice. We are also currently involved in a validation study of our standardized assessment for use as a predictor of student success in these programs.

SCE also participates in the CASAS system and is therefore able to report student achievement data for its ESL CASAS participants. CASAS data shows consistently improving student achievement rates over the last five years.

In addition, SCE serves students with challenges ranging from disability to economic struggles to under/unemployment. Adult students with disabilities are served through our Disabled Student Programs and Services department (DSP&S).

Strategic planning for improving our CTE programs addresses the needs of special populations, which include individuals with limited English proficiency, economically disadvantaged students, single parents with custody of minor children, and displaced homemakers. Data on these students is collected through the SCE on-line registration process and is compiled with other data collected by the state MIS. Based on these figures the State provides the District with Perkins CTE grant funds to better serve these populations.

As a result of this funding, SCE has been able to offer VESL courses for limited English proficiency students in the areas of pharmacy technician and early childhood education. We have implemented day programs in three CTE programs to better serve the need of special populations, in particular CalWORKS students and recipients of EDD benefits.

Lastly, resources have been allocated to expand matriculation services to better support the needs of our students, such as access to vocational counselors, assessment of basic skills, and job preparedness services.

F. How well is the college integrating the use of data in program planning?

For the 2008-2009 school year, SCE decided to align its strategic planning with the accountability requirements from WASC accreditation standards, Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC) measures, and Career Development and College Preparation courses (CDCP) measures. These measures require the use of data collection and data review for purposes of program improvement and improved student outcomes such as persistence and transfer.

SCE's Research Analyst also attends management team meetings and advisory committees, and provides a research- and data-driven perspective for planning and decision-making. The Research Analyst has also worked with a number of SCE departments to develop student surveys, the results of which have been used for program planning and improvement.

III. Program-Specific Self-Evaluation

Matriculation (Non-Credit)

A. Management Information Systems Data Reporting

a. How is the program director involved in the review of MIS data before it is submitted to the System Office?

The categorical program director for Matriculation, Anna Garza, performs a SARS GRID extract of counseling appointments and submits this extract to the District Data Quality Analyst responsible for all MIS submissions. These data extractions occur once per term. For the other matriculation components, data is pulled by the Data Quality Analyst from Banner local data. SCE is currently in the process of developing a calendar to further facilitate communication between matriculation and District IS, and data review.

b. Do the data appear to be accurate?

The matriculation data, in general, is not very accurate for SCE. We believe this to result from several factors, which will be addressed in the following section.

c. If the data does not appear to be accurate, identify the problem.

Prior to 2006 there was no systematic recording of counseling appointments, as SARS GRID software had not yet been purchased. Therefore, the numbers for the 2004-2005, and 2005-2006 school years will be extremely inaccurate. Due to this circumstance, we chose to not address the data from those years.

Instead, we chose to focus on the school year 2006-2007, since that is the year SCE began tracking orientation and counseling using more systematic methods. However, even for this school year much of the data appears to be inaccurate. We believe this to be a result of the following factors.

First, SCE has a very large ESL program. Every ESL student attends orientation and is assessed using CASAS. However, this orientation and assessment are not recorded in SARS or Banner; thus, these counts are never submitted to MIS.

Second, SCE employs a significant number of adjunct and offsite counselors, and there appear to be a large number of coding errors to record student services.

The third and biggest issue appears to be that matriculation data is housed in a number of different locations, and consolidating this data to submit to MIS is problematic.

However, these issues will be a priority for the 2008-2009 school year, as SCE has aligned the strategic planning goals with accountability requirements, which has direct implications for improving MIS data accuracy and submissions. SCE's Research Analyst collaborated with SCE IT staff to replicate MIS matriculation data using local data for the 2006-2007 school year (please see attached document) This is the data we will be addressing in the following sections; this data will also be shared with District Information Services so that we can collaborate to eliminate data errors.

B. Access – Identify how accessible the program is by comparing demographic data from the college to the program.

Gender

In terms of the accessibility of matriculation, there seems to be no significant differences in terms of gender; the number of males and females served in matriculation very closely mirrors the number of males and females at SCE.

Age

In terms of age, there are 2 major patterns. One, the percentage of students under the age of 20 served by matriculation is greater than the percentage of students under the age of 20 at SCE. The reason for this discrepancy is that SCE conducts weekly orientations and assessment for students in the High School diploma program, and a majority of these students are under age 20.

The other pattern regarding age is that the percentage of students age 50 or above served by matriculation is much lower than the percentage of students above age 50 at SCE. This discrepancy results from the popularity of the Older Adults Program at SCE, which tends to serve this age population. However, because these course offerings include fitness, creative arts, etc., these students tend to not be served by matriculation. We believe these 2 patterns of age are not illustrative of inaccessibility in any way; rather, these are natural consequences of programs at SCE.

Race/Ethnicity

In terms of race/ethnicity, the 2 major patterns seen in the data is that Hispanic students are proportionally over-served by matriculation, and White students are

proportionally under-served by matriculation, both relative to the respective overall populations at SCE. Again, we believe this to be the result of the majority of matriculation students served being High School Diploma program students, and the ethnic breakdown of these students tend to be predominantly Hispanic/Latino.

Financial Aid

In general, SCE students do not receive federal or state student financial aid. The data element that is tracked is whether students are eligible to receive a BOG waiver. However, this data is only captured if students register online. However, a large number of students opt to register in person, and thus for these students this data is not available. The MIS data tracks students that received a BOG waiver, whereas SCE only tracks eligibility (and not actual recipients) and therefore this MIS data is inaccurate.

Disability

Finally, for disabled students, access is good, as SCE has DSPS counselors specifically dedicated to meet the student services needs of disabled students. However, this is not reflected by MIS data, because DSPS counseling appointments are not extracted, and therefore not submitted to MIS. Remedying this data is currently on the list of priorities for the 2008-2009 school year.

From the data, SCE does not have any immediate concerns about access. SCE's student population is extremely diverse, and we encourage all students to take advantage of our student services. There are several programs and services we feel specifically contribute to student access at SCE. First, SCE has a large ESL program, and we are therefore able to market our services in several languages across our district. Second, any student enrolled in one of the targeted course categories served by matriculation are able to make an appointment to meet with a counselor.

C.. Progress – Compare how well students served by the program perform compared to those of the whole college.

Course Success Rates and Dismissal

Unfortunately, due to the nature of noncredit instruction, course success rates are difficult to track because the majority of our courses are not graded. However, SCE is working toward a consistent method of administering grades for our High School Diploma program and for 3 vocational certificate programs. This will enable us to track success in the future. SCE is also an open-entry/open-exit school, and dismissal is tracked by program managers, and would not be reflected in MIS data.

Persistence

In terms of persistence, the patterns of enrollment for matriculation students very closely mirror the patterns of persistence for all students at SCE. Certainly, we do not interpret this to mean that matriculation is not effective for fostering student persistence; rather, we believe this to be an artifact of the inaccurate matriculation count. However, concerns about student progress as SCE are valid. We believe this is a result of a variety of factors, but we believe the leading cause to be that SCE's nontraditional students have work and family obligations that often prevent them from making education their first priority. This was confirmed by our retention program, which has found that when

telephone calls are made to students that have not attended classes for 1 month or longer, students often cite their work and family (particularly access to child care) as reasons for not attending.

The other contributing factor is noncredit students' educational goals. Noncredit students often have short-term goals that are met by SCE's offerings, but would not be reflected in persistence measures since these goals may be met within a one-year time period.

SCE has a number of programs and services in place that contribute to the progress of our students. Matriculation offers orientation for new High School diploma students twice a week, and these students meet with a counselor to create a Student Education Plan. Matriculation also offers orientation for vocational students, as well as a Career Pathways Program that enables students to learn more about their chosen field of study. Matriculation also has a High School retention ambassador that makes follow-up calls to students that have not attended classes in over 3 months. Finally, students are given a standardized assessment test, the TABE, and low-scoring students are referred to SCE's Learning center for assistance with their basic skills. These services have a positive impact on student persistence and student success, and research studies are planned to investigate the impact of each of these services.

D. Success

SCE offers High School diploma, as well as several vocational certificates. Because SCE is noncredit, achieving a "transfer-prepared" status is not applicable. Furthermore, because SCE is only recently beginning an initiative to collect students' SSNs, we are currently unable to track transfers. Increasing our ability to track transfers to the community colleges and universities is a strategic planning priority for SCE.

High School Diploma

In the 2006-2007 school year, 284 students received their diploma. Following the definition of a matriculation student used in this report, only 2 of those students were served by matriculation in that year. However, all high school students are served by matriculation when they first enroll at SCE. While the number of graduates, compared to total enrollment in the high school program, is not extremely high, we believe that this is more a function of students' non-school obligations. Matriculation offers a number of services to help high school students, including comprehensive basic skills assessment and referrals to our Learning Center, access to counselors, and orientations. More recently, High School has implemented a direct instruction course for math, a subject that SCE students struggle with in particular. Funds from the Basic Skills Initiative will also be used to improve success in the High School Program

Vocational Certificates

In the 2006-2007 school year, 107 students earned a vocational certificate. Of these students, 55 were served by matriculation. Many vocational certificates visit a

counselor toward the end of completing their requirements for an “exit interview” and “graduation check.”

Vocational students are served by a variety of matriculation services, including orientation, a Career Pathways program, access to vocational counselors, and VESL courses. In addition, SCE received funds from the Perkins CTE Act, and these funds are used to improve the progress and success of vocational students.

Matriculation: Credit and Non-Credit

3. Program Requirements

Research and Evaluation

1. Describe the resources available and committed for matriculation research

The School of Continuing Education hired a full-time Research Analyst, Venette Van Duyn, Ph.D., in November 2007. Many of her research projects include studies directly exploring the effects of matriculation on student outcomes. Staff in the IT department, both at the school and district level, also assist Venette with technology and data needs for these matriculation research studies.

2. Describe the research agenda supporting matriculation and what studies have been completed.

The research agenda for matriculation is to perform ongoing studies examining the effectiveness of each of the matriculation components—with a particular focus on orientation, assessment, counseling/advisement, and student follow-up.

The most immediate item on the research agenda was validation of the primary assessment tool used in Matriculation—the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Data has been collected for both the content validity and criterion-related validity segments of the validation, and SCE is currently finalizing its data analysis.

In addition to the validation, several other matriculation research studies have been conducted. For example, a study was conducted evaluating the attendance of Career Pathways, an optional supplement to SCE’s formal orientation for three career technical education (CTE) programs. At Career Pathways, students learn more about their intended career field and about the campus, and also take the TABE assessment. In addition, students attending Career Pathways that performed poorly on the assessment were tracked to determine whether they had sought assistance from the Learning Center, passed their courses, and persisted to the next term.

Demographic and enrollment statistics are also periodically gathered for students in our High School, ESL, and CTE programs.

By the end of the fall term 2008, exit surveys will also be implemented in the High School diploma program and CTE program. The purpose of these surveys will be to determine whether the programs helped students achieve their career and educational goals. Results from this data will be used toward program improvement.