

Presidential Taskforce on Women's Programs

Summary of Recommendations

Preamble

The Presidential Taskforce on Women's Programs recognizes the contribution of the program staff to the college, in general, and the success of re-entry students, in particular. These services include a food pantry, a textbook loan program, Women Supporting Women grants, personal counseling, a student lounge, and scholarship workshops, as well as a caring, supportive atmosphere. Because of the value of these services to re-entry students, the Taskforce recommends that they serve as the foundation for a "Center" to carry on many of these worthwhile traditions.

Consensus

In its examination of existing campuswide programs for re-entry students (see chart at the end of this report), the Taskforce determined that some of these services are provided by several Student Services programs at various venues with a variety of funding sources, and that it is in the best interest of students and the college to consolidate some of those resources so as to develop capacity and better serve the needs of re-entry students. The Taskforce also determined that expertise in re-entry services already exists in these Student Services areas. Therefore, the Taskforce recommends that the institution draw upon this expertise to design a "Center" that can serve the needs of re-entry students at the highest level possible. To this end, Taskforce members agreed to recommend the following:

- Separate the services component of Women's Programs from Women's Studies, an instructional program.
- Turn over the design and implementation of the new "Center" to Student Services to utilize the existing expertise on serving re-entry students. The group agreed that providing re-entry services is an institutional responsibility, one that requires institutional fiscal, physical and human resources. Consequently, it was unanimously agreed that implementation of re-entry services can be absorbed by Student Services programs. While re-entry services targeting special populations can continue to serve the needs of these students through categorically funded programs, re-entry services for general population students can be provided by Student Services. In particular, counselors have the background and are currently serving re-entry students as they have been working with this population already.
- Move forward with the search for the general counseling position to include a focus on re-entry counseling. It was recommended that the job announcement for the counseling position incorporate this expertise as a desired qualification.
- Because of its limited resources, the college should provide crisis intervention counseling, but not long-term personal counseling. Furthermore, the Taskforce agreed that the mode of delivery currently available through Health Services and other Student Services programs is the most affordable model. Consequently, it was agreed that the Re-Entry and Multicultural Center will forgo a faculty position replacement at this time.
- Transfer the current support staff of the Women's Programs to Student Services to serve as the foundation of support for the new "Center." The new program design will determine where and how these positions are to be integrated.

- Develop a plan that utilizes existing staff and not rely on a new position. MPC needs to look at the campus as a whole and identify areas to combine or consolidate to eliminate duplication of services so as to maximize resources.
- Form an operational committee composed of a representative of the current support staff of the Women's Programs and members of Student Services areas that have expertise and experience implementing re-entry services. The operational committee should be comprised of those who will be involved in implementing the programs to ensure expertise and campus buy-in. It was agreed that the timetable for the separation of the services from the Women's Studies program should take place by the start of fall 2010. Therefore, the operational committee needs to begin its work in earnest at the start of summer 2010. Reporting to the Vice President of Student Services, the operational committee will accept the recommendations of the Taskforce and design an implementation plan to be reviewed and approved by the Superintendent/President.
- To assist the operational committee begin their task, the Presidential Taskforce has developed a mission statement for them to consider. (See mission statement at the end of this document.) The mission statement is meant to serve as the framework for the operational committee—not for dissemination to the public as “the Center’s” official mission statement. It is strongly recommended that the operational committee develop a mission statement for “the Center” for dissemination purposes.
- As to the reassigned time of the Director of Women's Programs, the Taskforce recognizes the District's right of assignment and defers this decision to Academic Affairs.

Recommendations for the Operational Committee:

- Utilize this report and the mission statement developed by the Taskforce as a catalyst for the committee to design a services plan that will serve the needs of re-entry students.
- Move forward, but honor the contributions of the past.
- Be open-minded; review best practices at other colleges to get ideas.
- Identify the target students, their barriers, and services needed.
- Utilize the table at the end of these notes to arrive at what “the Center” could be.
- Form an advisory group that includes community representatives after “the Center” is in operation for ongoing support purposes.

Ideas for the Foundation of “the Center”:

- Have an open door policy and attitude. “The Center” should include general services; a welcome environment open to, but not limited to, re-entry students from different backgrounds; a lounge with comfortable chairs; and space for students to “hang out.” This atmosphere should facilitate community building.
- The concept of a “Campus Navigation Center.” The Center could be a hub, staffed with work study students or “ambassadors.”
- Staff members should be prepared to provide personal assessment/orientation to students. Sensitivity and understanding of the students' needs is of utmost importance. The purpose of assessment is to inform students of the next step. Staff should be well informed of services available at “the Center” as well as on campus, and should offer to help students with some of them, or refer them to the appropriate services on campus.
- Activity at “the Center” could be seasonal based on students' needs. Possible busy times would be the beginning of each semester, mid-terms, finals, etc. To off-set this possibility, the operational committee could design a “Center” that is activity based.

- Provide only those services that are sustainable; eliminate redundancy as much as possible.

The Taskforce conducted research via the worldwide web on “best practices” of various types of centers at community colleges (e.g., women’s centers, welcome centers, one-stop centers, etc.). Taskforce members were asked to select from their research two or three of what they considered “best practices.” Printouts of the websites identified as reflecting “best practices” in the center concept are attached to this document for the operational committee to consider.

Recommendations on Existing Services with an Eye to the Future:

Food Pantry: It should be located in “the Center,” and staffed by student workers. It should be available during the hours of operation and well supervised. Resources can be pooled by including service clubs. A discussion needs to take place with the ASMPC. Their buy-in is crucial to continue to offer this service on a sustainable basis.

Text Book Program: This should be a service sponsored by “the Center.”

Re-Entry: The concept is to have a lounge area at “the Center” to include activities for all re-entry students. Collaboration with the other groups on campus that offer these services is needed. An attempt should be made to provide these services in one lounge area. Flexibility will be a key issue as the student population will change from year to year.

Women Supporting Women: No change in philosophy, which is “to provide emergency financial assistance to women who are at risk of dropping out of Monterey Peninsula College.” Strict adherence to the principles of accountability and transparency is crucial.

Mental Health: Provided by Student Health Services.

Student Lounge: There should be a lounge at “the Center.” The consensus was that the other locations should still make their lounges available as each will draw a different student population.

Scholarship Workshops: This is an activity-based item. It is an opportunity for collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Services taking place at key times during the academic year to assist students with their biographical essays and personal statements. Consensus was to continue to offer this service.

Job Experience/CO-OP (New): Staffing needs can be met through the Work Study program.

Cultural Events and Activities: It was recognized that this is part of the education process. Cultural events and activities are not a service but an awareness of the people MPC serves. It is an institutional responsibility that takes place throughout the campus to celebrate diversity and make students feel welcome. It was further recognized that several cultural events are organized by various entities, but there is no effort to coordinate. Coordination of these activities is beyond the scope of “the Center.” However, this does not preclude “the Center” from organizing cultural activities as their means will allow.

Services that are neither listed nor offered historically can be addressed and added at some point in the future.

Monterey Peninsula College Campuswide Programs that Offer Re-entry Services

Food Pantry	Text Book Program	Re-Entry	Women Supporting Women	Mental Health	Student Lounge	Welcome Center (Campus Navigation)	Events	Scholarship Workshop	Job Experience/ CO-OP
ASMPC	Women's Programs	(CARE)	Women's Programs	Women's Programs	Women's Programs	Women's Programs	Everyone	Women's Programs	Women's Programs
Women's Programs	(EOPS)	(EOPS)		Student Health	(1 st Floor) LTC	(EOPS)		(TRiO)	Administration
	(TRiO)	Women's Programs			College Center	A & R			Matriculation
	(Financial Aid)	(Cal Works)			(Int'l Center)	Financial Aid)			
		(TRiO)			(TRiO)	General Counseling			
		General Counseling				ASMPC			
		(Supportive Services)				Supportive Services			
		(CDC)							

Mission Statement

The mission of the center is to provide a wide range of accessible services and activities that support and empower a diverse student body and that facilitate the transition to college within a nurturing environment.

Taskforce Members

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