

Program Review Report

Support Offices and Services

Sierra College, Spring 2009

Unit Name: Marketing and Public Relations

Date Submitted: June 1, 2009

Submitted By: Susanne Michaels

Please limit responses to 100 words or fewer, unless otherwise directed. Refer to the detailed instructions when completing this form. District data has been attached to the back of this form for your use if appropriate.

1) Relevancy

- **Department Mission Statement:**

The Marketing and Public Relations Department is responsible for effectively communicating the District's strategic goals and vision to existing, potential, and former students; community and business members; governmental representatives; members of the media; and District staff.

Department members partner and collaborate with stakeholders throughout the College to refine messages and brainstorm concepts and tactics to ensure success and provide the best return on investment. This requires an in-depth knowledge of existing and emerging communications methods, the media preferences of target audiences, and key trends.

The department plays a critical role in student success, enrollment management, resource development, community/media relations, emergency communication and strategic planning.

- **How does the program align with the District 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 life long learning. The College's programs and services encourage students to identify and to expand their potential. Sierra College students will develop the knowledge, skills and abilities to become engaged and contributing members of the community.

Enter mission alignment comments here...

The Marketing/PR department is the conduit that plans, produces and helps disseminate mission-critical information to potential and continuing students regarding:

- Academic/Career & Technical training offerings, i.e., calendars, courses, degrees & certificates, programs
- Support service information, i.e., Academic Foundations, Counseling, Admissions And Records, Financial Aid, Tutoring Centers, Transfer Center, Career Connections
- Events that enlighten and encourage engagement
- Student Life opportunities

Each communication is precisely designed to reach the target audience, ensuring that the District serves students with diverse goals, abilities, and needs as well as interests.

List the major functions or service performed by the office:

Enter strategic goal alignment comments here...

The department is guided by the Marketing Master Plan that is based entirely on the goals and objectives outlined in the District's Strategic Plan. It is a flexible plan designed to dedicate the limited human and budgetary resources to meet these priorities and shift whenever circumstances require.

The major functions and services are vast, including branding, advertising campaigns (online, radio, TV, print), press releases, media relations, publications, posters, flyers, website/portal communications, email/direct mail, and video/multimedia. They also serve as Public Information Officers in the Incident Command Team and provide expert communications advice and support to the college community from the President's Office to individual faculty members.

- **Is the office intended to serve a special population or clientele? If so, please describe the end user:**

Enter served population comments here...

With just a few exceptions (i.e., district-wide mailing of postcard, web, class schedule, catalog) each project, of the more than 1,000 completed yearly by the department, targets specific population groups. Each major category frequently contains sub-groups that require different targeting criteria. An example – **major category:** continuing student – **sub-groups:** transfer, millennials, basic skills, older returning, enrichment, career & technical, lifelong learners, job skills upgrade, etc.

The major categories include existing, potential, and former students; community and business members; governmental representatives; members of the media; and District staff.

- **How does the program align with the District's Strategic Goals?**

- I. **Educational Effectiveness** – Programs and services of the District will effectively promote and support student opportunity, success and achievement*
- II. **Organizational Effectiveness** – The District will manage its resources to best meet its multiple missions within the constraints of its resources*
- III. **Resource Development** – The District will focus on securing new resources to align with strategic goals*
- IV. **Focused Access** – The District will target outreach and access efforts to best serve its community*

The department continually:

- I. Markets, promotes, and supports the full range of student services, critical dates, events, new programs and classes.*
- II. Analyzes and plans for the dedication of resources based on optimal return on investment; creates partnerships with community and internal groups to maximize exposure and spread impact of resources; streamlines internal processes to be more efficient.*
- III. Works with the Foundation on marketing/pr campaigns for events, fundraising, and targeted media buys. Helps coordinate media for forums and presentations to community/business leaders.*
- IV. Dedicates outreach marketing/pr efforts to audiences identified by the District Strategic Plan. Targets based on economic/demographic trends and essential community needs.*

- **List the current goals of the office:**

Resource Development - Increase funding of opportunities through the Foundation.
Educational Effectiveness - Enhance communication with existing students in order to improve student retention and success.
Organizational Effectiveness - Review existing budget expenditures, form partnerships with internal departments and external organizations in order to focus on projects with the highest ROI potential.
Focused Access - Extend and improve free media opportunities

- **Describe the strategies and activities intended to achieve the goals:**

Produce print, web, and DVD/video materials and programs.
Purchase targeted advertising with primary audiences.
Emphasize Academic Foundation programs, critical dates, financial aid, counseling, assessment, etc. in print materials web page content and flash links, portal channels and on campus advertising.
Improve permanent and temporary campus signage to help guide students to critical departments (student services, tutoring facilities) and announce critical events and deadlines.
Cultivated partnerships with CTE, Workforce Development, Outreach, Board members and community organizations like Wells Fargo, city of Roseville, and Placer County Transportation.
Redesign printed class schedule to be more cost effective and redirect savings to high ROI internet/social media advertising and specific targeted Strategic Goals.
Build and cultivate relationships with local and national media

- **Describe how achievement of the goals will be assessed (approximately 1-3 measures):**

Enter comments here...

Educational Effectiveness – Analysis of student behavior data (i.e., support service usage, online/registration hits) following various campaign efforts, focus groups

Resource Development – Assessment data on interactive direct mail/web campaign and NPR radio buy for Foundation

Organizational Effectiveness - Overall projects completed – Work Order data year to year; cost savings on class schedule; partnership data; satisfaction survey

Focused Access – new student enrollment data; social media data; web hits data

- **Provide and define appropriate office use trend data as available. Comment on any significant information that emerges from the data:**

Enter comments here...

- **Sierra College Website** (1/5– 5/15): All Visits **1,619,159**, New Visitors **390,418** - **up 27.61%** from last semester
- **Google Adwords** (1/5-5/15): **2,196,651** impressions, **23,306** clicks average cost per **\$0.33**
- **Facebook Ads** (1/5 – 5/15): **321,469** impressions targeted at HS students in District, **820** clicks average cost per **\$0.17**
- **MySierra login #s** (as of 6/1): **23,015** - huge spikes after marketing communications. i.e., **2,346** from 3rd letter
- **Work Order** (total projects 08/09): **1,132** – **up 30%** from 2007/08
- **Foundation Campaigns:** direct mail **7,508** - **overall 39% response**; NPR (2/9 – 6/1) - **240** sponsorship spots
- **Direct Mail:** **938,028** households reached from (7/08 – 5/15)

- **Describe the mechanisms used to monitor the unit’s effectiveness:**

Enter comments here...

- District-wide data such as enrollment, retention, success-rates, and high school participation rates is used to monitor effectiveness. While there are many reasons for the data results we can clearly see an up tick in student response from all avenues (i.e., online interest, registration, counseling appointments) following each campaign.
- The '09 Student Satisfaction Survey indicates students are well aware of programs (by the small percentage that responded 'Not answered' or 'Undecided' to each question).
- Focus groups indicate changes in awareness (i.e., marked improvement in ability to navigate in study individuals who had not been to the campus following each signage project)
- Department efficiency tracked, example: Class schedule change netted a savings of \$26,816
- External and internal partnerships tracked, **see summary**

2) Currency

- **Describe any efforts to support continual improvement and maintain currency:**

Enter comments here...

The department is continually updating skills, remaining current with trends and media/communication methods, as well as examining internal methods for greater efficiency. By position:

- **Designers/Multimedia Specialist:** Proficient with latest software; study cutting edge websites/periodicals; network with professionals statewide and attend conferences; analyze new social media and other online opportunities.
- **Manager:** Research media preferences of target audiences, local, state, national demographic/economic trends and District Strategic Plans. Serve on Board of Directors of statewide Public Relations Organization and attend in person and online conferences/seminars. Train for emergency preparedness.
- **AST:** Remain current with District software and procedural changes, maintain current list of media, and train for emergency preparedness.

3) Resource Data

Marketing and Public Relations	1000	2000	3000	4000	5000	6000	7000	Total Budget
06-07 Actual	\$0	\$415,313	\$131,114	\$303,173	\$87,294	\$0	\$0	\$936,894
07-08 Actual	\$0	\$437,812	\$133,885	\$152,793	\$120,790	\$8,396	\$0	\$853,676

1000 – Certificated Salaries, 2000 – Classified Salaries, 3000 – Staff Employee Benefits, 4000 – Books, Supplies & Equipment, 5000 – Other Operating Expenses & Service, 6000 – Capital Outlay, 7000 – Other Outgo
 06-07 and 07-08 data includes TOPS Codes: 671000, 679004
 (If these TOPS codes do not correctly reflect your department budget, please let us know.)

- **Considering the data provided above, comment on the adequacy of the program’s equipment and technology funding level:**

Enter equipment and technology funding level comments here...

Our 4000 line item is also used for all of our printing, software, direct mail, and distribution costs leaving very little for new equipment. Frequently, software upgrades require more robust computers (capacity and speed). Also, advanced multimedia equipment (cameras, lighting kits), and high quality printers (which need repair or replacing every 5 years or so) allow us to produce more projects in house, thus saving the district money.

The 6000 line item is not sufficient for all of these purchases so we look for Foundation grants and rotate new purchases yearly based on return on investment analyses.

- **Considering the data provided, comment on the adequacy of the program’s management, classified and student help staffing levels:**

Enter staffing level comments here...

Because the department serves the entire district, it is extremely busy year round. Work to increase efficiency has yielded good results, however, and output has increased dramatically.

The largest staffing need is for a Public Information Assistant (already submitted/ranked) that would also function as a copywriter for print/website/portal content. Currently, the manager is the only copywriter and the AST sends out press releases and event updates. During incidents, they fill the #1 and #2 PIO positions. Since communication is one of the most important functions during and following emergencies, two people are not sufficient to meet all needs. This position would help fill the gap.

- **Comment on the adequacy of facilities:**

Enter facility comments here...

The department would like to be moved to a different location. The area it now occupies would make for excellent part time occupancy (i.e., mail room, office hours, and classrooms) but is problematic for employees who must be there full time.

The space does not now provide for the quiet necessary to focus without frequent interruptions or shoot video. This will be worse when a classroom is placed adjacent to this area in Fall ‘09. The lack of natural light has been linked as a cause of migraines in one employee.

Finally, the AST is in a former janitor’s closet and the manager’s office shares a wall with an elevator (causing loud rumblings).

4)

Summary/Closing

- **Evaluate the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities/future directions, challenges (Limit response to 250 words or fewer.):**

Enter evaluation here...

The Marketing PR department greatest strength lies not just with the high level of creative talent found in the staff, but also with their willingness to work as a team, remain flexible, and apply their ingenuity to finding solutions to budgetary challenges and workload issues.

One challenge lies in the prioritization of projects. In the past, with a few exceptions, the process was based on a first come first served basis. Currently we are developing an electronic work order form that will allow the requestor to justify the project by linking it to one of the strategic goals of the district. Projects that are linked will be prioritized ahead of projects that are not.

In the future the department will continue to integrate its services with departments and programs from throughout the district in order to reduce redundancy, coordinate efforts, save money, and enhance branding.

Another future direction that will increase efficiency and effectiveness is to bring web content and MySierra portal content under the responsibility of the Marketing/PR department. The '09 Student Satisfaction survey commented that a significant number of students did not like the portal. The content for both should be current, easy to understand, and compelling. This is the expertise of marketing staff.

- **Please provide any other information the Program Review Committee should consider:**

Enter additional information here...

Because of its mission to serve the entire district and communicate Sierra's goals to all community members, the Marketing /PR Department's perspective is both global and specific. It is the job of the department to understand not only the district's goals and overall strategic direction but also the specific accomplishments of faculty members, students and programs that best tell the District's story.

As the district faces economic challenges in the future, this department will play a critical role by understanding which existing (i.e., mail, email, posters, signs), new (i.e., social media, web advertising), and evolving (i.e., twitter) targeted communications opportunities, methods and strategies will yield the highest return on investment.

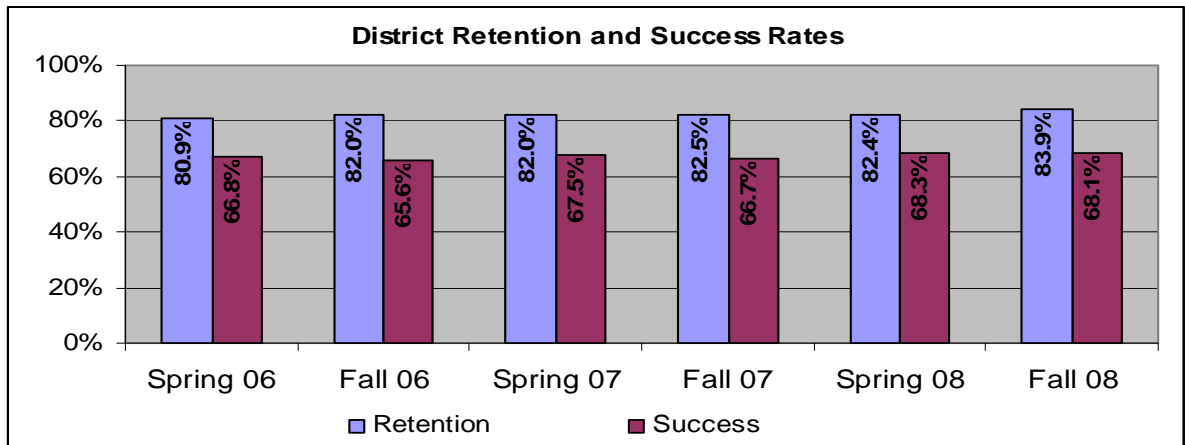
Finally, the department will be pursuing more internal and external partnerships to save money while extending reach, examples:

Internal Partnerships - In the past, new programs with grant funding like the CTE Energy Technology Program would have contracted out their marketing projects. By bringing them in house, we saved \$5000 graphic design fees and \$16,000 in web design and video/ multimedia fees. Also, the task force, which includes many industry partners, is extremely pleased with the quality of the work. Currently, the program has over 450 prospective students due to the marketing efforts.

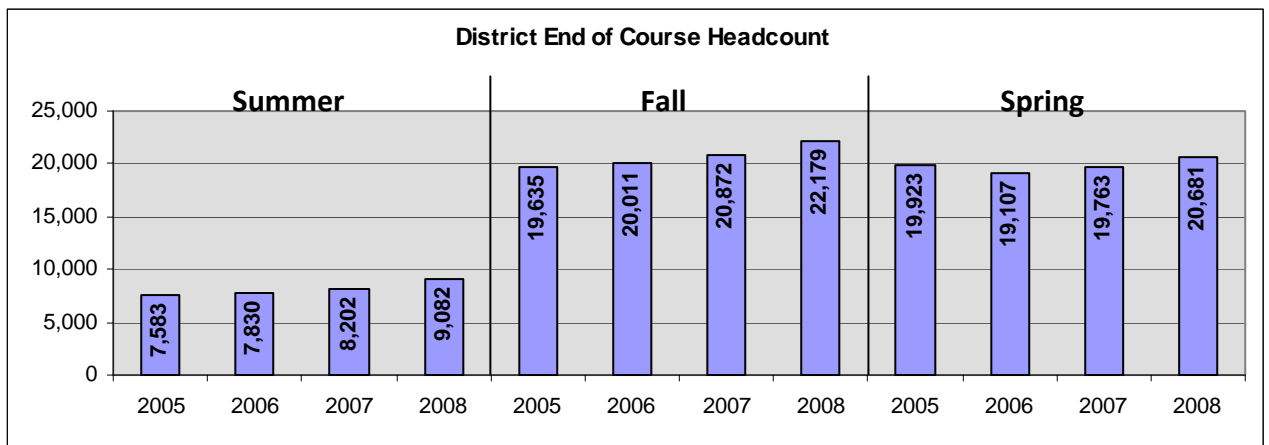
External Partnerships – Today you can find our schedules in every Wells Fargo branch, two signs inside every public bus, links from Chamber of Commerce and business websites and much more. Currently, the department is developing extensive social media programs with a new local company 'Zoom' at no cost to Sierra. In exchange, they will build their portfolio with the Sierra project.

District Data Elements

- Retention and Success



- Enrollment Trends



- Productivity

