

# Synopsis of Completion Model Conversations

## Our Approach: Appreciative Inquiry

The completion team formed in late Fall 2019 as one of five workgroups connected to Gavilan's Guided Pathways Initiative. The goal of the completion workgroup is to develop a completion model that will enable the college to provide each student with relevant and timely academic and non-academic support, which are seamlessly integrated into the student experience.

The team utilized an appreciative inquiry approach that allowed us to engage in conversation with every instructional and student services department on campus to approach large-scale change and means for identifying challenges, changes, and concerns in ways that builds on the successful, effective, and energizing experiences of our campus community. Departmental conversations were structured and guided to inquire on the following components of a completion model: Academic Support, Counseling, Career Exploration, Peer Support, Financial Aid, Data (Access to and use of) and Division Dean.

Departmental conversations were completed between Spring 2020 and Spring 2021. During that period the committee provided summary reports to all departments of their findings and offered time for clarification. At the same time, we explored and learned about other college completion models, including the Santa Rosa Junior College's structure of Student Success Programs around four main goals. Students should (1) be invited and welcomed; (2) be guided and supported; (3) be engaged and empowered; and (4) succeed and complete a certificate, degree, or transfer.

## What We Learned:

What we've learned is based on the following:

- Analysis of current successful practices of existing programs at Gavilan College
- Feedback provided during extensive conversations across campus with instructional departments and student services.
- Research of existing Guided Pathways programs and completion team models at other Community Colleges.
- Understanding of practices that reinforce the Guided Pathways scale of adoption measures that currently exist on campus within specialized programs and have potential for scaling across all disciplines.

Guided Pathways Scale of Adoption Measures for Pillar 3: Stay on the Path

<b>PILLAR 3</b>	<b>STAY ON THE PATH</b>
<b>Practice A</b>	Counselors monitor which program every student is in and how far along the student is toward completing the program requirements.
<b>Practice B</b>	Students can easily see how far they have come and what they need to do to complete their program.
<b>Practice C</b>	Counselors and students are alerted when students are at risk of falling o their program plans and have policies and support in place to intervene in ways that help students get back on track.
<b>Practice D</b>	Assistance is provided to students who are unlikely to be accepted into limited-access programs, such as nursing or culinary arts, to redirect them to another more viable path to credentials and a career.

## Instructional & Student Services Conversations

### Synopsis of findings:

#### Academic Support

- Online academic support and instruction on how to navigate the online experience needs to be offered to all students via an effective communication platform with texting capabilities.
- Embedded librarians, welcome center, peer mentors, tutoring center, writing center, Embedded writing assistants/tutors, learning commons, when integrated into the curriculum and supported by faculty, generate best results.
- Loss of early connect impacted departments.
- 2-yr Integrated Student Services and Academic Annual calendar showcasing all support services, registration events, deadlines, etc.
- More targeted efforts and proactive engagement of students for specific populations (student not enrolled, close to graduation, on probation, special programs and basic needs)
- Need for identifying liaisons in all Student Services areas (who to contact, when) embedded within the meta-majors (part of a coordinated care model).
- Webpages need to use student friendly language and provide direct information within portals.

#### Career Exploration

- Faculty within disciplines currently self-initiate career exploration with students. Invite guest speakers to classes, host alumni panels, advise discipline specific clubs, ie. Future Educators Club, Comm Club, in addition to assigning portfolio & interview assignments, etc.
- College Faire utilized and high exposure (when we were meeting face to face on campus) Nonexistent online.
- Suggestion to rename Career Exploration to - Explore Professions within your Pathway. More inviting to students.
- Increase industry partnerships and paid internship opportunities for all majors/clusters and integrate experience into the curriculum.
- Need to integrate career exploration and support into the curriculum or students experience through a First Year Experience (FYE) or another identified course in the pathway.
- Library can partner to provide significant resource support for career exploration.

## Counseling

- Disparity identified in counseling services for disciplines not served by a designated counselor or served by special programs such as EOPS, TRIO, CALWORKS, Puente, Non-Credit, etc.
  - Identify Counselor/s for each cluster to follow the Guided Pathway model
  - Praise for designated counselors assigned to disciplines such as Allied Health, Administration of Justice, Aviation, Cosmetology, Child Development, English, Kinesiology, STEM, Special Programs
  - Need for Counselor knowledge of all career options within disciplines and support in choosing discipline-specific majors, particularly those under the Fine Arts umbrella.
- In-class counseling presentations effective in making a personal connection with student & pathway
- Faculty mentors for majors a viable option. Stipends once offered.
- Identify peer mentors for each cluster to follow the Guided Pathways model.
- Need to systematically celebrate student milestones and accomplishments.
- Students who meet with a Counselor at the beginning of the semester and are provided counseling services year-round have a better start and more guidance for the duration of their time at Gavilan.
- Need staff support to help coordinate student communication, timelines, etc.
- Students who connect early with a Counselor or Peer Mentor are more likely (than the district average) to complete matriculation and persist through completion of certificate or degree.

## Data

- Access to data that is easy to disaggregate (by cluster, program, discipline, and student demographics) beyond what ARGOS & GavDATA has to offer.
- Inequity resulting in faculty having to resort to surveying courses and compiling data on their own.
- Request for data coach to train faculty and student support services staff with locating data, creating and interpreting data, monitoring existing majors, certificates, and graduates, establishing an alumni tracking system, targeted data based interventions, etc.
- Data is necessary, but practitioner accountability is key
- Identify student milestones/benchmarks for recognition and support.
- Semester report provided to each department with disaggregated info, graduation, student persistence, course success rates, declared majors, race and ethnicity etc.

### Division Dean

- Disparity between departments and level of engagement between Dean and faculty.
- Need more support from Dean for program viability and growth.
- Some Deans praised for supporting and being advocates for the programs and departments.
- Dean partners should be familiar with the meta-major and have awareness of courses needed for graduation to ensure the course schedule provides options for students (a particular consideration for cancelling courses and of concern for small programs or programs facing discontinuations).

### Financial Aid

- Timelines/Deadlines - Improved information flow to students both on campus & online.
- Timeliness of financial aid is crucial since it adversely affects enrollment, cancellation of classes and student success when delayed.
- Response to student inquiries delayed or non-existent online likely due to staff shortages.
- Confusion about financial aid terms, BOG, CCPG, College Promise, Grants, Scholarships. What are the differences, and do I qualify? Need for student-friendly language and provide financial literacy.
- Improve Financial aid workshop promotion and attendance.
- Equity concerns regarding Full time vs. Part time students' access to financial aid.
- Importance of disaggregating the way FA looks at data, so more eyes are on the data--can engage in dialogue around data through multiple perspectives.
- Importance of identifying liaisons for special populations (Undocumented, Homeless, Foster Youth, Promise) and have this information available on the website.

- Need to increase FAFSA/CADAA application rate – a whole campus approach for connecting students to financial resources and follow-up (incomplete applications, verifications, etc.)
- Support for students is critical: access to financial resources is a significant factor in student success \*Data from Gavilan Title V grant

### Peer Support

- Instrumental in helping students achieve their academic goals; most effective when integrated into the class curriculum and part of programs.
- Welcome Center receives positive feedback.
- Evening students lack access to peer support services, particularly those students at satellite campuses.
- Identify peer mentors for each cluster to follow the Guided Pathways model.
- Student Ambassador model for Basic Needs awareness and outreach seems promising
- Need for better process to do the “warm hand off” for students both in-person and virtual environments have challenges.

### First Year Experience

- Concern about adding additional units onto the student’s coursework load.
- A General Education Guidance Course taught by Counselors with visiting program presenting on their major and career options suggested.
- Some programs (Kinesiology, CD, STEM etc.) already offer courses that explore career options, emphasis on majors, etc.
- Concern if student decides to change major that they do not have to retake FYE course.
- Intentional outreach, on-campus face to face orientation, campus tours, increase the likelihood of attending Gavilan College.
- Establishing a connection and building relationships early is key: First year support is crucial and modeled by special programs.\*Data from EOPS, CalWORKs, TRiO, PUENTE, Athletics, MESA/STEM show higher completion rates for students.

### Next Steps:

The Completion Team plans to present the Findings and Recommendations as an information item to Academic Senate on their December 7th meeting date and present on all standing shared governance committees.