

El Camino College

STUDENT & COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT

Financial Aid Department

Program Review 2017

Program Review

Program Review is a tool used by program personnel to critically evaluate the services offered by the program and to recommend necessary improvements that address the needs of the College or the Center and the community.

Desired Outcomes

Desired Program Review outcomes include: a thorough evaluation of the program's effectiveness using quantitative and qualitative data; recommendations for program improvement (or if appropriate program discontinuance); and placement of the recommendations into the program's annual plan.

Program Description

Assume the reader of the program review does not know about your program

1. Describe the program. How does the program link to the College's mission statement, statement of values, or strategic initiatives?

The El Camino College Financial Aid Office is committed to the purpose and values of the college's mission to make a positive difference in people's lives and provide excellent comprehensive services that promote student success. The El Camino College Financial Aid Office administers various student financial aid resources, including federal and state grants, scholarships and work study programs. These programs are designed to provide eligible students with monetary resources to assist with the costs of a college education. On an annual basis, the department provides students with over \$47 million dollars in financial aid assistance. By providing financial aid assistance to eligible students, the department makes college accessible and affordable for those who may otherwise not have the monetary resources to pursue post-secondary education.

The Financial Aid Office commits itself to promoting a student focused financial aid experience that maximizes the amount of students who apply for and receive financial aid, ensures ethical and equitable awarding of financial aid, and meets the demands and needs of a changing campus community. These values are in line with the El Camino College strategic initiatives that promote student success and support, collaboration, community

responsiveness, institutional effectiveness, and modernization. The department has focused much of its efforts over the past several years on the following objectives:

1. Provide timely, effective, and quality services to students and staff
2. Improve communication and awareness of the various financial aid programs available to the campus community
3. Implementation of efficient, streamlined procedures that reduce unnecessary barriers for students during the financial aid process
4. Ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations that govern the administration of financial aid
5. Leverage technology to improve the student experience, including increased automation in the awarding of federal and state grant programs

Financial Aid Application Process

The majority of students apply to receive financial aid on-line by completing the Free Application for Federal Students Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act Application. U.S. Citizens and eligible non-citizens complete a FAFSA application, whereas undocumented students (often referred to as Dreamers) complete the California Dream Act Application. Students who do not wish to complete the above mentioned applications, and choose to only be considered for the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver (BOGFW), have the option of completing a paper BOGFW application. U.S. Citizens and eligible non-citizens are considered for both federal and state aid programs, however undocumented students are only considered for state based programs. FAFSA and Dream Act Applications become available on October 1st of the preceding year. For example, applications for the 2018-2019 award year became available October 1, 2017. Students are encouraged to complete their financial aid application before March 2nd in order to be considered for California state grant programs.

After a student completes a financial aid application, a student's eligibility for financial aid is determined based on the student's financial need. Need is determined by subtracting the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC) from the student's estimated Cost of Attendance (COA). The EFC is calculated based on the information the student provides on their financial aid application and the COA is calculated using the total estimated costs of educational expenses, including room and board, books and supplies, transportation and other miscellaneous expenses. These amounts may be adjusted depending on the amount of units a student is enrolled in. Once the financial aid office receives a student's application the financial need is calculated, it is determined if the student needs to turn in any additional documentation, and if all necessary information is received, financial aid awards are made. Approximately 30% of students

are selected for a review process called verification which requires students to submit supporting forms and documentation before financial aid funds can be disbursed.

Financial Aid Programs

Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGFW)

The California Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGFW) is a state program that waives enrollment fees for qualified California residents for the entire school year. Students may receive a waiver for any number of units, with no minimum. Students who meet residency requirements and have a need of at least \$1,104 are eligible to receive the BOGFW.

Federal Pell Grants (Pell)

The Federal Pell Grant is a federally funded program for undergraduates who demonstrate financial need. The amount of the Pell Grant is based on the cost of attendance, the Expected Family Contribution, and the number of units the student is enrolled in. Eligible students receive payments three times each semester. For the 2017-2018 award year the maximum annual Pell Grant award is \$5,920.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

FSEOG is a federally funded grant available to undergraduates who demonstrate exceptional financial need, meet the priority deadline, and are Pell Grant recipients. Students are required to be enrolled in six units. For the 2017-2018 award year the maximum annual SEOG award is \$600.

Federal Work-Study (FWS)

Federal Work-Study is a federal work program for students that allows them to work on-campus or at participating off-campus or non-profit organizations. Students may work up to 20 hours per week, and are paid at minimum wage or above. Students are required to be enrolled in six units. Students who demonstrate financial need may qualify for federal work study.

California Grant B (Cal Grant B)

Cal Grant B is a state program provided to students from low-income families. This grant may be used at community colleges and universities, not to exceed four years. For the 2017-2018 award year the maximum annual Cal Grant B award is \$1,670.

California Grant C (Cal Grant C)

Cal Grant C is a state program to help pay for training costs at occupational or career colleges. At California Community Colleges, this award is intended to be used for books, tools and equipment for vocational programs that are at least four months in length. Students may be eligible to receive this award for up to two years. For the 2017-2018 award year the maximum annual Cal Grant C award is \$1,094.

Full-Time Student Success Grant (FTSSG)

FTSSG is a state program that may be awarded to students who are eligible for a Cal Grant and are enrolled in at least 12 units at a CA community college. For the 2017-2018 award year the maximum annual FTSSG award is \$1,000.

California College Completers Grant (CCCG)

CCCG is a state program that may be awarded to students who are eligible for a Cal Grant and FTSSG and are enrolled in at least 15 units at a CA community college. For the 2017-2018 award year the maximum annual CCCG award is \$1,500.

- 2. Describe the student population served by the program using data. Please note the source of the data. If necessary, please contact the Office of Institutional Research & Planning to obtain data.

Based on data reported in the 2016 El Camino College Annual Fact Book, the student population that is served by the El Camino College financial aid office has been increasing year over year, serving 58.2% of students during the 2015-2016 award year compared to 54.1% during the last program review cycle during the 2013-2014 award year. The largest financial aid program is the Board of Governor’s Fee Waiver which was awarded to 56% of the student population in 2015-2016, followed by 27.2% of students receiving grants, 1.8% of students receiving scholarships, .8% receiving work study, and .1% receiving loans. These percentages translate to 18,668 student financial aid awards totaling \$47,142,513.00 including: 17,951 Board of Governor’s Fee Waivers totaling \$13,491,676.00, 8,730 grants totaling \$32,087,057.00, 579 scholarships totaling \$879,306.00, 241 work study participants totaling \$564,938.00 and 18 student loans totaling 119,536.

El Camino College Financial Aid Office	2015-2016	2015-2016	2015-2016
Total Financial Aid Disbursed to Students	Student Count	Award Count	Aid Amount
El Camino College CCD Total	18,668	59,797	\$47,142,513
Board of Governors (BOG) Enrollment Fee Waiver	17,951	33,780	\$13,491,676
Grants Total	8,730	24,775	\$32,087,057
Loans Total	18	30	\$119,536
Scholarship Total	579	737	\$879,306
Work Study Total	241	475	\$564,938

*Source: California Community College Chancellor’s Office Data Mart

The financial aid office disburses \$15,702,061 financial aid dollars to students in special populations at El Camino College. The programs include the Career Advancement Academy (CAA), the CalWORKs program, the CARE program, Disabled Students Programs &

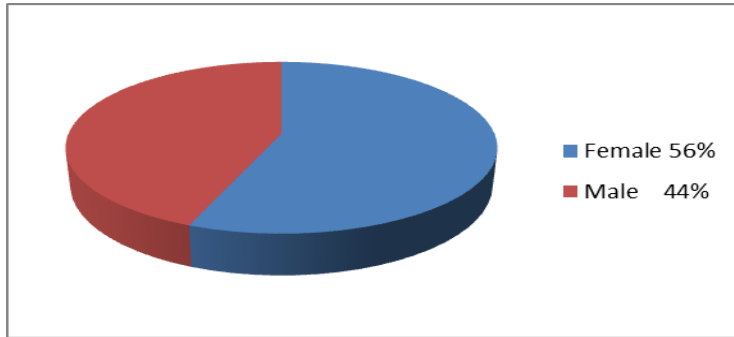
Services (DSPS), EOPS (Extended Opportunity Programs and Services), Foster Youth, Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA), military (Active Duty, Active Reserve, National Guard), Puente, Special Admit, Umoja, and Veterans.

El Camino College Financial Aid Special Population Summary	2015-2016	2015-2016	2015-2016
	Student Count	Award Count	Aid Amount
Total ECC FA Special Population	3,768	18,274	\$15,702,061
CAA - Career Advancement Academy	30	83	\$78,031
CalWORKs - California Work Opportunity & Responsibility to Kids	367	1,749	\$1,456,132
CARE - Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education	97	797	\$625,112
DSPS - Disabled Students Programs & Services	968	3,401	\$2,452,037
EOPS - Extended Opportunity Programs & Services	1,161	7,490	\$6,883,816
Foster Youth	253	917	\$802,855
MESA - Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement	428	2,135	\$1,931,108
Military (Active Duty, Active Reserve, National Guard)	19	74	\$74,183
Puente	105	477	\$378,965
Special Admit	59	217	\$217,482
Umoja	66	268	\$243,084
Veteran	215	666	\$559,256

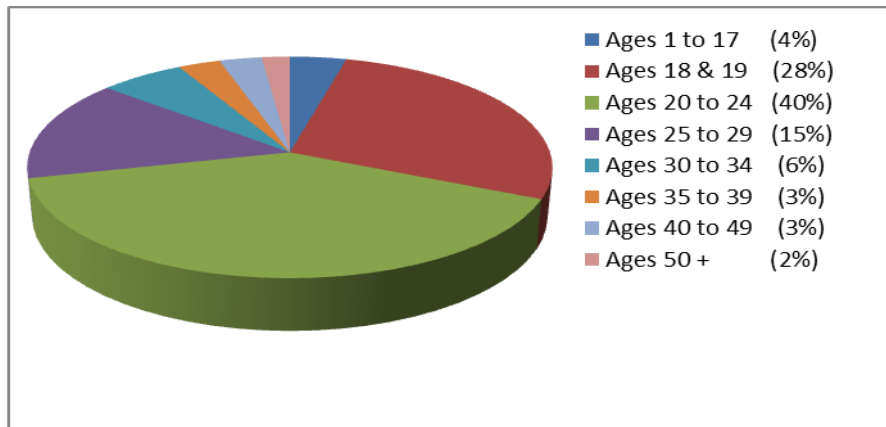
Source: California Community College Chancellor's Office Data Mart

The demographics of students receiving financial aid are fairly consistent with the demographics of the total El Camino student population. Females continue to receive financial aid at a higher rate (56%) than male (44%) students. In fall 2015, 51.6% of the total student population was female and 48.4% of the population was male. The demographics of students receiving financial aid by age are almost identical to the student population. Students ages 24 and under make up 71.1% of the total population and make up 72% of the population that receives financial aid. Hispanics are the largest represented ethnicity in the total student population at 52%, with Hispanics accounting for 58.5% of the population of students receiving financial aid.

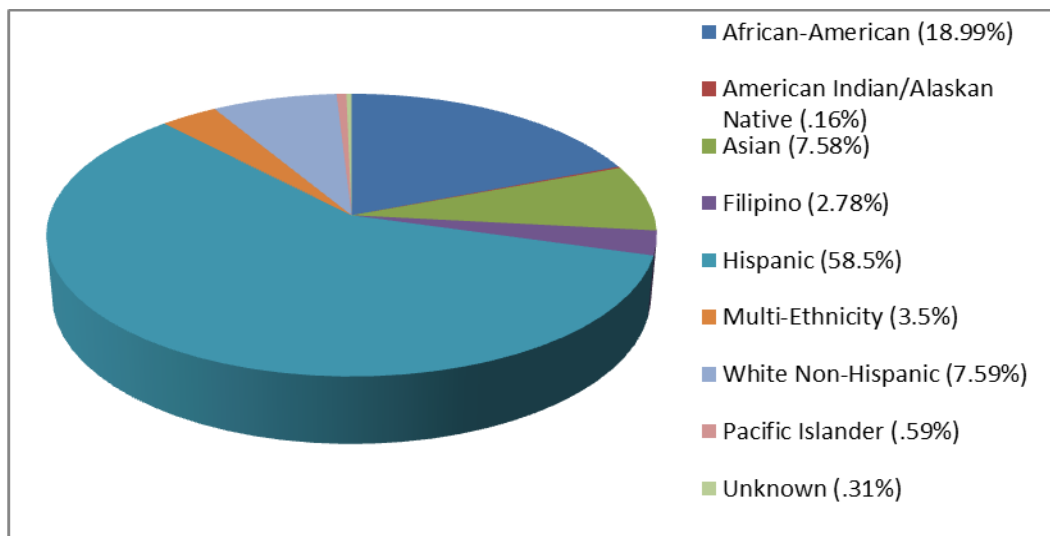
2015-2016 Financial Aid Receptients by Gender



2015-2016 Financial Aid Receptients by Age



2015-2016 Financial Aid Receptients by Ethnicity



*Source: California Community College Chancellor’s Office Data Mart

3. Describe how interaction with the program helps students succeed or meet their educational goals.

The overall goal of the financial aid program is to make college affordable and accessible for low income students who may not otherwise have the opportunity to pursue a college education. The financial aid programs at El Camino provide need based financial aid grants to low income students pursuing an undergraduate degree, with the intention of removing economic barriers that may prevent minorities or low income students from pursuing post-secondary education. There is a great societal need to increase access to higher education. Increasing the number of college graduates leads to a more skilled and educated workforce. According to Steinberg in the article *Access to higher education: Exploring the variation on pell grant prevalence among U.S. colleges and universities*, “at the societal level, additional investment in higher education is associated with greater community involvement, reduced unemployment, reduced crime, and increased charitable contributions of time and money” (Steinberg et. al, 2009). These societal benefits may also lead to fewer recipients being dependent on other social welfare programs, such as TANF or food stamps.

4. How does the program interact with other on-campus programs or with off-campus entities?

The financial aid department collaborates with a variety of on campus programs and off campus entities. The financial aid Student Services Specialist has a partnership with the Office of Outreach and School Relations to ensure financial aid outreach has maximum exposure in the local community. The Student Services Specialist frequently supports local schools and community organizations with financial aid informational sessions and workshops. Since July 2017, the financial aid office has already conducted 83 on and off campus outreach events. Most recently, the financial aid office represented El Camino College at Torrance High School, Junipero Serra High School, Hawthorne High School, Narbonne High School, Hawthorne Math and Science Academy, DaVinci Communications High School, Animo Leadership Charter High School, Synergy Quantam Academy, Hamilton Adult Center, the Boys and Girls Club of Carson, and the United States Coast Guard Education Fair.

The financial aid office has also partnered with on-campus resources and has provided financial aid resources, training, and workshops at El Camino College Night, New Student Welcome Day, Professional Development Flex Day presentations, One-Stop Enrollment Services, F.A.A.S.T. (Financial Aid and Academic Student Training) information sessions for First Year Experience, EOP&S Information Sessions, Puente Program Orientation, Student Athlete Meetings, Ambassador Trainings, TOP Student Support Expos, Club Rush and the Transfer Fair. Financial Literacy presentations have been provided for the Guardian Scholar’s program and the RISE Center. The Student Services Specialist also has partnerships to provide in class presentations for the TOP program classes and human development classes. Other instructors also utilize the Student Services Specialist to provide

in-class financial aid presentations, with requests coming in daily. The office also has frequent collaboration with Admissions and Records, Fiscal Services, Counseling Office, EOPS/CARE & CalWORKs program, Guardian Scholars program, Student Development Office, and health center.

The Director of Financial Aid has been involved in the following campus committees: Co-chair of the document management subcommittee – this includes going paperless, mobile, work flow, electronic signature, etc. The Director is also co-chair of the financial aid subcommittee on the Compton College transition and serves on the Council of Deans, Guided Pathways committee, Student Success Advisory committee and Technology committee.

The Assistant Director of Financial Aid has been involved in the following campus committees: Auxiliary Services Board (ASB), Process Improvement Steering Committee, Public Relations and Marketing-Website Redesign Task Force, EOP&S Advisory Committee, PRIDE Mentor Design Team, Dreamer’s Task Force, CalFresh Committee, Manager’s Professional Development Committee, Food and Shelter Taskforce, U-Pass Committee, Starfish ECC-Connect Support Team, and Chair of the SAP/Loss of BOG Committee.

5. List notable achievements that have occurred since the last Program Review.

Since the last program review in 2013, the financial aid office has successfully implemented numerous initiatives, many of which were identified during the last program review cycle. As summarized below, the department has been steadfast in taking action to streamline the financial aid process, improve customer service, reduce the average time to process financial aid awards and disbursements, and increase controls to ensure compliance with state, federal and accreditor regulations.

Summary of Achievements

- Increased the staff trainings and team building activities between the El Camino Torrance Campus and the Compton Education Center. Each semester, the El Camino Torrance campus hosts a joint retreat with all financial aid staff members from both the Torrance and Compton campuses. These trainings include team building activities, program updates and compliance training. In addition, the Torrance financial aid office holds monthly staff meetings throughout the school year.
- Development of Financial Aid Policy and Procedure Manual. In spring 2016, a formal financial aid policy and procedure manual was developed by the financial aid managers to uphold financial aid compliance and ensure ethical and equitable awarding of the various financial aid programs. This was a more robust, compliant, and comprehensive Policy and Procedure manual than the manual that was created by previous management in 2013.

- The Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) process and automated calculator was revamped to comply with federal regulations related to the institutional SAP policy and the determination of maximum timeframe. El Camino previously considered students to hit maximum timeframe at 90 units, although regulation is 150% of the student's degree program. The calculator was updated to calculate based on the student's academic program. This required coordination with Academic Affairs and Admissions and Records. The SAP calculator was also updated to automatically determine if a student met the conditions of his/her appeal, eliminating a manual process that was done by the Advisors.
- Successfully completed recertification of Title IV with the U.S. Department of Education.
- The use of the Colleague communication management module was implemented by the financial aid office to automate the missing information letters, SAP notifications, and other forms of communication with students.
- In fall 2015, the financial aid office implemented a freeze date to comply with Title IV regulations related to federal Pell grant disbursements. The new calculation allows for increased accuracy in determining the amount of the Pell grant award a student is eligible to receive during the term by locking in students' enrollment status as of the freeze date.
- Support to Compton College: The El Camino College Financial Aid office is responsible for ensuring that there are parallel processes in place at the Compton Education Center. The managers at both locations meet regularly to address issues of concern and to develop processes that are duplicated at both locations. The Director of Financial Aid at El Camino College is co-chairing the committee to help Compton College re-establish Title IV eligibility.
- In partnership with the Office of Outreach and School Relations, Student Ambassadors assist with staffing the Financial Aid computer lab. Effective fall 2017, a Financial Aid Assistant has been stationed in the FA lab to improve the scope and quality of assistance that students are able to receive.
- Successful transition from Higher One to Bank Mobile Vibe for disbursement of federal Pell grant and SEOG. In 2016, Bank Mobile Vibe purchased Higher One. During this time, the U.S. Department of Education also announced changes to how colleges will work with third party vendors for the disbursement of federal student aid. Bank Mobile gives students three disbursement options to choose from to receive their federal financial aid: (1) Direct Deposit into an existing bank account; and (2) the BankMobile Vibe Account, (3) a paper check mailed to the student. Students who do not select a disbursement option will automatically default to a paper check 14-days from the date of disbursement to be sent via U.S. mail. Students who choose to receive their disbursements using the BankMobile Vibe Account also have access to the Allpoint Network which includes over 55,000 ATMs worldwide.
- Implementation of changes relates to the Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGFW) programs as a result of the Student Success Act of 2012. In accordance with the Student Success Act of 2012 (California Senate Bill 1456), effective fall 2016, students are now

required to meet academic and progress standards to remain eligible for the fee waiver. Students must sustain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 and must also maintain a cumulative satisfactory completion rate of more than 50% of attempted units. The Director of Financial Aid led a team to develop and implement a strategy, policy, procedure and workflow for the loss of the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver.

- Effective fall 2017, the SAP appeal form and review committee was combined with the Loss of Board of Governors appeal form and review committee. This made the SAP and Loss of Board of Governor's appeal process easier for students, as students now only need to complete one form that is turned in to the financial aid office. Previously, students were required to complete two separate forms, with the SAP Appeal form submitted to the financial aid office and the Loss of Board of Governor's Appeal form submitted to the Admissions and Records Office.
- Updated system to ensure compliant calculation of enrollment status related to re-establishment of the winter session. A winter session was added back for the 2016-17 academic year. In the past, financial aid did not utilize winter session courses in the awarding of federal financial aid. The winter session is required to be included with a primary term in order to be compliant with the federal Pell methodology utilized by El Camino. The financial aid awarding system was updated to accurately include winter courses with the spring courses to determine enrollment level for financial aid purposes.
- Effective fall 2017, there was a modification made to the Federal Pell Grant disbursement schedule to reduce the amount of institutional liabilities the district is required to return to the Department of Education. These liabilities occur when students receive Pell Grant disbursements during the start of the semester, but do not establish attendance. The disbursement schedule was modified to disburse 12% of Federal Pell Grant award by the seventh day of instruction, followed by a subsequent 13% of the Federal Pell Grant award immediately following census date. A subsequent 25% Federal Pell Grant disbursement will be made following the 60% point of the semester. In past award years, 25% of the Federal Pell Grant award was disbursed by the seventh day of instruction followed by an additional 25% Federal Pell Grant award disbursement after the 60% point of the semester. This change is expected to significantly reduce the district's annual liability expenses while still providing sufficient funds for students to purchase books and supplies.
- Streamlined the financial aid packaging workflow and auto-packaging process. When the Director of Financial Aid initially came to El Camino College, the turnaround time for document review and packaging was 14 weeks and the office constantly had long lines of students. Students would even be waiting in the hallway to the office an hour before it was scheduled to open. Many files were being handled manually rather than packaged through the auto packaging system. The auto packaging rules were immediately adjusted for the next award year. The turn time was reduced to 6 to 8 weeks during peak processing months (summer and early fall) and a turn time of 1 to 2 weeks during non-

peak processing months. This virtually eliminated student lines with the exception of payment drop deadlines and the first few weeks of fall and spring terms. The department increased the number of students receiving financial aid on the first disbursement of the fall term, enabling students to utilize Pell grant funds to purchase much needed books and supplies.

- Improved reporting tools to increase processing and packaging efficiencies. El Camino College went through a conversion to SQL which impacted the reports and queries staff utilized to determine their work flow. The Director of Financial Aid worked with an outside consultant to write reports to replace the Ready to Package report previously used by staff. The previous report was basically a huge data dump of all financial aid students that staff would filter and sort to find students that needed manual review or processing. It was not an efficient way to prioritize work or control workflow. As a result of the new reports, staff will only see the files that need review.
 - Maintained cohort default rates under required thresholds
 - Financial Aid web page was redesigned to include images and infographics to allow for easier navigation of the webpage.
 - Introduction of financial literacy initiatives. The Financial Aid Office offers students a free suite of money management and financial literacy titled, Cash Course. The Assistant Director of Financial Aid completed a course sponsored by the Chancellor's Office and successfully earned a Certification in Personal Finance. The Financial Aid Office is now available to provide Financial Literacy Workshops on and off-campus.
 - Automated the Cal Grant awarding process. The department is currently finalizing a project with an outside consultant, Ferrilli, to automate much of the Cal Grant process, importing the rosters and sending automated disbursement rosters to CSAC.
6. What prior Program Review recommendations were not implemented, if any, and why? What was the impact on the program and the students?

Online Forms

One prior Program Review recommendation that has not occurred is the implementation of PDF Interactive forms. This recommendation is now outdated as there is a need to migrate to an online-based financial aid experience which would replace the current paper and PDF form to smart forms. This online platform should also be mobile friendly and allow for students to complete forms and upload documents utilizing their smart phone or mobile devices, reducing the amount of students that are required to visit the financial aid office. It is difficult to gauge the extent of how not converting to online financial aid forms has impacted students. The completion of financial aid forms can be a complicated process that creates barriers to student enrollment. Many students do not complete the financial aid process because it can be burdensome and difficult to navigate.

The reason this recommendation continues to be delayed is Informational Technology Services (ITS) has been working on completing projects that will support this type of

integration. Previously, the ITS department was completing the migration to SQL before allocating resources to system changes or enhancements. Now that the SQL Conversion is complete, a campus wide “Paperless” committee has been established, which the Director of Financial Aid is co-chairing. However, if a campus wide document management solution cannot meet the demands and needs of the students and the financial aid department, the financial aid managers recommend utilizing Campus Logic software. It is expected that the financial aid office will be able to convert to a paperless and mobile document intake process over the next 2-3 years.

Program Environment

Information in this section should help build a case for additional resources for the program

1. Describe the program environment. Where is the program located? Does the program have adequate resources to provide the required programs and services to staff and students? If not, why?

The financial aid office is located in three separate locations on campus. The Financial Aid Assistants which work at the financial aid service windows, the Director of Financial Aid, the Assistant Director of Financial Aid, the Student Services Specialist, the Administrative Assistant, student workers, and a rotating Financial Aid Advisor that serves as the daily “Walk-In Advisor,” are located in the Communications Building, Room 103. These employees were previously located in the Administration Building. The nine Financial Aid Advisors, an Accounting Technician, a User Support Technician, and a TNC Worker are located in the Student Services Building, Room 209 and 211. This area has 13 cubicle workstations and one cubicle office that is currently used as storage for financial aid outreach supplies. There is also a Financial Aid Computer lab which includes nine computers that are used for student usage and one employee work station. There is one Financial Aid Assistant assigned to work in the Financial Aid Computer lab, along with 1-2 Student Ambassadors. The needs of the financial aid department are currently being met in Student Services Building, room 209 and 211 and in the Financial Aid Computer Lab however, there are concerns with the financial aid office located in the Student Services Building.

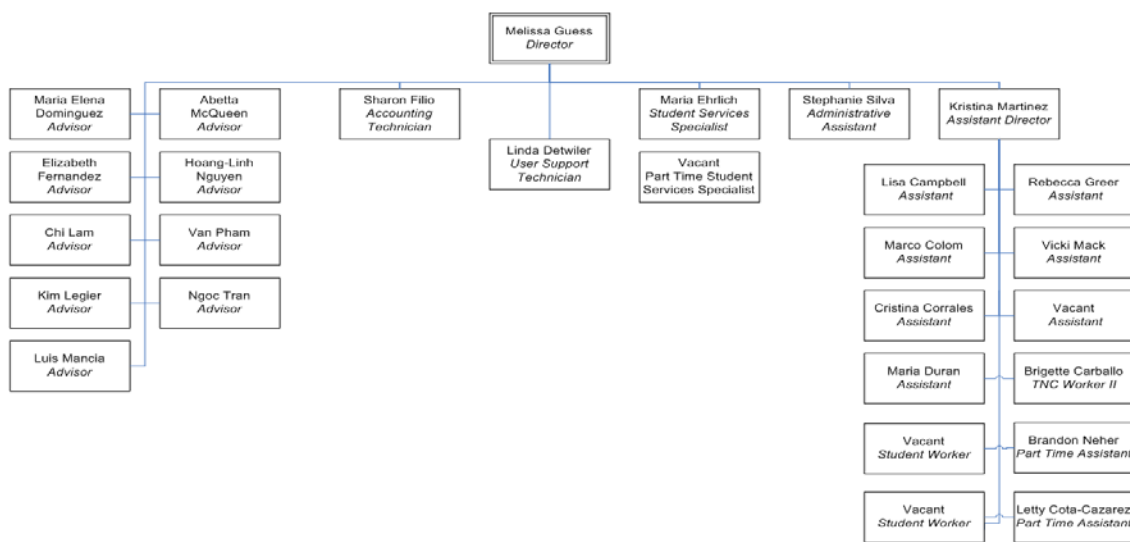
The financial aid office that is located in Communications Building has seven service windows, an office for the Director, a cubicle office for the Assistant Director, and four cubicles. The relocation of the financial aid office offers a more professional atmosphere and also allows for some improvement to students privacy. Despite these improvements, the design and configurations of the workstations for financial aid assistants have been problematic due to ergonomical concerns. Many staff members have addressed complaints regarding the utility of their workspace. Blinds are also needed for the service windows, however prior requests to have blinds installed were denied by facilities. There are also concerns regarding being able to effectively communicate with students through the

windows. There is not an audio system and the design of the grates makes it difficult to hear students. Staff members have also expressed concerns about not having a private area to meet with the Assistant Director. Another area of concern is ensuring the financial aid office adequately meets the needs of our disabled students. Although there is a dedicated wheelchair accessible window, the window is on the opposite side of the financial aid entrance. Students in wheelchairs or those who have difficulty with mobility must navigate through the entire office. Additionally the ramp that students must use to access the building has poor signage and is not located in a convenient proximity to the office. These concerns have been brought to the attention of facilities and the Vice President of Student Services is working to rectify the issues. The financial aid department anticipates these types of issues will not occur in the new Student Services Building.

2. Describe the number and type of personnel assigned to the program. Please include a current organizational chart.

At full staffing, there are a total of 28 employees in the financial aid department. Reporting to the Director of Financial Aid are nine Financial Aid Advisors, one Accounting Technician, one User Support Technician, one full time Student Services Specialist, one part time Student Services Specialist, an Administrative Assistant, and the Assistant Director of Financial Aid. There are seven full time Financial Aid Assistants, two part time Financial Aid Assistants, two student workers, and one TNC employee that report to the Assistant Director of Financial Aid. There is also a full time Financial Aid Counselor that is located in the Counseling office however, this employee does not report directly to the financial aid department.

Financial Aid September 20, 2017



3. Describe the personnel needs for the next four years.

The financial aid department anticipates the need for some personnel changes over the next four years as the department adapts to meet the needs of a changing student population.

- *Financial Aid Advisor-Foster and Homeless Youth Liaison*

At the end of 2017, the department will be hiring a Financial Aid Advisor that will be dedicated to servicing the foster youth and homeless population on campus. This position will also be trained to assist students in applying for Cal Fresh benefits (formerly known as food stamps) and to support other food and shelter insecurity initiatives on campus. The intent is that this position will utilize a case management approach to connect homeless and foster youth students with the various resources available both in and off campus. This position will replace the position of the Financial Aid Advisor position that is retiring in December 2017. This position will serve as the Foster Youth Liaison and the Homeless Youth Liaison on campus. Currently, the Assistant Director of Financial Aid has been serving as the campus's Homeless Youth Liaison. Per AB 801, Education Code section 67003.5, the institution was required to designate a staff member to serve as the Homeless and Foster Student Liaison. That person is responsible for understanding the provisions of the federal Higher Education Act pertaining to financial aid eligibility of current and former foster youth and homeless youth, including unaccompanied homeless youth. The liaison must also identify and inform students of available and appropriate services, including student financial aid and other assistance, and their eligibility as independent students under section 1087vv of the federal Higher Education Act. Having a staff member serving in this role will improve the quality of services and increase outreach initiatives on campus to identify foster youth and homeless students that are currently not receiving support services on campus.

- *Student Services Specialist (full time)*

The need for an additional full-time Student Services Specialist was identified in the El Camino College Process Improvement Project. The Process Improvement Action Plan includes an action item to hire a second full-time Student Services Specialist in order to increase financial aid outreach efforts on and off-campus. The Student Services Specialist would be responsible for presenting information on financial aid and helping students and their families complete financial aid applications and supporting documentation to apply for federal, state, and local financial aid (scholarships). This position would allow for increased efforts to ensure that students apply for financial aid by the established deadlines in order to receive their disbursements during the first week of the semester. Another issue identified in the Process Improvement Project was the need to "humanize" the financial aid process. The Student Services Specialist would also serve as the liaison for students who are at-risk of losing their Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGFW) eligibility due to not meeting academic and/or progress standards, current and former foster youth, homeless students, adult/re-entry students, and other special student populations as defined by the college. The financial aid office may consider hiring additional Student Services Specialist to replace Financial Aid Assistant

vacancies. This would ensure employees who service the financial aid front counter have a more technical skillset to problem solve the needs of students who visit the financial aid office.

- *Financial Aid Supervisor*

The department anticipates an emerging need for a Financial Aid Supervisor to provide constant supervision over the financial aid front counter and Financial Aid computer lab. The requirements and regulations set forth by the state and federal government that impact financial aid and Title IV continue to rise every year. To ensure compliance, the Director and Assistant Director of Financial Aid have had a continuous increase in the amount of time spent on policy and procedure development and implementation, strategic initiatives, system enhancements, campus and staff trainings, and collaboration with other impacted departments. A Financial Aid Supervisor would provide for consistent supervision over the department and would also ensure a manager was on-site to handle escalated student issues and staff concerns.

4. Describe facilities needs for the next four years.

The financial aid department will relocate into the new Student Services Building which is expected to be open in spring of 2019. The new building will allow for many of the needed changes and accommodations to the office to be made. The new location will also allow for the entire financial aid staff and financial aid computer lab to be in one location on campus. This will better serve students as they will not need to visit multiple locations on campus to receive financial aid assistance and support.

5. Describe the equipment (including technology) needs for the next four years.

The new Student Services Building includes plans to significantly increase the size of the financial aid computer lab in the new Student Services Building. This will create a need for additional computers and potentially a smart board that could be utilized for financial aid presentations, workshops, and trainings. The relocation to the new Student Services Building should also include a refresh of the computers for all financial aid staff. Financial Aid would also like to consider utilizing the Q-Less system to provide for a more concierge service approach to managing the financial aid lines. The financial aid management team has also identified Campus Logic as a potential software provider. Campus Logic features paired with the Colleague Financial Aid Student Self-Service software could transform the student financial aid experience. Additional information regarding Campus Logic can be found in the recommendation section.

6. Describe the specific hours of operation of the program. Do the scheduled hours of operation meet the needs of staff and students?

The El Camino College Financial Aid Office hours during the fall, winter, and spring terms are Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 8:00am – 5:30pm, Wednesday from 8:00am to 6:30pm, and Friday from 9:00am-1:00pm. The El Camino College Financial Aid Computer lab hours during the fall, winter, and spring terms are Monday-Thursday 8:00am-5:30pm and Friday from 9:00am-1:00pm. The office and lab have the same operating hours during the summer; however the campus is closed for eight Fridays. In coordination with other student services departments, the financial aid office has had staff available for extended hours including Saturdays during the start of the fall and spring terms. The El Camino College financial aid office also responds to email inquiries via eccfaid@elcamino.edu during regular business hours and students typically receive a response within one business day. Students can also receive assistance with general questions by calling the financial aid hotline. As a result of the college's Process Improvement Project, the financial aid office made changes to the financial aid phone tree. Students no longer have to hear a loop of automated responses. Instead, calls are now answered in the order in which they are received and students now have the option of leaving a message and receiving a return call within one business day.

Closing the office early on Fridays has been beneficial for providing staff training and meetings. It is difficult to hold staff meetings or trainings during open office hours as staff must remain in the offices to work the front counter and answer the telephone. The financial aid office does receive permission from administration to close the office for two days during the academic year in order to conduct the Financial Aid Training Retreats. These events are scheduled on Fridays in order to have the least impact on student needs. Financial Aid front counter staff have also expressed the desire to close during major campus events like Flex Days, however these requests were denied in the past by previous administration because these events also occur at the start of the semester, which are peak student traffic times in the financial aid office.

7. Describe the external factors that directly affect the program. Take into consideration federal and state laws, changing demographics, and the characteristics of the students served by the program. How does the program address the external factors?

The department diligently strives to maintain compliance and accountability with the various state and federal laws and regulations that govern the administration of financial aid programs. The financial aid office must be ready to quickly adapt to the ever changing regulatory environment that governs how the institution administers financial aid. Recently, changes were made at the federal level to implement year round Pell and changes were made at the state level to introduce a new California Completers grant program. These changes were announced just before the start of the fall 2017 semester. To ensure students are able to

receive the maximum amount of financial aid available, the financial aid office has had to redirect resources to ensure these changes are implemented timely.

Compliance with federal, state and institutional regulations and mandates is one of the main focuses on the financial aid office. El Camino College's Financial Aid Office has a responsibility to lead and support the Compton Education Center in re-establishing an operation that will meet the qualifications for certification of Title IV federal aid. The Financial Aid Office at the Torrance campus continues to work closely with the staff at the Compton Center as Compton College transitions to becoming independent of El Camino College. Each financial aid program has specific administrative and management guidelines that are established by state and federal law and regulations, which necessitate that the financial aid managers develop institutional policies and procedures that are complied with by both the Torrance and Compton campuses.

Below is a summary of the requirements the institution must comply with in order to remain eligible to participate in the various financial aid programs:

To be an eligible institution, it must adhere to the following requirements:

1. It must be legally authorized by the state where the institution offers postsecondary education.
2. It must be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency and
3. It must admit as a regular student only individuals with a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent or individuals beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the state where the institution is located.

El Camino College financial aid office adheres to the above required standards by completing and/or maintaining the following documents:

1. Completing annually the Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) each year and providing this document to our internal auditors.
2. Completing the Recertification to participate to the Department of Education as indicated by regulatory deadlines.
3. Completing the Program Participation Agreement for the Cal Grant Program as indicated by regulatory deadlines.
4. Completing the Board Financial Assistance Program Summary of Spending (BFAP SSARCC) to the Chancellors office annually.
5. Submitting to the Department of Education all internal audits of all State, Federal, and Institutional funds disbursed.
6. Completing annually internal audits of Title IV, Institutional and State programs and respond accordingly.
7. Keeping on file the Institutions accreditation report.

The College is granted authority to participate and disburse Title IV, institutional and state funds based on the above list. In addition the office must also ensure the institution is in compliance with the following standards:

1. Establish disbursement dates and the guidelines for awarding and disbursing aid.
2. Ensure compliance with consumer reporting requirements including adherence with gainful employment regulations,
3. Send all staff to program training annually to maintain knowledge of changing rules and regulations.
4. To annually update the Policy and Procedure manual outlining all processes within the Financial Aid Office.
5. Ensure students have access to the various financial aid applications, including the FAFSA Application, California Dream Act Application and the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver Application.
6. Work in cooperation with the following offices to assure funding, awarding and disbursing of funds to meet all deadlines and regulations in a timely and accurate process: Fiscal Services, Admissions and Records, Information Technology Services, EOP&S/CARE and CalWORKs.

Service Area Outcomes (SAOs)

Please attach SAO assessment results as an appendix to the program review

1. List the program's SAOs.

Student Area Outcome #1

Increase the percentage of students who are awarded and disbursed Pell Grants by increasing the percentage of students who complete the financial aid verification process.

Student Area Outcome #2

Increase student's knowledge of how to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards as defined by the Financial Aid Office by means of Financial Aid Workshops.

Student Area Outcome #3

Increase the percentage of students who are awarded and disbursed financial aid on the first scheduled disbursement of the fall semester.

2. How were the SAOs developed? Who was engaged in the creation of the SAOs?

Financial aid staff members, financial aid managers, and the Dean of Student Support Services collaborate to determine how the financial aid department can improve its services to students. The SAOs are developed during the annual financial aid retreats. Financial aid staff members are put into groups. The groups discuss different action steps that they can implement in their specific financial aid role to help meet the SAO goals.

Student Area Outcome #1: Financial aid staff determined that there are many students that do not receive the maximum amount of financial aid that they may be eligible to receive because the students do not complete the entire financial aid process. Financial Aid staff agreed to call and email students who had not completed the verification process to follow up on why students did not complete the process. Workshops were scheduled in the financial aid computer lab to assist students with completing the verification process.

Student Area Outcome #2: The Student Services Specialist created a newly designed F.A.A.S.T. (Financial Aid and Academic Student Training) in coordination with the First Year Experience program. This program was created to address implementation of Academic and Progress standards on the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver Program. The F.A.A.S.T. workshops focused on how federal SAP requirements differed from the BOGFW requirements. The financial aid department decided to retain the SAO to measure the success of the F.A.A.S.T. workshops.

Student Area Outcome #3: Ensuring students have money to pay for books and supplies at the start of the semester, is a priority for the financial aid department. Continuously making department improvements to increase the number of students that are paid on the first fall disbursement is consistent with the departments' purpose to make college accessible and affordable for all students. Each year the department develops new initiatives to continue to increase the numbers of students that are paid the first week of school. Staff members agree that students have a higher satisfaction with the financial aid department when students receive their disbursements timely. This also reduces the number of students that stand in line at the financial aid office during the first few weeks of the semester.

3. How often are the SAOs assessed and who is engaged in the discussion?

The SAOs are reviewed on an annual basis. The Director and Assistant Director of Financial Aid gather the data and review the results. Data is collected using queries from the Colleague system, evaluating survey results, and obtaining disbursement numbers from the Fiscal Services Department. The results are then shared with financial aid staff and the Dean of Student Support Services at a monthly meeting. Each year the department reviews the SAOs to determine if the goals have been reached, if the goals are attainable, if the goals are still relevant and if there are new initiatives the department can implement to continue to improve the results of the SAOs. If the SAO assessment results are not as anticipated, financial aid management and staff strategize to determine how the results can be achieved in the future.

4. What has been done if the SAO assessment results were not as anticipated?

If the SAO results are not as anticipated, the financial aid department reviews the SAO to discuss whether the results are attainable and determine action steps to improve the results in future years. An immediate concern is the number of students that complete the verification

process. The financial aid office has identified the need to improve the number of students that complete the financial aid process. Approximately 30% of students that submit a financial aid application are selected by the Department of Education or California Student Aid Commission for a review process called verification. Students selected for verification may be required to turn in forms and supporting documentation that verifies their household size, the number of family members in college, income information for student, parents, and/or spouse, high school completion, and identity. Depending on the type of verification a student is selected for, a student may need to turn in all or only some of these supporting documents. Analysis of the number of students that complete the verification process reveal a significant area of opportunity for the department to increase the number of students that receive financial aid. These trends may also help the campus reach their enrollment management metrics. A review of data for Student Area Outcome #1 Increase the percentage of students who are awarded and disbursed Pell Grants by increasing the percentage of students who complete the financial aid verification process, yielded the following results:

Number of students verified:

2014: 31% verified (3,200 students verified 7,137 students not verified)

2015: 29% verified (3,985 students verified 9,561 students not verified)

2016: 34% verified (4,101 students verified 7,866 students not verified)

2017: 24% verified to date* (2,309 students verified to date/ 7,336 students not verified)

It is important to note that the number of students verified and not verified for 2017 will continue to increase until September 30, 2018. It is also important to note that the number of students not verified includes all students that submitted a financial aid application to El Camino College, regardless of whether they ever enrolled at the college. Regardless, this data reveals a significant opportunity for the college to increase the number of students that enroll at El Camino College and that receive financial aid. The financial aid managers have actively been pursuing technological enhancements that will make the financial aid verification process simpler, quicker, and less burdensome for students. Unfortunately, the financial aid request to implement software to transform the verification process have hit roadblocks in prior years, however financial aid management will remain persistent in pursuing software enhancements that align with El Camino's purpose of making a college education attainable and affordable for all students.

5. Where are the SAOs assessment results shared with staff, students, and the public?

The SAO assessment results are shared with financial aid staff at a regular staff meeting. The results are able to be viewed by students, public, and staff on the webpage. The financial aid office noticed the Admissions and Records displays their SAOs on large posters inside the office. The financial aid office intends to display their SAOs in the financial aid office for the upcoming year.

6. Have the SAO assessment results indicated the need to change or modify components of the program? If so, were the changes implemented?

The SAO assessment results have revealed the need to consistently make improvements to the financial aid department. The following changes have been implemented to help the department achieve the expected SAO results:

- For the 2017-2018 award year, the department completed another overhaul of the workflow, auto packaging system, and disbursement process with the assistance of an outside consultant. This overhaul improves compliance, efficiency, and automation. Many students will now be awarded through the auto packaging system that used to require manual review. Students who do not need to take additional action will now be packaged immediately. The department expects to reduce the turn time by an additional 2 weeks during peak processing times.
- Improved the system disbursement process. By changing the work flow, the office was able to eliminate road blocks and manual overrides in the disbursement process. Not only will disbursements be quicker, but it also allows for separate functions of awarding and disbursing related to the BOG fee waiver and running the BILL process that applies the fee waiver to the students account.
- A Student Services Specialist position was added to the department in 2015 to increase and improve financial aid outreach, both on and off campus. As a result, the number of presentations and events has increased dramatically and collaboration with other departments has significantly improved. There is now a dedicated staff member to perform financial aid workshops and reach out to students that have not completed the financial aid process.

Program Improvement

Information should help determine where program resources should be dedicated

1. What activities has the program engaged in to improve services to students?

In June 2015, the Student Services Specialist position was added to the financial aid office in order to provide targeted financial aid outreach activities, both on and off campus. The position is dedicated to increasing awareness of financial aid programs that are available to students as well as providing assistance to students with completing financial aid applications, obtaining documentation needed to complete the financial aid process, and completing required forms. The first week of October, the financial aid office sponsored Financial Aid Frenzy Week, which provided daily workshops to assist students in completing the FAFSA or California Dream Act Application. Since February 21, 2016, financial aid outreach has conducted 321 outreach events, including 209 presentations, 55 information tables at various events, 43 hands-on workshops, and other various trainings and activities.

There are currently 149 additional financial aid outreach events scheduled during the 2017-2018 academic year, with this number expected to double, as new events continue to be scheduled on a regular basis. This targeted approach to financial aid awareness and completion of the financial aid process is expected to lead to increased numbers in students applying for financial aid and completing the financial aid application process.

The financial aid office has also implemented technology to provide more effective and efficient services to students. The financial aid awarding workflow and auto-packaging process has been updated twice since the last program review. Additionally, the disbursement process has been changed to allow for less manual intervention in disbursing aid. The financial aid office is currently working with Information Technology Services (ITS) to implement the Colleague Financial Aid Self Service software. This will allow for students to use an updated student portal to review communications with the financial aid office. Features of the Financial Aid Self Service software includes interactive checklists with status indicators to show students where they are at in the process, Satisfactory Academic Progress notifications, customized online award letter tools and a mobile responsive design that allows students to review communication from their smart phones or electronic devices. The financial aid office intends to pair these communication enhancements with Campus Logic software to transform the student financial aid experience. The financial aid office intends to work with the district to secure funds to ensure implementation and maintenance of the Campus Logic software. There may be an opportunity from the state to receive one-time funds to implement innovative financial aid software however, on-going costs to maintain the system would be the responsibility of the college.

The financial aid office has been involved with campus initiatives to help support students with food insecurities. The financial aid computer lab now offers drop-in assistance with the CalFresh program and has also supported efforts with the Warrior Pantry. The Financial Aid Advisor-Foster and Homeless Youth liaison will work to continue to strengthen these efforts.

The financial aid office has worked with the Public Relations and Marketing department to enhance the financial aid presence in the college-wide marketing campaigns. In 2017, changes were made to the El Camino College marketing efforts to include “Apply for Financial Aid” as one of the “Steps to Enroll.” The financial aid office also supplied the marketing team with suggested social media posts and videos that could be shared on the various El Camino College social media platforms. Although the financial aid presence on the El Camino College is not as frequent as the office would like, significant improvements have been made to include social media posts that promote financial aid. The Assistant Director of Financial Aid was also a member of the ECC Website Redesign Taskforce where she was able to share her input and the compliance requirements regarding the presence of financial aid on the campus webpage. Additionally, the Assistant Director of Financial Aid was trained to update the financial aid webpages using Omni Update. The financial aid webpage has been redesigned to include infographics, thumbnails, and embedded videos to make the webpage visually appealing and easy to use. The financial aid office intends to

increase collaboration with the Public Relations and Marketing Department to ensure the financial aid department is included in campus wide marketing campaigns.

2. How have program personnel used metrics to improve program services? Provide metrics from the last four years.

Financial aid management has used data driven decision making to determine the immediate actions, priorities, and needs of the department. In response to data analysis and survey results, the financial aid department took action to improve communication to students, raise the quality of service provided by the department, and provide more options for students to receive assistance with the financial aid office. The initiatives that have been implemented by the financial aid office have been focused on promoting customer service, improving communication to students, and implementing technology to improve department efficiencies.

Based on the El Camino “Survey of Entering Student Engagement” results, which was conducted by the Office of Institutional research, 74% of survey respondents indicated that they applied for financial assistance (74%). However, only 57% of students reported being notified about their eligibility for financial assistance and 28% reported receiving funds. The majority of students applied for financial assistance at least one month before classes began (63%) and about a quarter did not apply for assistance. Forty-three percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the college provided adequate information about financial assistance (up from 38% in 2014.) Only 24% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a college staff member helped them determine their qualifications (up from 22%) in 2014.

In 2016, 72% of students (up from 64% in 2014) indicated that they were aware of the financial aid assistance advising that was available to students. Fifteen percent of students indicated that they used financial assistance advising two or more times (up from 12% in 2014) and 40% indicated that they were very satisfied with the services provided. Fifty one percent of survey respondents reported applying for financial aid three or more months before classes began, which is a six percent increase since 2014.

The latest El Camino Community College Survey of Student Engagement survey was conducted in 2014. In this survey, 45% of students answered that they utilized financial aid advising services, 84% felt that they were very or somewhat satisfied with the services and 85% that the financial aid advising services is very or somewhat important. Being able to afford the cost of attending college can be large obstacle for many students, which can have a direct impact on student retention and success. Being unaware of the financial aid programs that are available to students or not receiving financial assistance could determine whether or not a student chooses to enroll at El Camino College.

3. If applicable, explain any patterns in student success, retention, persistence, graduation, and transfer in terms of student characteristics and program objectives and discuss planned responses or changes.

The financial aid office strives to offer student-focused, compliant, and comprehensive services to our campus and surrounding community. The department has made significant efforts to be progressive in developing and implementing new services and processes that align with the office's commitment to student success.

Customer Service

Administer a customer service survey to students or colleagues, if applicable. Please administer the survey the semester prior to submitting your program review.

1. How was the survey conducted? Please include a copy of the survey to the appendix.

The financial aid office sent out customer service surveys to students using their El Camino College student email addresses. One customer service survey was sent in the spring 2017 semester and an additional customer service survey was sent in the fall 2017 semester.

2. What were the major findings of the customer service survey?

The spring 2017 survey had 557 survey respondents and the fall 2017 survey had 679 respondents. The results of each survey revealed similar trends. In the fall 2017 survey 71% of students rated the "Overall Quality of service" at Excellent or Good, whereas the spring 2017 survey had 68.23%. In both surveys, more than 80% of students felt the confidentiality of private information was good or excellent, and less than 3% felt it was more.

Spring 2017 Survey Results:

Financial Aid Student Survey

N=557

Spring 2017

Please rate the following services based on your experiences with the Financial Aid Office.

1. Hours of operation

Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	176	31.60	<div style="width: 31.60%;"></div>
Good	213	38.24	<div style="width: 38.24%;"></div>
Fair	108	19.39	<div style="width: 19.39%;"></div>
Poor	22	3.95	<div style="width: 3.95%;"></div>
N/A	19	3.41	<div style="width: 3.41%;"></div>
Invalid	19	3.41	

2. Office facilities [appearance- comfort]

Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	147	26.39	<div style="width: 26.39%;"></div>
Good	198	35.55	<div style="width: 35.55%;"></div>
Fair	137	24.60	<div style="width: 24.60%;"></div>
Poor	50	8.98	<div style="width: 8.98%;"></div>
N/A	13	2.33	<div style="width: 2.33%;"></div>
Invalid	12	2.15	

3. Timeliness of response to your request[s]

Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	154	27.65	<div style="width: 27.65%;"></div>
Good	181	32.50	<div style="width: 32.50%;"></div>
Fair	134	24.06	<div style="width: 24.06%;"></div>
Poor	63	11.31	<div style="width: 11.31%;"></div>
N/A	16	2.87	<div style="width: 2.87%;"></div>
Invalid	9	1.62	

4. Knowledge & Helpfulness of Financial Aid Staff

Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	211	37.88	<div style="width: 37.88%;"></div>
Good	166	29.80	<div style="width: 29.80%;"></div>
Fair	115	20.65	<div style="width: 20.65%;"></div>
Poor	55	9.87	<div style="width: 9.87%;"></div>
N/A	8	1.44	<div style="width: 1.44%;"></div>
Invalid	2	0.36	

5. Confidentiality of private information maintained

Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	283	50.81	<div style="width: 50.81%;"></div>
Good	188	33.75	<div style="width: 33.75%;"></div>
Fair	49	8.80	<div style="width: 8.80%;"></div>
Poor	16	2.87	<div style="width: 2.87%;"></div>
N/A	16	2.87	<div style="width: 2.87%;"></div>
Invalid	5	0.90	

6. Timeliness of response to emails sent to eccfaid@elcamino.edu

Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	150	26.93	<div style="width: 26.93%;"></div>
Good	172	30.88	<div style="width: 30.88%;"></div>
Fair	74	13.29	<div style="width: 13.29%;"></div>
Poor	35	6.28	<div style="width: 6.28%;"></div>
N/A	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0.00%;"></div>
Invalid	126	22.62	<div style="width: 22.62%;"></div>

7. Finding forms, videos and other information on the ECC Financial Aid webpage

Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	178	31.96	<div style="width: 31.96%;"></div>
Good	189	33.93	<div style="width: 33.93%;"></div>
Fair	102	18.31	<div style="width: 18.31%;"></div>
Poor	44	7.90	<div style="width: 7.90%;"></div>
N/A	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0.00%;"></div>
Invalid	44	7.90	<div style="width: 7.90%;"></div>

8. Overall quality of service

Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	182	32.68	<div style="width: 32.68%;"></div>
Good	198	35.55	<div style="width: 35.55%;"></div>
Fair	117	21.01	<div style="width: 21.01%;"></div>
Poor	39	7.00	<div style="width: 7.00%;"></div>
N/A	9	1.62	<div style="width: 1.62%;"></div>
Invalid	12	2.15	<div style="width: 2.15%;"></div>

Fall 2017 Survey Results:

Financial Aid Student Survey			
N=679		Fall 2017	
Please rate the following services based on your experiences with the Financial Aid Office.			
1. Hours of operation		2. Office facilities [appearance- comfort]	
Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	227	33.43	
Good	262	38.59	
Fair	119	17.53	
Poor	23	3.39	
N/A	27	3.98	
Invalid	21	3.09	
3. Timeliness of response to your request[s]		4. Knowledge & Helpfulness of Financial Aid Staff	
Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	195	28.72	
Good	206	30.34	
Fair	151	22.24	
Poor	80	11.78	
N/A	34	5.01	
Invalid	13	1.91	
5. Confidentiality of private information maintained		6. Timeliness of response to emails sent to eccfaid@elcamino.edu	
Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	338	49.78	
Good	216	31.81	
Fair	65	9.57	
Poor	17	2.50	
N/A	35	5.15	
Invalid	8	1.18	
7. Finding forms, videos and other information on the ECC Financial Aid webpage		8. Overall quality of service	
Response	Frequency	Percent	
Excellent	226	33.28	
Good	230	33.87	
Fair	125	18.41	
Poor	37	5.45	
N/A	0	0.00	
Invalid	61	8.98	

3. Describe exemplary services that should be expanded or shared with other programs.

The comments section of the survey included complementary comments for financial aid staff that engage in one-on-one services with students. For instance, Elizabeth Fernandez who is the Financial Aid Advisor who meets with foster youth students received multiple praises in the student comments section. This may suggest that students have a better perception of the financial aid process when they receive personalized assistance. This also supports the Process Improvement Plan’s initiative of “humanizing” the student enrollment

process. Hiring an additional Student Services Specialist will assist with engaging students on a more personalized level. In addition, the college may consider changing the roles of the Financial Aid Assistant to Student Services Specialists in the future.

4. What aspect of the program's service needs improvement? Explain how the program will address service improvements.

A major area of concern for the financial aid department is ensuring that there is consistency in the quality of services provided by the financial aid office. Despite efforts by management to promote exemplary customer service, there continues to be a perception by students that the financial aid office is rude, unhelpful, and seems annoyed when they are helping students. There have been comments in customer surveys that compare the Financial Aid Office to the Department of Motor Vehicles. During the start of the spring 2017 semester, the Assistant Director of Financial Aid surveyed students who visited the financial aid service windows. Many of the comments included in the spring 2017 survey expressed the students' dissatisfaction with the number of service windows that are open during peak processing periods. Due to scheduled breaks and lunches, scheduled and unscheduled employee absences, and a Financial Aid Assistant assigned to answering phones, there are often times when there are only 2-3 staff members available to assist students. This resulted in the department hiring two part-time financial aid assistants who are available to ensure at least 4-5 windows are open at all times. This concern may also be addressed by implementing an online queuing system to replace the need for students to stand in line. Students would be able to check-in to line virtually through a smart phone or device. Students who do not have an electronic device would be able to check-in line from an employee at the office who has a tablet connected to the queuing system. Students would be notified once a financial aid staff member was available to meet with them,

As the department continues to focus on improving customer service and the student experience, overcoming the negative stigma associated with the financial aid office will be an uphill battle. To accelerate changes in these perceptions, the financial aid managers will continue to promote the need for improved customer service. The financial aid managers would like to incorporate the Disney customer service model approach that has been utilized by Vice President Ross Miyashiro at other institutions. Utilizing "secret shoppers" and reviewing the results with the team may be another helpful tool in changing employee behaviors.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Only include information previously referenced in the program review

1. Summarize the program's strengths.

The financial aid office has made remarkable improvements to the department over the past several years. The financial aid office has been steadfast in identifying and implementing changes that have increased the number of students that receive financial aid and reduced the amount of time students wait to receive their funding. Throughout these efforts, financial aid has upheld the highest standards of compliance, ethics and equitable awarding. The financial aid office has increased collaboration with both on campus departments and off campus entities, providing for more partnerships in improving the student financial aid experience. Outreach initiatives have been planned in a more targeted and deliberate manner in order to maximize our efforts. The department has increased the number of staff trainings and has worked towards improving teamwork and comradery within the office. The financial aid office has enhanced communication with students by utilizing communication management in the Colleague system and working towards implementation of the Colleague financial aid self-service module. The financial aid department has also been quick to respond to an unpredictable regulatory environment that has imposed awarding and regulatory changes without advanced notice. The department has been able to implement a variety of policies, procedures, and system enhancements to respond to these changes, ensure compliance, and award the maximum amount of financial aid available to students. Line wait times have decreased from several hours to a maximum average wait time of 30 minutes or less. The financial aid office has achieved significant workflow efficiencies and has made great improvements to the financial aid auto-packaging system in Colleague. The financial aid department feels it has maximized efficiencies currently available in Colleague. To take the department to the next level in effectiveness, efficiencies, and increased student satisfaction, the department has identified potential software solutions that can help transform the student financial aid experience. With the support of higher administration, the financial aid department is confident and committed to transforming the department to meet the demands and needs of the next generation of college students.

2. Summarize the program's areas that need improvement.

It is imperative that prospective and continuing students are aware of the financial assistance that is available to them and that they are very satisfied with the experience they have interacting with the financial aid office. Although new financial aid management has taken significant steps to promote financial aid awareness and improve the student experience, considerable improvements still need to be made. With the

student demographics rapidly changing, the financial aid department needs to be responsive in meeting the technological demands and expectations of the next generation of students enrolling at the college. The financial aid department recommends El Camino College utilize innovative technology to transform the student financial aid experience and improve how we communicate with students and at El Camino College. Consistent with the Process Improvement Plan, the financial aid office also recommends hiring a second full-time Student Services Specialist to further expand outreach efforts and humanize the financial aid process.

The financial aid office is also faced with the challenge of assisting Compton College with reestablishing certification with the Department of Education to offer Title IV federal financial aid programs. The timeline for transition is very aggressive. The Director of Financial Aid has spent multiple hours assisting Compton College administrators and staff with the transition process and anticipates that the transition planning and training will take a significant amount of time away from her daily duties and commitments. This may negatively impact ECC projects and a prioritization may need to be implemented. The financial aid office recommends hiring a Financial Aid Supervisor to assist financial aid management during the Compton transition.

3. List the program's recommendations in a prioritized manner to help better understand their importance to the program.

1. Implementation of Financial Aid Processing Software

The financial aid department feels there is an immediate need to leverage technology in order to improve the student financial aid experience. The financial aid process can be complicated and overly burdensome for students. Information provided from Campus Logic notes, "many students simply drop out of the process, especially low-income students with 40% failing to enroll because of the complexity of the process itself." The financial aid management team has identified Campus Logic as a potential software solution that would transform the student financial aid experience.

The solutions provided by Campus Logic utilize technology to streamline the financial aid process, providing for greater equity and access for students to attend college. Financial aid communications are modernized to include interactive Award Letters that link to Financial Aid TV videos. These videos explain the different types of aid the student is receiving and can also link to videos that show the next steps in the process (i.e. how to request tax transcripts, etc.) Financial aid forms are simplified for students as a smart logic is used to only require students to complete sections of the forms that are relevant for each specific student. Pre-filled, personalized web forms ensure students submit accurate and complete documents on their first submission. Compliant e-signatures and a secure document upload system allows for students to complete required forms and submit supporting documentation utilizing their mobile devices and/or personal computers. This reduces the number of students required to visit the financial aid office, allowing staff to focus their efforts on students who need the most support navigating the financial aid process. Improving the student financial aid experience may

also help to increase enrollment at the college. Students who are already burdened and reluctant to complete the financial aid process may choose to attend another nearby college that simplifies the student financial aid process.

Campus Logic creates a paperless file review system which reduces the amount of time it takes for staff to review verification, SAP Appeals, Professional Judgements and C-Code resolutions. There is also an automatic file index and imaging system which will significantly reduce the amount of time front counter staff spend on scanning documents and will reduce the potential for human error that could result in FERPA violations. Additionally, there is an automated student follow up component that uses text and email to notify students of documentation that is outstanding to complete the financial aid process. The service also includes a dashboard reporting tool and custom reports that will provide management with data that can be used to make insightful and actionable decisions. A new feature of Campus Logic is a scholarship management tool that matches students with a variety of vetted external scholarships. This tool can also support and combine the application process for institutional scholarship awards. These features may help to support the expansion of El Camino's College Promise Program.

2. Hire a Financial Aid Supervisor to assist management during the Compton transition. The supervisor would oversee front counter operations to ensure consistent supervision over the department and would also ensure a manager was on-site to handle escalated student issues and staff concerns.
3. Hire a second full-time Student Services Specialist to assist with the Process Improvement Plan's recommendation to humanize the financial aid process and increase the on campus and off campus outreach efforts. This position would also schedule one-on-one appointments in the financial aid lab to assist students with the financial aid process.
4. Partner with Fiscal Services to disburse financial aid funds to student accounts and return net credit balances to students. This would allow for all financial aid funds, regardless of the source to be disbursed to students using their preferred disbursement method through Bank Mobile. This would also allow fees owed to El Camino College for the current term to be paid from financial aid funds reducing the holds placed on students for unpaid fees. This might also assist with enrollment management as students with unpaid fees are not able to register for courses in subsequent terms until all fees are paid.
5. Implementation of virtual line management system
To reduce student wait times and to be proactive in the department's approach to customer service, the financial aid department recommends a virtual online queue system be implemented in the new Student Services Building to replace the need for students to wait inline. Q-Less has been identified as a potential solution for this need. Q-Less would allow for students to enter an online queue to meet with a financial aid staff member, eliminating the need for students to wait in line when they got to the financial aid office. Students would be notified once a financial aid staff member was available to meet with

them. Students would be able to receive the services they needed without the hassle of standing in line. Students could use the time they saved waiting on line to participate in on other campus activities. This would help to improve student satisfaction and also prevent escalated student issues from students who become agitated while waiting in line. Several competing community colleges have already implemented online waiting systems and have experienced dramatic improvements in student satisfaction. In addition to eliminating long lines, the queuing system would allow management to gage the demand for financial aid staff at the front counter. Additional staff members could meet with students during peak periods and staff could be reassigned to provide more student outreach during less congested times.

4. Please indicate whether the program should continue or be discontinued.

Continue Program

Discontinue Program. Explain how the program's services could be handled by another on-campus entity if the program has been declining or is no longer fully utilized.

Student & Community Advancement Program Review Committee

Ratings

Excellent

The program review was extremely well written. Concise and grammatically correct with few to no spelling errors. A model program review that is ready to be posted online for a public audience.

Meets Expectations

The program review was adequately written. Lengthy or vague at times or included some grammatical and spelling errors. Corrections should be made prior to posting online for a public audience.

Needs Improvement

The program review was poorly written or incomplete. Too lengthy or vague or too many grammatical and spelling errors throughout the document. The program review needs to be rewritten and resubmitted to the Student & Community Advancement Program Review Committee by an established deadline.

Revised

5/5/2010; 3/13/2013; 3/31/2014; 4/15/2014; 6/1/2015; 8/20/2016; 7/13/17

