

Outreach and School Relations - Program Review

I. Overview

A. Program Profile

Outreach and School Relations at El Camino College serves as a liaison to the local high schools and community, and is the clearinghouse for the college's outreach and recruitment activities. The program's goals are to inform high school students, teachers, counselors, parents, and the public about educational opportunities at El Camino College; foster positive relationships with K-12 educational partners; and facilitate the transition of students from area high schools to El Camino College. The overall mission of the program is to expand student access to El Camino College. General funding manages this program.

B. Status of Previous Recommendations

The last program review in 2002 for Outreach and School Relations (OSR) included recommendations based on a survey of employees within the department addressing institutional standards that were met or not met. The standards survey is no longer included as part of the program review process. Notwithstanding, the previous recommendations (in italics) and an updated status of those recommendations are listed here.

Communication Processes Within Department: It is the goal of the Outreach and School Relations (OSR) department to improve the communication processes within the department to within standard by the next program review. The department's lack of identity and its frequent reassignment to other divisions and managers has hindered communication within the department. With organizational and managerial stability on the horizon communication will improve. Communication has improved with the appointment of a Director of Outreach and School Relations and the department being assigned to the Enrollment Services Division.

Timely Response to Requests for Info: With the increase of communication within the department this category will improve. A reasonable turnaround time for feedback must be communicated to avoid assumptions. It is the goal of the OSR Director to improve the timely feedback within the department to within standard by the next program review. The timeliness of responses to requests for information has improved with the appointment of a Director of Outreach and School Relations and the department being assigned to the Enrollment Services Division.

Employee Performance Evaluation – Personnel Needs Identified/Positions Requested In a Timely Manner: At the time of the last program review the OSR was composed of a classified coordinator, two classified student services specialist, a non-cert paraprofessional, a casual clerical assistant, and a student helper. At that time it was noted that “the size of this staff does not adequately meet the needs of a campus of 24,000 students.” Today, the staff includes a director, two classified student services specialists and one student worker – two fewer employees than what was called an inadequate staff in 2002. The reorganization of 2002 redefined the role of the OSR on and off campus and addressed staffing issues. Again, while there is more stability in the OSR, understaffing, in particular an administrative assistant for the Director, is a serious concern.

C. Continuing Recommendations

Recommendations from the 2002 program review were intended to meet the institutional standards by this program review. Because the institutional standards are no longer the benchmarks for the program effectiveness, the continuing recommendations listed here are the only ones deemed appropriate at this time. The following recommendations should continue in order to ensure program success:

- The changes in communication within the department will continue and remain a priority
- The director of the OSR will to explore staffing needs
- Hire an Administrative Assistant

II. Program Data

A. Student/Client Satisfaction

Two surveys were conducted for this program review. One, an internal survey of the offices on campus that interact with the Outreach and School Relations staff and the second was an external survey of the high schools which work closely with this department staff. Both the internal and external surveys were identical and asked respondents to rate the OSR in the following areas: Hours of operation, office facilities (appearance, comfort), timeliness of response to your requests, procedures clear and easy to follow, usefulness of materials received, staff helpfulness, staff knowledge, communication with outreach office and overall quality of service.

Hours of Operation – 91% of the respondents rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Office Facilities (appearance, comfort) – 83% rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Timeliness of Response to Requests – 85% rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Procedures Clear and Easy to Follow – 100% rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Usefulness of Materials Received – 100% rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Staff Helpfulness – 100% rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Staff Knowledge – 100% rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Communication with Outreach Office -- 100% rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Overall Quality of Service -- 100% rated the OSR as good or excellent.

Responding to the question, “**Is the Recruitment Office meeting your needs?**” – 92% of the respondents answered yes.

Comments added to the surveys:

- Robin does a great job, but could do better if he had staff!!!
- OSR needs support staff that are able to respond to outside inquiries in a timely manner, not in 6 to 12 months.
- Add staff – OSR has a director yet no admin I/II when most directors on campus have an admin I/II.
- Love having a counselor designated to our school!
- Robin Dreizler emails me immediately when I correspond with him. I have heard some of the ECC staff are mean to the kids I send to the college unless they go to his office.
- We receive fabulous service from Outreach.
- Overall, ECC is the best.
- We need more communication from the various trade/certification departments at El Camino.

Program improvements that should be made based upon the analysis of these surveys and comments: Very few, if any, improvements need to be made with the manner in which information is disseminated to the various shareholders both on and off campus. The staffing shortages are obvious to many however and should be addressed. This office is a model of consistency when it comes to customer service and providing accurate, and timely, information about El Camino College, its programs and services. This exemplary reputation could be even better with additional staff. Too often the director is left to do much of the office clerical work like, filing, processing purchase orders and payment requisitions, answering general phone and email inquiries, and campus tours. The sheer volume of phone calls alone to this office requires that the director return many phone calls from home in the evening or while in transit to and from work. Therefore, the main program improvement to consider would be to address additional staffing needs in order to maintain the high level of customer service the OSR currently provides.

B. Student/Client Outcome Data

Outreach and School Relations tracks the number of students who enroll at El Camino College following high school graduation. While this office is significantly involved with the matriculation process including applications, online testing and assessment, orientations and educational planning, the main goal is to increase awareness of El Camino College's programs and services and encourage students in the South Bay to make an informed decision about higher education. That being the case, the following chart shows enrollment of recent high school graduates from the top 23 feeder high schools for the past 3 years.

Fall Statistics	2003	2004	2005
Banning	57	41	55
Bishop Montgomery	95	90	43
Carson	139	128	129
Crenshaw		49	36
El Segundo	76	75	74
Gardena	213	199	156
Hawthorne	223	184	183
Inglewood	75	69	48
Lawndale	90	77	90
Leuzinger	167	188	127
Mira Costa	164	179	161
Morningside	50	68	56

Fall Statistics	2003	2004	2005
Narbonne	130	157	133
North Torrance	214	243	228
Palos Verdes			13
Palos Verdes Peninsula	129	118	98
Redondo Union	186	216	220
San Pedro	105	108	114
South Torrance	187	169	187
Torrance	224	204	218
Washington	74	75	59
West Torrance	197	169	193
Westchester	44	41	37
TOTALS	2839	2847	2658

The only concern with this data is that it does not accurately reflect the graduating class from the local high schools. Institutional Research provides the data based on age, not graduation year. The data in Colleague, the student system, is currently less accurate when the graduation year is queried compared to querying by age. Until the data captured on the admissions application or online application becomes more accurate, enrollment tracking and trends will be by age and not by grade or graduation year.

Analysis of program data.

The trends show that enrollment was relatively unchanged for the fall 2003 to the fall 2004 semesters. In the fall 2005, after enrollment fees were increased, enrollment decreased by 6%, and decreased statewide as well. In spite of the additional outreach efforts that were added for the 2004/05 fiscal year – outreach counselors were assigned to more than 25 schools – the additional staffing did not significantly improve enrollment numbers. What is difficult to measure is whether enrollment would have decreased even further without the addition of these outreach counselors to assist with recruitment.

Based upon the trends and performance indicator data, it is recommended that the following changes be considered. The Fall 2006 semester will be the first time that the outreach counselor program has been in place for 2 consecutive years. As the enrollment statistics are gathered from these top 23 feeder high schools, most of which have an outreach counselor assigned, a decision needs to be made whether to continue the program or concentrate our outreach and recruiting dollars elsewhere. If the goal is to use the office primarily to recruit students and increase FTES then the office is severely understaffed.

C. Campus/Community Collaboration

Most of the functions within Outreach and School Relations are dependent upon external collaborations and partnerships with other programs or services on campus and in the community. As evidenced by the external surveys, the collaboration with the local high schools is effective and appreciated. Those partnerships will be strengthened with increased communication and added services to ensure a smooth transition for high school seniors. In addition, younger students should be given advanced information on programs and services at El Camino College from at least the middle schools up through high schools. Currently, the OSR, because of its limited staff, tends to be more reactive to requests for speakers to career fairs and college nights. The office should be more proactive in creating events on various high school and middle school campuses, like “El Camino College Days” on the local school campuses.

Internally, there are also a number of collaborations that are critical to both the effectiveness of the OSR as well as the particular program. This office works closely with all programs that are doing outreach like, EOP&S, Financial Aid, Honors Transfer Program, Counseling, Admissions and Records, Inglewood Center, Public Relations and Marketing, Women in Technology, Career and Technical Education, Business Outreach, Athletics, Special Resources Center, and Testing/Assessment. This office has assisted with various program’s open house promotion, Senior Day, Career Expo, Space Science Day, Afternoon College and Community Education. Again, part of the effectiveness survey addressed the collaborations between this office and so many partners on campus.

Outreach and School Relations personnel can strengthen these collaborations or partnerships through continued communication and efforts to institutionalize this office as the central clearinghouse for all outreach efforts. There are still a few offices that are doing outreach or recruitment without the OSR’s knowledge. It is important to communicate these outreach activities so as not to duplicate efforts.

D. Program Data Recommendations

- The changes in communication within the department will continue and remain a priority
- The director of the OSR will to explore staffing needs
- Hire an Administrative Assistant
- Continue to strengthen collaborations and/or campus partnerships through continued communication as efforts to institutionalize this office as the central clearinghouse for all outreach efforts remain.
- The office should be more proactive in creating outreach events on various high school and middle school campuses

III. Program Requirements

A. Program Support

As mentioned in the Campus/Community Collaboration section above, this office is dependant on many offices to be effective. One example is the support this office receives from EOP&S and the Inglewood Center staff. There are far more events that El Camino College is invited to than staff available in Outreach and School Relations. The directors of EOP&S and the Inglewood Center for events in the north part of our district have both been very generous with their time and staff in helping cover outreach events. Likewise the director of workforce development has offered staff from the Women in Technology program as well as the coordinator of Career and Technical Education. Without this support the Outreach and School Relations would suffer, but more importantly, many community events would not have an El Camino College presence.

B. Facilities and Equipment

Facilities and equipment in Outreach and School Relations are adequate at this time. It is unfortunate that computer replacement could not occur until the current equipment totally stopped working. Additional storage could be addressed at this time but with the new building coming up soon, storage issues can be put on hold until the next program review.

C. Staffing

As mentioned before in both the 2002 program review and the internal and external surveys for this review, the size of this staff does not adequately meet the needs of a campus of 24,000 students. The volume of phone calls to the director's office alone should be enough to raise concern. Each year, the director receives between 2,500 and 3,000 phone *messages*. The Director answers the phone as often as possible when in the office. The director recently ran a test to see how many people who call Outreach and School Relations actually leave a message. Less than 40% of those calling the office left a message. So, with nearly 3,000 phone messages, this means as many as 4,000 more phone calls to the office go unanswered. The director tries to answer the more frequent questions on the outgoing voice message but this is no way to effectively recruit prospective students. It is again stressed and recommended that the staffing issues be addressed.

Another concern is the need for an additional recruiter who is bi-lingual in Spanish. This request continues to be made by many of the local schools for various events. While the director of Outreach and School Relations is conversational in Spanish, a higher level of knowledge of the language is often needed to explain complex procedures and in many cases the law as with AB540. A premium should also be placed on staffing that is bi-lingual Spanish.

Personnel Trend

Personnel Type	Current Level		In 3 - 5 years		Retirement	
	# of Staffing	FTE	# of Staffing	FTE	# of Staffing	FTE
Full-time Faculty (Tenure Track)						
Full-time Faculty (Non-Tenure Track)						
Part-time Adjunct Faculty			3	1.5		
Full-time Classified Staff	2	2	3	3	1	1
Part-time Classified Staff (Permanent)						
Part-time Classified (Temporary)						
Casual Employees						
Student Employees	1		1 to 3	-		
Manager	1	1	1	1		
Supervisor						
Temporary Project Administrator						
Faculty Coordinator						

FTE: Full Time Equivalent (i.e., 2 employees working at 50% would equal 1 FTE)

How does this data impact the program or the future of the program?

As mentioned throughout this program review, inadequate staffing is a concern. The program will continue with or without additional staffing but in order to compete in an increasingly competitive recruiting arena, staffing should be addressed now.

Program personnel are all current in their field.

List and prioritize all staffing recommendations.

- An admin assistant is critical to the continued success of outreach
- A bi-lingual Spanish recruiter should be a priority when addressing in the staffing needs
- Part-time adjunct faculty would be a welcome addition at the high schools to assist with the educational planning step of the matriculation process.

D. Planning

A number of changes or trends could impact Outreach and School Relations within the next five years. Funding will most likely drive any future planning with the OSR. The recent implementation of the California High School Exit Exam could also affect enrollment from and at the dominant local feeder high schools and El Camino College may need to re-direct some of its marketing in the high schools toward a changing demographic. Enrollment analysis looks promising in the local area in terms of the number of students who should be graduating from the local high schools. However, because of the competitive nature of higher education in the South Bay, a premium should be placed on earlier marketing to a younger audience of prospective students. The key learning outcome will be in making sure students, at an early grade level in high school, are able to make an informed decision about college, El Camino College specifically, and their future.

As mentioned, funding and staffing issues could be a major concern for the future of the OSR. Alternative funding and staffing resources should be investigated. For example, if the outreach counseling program is discontinued, a volunteer student ambassador program could be considered. Likewise, if funding is eliminated, increased internal communication, partnerships and coordination for coverage at local outreach events and activities will be required. Fortunately OSR has successfully managed in the past with limited funding and staffing and a return to this state would not put the office or El Camino College's recruiting efforts in jeopardy.

The data that is currently available is adequate for improving program development. The only concern the OSR has at this point is that the data be accurate and that data integrity is not sacrificed at the expense of processing applications in a timely manner. This office would prefer data be accurate rather than quickly processed.

Program personnel are in weekly, if not daily, communication with management of the program. As per the recommendations of the last program review, a premium has been placed on maintaining and effectively communicating the future program plans, changes affecting the program and this office's ability to adapt. Program personnel are given quite a bit of freedom when it comes to the implementation of the programs plans. It is the opinion of the Director of the Outreach and School Relations that the personnel in the trenches, the ones meeting face-to-face with the students are the people who should be making the decisions when it comes to the methods used to disseminate information on El Camino College's programs and services. Thus, the personnel from the OSR are heavily involved in the creation and implementation of program plans.

The goal of the OSR is to disseminate information and answer questions about El Camino College and higher education so that prospective students, high school students and their parents, can make an informed decision about higher education.

E. Program Requirement Recommendations

- An admin assistant is critical to the continued success of outreach
- A bi-lingual Spanish recruiter should be a priority when addressing in the staffing needs
- Part-time adjunct faculty would be a welcome addition at the high schools to assist with the educational planning step of the matriculation process
- Maintain flexibility with program personnel in times of limited funding and staffing

IV. Recommendations

Outreach and School Relations personnel focus on marketing and promoting the value and advantages of attending El Camino College. A majority of what is accomplished through this department in achieving these desired outcomes centers around improving internal and external communications – a critical institutional goal. With each of the recommendations listed below, Outreach and School Relations will improve and enhance internal and external communication.

- An administrative assistant is critical to the continued success of outreach – \$58,000.
- At least one bi-lingual Spanish recruiter should be the standard for El Camino College based on demographic studies of our surrounding community – \$15,000 to \$25,000.
- 2 to 3 part-time adjunct faculty counselors to assist with educational plans at the high schools as needed – \$40,000 to \$60,000
- The recent adjustments in communication internally within the department will remain a priority.
- The office will proactive in creating outreach events on various high school and middle school campuses – internal partnerships will be critical to the success of any significant outreach activity.
- Employees will be provided with updated job descriptions on an annual basis
- The OSR personnel will strengthen internal and external collaborations and partnerships through continued communication to establish this office as the central clearinghouse for all outreach efforts on campus.