The California Guided Pathways Demonstration Project

Application for Participation in the 2020-22 Phase

Cohort Two / New to CAGDP Colleges

El Camino College

1. What are the 2-3 accomplishments that have occurred under a guided pathways umbrella with your CCCCO Guided Pathways funding during the last three years that you think will be the most impactful for your students' experience at the college? Why?

One of our most notable accomplishments under Guided Pathways is the establishment of meta-majors at El Camino College.   Over the fall 2018 and spring 2019 semesters, 130 groups of faculty, staff, students, and administrators engaged in card sorting sessions taking place at various events, meetings and classrooms to simplify major options for students. The data was analyzed and a total of 7 meta-majors emerged. This will be helpful in improving the student experience in choosing a major.   Instead of students being asked to choose a degree or certificate path from a list of over 200 options, students can first choose one of seven areas of interest and explore options among the related majors.   The establishment of meta-majors is also a springboard to other improvements, such as the adoption of "Program Pathways Mapper," where meta-major and pathway information will be made available to students as well as the establishment of success teams (both described in the next paragraphs.)

Over the 2018-2019 academic year, instructional and counseling faculty collaborated to develop maps for all 203 degree and certificate programs offered at El Camino College. This process took an entire year to complete and the purchase of Program Mapper will put these maps in an accessible online format. The adoption of Program Mapper will clarify the path for students by ensuring students have a sample roadmap that lists all the classes they need to take for their chosen major and/or certificate. Coupled with counseling support and readily accessible maps, the students will have yet another safety net to ensure they stay on the path, take fewer unnecessary units and know how long it will take to complete a degree or certificate should they decide to take a full-time or part-time load.

Finally, El Camino has recently created success teams for each meta-major. During the fall 2019 semester, the Business meta-major launched a success team pilot group and engaged in inquiry centered around students within this meta-major. Participants included administrators, counseling, librarian & instructional faculty, and classified professionals. During this time, the group met bi-weekly to discuss student data, identify equity gaps, and set goals. This first success team led the way for the other meta-major success teams to launch this semester.

2. What are the top 3-4 issues that your college needs to work on in the next two years under a guided pathways umbrella to optimize the student experience? How do these issues relate to your Vision goals?

The first issue is integrating and utilizing technology to simplify processes. We have adopted Starfish as the program that will support our movement to a case management model. However, one of the challenges is motivating faculty to use Starfish and also building the capacity in student services to respond to flags and referrals raised in the system. Another difficulty is that Starfish and the version of Colleague that we use do not easily share data, making it difficult to create coherent pathways for students and for college personnel to monitor student progress.

The next challenge is communicating deadlines and check-in points to students as they hit milestones. This is related to the first challenge, as we need to build a system that will help keep college personnel informed when students hit milestones (e.g. when a student should apply for graduation, or when their FAFSA is due). However, we also need to identify the milestones when we would reach out to students, and we are currently engaged with this work. We know we will also need to determine whether milestones are different for different majors or meta-majors, so it will take time to develop an integrated communication plan.

Finally, there is the challenge of reimagining course scheduling to ensure students have the opportunity to achieve their goals in a timely and efficient manner. Recently the college has implemented a plan to move to a block scheduling in order to minimize the possible class start times from over 70 different start times to around 10. The next step is to link students' educational plans to course scheduling— scheduling courses in a given semester based on student need rather than instructor preference or schedule rollover. This is also related to the first challenge in integrating technological platforms to make it possible to plan schedules in this way.

3. What is your college's decision-making process to make policy and practice changes? How will that process work with CAGP 2020-2022 to make the necessary changes to how students experience your college?

There are multiple processes that may be involved for policy and practices to change. Policy changes must go through several committees as part of the college's collegial consultation process, including: College Council, Academic Senate, Planning & Budgeting Committee, Calendar Committee, Facilities Steering Committee, Technology Committee, the Executive Cabinet, and the Board of Trustees. Any of these bodies can make recommendations to the policy, but the Board of Trustees has the final decision.

Changes that require budget must go through a prioritization process that requires the college to rank its spending priorities. This multi-step process begins with the program and goes from deans/directors, to the area vice-president, and then the executive cabinet before the request can be approved.

CAGP will have to work in conjunction with these processes in order to make major changes. Many on campus recognize the need to make some changes but need direction of which changes to make and how to implement them. Some changes may be able to be achieved at the program level by "just

flipping the switch" and making the decision to do something different, but many will require campus-wide buy in and possible changes to current institutionalized processes.

4. How does the college build collaboration, communicate and engage with multiple stakeholder groups (faculty, staff, community partners, students)? What things will you watch out for in those collaborations?

The college engages multiple stakeholders through its various committees and meetings, i.e.; Board of Trustees, academic senate, college council, and curriculum committee. All of these meetings welcome community members and stakeholders from across campus to join. Additionally, the Guided Pathways success teams will serve to build collaboration among stakeholder groups. In addition to these regular meetings, El Camino holds many on campus events, like the ECC Collaborative that engages high school teachers, counselors, administrators and community partners to discuss how to best support the students from our local feeder schools. Equally as important are our theatre and performing art events that are attended by community members from the greater Los Angeles area.

Administrators now hold open office hours to increase lines of communication between upper management and the campus community. In these collaborations it is important that they are inclusive of all stakeholders and are working towards the Guided Pathways framework. Aside from inclusivity it is also key that there is an understanding on how these collaborations use data to help to eliminate the equity gap and improve student success.

5. Equity will be intentionally woven into the CAGP 2020-2022 project, most notably through integration of the topics and thought capital from ten Equity Through Pathways discussion guides to be released in April 2020. What are 2-3 aspects of the student experience at your college that may be experienced inequitably by historically underserved students (e.g., students of color, first-generation students) that you would like to address in CAGP 2020-2022?

In the Spring of 2019, El Camino College completed several student focus groups in collaboration with the Career Ladders Project (CLP). The goal of these groups was to learn about the experiences of students who were in special programs or cohort groups and those that were not. After reviewing the results from these groups along with quantitative data from our institutional research office, many inequities were highlighted by students. These inequities are experienced by historically underserved students throughout their time here at El Camino. We do a good job at catching certain groups of historically underserved students with special programs but students do not qualify for or are unaware of special programs are left behind to fend for themselves. They have trouble getting into classes, persisting in courses and successfully completing courses at a higher rate than those students who are not historically underserved. These students that are not in a special program inequitably experience simple things like registering for courses or completing their graduation petition on time. Scaling up services and support for students not served by a special program is something we'd like to address in CAGP 2020-2022.

6. Describe your two best examples of using data to explore and address a key student success issue. Indicate (a) what issue the college was exploring, (b) what the data revealed, (c) what you did differently after reflecting on the data, and if possible, (d) any subsequent outcomes data.

During the Fall 2019 term, El Camino piloted its Business Success Team. One of the observations we found was students with Comprehensive Educational plans were more likely to earn more units in the

first year, to be retained to a subsequent term, and to have a lower number of withdrawals. Initially, the discussions began to center around how to get more students to develop comprehensive educational plans. After a deeper look into the data, it was determined most of the people with comprehensive ed plans in the Business Meta-major were also in a cohort with some level of wrap around services. This led to a change in the discussion to determine how the success team could provide wrap around services. Our current South Bay Promise model requires all participants to be a part of one of these cohorts, so creating a meta-major specific cohort that serves all students will allow more students to take advantage of the additional resources the South Bay Promise offers, as well. As this work is still ongoing, we do not have any subsequent outcomes data.

The increased success of students participating in supplemental instruction sections of math and English courses led courses in the STEM pathways to incorporate supplemental instruction (SI) during the Fall 2019 term. SI involves utilizing students who have a good understanding of the subject matter to facilitate weekly review sessions to help students work through the content of the material. Preliminary results showed positive outcomes for students in SI sections of STEM courses and additional sections are utilizing the format Spring 2020.

7. Give us a brief overview of your college culture, including not only positive features but at least two challenges that the culture presents for redesigning the student experience at scale—and how you plan to address them if accepted for CAGP 2020-2022.

El Camino College has a very positive reputation in the community, the Los Angeles South Bay Area. Its mission statement is as follows: "El Camino College makes a positive difference in people's lives. We provide excellent comprehensive educational programs and services that promote student learning and success in collaboration with our diverse communities." The employees of El Camino College definitely live the mission, and their focus is on creating a positive difference in their students' lives—this is evident in the care that instructors take in teaching their classes, the counselors take in advising students, and all staff, faculty and administrators take in ensuring access and success for the students that come through our doors.

However, one challenge is that El Camino is very siloed. People spend the majority of their time in their own areas and rarely venture out to collaborate with other departments. This creates a culture in which people don't know the role of other employees, much less the role of other departments and how they function. To address this, we are in the process of creating cross-functional "success" teams for each meta-major. These teams include instructional faculty, counselors, data coaches, administrators, staff and students.   The members are not necessarily from the same division(s) as where the meta-major is housed. The idea is to harness the expertise of all success team members to focus on enhancing student success. If accepted into CAGP, we will continue to build success teams, and with the help of training and coaching, we hope to expand these teams to include more members and involve all employees on campus.

Another challenge is the use of data to improve student success. Data has yet to become part of the culture at ECC---even as there is more and more discussion involving data and more data collection. However, this has not led to the idea that data should be at the center of all decisions made on campus, and that data should be collected and analyzed to assess the effectiveness of these decisions. We are currently developing the role of the data coach on these cross-functional success teams, and would like

to continue developing this role with the help of the trainings and coaching we would receive as part of the CAGP program.

8. How have you used professional development in concert with your guided pathways efforts under the CCCCO Guided Pathways funding? To whom was it offered and to what end? How would you use it intentionally during CAGP 2020-2022?

Our team has offered both on-campus professional development opportunities as well as taken advantage of off-campus opportunities offered by the chancellor's office and partner organizations such as the RP Group and Career Ladders Project.

For the last three years, the college has offered a "Guided Pathways Winter Summit" which is a whole-day professional development opportunity to advance the work of Guided Pathways. The first summit focused on general concepts to get the campus informed about what Guided Pathways is; the second summit featured a presentation from a representative from EAB justifying the Guided Pathways approach and engagement in activities around meta-majors and program maps. The third (most recent) summit focused around starting up success teams at the college and educating the leaders and participants in these teams about approaches other colleges have taken in this work.

In addition to Guided Pathways-specific opportunities, the team has also looked for opportunities to further the work in already-existing professional development opportunities. Some examples include infusing Guided Pathways into the annual professional development day activities in Fall 2019, including a breakout presentation in the Technology conference about what technological tools can advance the Guided Pathways work. Finally, the annual ECC Counselor Collaborative, which is offered to El Camino counselors and area high school counselors, has the theme of "Guided Pathways" this year to inform participants about changes to come.

The off-campus opportunities that the GP team has taken advantage of to advance Guided Pathways are "Leading from the Middle" and "Strengthening Student Success" offered by the RP Group as well as a variety of Guided Pathways-focused opportunities through IEPI and CLP.

If accepted into CAGP, we would continue to hold the annual winter summit, which would focus around issues that CAGP is asking us to consider in order to gain a wider perspective from more stakeholders. We will start to offer additional summits or whole-day profession development opportunities other times during the year to engage more people in Guided Pathways. We would also continue to look for opportunities to fold Guided Pathways into already-existing professional development opportunities.

9. After engaging with faculty, staff administrators during the CCCCO Guided Pathways period, what have you learned? How would you address engagement, communication and working across traditional siloes in CAGP 2020-2022?

We have learned that much like most changes, some staff, administrators, and faculty have faced Guided Pathways with disbelief, skepticism and confusion . On the other hand, most students are excited about the innovations that Guided Pathways brings. During this period, we have continued to introduce and educate the campus about Guided Pathways and how this new restructuring will help us to reach the Vision for Success goals outlined by the Chancellor's office. The emphasis has been on the fact that this is not an initiative that is going to go away but rather a research-based approach that has been instrumental in producing successful outcomes for all students. We have also learned that until we

make this information relevant to an individual's everyday experience many times the ideas of Guided Pathways are ignored. We will address engagement, communication and breaking down silos by continuing the momentum that we have currently built by leaning on the success team for that extra traction. The introduction of success teams and the beginning of this process has been an exciting one. Many of the teams are up and running with enthusiasm. With this momentum, we hope that this will naturally attract others to help break these barriers and work together towards these goals. In addition to this, we hope to utilize work groups to help distribute the work and get more people involved in this process.   Additionally we have found that unless administrators are fully engaged and understand Guided Pathways it is very hard to get the campus to transform to this new framework.

Applications are due via email to Rob Johnstone at rob@ncii-improve.com by close of business on Friday, March 6th. You may submit the application using PDF or Word formats.

Note: If you are a Cohort One / 2017-2019 CAGP college, your application was sent to your CAGP Team Leads and your president; if you need a copy you can also email me directly at rob@ncii-improve.com