



SIERRA
COLLEGE
1936 • 2016

Educational Master Plan



2016–2026

Sierra College 2016-2026 Educational Master Plan

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Purpose

The Educational Master Plan delineates educational outcomes, district goals, and planning assumptions that will inform institutional program development and resource allocation as it pertains to projects where long-range planning is indicated and establishes a context for college and district initiatives.

Executive Summary

Sierra College has a long history of supporting students in Placer and Nevada Counties, as well as the greater Sacramento region. Over the past two decades, Sierra College has seen the number of students it enrolls increase by 50% only to see that number go through cycles of boom and bust along with California's economy. As Sierra College celebrates its 80th anniversary, it is once again in a period of declining enrollment. In addition, new state mandates are forcing faculty and staff to critically examine how we ensure students achieve their goals. Further, changes in technology provide opportunities and challenges to the way we provide services and learning opportunities to students.

These challenges represent an opportunity for Sierra College to leverage its strengths—a collaborative, positive work environment; engaged faculty and staff; and a willingness to experiment—in order to create a better, more responsive learning environment that maximizes student potential.

Background

Sierra College had its beginnings in 1882 as "Sierra Normal College" in Auburn and shared its early history with Placer High School. Tracing its birth from the establishment of Placer Junior College in 1936, it was not until the aftermath of World War II that enrollments began their consistent climb from a low point of 53 students in 1943. By 1961, when the main campus opened in Rocklin, 1,500 students were enrolled in the new location. With the explosive growth of the student population in the 1960s and the region of Placer County in the 1980s, Sierra College continued to grow. Enrollments reached 10,000 in 1980 and by fall 2008 there were 21,448 students enrolled at the college. However, subsequent enrollment has declined to 18,635 students by fall 2014¹. In 2016, Sierra College celebrates its 80th anniversary.

The single-college district includes four campuses: a main campus on 300 acres in Rocklin, a 115-acre Nevada County Campus in Grass Valley, a 73-acre Tahoe-Truckee Campus and the Roseville Gateway Center in Roseville. Sierra College began offering classes in the Tahoe Truckee area as early as 1969, with an official district-owned campus opening in 2009. Since the college's 50th anniversary in 1986, additional satellite campuses were opened at Roseville Gateway, and Nevada County, expanding the physical presence of the college even further in Placer and Nevada Counties. Currently Sierra College is working with the City of Roseville to develop a new center in downtown Roseville that will replace the Roseville Gateway Center.

Sierra College has a historic role in the community as an institution committed to the educational advancement of students in academic/transfer programs as well as career and technical education.

Mission and Vision

Sierra College Mission Statement

Sierra College provides a challenging and supportive learning environment for students having diverse goals, abilities, and needs interested in transfer, career and technical training, and lifelong learning. The College's programs and services encourage students to identify and to expand their potential. Sierra College students are supported in developing the knowledge, skills and abilities to be fully engaged and contributing members of the community.

Sierra College Vision Statement

We will challenge ourselves and our community to become fulfilled citizens in a global environment by contributing to and engaging in the thoughtful application of knowledge guided by respect for others and the world in which we live.

Core Values

The following core values will establish our ethical principles and will guide our institutional decision-making.

Sierra College will:

¹ California Community College Chancellor's Office DataMart

1. Support and model excellence in teaching, learning, scholarship, and creativity.
2. Provide the tools for continuing success in an ever-changing world.
3. Provide and demonstrate the value of an inclusive and equitable community.
4. Demonstrate collaboration in decision making.
5. Foster active citizenship in our community, our nation, and our world.
6. Create and nurture meaningful connections to our community.
7. Recognize that students are active participants in their education.
8. Support and demonstrate the sustainable use of all resources.

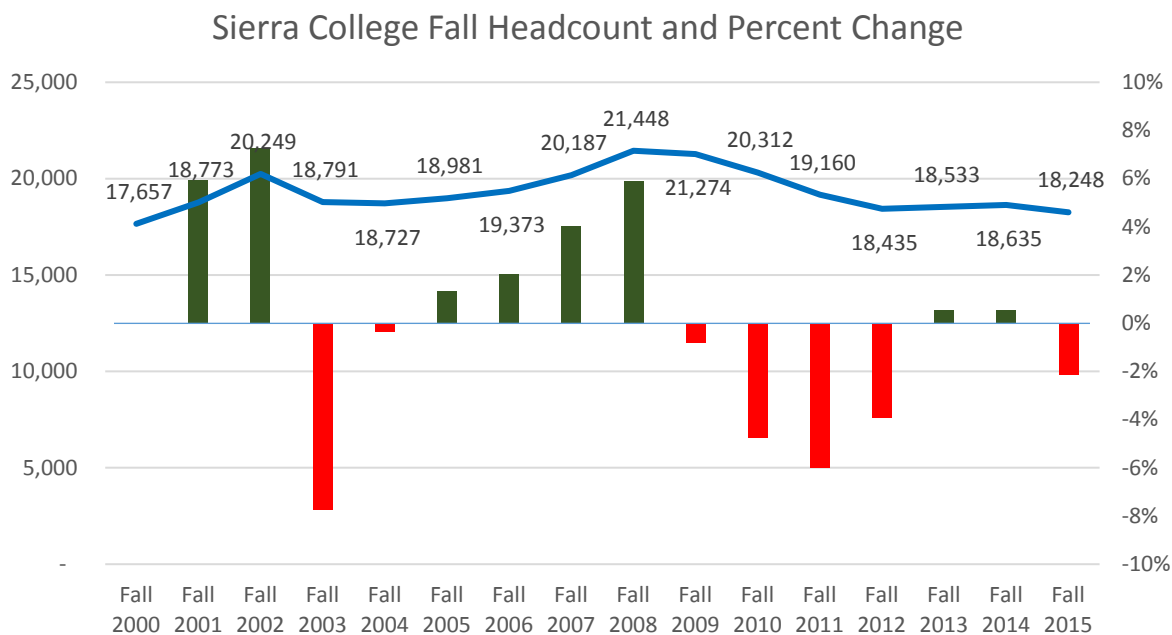
Programs

In order to support its Mission and support broader educational goals established by the State of California through Title 5 regulations, Sierra College currently offers 95 degrees and 78 certificates in 50 different educational areas. Since 2011, Sierra College has added 28 Associate Degrees for Transfer (AA-T/AS-T) in 27 educational areas. As of spring 2016, there are currently 36 approved Transfer Model Curricula for articulation between the California Community Colleges and the California State University.²

Sierra College is fully accredited through the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Students

Figure 1



The number of students attending Sierra College has fluctuated significantly with the California economy. Peak enrollment occurred during the Fall 2008 semester when unduplicated student

² Transfer Model Curriculum Information (<https://c-id.net/degreereview.html>)

enrollment reached 21,448³. In the fall of 2014, 35.8% of students attended full-time, which is similar to historical rates of FT attendance, but lower than the recent peak of 40.3% in 2011⁴.

Much like the rest of California, Sierra College is becoming more diverse. While Sierra College is still predominantly non-Hispanic, White, the proportion of students has dropped substantial and will likely continue to drop for the foreseeable future. In 2009, 72% of students reported they were non-Hispanic White, by Fall 2014, that number had decreased to 66%. The number of students reporting they were Hispanic or Multi-ethnic had increase during that time period, but most other groups had similar ratios.

While the proportion of Female, Male, or Undeclared gender students has shifted over the past few years, it has returned to the approximately the same distribution as it had in 2009.

In Fall 2014, nearly half of students (49.4%) declared their educational goal was to Transfer with an AA/AS. The next closest educational goal was Transfer without an AA/AS (11.2%).⁵ As of Fall 2014, the most common majors for Sierra College students are Nursing (8.9%), Business Administration (5.9%), Biological Sciences (5.7%), Psychology (3.4%), and Engineering (3.0%).⁶

Figure 2

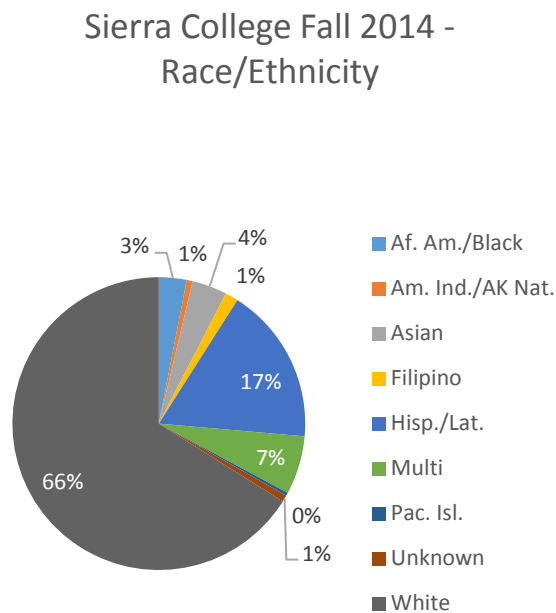
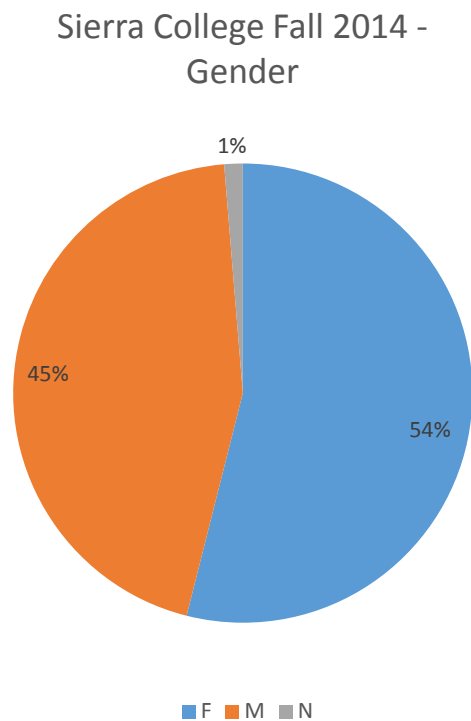


Figure 3



³ CCCC DataMart

⁴ 2015 Sierra College Factbook, page 9

⁵ 2015 Sierra College Factbook, page 15

⁶ 2015 Sierra College Factbook, page 16

Faculty and Staff

During the Fall 2015 semester, Sierra College employed:

Executive: 5

Educational Administrators: 16

Classified Supervisors & Confidential: 32

Classified: 231

Full-time Faculty: 235

Part-time Faculty: 669

Internal Trends

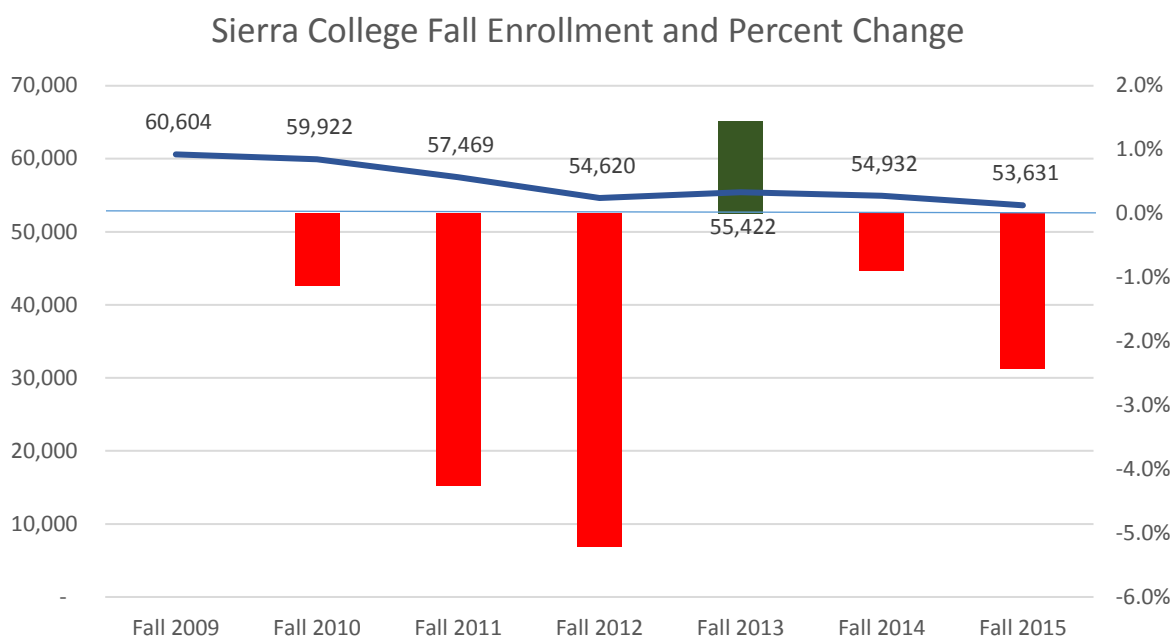
As part of the Educational Master Planning process, members of the EMP Taskforce conducted 3 focus groups and administered a districtwide survey that asked faculty and staff about Sierra College's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT). The committee reviewed this feedback and relevant internal data, and identified several trends.

Overall there was a great deal of similarity between the themes present in the focus groups and in the survey responses. Overall, Sierra College staff (administrators, classified, and faculty) feel that there is a climate of inclusion on campus and generally speaking staff feel Sierra College has a collegial, collaborative environment. Some respondents also felt that as a results of its collaborative environment, Sierra College had developed a culture of innovation. Staff generally felt that our quality of instruction and the quality of our students were excellent and that because of this Sierra College enjoys a positive reputation in the community and with other colleges and universities. Finally, many staff felt our location represented a tremendous strength. However, staff also identified a number of fairly consistent weaknesses. First, although Sierra College is ideally located, the Rocklin campus is old and many buildings need renovation. Although both the Nevada County Campus (NCC) and Tahoe Truckee Campus are relatively new, their relative distance from the Rocklin Campus creates barriers—such as unclear lines of authority and poor communication—that create friction or slow decision making. Even though staff identified our positive climate and atmosphere as a positive, many also faulted this for leading to slow decision making and that decisions were still not collaborative enough. One of the most common weaknesses identified is the large proportion of part-time faculty Sierra College employees. Many respondents felt that this high ratio of part-time to full-time faculty created a large burden on full-time faculty, decreased student access to faculty, and potentially decreased the consistency high quality of instruction. Staff identified a number of opportunities that worth exploring in greater detail, however four common opportunities were very prevalent: improving outreach to our local business and communities, continue to broaden and modernize the types of Career Technical Education (CTE) programs offered, be more innovative in our curriculum and curriculum delivery, and provide more individualized support for students.

Enrollment

In many respects the perceived threats to Sierra College align with current enrollment trends. Perhaps most concerning, Sierra College has seen a large decline in the number of students, but this has also resulted in a large decline in enrollments and Full-time Equivalent Students (FTES). In the Fall 2009 Semester, Sierra College had 60,604 student enrollments, but that had declined to 53,631 enrollments by Fall 2014—a decrease of 9.35%, Figure 4.⁷ Enrollments in the Spring semesters have seen a similar 9.83% decline over the same time period. The lone bright spot has been an increase in the number of enrollments during the summer semesters. Although, the summer 2014 enrollment was lower than the 2009 enrollment, the summer enrollments have grown from 6,119 in 2012 to 10,451 in 2014, a 70.80% increase. Sierra College is not alone in seeing enrollment declines. Nationally, public two-year colleges have seen year over year declines in enrollment of 2-4% for at least the past 3 years⁸.

Figure 4



While the concern surrounding the decreases is districtwide, the Nevada County Campus (NCC) has seen the largest proportional decrease. From Fall 2009 to Fall 2014, the enrollment at NCC has decreased by 24.3% and the unduplicated headcount has decreased by 25.7%.⁹ Unlike the Rocklin Campus, NCC primarily receives its students from its immediate service area. As will be discussed in External Trends, the decrease in enrollment at NCC can largely be attributed to changes in the Nevada County population, as well as some erosion to online courses.

Although Sierra College enrollment as a whole has declined, enrollment in Distance Education courses, primarily online courses, have grown modestly over the past several years. From Fall

⁷ 2015 Sierra College Factbook, page 2

⁸ National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, Current Term Enrollment Estimates – Fall 2015

⁹ 2015 Sierra College Factbook, page 99

2009 to Fall 2014, Sierra College online enrollment grew from 5,797 enrollments to 6,854 enrollments (18.23%). This increase has hid a general decline in the number of instructional television offerings (ITV). In Fall 2015, the Distance Learning and Instructional Technology (DLIT) Committee recommended that Sierra College discontinue its ITV program and repurpose the existing studio space to support online courses and curriculum. Consequently, Sierra will discontinue ITV courses beginning with the Fall 2016 semester.¹⁰ Although online education has grown, there is some concern that that growth has come at the expense of traditional, face-to-face classes.

In some discordance with the decline in enrollment, Sierra College has seen large numbers of students unable to enroll in courses or on long waitlists. Analysis showed the need for dozens of sections within key courses. In response, beginning in Spring 2016, departments have begun reevaluating which courses will be offered and when. Many, but not all, of the courses with long wait lists are in high demand general education courses, science, and math courses. The long waitlists in science courses appear partially based on the availability of lab spaces, which the college is temporarily addressing through temporary buildings. Although the current facilities master plan (FMP) calls for a new science building, it is unclear when Sierra College will have the resources to enact the FMP. It is worth noting that the FMP is being designed to cap Sierra College's headcount to approximately 22,500 students on the Rocklin Campus. Although there is sufficient buildable space to accommodate more students, expanding beyond that threshold has significant environmental impact, which become extremely costly to mitigate.

SSSP and Equity

In 2012, the Student Success Taskforce released a series of eight recommendations to improve student success across all California Community Colleges. The eight recommendations (and their 21 sub-recommendations) provided a broad framework to improve student completion that focused on systemic changes and incentivizing student success. In May 2012, the State Senate, via SB 1456, made several changes to Title V, which codified several of the Taskforce recommendations. The changes ultimately resulted in the Student Success & Support Program (SSSP)—a replacement for the previous Matriculation Program.¹¹ In 2014, Governor Brown included funding for colleges to enact improvements related to their Student Equity Plans (Equity). Although Title V had required colleges examine the success of certain student groups previously, the new budget language provided financial support for these initiatives and identified several new groups for consideration. While these are external initiatives, funding for the SSSP and Equity programs added millions of dollars of categorical funds to the Sierra College budget and has resulted in dozens of new hires, almost exclusively within the student services areas. While the SSSP program is intended to improve the success of all students, the Sierra College Equity Plan specifically targets populations of students that were disproportionately impacted in one of 15 indicators within the five categories of Access, Course Completion, ESL/Basic Skills Completion, Degree or Certificate Completion, and Transfer. The 2015 Equity Plan identified African-American, Foster Youth, and Female American Indian

¹⁰ Academic Senate Recollections – 12/2/15

¹¹ California Community College Chancellor's Office

students as the groups with largest rates of disparate impact, but other groups were likely see disparate impact or disproportionality in some of the 15 indicators.¹² In order to begin to address some of the issues identified in the Equity Plan, Sierra College created the RISE program—modeled after the Pasadena City College Pathways—and the Guardian Scholars Program. The RISE program will begin in Fall 2016 with 200 students and is expected to expand to 2,500 students annually.¹³ Sierra College is also using SSSP and Equity funding to develop new and revitalize existing Student Engagement Centers (Cross-Cultural, Gender, and LGBTQIA).

The development of the SSSP and Student Equity Plans and trying to understand the barriers to student success represented a turning point for Sierra College. For the first time, a large number of faculty, administrators, and staff analyzed disaggregated cohort data and identified barriers to students' successful completion of their educational goals. The results illustrate that although Sierra College is generally viewed positively, both internally and externally, our students are generally not much more successful than at other California Community Colleges and that most students are unable to make timely academic progress. For instance, in the Fall 2014 semester only 7.25% of students attempted 15 units and only 36.8% of students were enrolled in more than 12 units.¹⁴ Research conducted by the Office of Planning, Research, and Resource Development shows that only 3% of students who began their studies in the Fall 2014 managed to complete 30 units within their first year of study. This coordinated approach to analysis helped lead to a coordinated, integrated approach to developing the 2015-16 BSI, Equity, and SSSP plans, ensuring the integrity of independent resource allocations was maintained while also address students' needs in a more holistic manner.

Textbooks

Although not specifically addressed in the SSSP or Student Equity Plans, there is evidence from focus groups, surveys, and external literature that the cost of books and course materials represents a real burden for students. During the Fall 2015 semester, roughly 53% of students received some form of financial aid—a slight decrease from the 57% who received financial aid in 2014.¹⁵ Many students who receive financial aid have difficulty purchasing textbooks in a timely manner because financial aid is not disbursed until one week after the add/drop deadline.¹⁶ In order to address this, eligible students are given a book voucher to help cover or offset the costs of textbooks until financial aid is disbursed. However, the book vouchers are only redeemable at the Sierra College Bookstore and may not cover the entire cost of textbooks.

Unfortunately, this arrangement has several problems. First, students may not be receiving the best price for their textbooks. Second, the bookstore, currently managed by Barnes and Noble, has had a history of mismanagement that resulted in Sierra College asking for its local management team to be replaced in February 2014. Since then, the bookstore has been more responsive to student and faculty needs, but issues linger. Combined with the high costs of

¹² 2015 Sierra College Student Equity Plan, page 11

¹³ 2015 Sierra College Student Equity Plan, page 14

¹⁴ California Community College's Chancellor's Office, Datamart

¹⁵ Office of Planning, Research, and Resource Development

¹⁶ <http://www.sierracollege.edu/student-services/financial-aid/disbursement.php>

textbooks, some faculty have expressed interest in exploring additional options for providing students with textbooks, such as open educational resources.

Technological Challenges and Opportunities

In many respects Sierra College has been at the forefront of adopting technology to attempt to meet student needs and expectations, and manage the day-to-day operations of a multi-campus college. As a result, Sierra College uses a laundry list of systems to track student learning and engagement, manage online learning environments and manage curriculum. While this has given Sierra College a number of tools, it has also created a hodge-podge of data and made it difficult to gain a clear picture of what services students are using and how students are effected. In 2014, Sierra College created a new position, Manager of Software Integration, to manage the complex task of uniting Sierra College's tools and helping college decision makers make the most of the available information. As of early 2016, Sierra College is also implementing a new Operational Data Store (ODS) to serve as a central repository for critical student data.

In order to better monitor student academic progress and to offer more timely interventions to students in need, Sierra College adopted two new tools—Degree Works and Starfish. Degree Works allows students and counselors to create electronic educational plans. Degree Works allows students to manage their own educational progress and, importantly, provides Deans and department chairs a guide to how many students need a particular course in a given term. On the other hand, Starfish encourages faculty to offer electronic feedback to students, which can include recommendations to student services, such as counseling or tutoring, and commendations for good work, kudos. Importantly, these electronic messages do not occur in a vacuum, but can be seen by support teams who can further reach out to a student and can connect the student to resources. While Sierra College has a relative wealth of technology, the reliance on technology exacerbates the need for staff who are technically proficient and able to work in a complex environment.

Presidential Taskforce

As new technology has given us access to increasingly more accurate and detailed information about our students, one thing has become abundantly clear: the vast majority of our students are not meeting their stated educational goals in a timely manner—or at all. There are a myriad of reasons for this, some of which we can change and some which may be beyond our influence. However, there is no question that we can do better, and we must do better. As part of the holistic planning around BSI, Equity, and SSSP, President Duncan established a Presidential Task Force on Reengineering Sierra College—Reengineering for Success (R4S). The task force has been charged with looking at everything we do as a college with the goal of improving student success at all levels. It will help develop a roadmap for fundamental change at Sierra College that will thoughtfully, genuinely and effectively move us from a model focused on access to a model that focuses both on access and completion. The task force is primarily comprised of instructional and special services faculty and educational administrators, selected for their roles and perspectives at the college; however, that body will employ full collaboration practices to ensure stakeholders are engaged, informed, and have every opportunity to provide input and feedback as the work unfolds. To support and inform its work, the task force will be

evaluating effective practices around the state and the country and will bring best practices back to discuss with the college community at large. The task force has a two-year charter: Spring 16 will primarily be spent researching and seeking input from the college; it expects to start making recommendations in 2016-17 and implementing changes as they are approved with a full rollout in 2017-18. As the Sierra College planning model uses a 3 year refresh cycle, the R4S recommendations will be timely in informing the next educational master plan.

External Trends

Since 2000, the California economy has experienced two recessions, which are both visible in Figure 1 as two steep declines in student enrollment after periods of growth. The second of which, the Great Recession, led to levels of austerity in the California State Budget that were essentially unprecedented. In 2008, the Department of Finance offered an updated budget projection that State budget revenues would be nearly \$11 billion lower than projected in the annual budget (enacted just weeks earlier) and the 2009-10 fiscal year was expected to be nearly \$13 billion lower than projected.¹⁷ While the Great Recession officially ended in 2009, California's recovery was slow and the Sierra College budget did not meaningfully improve until 2012, when California voters approved Proposition 30 (Prop 30), "The Schools and Local Public Safety Protection Act of 2012."¹⁸ Proposition 30 temporarily raised taxes and prevented additional budget cuts to ensue in subsequent years. As revenues improved, meaningful hiring and reallocation of resources began to be restored in the 2013 fiscal year. Although Sierra College saw improvement in its overall budget, much of the increased funding was dependent on Sierra College reaching specific growth targets or was tied to categorical programs, such as SSSP and Student Equity.

Region

During the early 2000's, Placer County was one of the fastest growing counties in California. As the housing bubble burst and the Great Recession set in, the historic growth Placer County had seen came to a standstill. In 2005, Placer County issued 4,895 building permits for single family residences. By 2011 that number had decreased by 83% to 812. It has been several years and as of 2014, the last year where all data is available, has only increased to 1,636.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the improved economy and growth in construction may lead to an eventual increase in college going students. However, for the foreseeable future, in the primary Sierra College service area—Nevada and Placer Counties—we are unlikely to see much or any growth.

Due to the housing growth, primarily in South Placer, Placer County has grown at a rate higher than the state average (6.7%) to 371,694 people. However, this hides a demographic problem in that only 22.9% of Placer County residents are 18 or under, compared to 23.6% statewide, and nearly 18% of residents are 65 or over, compared to 13% statewide²⁰. In short, although Placer County is growing, it is with a disproportionally older population. Fortunately, Placer County

¹⁷ CA Department of Finance, *2008-9 Governor's Budget Special Session*

¹⁸ Trackprop30.ca.gov

¹⁹ <http://censtats.census.gov>, Building Permits

²⁰ US Census Bureau, *State & County Quick Facts*, Placer County (1/13/16)

public school enrollment has gradually increased over the past decade, but the rate of increase is slowing.²¹ The California Department of Finance (DOF) projects Placer County graduations will remain relatively flat for the next 3-4 years, before increasing around 7% by the 2022-23 school year. On the other hand, Nevada County has shown effectively no growth since 2010, increasing by an estimated 0.1%. Further troubling, persons under 18 only make up 17.8% of the population and persons over 65 account for 23.4% of the population.²² However, unlike Placer County this disproportionality has already had an impact on our college going rates and it will likely do so indefinitely. Nevada County had a peak public school enrollment of 15,119 during the 2003-4 academic year and has declined 18% to 12,305 by the 2014-15 academic year.²³ Fortunately, it appears the overall rate of decline has slowed, but the DOF projects that the number of high school graduates will decrease by 33% from the 2013-14 academic year to the 2023-24 academic year.

While only a small portion of Sacramento County is part of the Sierra College service area, in Fall 2014 27% of Sierra College students were from Sacramento County. Unlike Nevada and Placer Counties, Sacramento County is seeing a greater degree of growth and the number of high school graduates is going to increase by 12% by the 2023-24 academic year.

Student Success Task Force Recommendations

Although the Student Success Task Force (SSTF) recommendations directly lead to the creation of the SSSP, and indirectly to the Student Equity Plan, it also lead to several statewide initiatives that will directly impact how Sierra College and the other CCCs do business. The second recommendation, “Strengthen Support for Entering Students,” outlines two specific goals—standardizing assessment and providing electronic educational plans for all students, and states: “The creation of online resources that would support advisement and allow many students to self-manage their academic pathways is essential.”²⁴ This section, and the perceived need for a common online education system, led to the creation of three statewide initiatives: Common Assessment Initiative (CAI), Electronic Educational Plan Initiative (EEP), and the Online Education Initiative (OEI).

Fortunately Sierra College has had an oversized hand in helping shape the course of these initiatives. For instance, Sierra College’s successful adoption and implementation of Canvas directly led to Online Education Initiative adopting Canvas as its official platform. Somewhat similarly, the EPI adopted Starfish as its early alert system, in part because Sierra College had already successfully implemented Starfish. Finally, while Sierra College is not one of the pilot colleges for CAI, Sierra College is helping pilot multiple measures assessment based on high school transcripts, which will be integrated into CCC Assess system.

However, one component of the SSTF recommendations that has not received much direct attention has been a component of recommendation 2.3 that recommends the adoption of

²¹ California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, *Time Series – Public School Enrollment Placer County*

²² US Census Bureau, *State & County Quick Facts*, Nevada County (1/13/16)

²³ California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, *Time Series – Public School Enrollment Nevada County*

²⁴ Advancing Student Success in the California Community Colleges: Recommendations of the California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force, page 23

electronic library resources and a textbook purchasing module. While these recommendations are somewhat minor, they tie into an older initiative from the CCCCCO that recommends colleges do more to address textbook affordability.²⁵ In 2015, AB 798—College Textbook Affordability Act of 2015—set specific timelines, guidelines, and resources for CSUs and CCCs to adopt open source educational resources.²⁶ This new funding and availability of materials may help Sierra College partially address its issues associated with textbook affordability, equity, and bookstore.

Job Market and Strategic Partnerships

Current projections from the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) show a much improved economy. The most recently available projections (2012-2022) predict the Sacramento Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA), which includes El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo Counties, will increase the number people employed by 18.% by 2022. While many of the most prevalent job openings will not require college education, there are a substantial number of positions that will require some college, a certificate, or associate's degree. The most promising occupations within the SMSA that Sierra College may be able to serve are largely related to healthcare, web development and computer support, early childhood education, HVAC technology, and truck driving²⁷. Within the broader category of healthcare, there a wide variety of possible occupations that could be served by Sierra College: medical laboratory technicians, medical equipment repairers, dental hygienists, surgical technologists, medical records and health information technicians, nursing assistants, medical assistants and home health aides. Sierra College already offers a program in Nursing and has a joint program with Sacramento State (CSUS) to offer an RN-to-BSN program.

While Sierra College directly serves the job market, most students enter with intent to transfer to a four-year college or university. Many of fastest growing or largest growing occupations in the SMSA requiring a bachelor's degree are related to business, information technology (IT) and management information systems (MIS), education, business, marketing, accounting, and nutrition. Sierra College currently offers a robust business program with a diverse set of majors and degrees, which seems to meet many of these needs.

While labor market projections are reasonable attempts to predict the future of current occupations, there is still a great deal of uncertainty with regard to new and emerging technologies, services, or broader trends, such as the “Maker Movement.” Maintaining relevancy and currency in technical and academic skills and knowledge is particularly important to California's community colleges as students are readied for 1.6 million ‘middle skill’ jobs of the future. In addition, technology has disrupted post-secondary instructional delivery systems; the traditional model of college classroom and professor now has competition.

With these shifts in mind, Sierra College formed a multi-division workgroup of administrators, faculty and staff, and gained the support of district executives and the Board of Trustees in 2013 to develop a co-working and makerspace near the Rocklin campus. Our partner is Hacker Lab, a

²⁵ <http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/TextbookAffordability.aspx>

²⁶ <http://coolfoed.org/>

²⁷ EDD 2012-2022 Comparison of Growing Occupations by Entry Level

private entity founded in mid-town Sacramento and an economic catalyst for start-ups and micro-businesses. Hacker Lab Powered by Sierra College is the first community college public-private makerspace and co-working space in the country. It is a place where one can go to learn, create new products or technologies; and join a community of diverse minds, skills and interests that reflects a growing and passionate entrepreneurial and Creative Class.

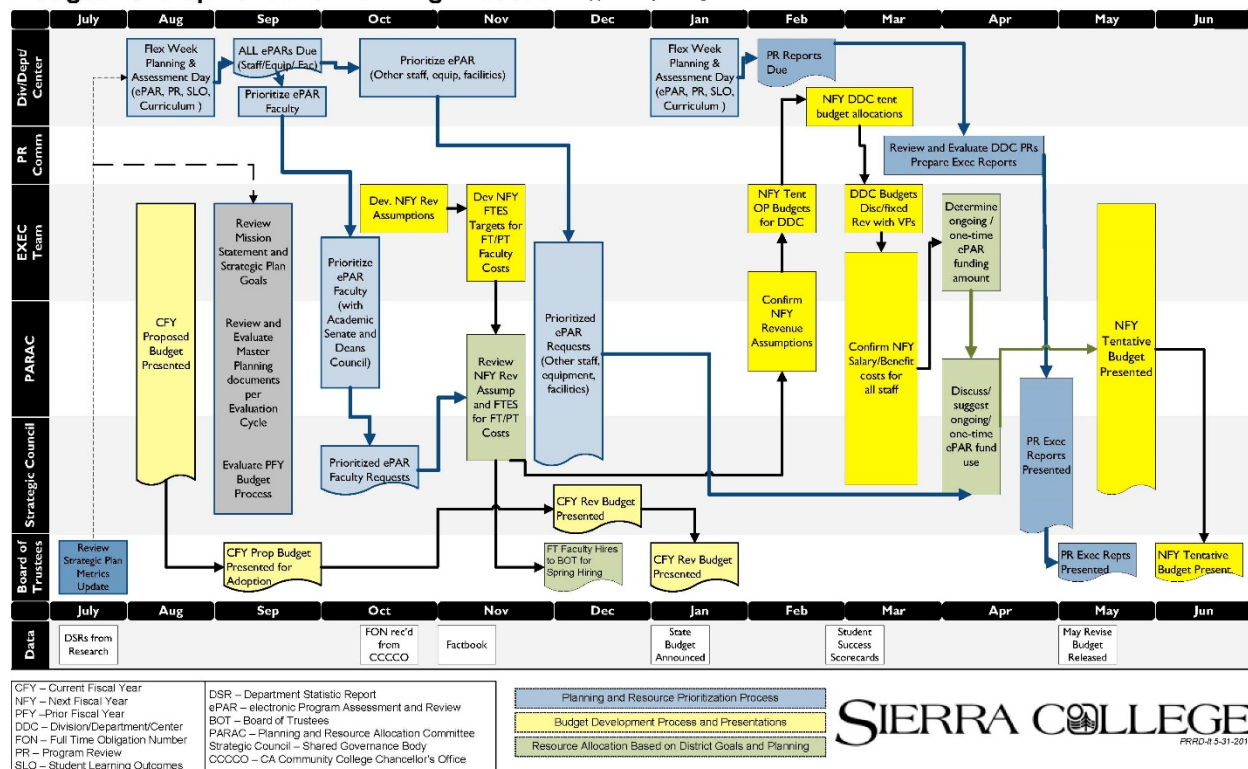
Effects and impact on Sierra College's educational delivery system are emerging but powerful. Students have access to a resource-rich space (with both human capital and equipment) 24 hours a day, seven days a week, resulting in accelerated exploratory learning and expanded technical capabilities. Faculty are connecting with leading-edge experts, such as the Chief Strategist for Innovation at Adobe Systems (worldwide), accelerating the use and integration of industry-endorsed tools and processes into community college curriculums. Administrators are influencing educational practice and policy, resulting in actions such as the launch of a statewide Chancellor's Office Maker-Innovator Workforce Development initiative.

Similarly, in Nevada County, a maker space called the Curious Forge, has been in place for five years, and is in partnership with the Nevada County Campus. Members make use of a wide variety of tools and equipment for projects in metal fabrication, woodworking, electronics, jewelry, ceramics and industrial sewing. Student memberships are subsidized by the NCC Coordinating Council of the Sierra College Foundation.

Planning Process and Cycle

Sierra College uses an integrated system of operational and strategic plans in order to ensure that we are meeting our District Mission and Vision. Sierra College uses a three year review cycle to refresh its strategic plans (Strategic Master Plan, Educational Master Plan, Technology Master Plan, and Facilities Master Plan). Although these plans are reviewed every three years, they each use a long-term timeline to set district priorities. For instance, the Facilities Master Plan uses a 20 year time frame and the Educational Master Plan uses a 10 year frame. In order to ensure individual departments and programs are aligned with the strategic plans and District Mission, individual departments are asked to periodically update and align department goals with the Sierra College Strategic Goals. This alignment occurs through the triennial Program Review process and the annual ePAR request process, which allows programs and departments to make resource allocation requests for personnel, equipment, and facilities.

Budget Development and Planning Process — Approved by Strategic Council 5/31/2013



Although the Sierra College planning and resource allocation process is generally able to meet many program and department needs for personnel and equipment, there are nevertheless significant challenges to meeting technology and infrastructure needs. As noted in the SWOT analysis, the Rocklin Campus has a number of older buildings in need of updating. While local bonds to update the Tahoe Truckee and Nevada County Campuses have passed, the voters in Placer County have not passed a bond to update the Rocklin Campus. Without bond funds, it is extremely difficult to fund the large scale infrastructure needs outlined in the Facilities Master Plan. Similarly, there are a number of equipment and infrastructure needs outlined in the Technology Master Plan that have been challenging to meet during typical budget years. In part,

this is because “students and instructors...continue to demand ever increasing levels of technology support and services, including a rapidly growing phenomenon known as BYOD (bring your own device) within Sierra College. This is brought upon us through the consumerization of technology, where it has become so affordable and pervasive for anyone to have an Internet capable device and expect to be connected to the Internet from anywhere any anytime.”²⁸ In short, staff and students are requiring more out of technology infrastructure than in the past.

Strategic Goals

In 2015, Sierra College adopted a new set of Strategic Goals, which broadly outline district priorities.

Strategic Goal 1: Achieve equitable access and increase student success, retention and persistence in order to increase the number of students who complete certificates and degrees or transfer to four year colleges and universities while maintaining high levels of academic integrity.

Strategic Goal 2: Identify and close success and equity gaps amongst underserved and/or underrepresented student populations.

Strategic Goal 3: Provide professional growth and develop a climate of inclusion in order to support highly effective and innovative teaching and learning, support services, operations, and collaboration.

Strategic Goal 4: Meet and exceed external standards through an outcomes based framework for continuous quality improvement.

Strategic Goal 5: Modernize, revitalize and develop new facilities and infrastructure based on the current Facilities and Technology Master Plans.

Strategic Goal 6: Expand community partnerships and funding opportunities to support strategic goals and leverage resources.

²⁸ 2014 Technology Master Plan, page 1

Goals and Opportunities

The following goals help Sierra College create a framework of expectations and ideas in order to address weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities, react to threats, and build on strengths identified in the previous sections of the Educational Master Plan.

Presidential Taskforce

President Duncan called the Presidential Taskforce (R4S) in order to improve student success outcomes for all students. To this end, R4S represents an opportunity to exam previously held assumptions about student behavior, develop a cohesive enrollment management approach, and examine curricular offerings. In order for the Taskforce to be ultimately successful, it will require a considerable reconsideration of college practices and changing college culture to address student success.²⁹

Goal: Increase the number of students who complete their educational goals in a timely manner.

Stabilize Enrollment

Sierra College's enrollment has dropped dramatically over the past five years (2010-2015). While it is difficult to pinpoint a single cause for the enrollment decline, it is likely that several factors, such as declining population in Nevada County and changes in repeatability, play a factor. Sierra College is currently funded based primarily on full-time equivalent student enrollment (FTES) and consequently, fluctuations in enrollment give rise to large fluctuations in the general fund budget.

Goal: Stabilize or grow student enrollment by increasing the number of students at Sierra College and/or increasing the proportion of students attending full-time.

Goal: Establish enrollment targets for all campuses and centers.

Goal: Identify partnerships, opportunities, or programs to stabilize and increase enrollment at the Nevada County and Tahoe Truckee Campuses.

Goal: Identify mechanisms to develop new and evaluate existing programs and services at centers.

Goal: Realign course offerings to meet student demand.

Goal: Increase the number of students successfully completing math, English, and ESL sequences in a timely manner.

Part-time Faculty

Throughout academia, the use of adjunct or part-time faculty has grown significantly as colleges have sought to decrease costs and increase flexibility. As found in the SWOT analysis, the reliance on part-time faculty comes with a cost to students and faculty. While the cost to

²⁹ Redesigning America's Community Colleges

students has been studied extensively^{30,31}, recent research suggests that performance differences in student outcomes for adjunct faculty at community colleges are not inherent³², but may be attributable to factors, such as teaching experience, courses part-time faculty are assigned, availability of support—such as professional development and knowledge of high-impact practices, and how well part-time faculty are integrated into campus initiatives and campus culture³³.

The proportion of Sierra College courses taught by Full-Time faculty has alternated between approximately 44% and 51% over the past decade³⁴. In 2011, the Board of Trustees set a goal for Sierra College to have at least 50% of its courses taught by Full-Time faculty³⁵. During the Fall 2015 Semester, Sierra College managed to achieve 48.52% of courses taught by Full-Time Faculty.

Goal: Increase opportunities for and participation in professional development for part-time faculty.

Goal: Evaluate our hiring practices and course assignment practices for part-time faculty.

Goal: Work within the existing collective bargaining system to identify means to increase the proportion of Full-time faculty.

Goal: Recruit and retain qualified part-time faculty.

Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) and Student Equity Plan

The Student Success Act of 2012 (SSA)³⁶ reimagined the way in which California Community Colleges would help students matriculate to college and succeed once they had enrolled. As part of the SSA, the California Community Colleges matriculation program was renamed the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) and the SSSP budget was changed to a performance based model in which colleges are paid by providing specific, measurable services to students. Many of those services, such as requiring students to develop a comprehensive educational plan, have been linked to increased student success. As part of SSSP, colleges must create a plan that identifies specific goals to accomplish and activities that the college will use to improve student success for all incoming students. While the SSSP plan is designed to help all students achieve, each college is mandated to develop a Student Equity Plan (SEP) that is specifically designed to meet the needs of historically underrepresented groups or other vulnerable populations.³⁷ Sierra College's equity plan focuses on closing achievement gaps in access, course completion, ESL and basic skills completion, degree and certificate completion, and transfer. Although

³⁰ Help or Hinder? Adjunct Professors and Student Outcomes (Bettinger and Long, 2005)

³¹ Effects of Exposure to Part-time Faculty on Community College Transfer (Eagan & Jaeger 2008)

³² The Effect of Part-time Faculty on Student Degree or Certificate Completion in Two-year Community Colleges (Yu, 2014)

³³ Contingent Commitments: Bringing Part-Time Faculty Into Focus (CCCCSE, 2014)

³⁴ http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/FinanceFacilities/FiscalStandards/FullTimeFacultyObligation.aspx#Fall_2013_and_Fall_2014

³⁵ Sierra College Strategic Master Planning Metrics

³⁶ <http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/Matriculation/SB1456StudentSuccessActOF2012.aspx>

³⁷ <http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentEquity.aspx>

disproportionate impact is visible for several groups, the highest rates of disparate impact appear for African-American, Former Foster Youth, and female Native American students.³⁸ In no small part, both the SSSP and SEP seek to help Sierra College adopt high-impact practices in order to improve student success. In order to make the broadest impact possible, Sierra College will need to expand its current staff development offerings and increase the proportion of all staff participating in staff and organizational development opportunities.

Goal: Meet or exceed student success goals outlined in the Student Equity Plan and Student Support and Success Plan.

Goal: Develop a plan to help faculty incorporate open educational resources (OER) into courses and programs.

Goal: Increase opportunities for and participation in professional development for all staff.

Goal: Expand practices to recruit and hire employees that reflect Sierra College's commitment to equity and diversity.

CTE & Regional Offerings

As defined by California Education Code (66010.4) the primary mission of the California Community Colleges is to “offer academic and vocational instruction.”³⁹ With regard to Career Technical Education (CTE), the CCCs are specifically “to advance California’s economic growth and global competitiveness through education, training, and services that contribute to continuous work force improvement.”⁴⁰ Since all community colleges are mandated to serve California’s economic interests, this has led to many colleges offering the same or similar programs within a limited geographical area, which “can result in fragmentation of efforts, duplication of services, poor connection among programs, and confusion to both students and employers.”⁴¹ The CCCCO has increased its emphasis on regional coordination of CTE offerings. Sierra College has representation regionally through a Sector Navigator and Deputy Sector Navigator, but there likely needs to be more coordination between our representatives and program development bodies. One possible activity is to examine the regional program offerings between and within the local community colleges and four year transfer colleges.

Goal: Improve awareness and responsiveness to regional occupational and CTE needs.

Goal: Identify areas of overlap and deficit in programming between regional colleges and universities.

Goal: Develop and/or expand industry partnerships in order to better identify potential programs and create pathways for students to gain employment.

³⁸ 2015-16 Sierra College Student Equity Plan, page 11

³⁹ California Education Code 66010.4.(a)(1)

⁴⁰ California Education Code 66010.4.3

⁴¹ Report of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy, page 27

Goal: Provide regional leadership and coordination with regional partners in Adult Education.

Identifying Programs for Potential Growth

As part of its stated mission, Sierra College seeks to prepare students for careers by directly preparing students for the workforce and for transfer to four year colleges and universities. As Sierra College has an obligation to advance the economic growth of our service area, we must identify new and emerging occupations and educational opportunities that support the educational and employment goals of our students. For instance, there is a growing sub-field within business, Business Intelligence Analyst—that was the 11th most posted position in the Sacramento Area⁴²—that we may be able to address through a combination of Business and Computer Information Systems curriculum. This modified curriculum may also fit with the CSUS Business Administration Management Information Systems major.

Goal: Develop a menu of potential credit and noncredit training programs that support the current and future career goals of our students.

Goal: Identify current programs that can be modified or adapted that support the future academic and career goals of our students.

Goals: Investigate and develop non-credit programs that provide a ladder or bridge into credit programs.

Identifying Programs for Discontinuance, Downsizing or Repurposing

In its current enrollment state, Sierra College faces significant obstacles to developing new programs. In order to meet emerging needs, the college should identify programs that need to be revised, repurposed, or eliminated in order to allow the college to maximize resources.

Goal: Use the existing Program Vitality process (AP 4021) to identify programs for potential elimination, revision, or repurposing.

Accreditation and Data Tracking

In 2015, the CCCCCO Task Force on Accreditation made significant recommendations to change the accreditation process for all of the California Community Colleges.⁴³ Those recommendations largely consist of discontinuing our affiliation with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) and either adopting the accrediting standards of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) or another regional accrediting body. Consequently, Sierra College will likely have to respond to new accrediting standards by the time of its next site visit. In order to meet any likely standards, Sierra College will need to develop additional capacity to assess student learning and demonstrate students are making progress in meeting their academic goals. In many respects, this ties to the culture of evidence informed decision making that Sierra College strives to use.

⁴² Burning Glass Technologies, Labor Insight Jobs, November 1, 2014 to October 31, 2015

⁴³ California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office 2015 Task Force on Accreditation, page 8

Goal: Develop resources and staff development training to better assess student learning.

Goal: Better align the program review, budget, and planning processes to better support student learning and student learning assessment practices.

Goal: Develop and resource tools and personnel in order to ensure access to and understanding of reliable information at all levels of decision making.

Expanding Regional Partnerships

As established by the original California Master Plan for Higher Education⁴⁴, community colleges are to provide “the first two years of undergraduate education,” remedial, and vocational education to “any student capable of benefiting from instruction.” Consequently, Sierra College has an obligation to support its local communities, but also to develop relationships with other local colleges and schools. California State University Sacramento (CSUS), generally referred to as Sacramento State, is the primary transfer destination for Sierra College students. Sierra College has a recent history of partnership with Sacramento State that includes an RN-to-BSN program, an Early Assessment Program for high school seniors in mathematics, and Sacramento State offering a selection of courses at the Rocklin Campus. Sierra College and Sacramento State also have an agreement to explore a combined campus in Western Placer County as part of the Placer Ranch Development. The status of the development is currently uncertain, but both Sierra College and Sacramento State have expressed their continued support for the project. Currently, Sierra College is trying to establish a similar relationship with the University of California, Davis—the primary UC destination for Sierra College students.

Similarly, Sierra College has an obligation to our students and the communities we serve to ensure that students successfully matriculate from local high schools and achieve their educational goals. However, some of the barriers that students face may not be directly related to education, but rather due to social or environmental circumstances, such as needing childcare or reliable transportation. While Sierra College may not directly be able to address these needs, developing stronger partnerships with local organizations may help provide some of the missing links to student success.⁴⁵

Sierra College serves many diverse communities, from the literal cities in the Sierra College service area—such as Rocklin or Auburn—to figurative communities—the business community or the arts community. In order to improve the success of all students, it will be necessary to expand our existing partnerships and develop new ones. For instance, developing partnerships with local tribal nations or tribal organizations may increase student success amongst Native American students while at the same time broadening educational opportunities for all students. The interest of the college is to also develop partnerships with other nearby groups and communities.

Goal: Increase the level of communication and collaboration between regional universities and Sierra College programs, with special emphasis on top transfer majors.

⁴⁴ <http://www.ucop.edu/acadinit/mastplan/mpsummary.htm>

⁴⁵ Lumina Foundation (<https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/publications/BFA/Beyond.Financial.Aid.pdf>)

Goal: Increase the level of communication and collaboration between regional high school districts.

Goal: Develop new and improve existing partnerships with regional communities and organizations to better support student success.

Goal: Create seamless articulation and transfer opportunities for students.

Facilities and Infrastructure

Although the state of facilities and infrastructure are not directly part of the educational programming at Sierra College, they nevertheless have an effect on the quality of instruction and the types of programs offered.

Goal: Integrate future program needs into the Facilities Master Plan and Technology Master Plan.

Assessment and Implementation

As part of the current Budget Development and Planning Process, the Office of Planning, Research, and Resource Development (PRRD) provides an annual update to the Board of Trustees (BOT) regarding our progress in meeting key Strategic Planning Metrics. This report is given to the board as part of the BOT's strategic planning retreat that occurs each summer, typically in July. In order to fully integrate the EMP and Strategic Plan, the annual update should include both the Strategic Planning Metrics and an update on progress of the EMP goals.

One of the short comings of the current planning process has been that the broader participatory governance groups, the membership of the four Senates, have not been involved in the BOT's strategic planning retreat. In order to address this deficiency, the annual update should be presented to Strategic Council early each fall, with a presentation to each Senate to follow, at the relevant president's discretion. One potential benefit of this timing would be the opportunity for the Senates to have a clear sense of whether we are meeting our current college mission, which is also reviewed each fall.

Sierra College has a long history of using Strategic Planning Metrics to inform decision making. Evaluating the EMP should involve the same deliberative process of collecting current performance metrics and comparing those to historical activities. As part of the first year, Sierra College shared governance groups should identify activities and associated metrics in order to assess progress. The activities and associated metrics will be included as an updated Appendix A.

Appendix A: Activities

The Education Master Plan sets a number of goals for Sierra College to accomplish in order to address weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities, react to threats, and build on strengths. The following list attempts to organize and delineate specific current or future activities that Sierra College may undertake to achieve these goals.

Goal: Increase the number of students who complete their educational goals in a timely manner.

Activity: Develop “Pathways” to decrease the number of students who take courses that are not applicable to the degree, certificate, or transfer progress. (Spring 2016 – Ongoing)

Metric/Measure:

Goal: Stabilize or grow student enrollment by increasing the number of students at Sierra College and/or increasing the proportion of students attending full-time.

Goal: Identify partnerships, opportunities, or programs to stabilize and increase enrollment at the Nevada County Campus.

Goal: Identify mechanisms to develop new and evaluate existing programs and services at centers.

Goal: Realign course offerings to meet student demand.

Goal: Increase the number of students successfully completing math, English, and ESL sequences in a timely manner.

Goal: Increase professional development opportunities for all faculty.

Goal: Increase participation in professional development for all faculty.

Goal: Evaluate our hiring practices and course assignment practices for part-time faculty.

Goal: Work within the existing collective bargaining system to identify means to increase the proportion of Full-time faculty.

Goal: Meet or exceed student success goals outlined in the Student Equity Plan and Student Support and Success Plan.

Goal: Develop a plan to help faculty incorporate open educational resources into courses and programs.

Goal: Improve awareness and responsiveness to regional occupational and CTE needs.

Goal: Identify areas of overlap and deficit in programming between regional colleges and universities.

Goal: Develop and/or expand industry partnerships in order to better identify potential programs and create pathways for students to gain employment.

Activity: In 2016, Hacker Lab Powered by Sierra College will initiate a strategy based on three areas of impact: Develop, Explore, Make an Impact. Develop will build skills and knowledge using new technologies, tools and processes. Explore will accelerate learning and prototyping both inside and outside the classroom. Make an Impact will pair ‘social benefit’ and business/industry engagement with classroom learning and project applications. Additionally, new efforts to develop similar public-private partnerships will take place at Sierra College’s other campuses. (Fall 2015 – Ongoing)

Activity: Sierra College is a close partner with the Nevada County Economic Resource Council (ERC). Sierra College is currently working with ERC to support the new Green Screen Institute, a virtual reality co-working space. (Spring 2016 – Ongoing)

Goal: Develop a menu of potential programs that support the future transfer and career goals of our students.

Goal: Identify current programs that can be modified or adapted that support the future transfer and career goals of our students.

Goal: Use the existing Program Vitality process (AP 4021) to identify programs for potential elimination, revision, or repurposing.

Goal: Sierra College should develop resources to better assess student learning.

Goal: Better align the program review, budget, and planning processes to better support student learning and student learning assessment practices.

Goal: Increase the level of communication and collaboration between regional universities and Sierra College programs, with special emphasis on top transfer majors.

Goal: Increase the level of communication and collaboration between regional high school districts.

Goal: Develop new and improve existing partnerships with regional communities and organizations to better support student success.

Goal: Create seamless articulation and transfer opportunities for students.

Goal: Integrate future program needs into the Facilities Master Plan and Technology Master Plan.

Appendix B – Goal Alignment

Strategic Goal 1: Achieve equitable access and increase student success, retention and persistence in order to increase the number of students who complete certificates and degrees or transfer to four year colleges and universities while maintaining high levels of academic integrity.

Goal: Increase the number of students who complete their educational goals in a timely manner.

Goal: Stabilize or grow student enrollment by increasing the number of students at Sierra College and/or increasing the proportion of students attending full-time.

Goal: Identify mechanisms to develop new and evaluate existing programs and services at centers.

Goal: Realign course offerings to meet student demand.

Goal: Increase the number of students successfully completing math, English, and ESL sequences in a timely manner.

Goal: Develop a menu of potential credit and noncredit training programs that support the current and future career goals of our students.

Goal: Identify current programs that can be modified or adapted that support the future academic and career goals of our students.

Goal: Use the existing Program Vitality process (AP 4021) to identify programs for potential elimination, revision, or repurposing.

Goal: Increase the level of communication and collaboration between regional universities and Sierra College programs, with special emphasis on top transfer majors.

Goal: Increase the level of communication and collaboration between regional high school districts.

Goal: Create seamless articulation and transfer opportunities for students.

Strategic Goal 2: Identify and close success and equity gaps amongst underserved and/or underrepresented student populations.

Goal: Meet or exceed student success goals outlined in the Student Equity Plan and Student Support and Success Plan.

Goal: Develop a plan to help faculty incorporate open educational resources (OER) into courses and programs.

Goal: Expand practices to recruit and hire employees that reflect Sierra College's commitment to equity and diversity.

Strategic Goal 3: Provide professional growth and develop a climate of inclusion in order to support highly effective and innovative teaching and learning, support services, operations, and collaboration.

Goal: Increase opportunities for and participation in professional development for part-time faculty.

Goal: Evaluate our hiring practices and course assignment practices for part-time faculty.

Goal: Work within the existing collective bargaining system to identify means to increase the proportion of Full-time faculty.

Goal: Recruit and retain qualified part-time faculty.

Goal: Increase opportunities for and participation in professional development for all staff.

Strategic Goal 4: Meet and exceed external standards through an outcomes based framework for continuous quality improvement.

Goal: Develop resources and staff development training to better assess student learning.

Goal: Better align the program review, budget, and planning processes to better support student learning and student learning assessment practices.

Goal: Develop and resource tools and personnel in order to ensure access to and understanding of reliable information at all levels of decision making.

Strategic Goal 5: Modernize, revitalize and develop new facilities and infrastructure based on the current Facilities and Technology Master Plans.

Goal: Integrate future program needs into the Facilities Master Plan and Technology Master Plan.

Strategic Goal 6: Expand community partnerships and funding opportunities to support strategic goals and leverage resources.

Goal: Identify partnerships, opportunities, or programs to stabilize and increase enrollment at the Nevada County Campus.

Goal: Improve awareness and responsiveness to regional occupational and CTE needs.

Goal: Identify areas of overlap and deficit in programming between regional colleges and universities.

Goal: Develop and/or expand industry partnerships in order to better identify potential programs and create pathways for students to gain employment.

Goal: Provide regional leadership and coordination with regional partners in Adult Education.

Goal: Develop new and improve existing partnerships with regional communities and organizations to better support student success.