Peer Team Report
On
Extended Opportunities Programs & Services

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Area 1: Mission
Findings:

The mission of the EOPS program is to "provide quality education that enriches lives and builds futures" by offering support to students who otherwise might not be able to participate and benefit from college education. Affirmative action to ensure student success and retention is taken through priority registration, text book vouchers, financial support and grants, when available. Mandatory meetings with counselors also contribute to a persistence rate that is significantly higher for EOPS students than for the regular AVC population.

Area 2: History
Findings:

Student counts for the program have remained in the 1200 – 1250 count each year over the time frame for this evaluation study. This is considerably higher than the cap imposed by the Chancellor's office (880 students). In spring 2009, the Chancellor's office program site visitation team recommended a reduction of enrolled students to more adequately meet the needs of those students in the program.

To ensure student success, changes in the program include transition to a case-management system for student interviews and Program Monitor Evaluation (PME) to track student progress towards their educational goals. Additionally, all students must now attend a program orientation session as part of the program application.

Services provided in the past four years include Outreach/Recruitment, orientation, implementation of a six semester student education plan, priority registration, counseling services, academic and financial support, EOPS 060 course development, student recognition, referral services, scholarships, Region VI EOPS Summer Institute, development of student learning outcomes (SLOs) and program learning outcomes (PLOs), annual meetings of the EOPS Advisory committee, probation workshops for students on academic probation, development of brochures translated into Spanish.

Area 3: Curriculum
Findings:

No degrees or certificates are offered through EOPS. When offered, EOPS 060 provides skills and information to students to support them in the achievement of their personal and academic goals. SLOs which support PLOs and ILOs have been established for this course. Course outlines of record (CORs) are current and adhered to by teaching faculty.

Area 4: Student Support and Development
Findings:

Statistically, from 2006 - 2009 a disproportionately high number of EOPS students have been African American when compared to all AVC students and more African American students than other groups have met the criteria for the Board of Governor's Waiver (BOGW), prescribed by Title 5 to identify students with an economic disadvantage and increased eligibility to enter the EOPS program. More students than recommended by the Chancellor's office (1200 versus the 880 cap) have been accommodated each year, resulting in reduced textbook vouchers and financial grants but increased overall access to other services. The recommendation to reduce the student numbers in the EOPS program would limit access and assistance for some students but provide increased per capita resources and reduce the work load on current staff. Reductions to the program due to budgetary constraints in the past two years include loss of the EOPS 060 course, reductions in financial grants and textbook/meal vouchers, reductions in overload for counselors and classified staff, loss of a Math tutor in the instructional support area and reductions to the outreach initiative.

The persistence and success rates of students in the EOPS and CARE programs are similar to the overall college average when comparing degree and certificate completion, and transfer preparedness. The success rates may even be slightly higher but limited statistical analysis/ explanation of the study parameters was provided by the Chancellor's office. Success here is attributed to PME described in Area 3, the Scheduling and Reporting System (SARS) for creation of student appointments, the case management system and mandatory student orientation sessions.

Area 5: Data Analysis and Environmental Scan
Findings:

Analysis shows that female students are 8% higher in the EOPS program than the AVC average and 35% higher in the CARE program than the AVC average. Further study is needed to ascertain the cause of this difference, although access to child care is likely a significant attraction for single mothers. Student ethnicity data suggest that disadvantaged Hispanic students may be slightly underrepresented in the CARE program and EOPS. Student age statistics suggest that there may be an underrepresentation of students under the age of 20 years in the EOPS/CARE programs. Further detail and clarification of data provided by the Chancellor's office may be needed to determine whether higher outreach to these particular demographic groups may be required to ensure equal representation of all under-advantaged groups.

Measures to improve the EOPS program access to under represented demographic populations have been identified. Strategies being implemented include translating brochures and information flyers into Spanish, planning orientation meetings in Spanish language, high school outreach, nurturing a more active relationship with the community Advisory committee and the AVC Outreach program and working towards a more unified career center where EOPS students will receive career assessment.

Area 6: Student and Program Learning Outcomes
Findings:

EOPS/CARE evaluates student and program learning outcomes through student surveys as well as staff review of survey data. Staff meetings allow for ongoing evaluation of how the program could more effectively meet the PLO and SLO objectives. Student survey results show a high level of satisfaction with services being provided by counselors and a high level of understanding of the steps required at the college level to pursue a career goal successfully.

Through review of the survey data, EOPS analysis of the student and program learning outcomes has strongly influenced their program review and the improvements and revisions in the program that have been implemented, e.g. PME and case-management counseling system.

Area 7: Collaboration with Other Programs
Findings:

EOPS is directly involved with a variety of campus programs within the student services division, including the counseling and matriculation department, the student outreach program, all categorical program directors (weekly meetings), and tutoring service directors at the Student Learning Center and Job Placement Center. Close communication with the AVC business office and the Palmdale center is also a necessity to ensure fiscal accountability and sound planning for the growing new campus.

Plans are in place to collaborate and reach out to other funding sources and entities on campus and off campus to fill current budgetary gaps and help the program continue to provide necessary services for EOPS/CARE students. Potential funding sources include Basic Skills and the AVC Foundation on campus, as well as CSUN, CSUB, and other entities off campus.

Area 8: Outreach Activities
Findings:

EOPS/CARE will continue to participate and coordinate various outreach activities described in other areas of the report. Outreach activities are not required to recruit additional students (the EOPS program has been advised to adhere to the cap set by the Chancellor's office) but may be advisable to ensure that resources are divided and allocated in a manner that accurately reflects the demographic diversity of the college student catchment area.

Area 9: Goals and Objectives
Findings:

Findings in this area of the report will be updated on an annual basis. Goals include assessment of PLOs and their ongoing refinement and validation, development of a

student survey system allowing data collection over time that will provide ongoing analysis of the effectiveness of EOPS program services, increased efforts to secure funds for the EOPS program, collaboration with other campus services, ongoing training for EOPS staff in the use of computers and relevant software programs and the introduction and establishment of services at the Palmdale Center.

Area 10: Long Term Resource Planning
Findings:

Findings in this area of the report will be updated on an annual basis. A high priority is the maintenance of current full time staffing levels (1 program director, 4 counselors, 1 EOPS specialist, 3 EOPS technicians) to ensure the ongoing provision of assessment and counseling services. Computers and monitors for all staff members are also a priority. As the state budget improves, long term vision includes plans to increase staffing and develop the Palmdale presence include new staffing requests pursuant to Title 5 guidelines:

- An assistant director
- Two counselors
- Three technicians
- Three student assistants
- Implementation of web resources and emerging technologies at the Palmdale campus

Area 11: Recommendations and Comments
Interviews with the faculty and staff confirm broad participation in the self-study report and support of its content.

1. Until the budgetary crisis improves, the Peer Team recommends restraint and prudence in limiting the number of students recruited into EOPS to the levels presently being served or fewer, so that those in the program may have their needs adequately met and so that counselors and certificated staff will not become overwhelmed. It was not clear from the report how strongly the advice from the Chancellor's office to stay within the student cap limits of Title 5 was worded. The Peer Team advocates positive cooperation with the Chancellor's office and adherence to state policies.

2. Maintenance of the current staffing levels to provide continued quality service to EOPS students through the valuable input of counselors and support staff. Additional proposed staffing needs carrying a high salary overhead (such as a future assistant director at the Palmdale campus) may require additional justification in terms of workload analysis, duties, responsibilities and accountabilities, hours of work estimated etc.

3. Requests to the Chancellor's office and Institutional Research for further data details and analysis to allow more concrete conclusions to be derived from the trends reflected and suggested by present data. This may permit the next cycle of

Program Review self study to make a stronger report of the successful outcomes being achieved. It may also allow the EOPS program to have a clearer idea of whether all demographic groups within the Lancaster/Palmdale area are being equally accessed, represented and served. Without this information, outreach efforts cannot be successfully evaluated or planned.

4. The Peer team recognizes the challenges presented by the present budgetary cuts and congratulates the EOPS director and staff on their creative approaches in seeking additional funding for the program. Continued resourcefulness and opportunity seeking is to be recommended. Collaborations with other AVC campus programs with the same goals may lead to productive new ways to use the funding that is presently available.

5. The Peer team would like to recognize the worthiness and value of the services being provided by EOPS and would recommend that restoration of the budget allocations to assist students in need be a strong priority when financial conditions begin to improve.