

3/24/25: Counseling Meeting Notes

Attendees: Perez, Alturk, Castro, Ross, Allen, Moy, Scurry, Towle

Counseling Updates/Accreditation

Districtwide Counselor Debrief:

- Counselor majority seemed to like once a year instead of twice a year, virtual format is preferred. Might be hard to plan for hybrid
- Academic advisement is confusing, some are unsure how to use it and have stopped. Co-Chairs will look into asking Dr. V for training.
- Timing was off since it was the last day for extended deadline - Co-Chairs explained the time was set before A&R announced deadline

Review Math Chairs Guided Placement - guide was reviewed with changes and counselors accepted the new guide. Co-Chairs will email the Math Department to see if this will be posted on the department website and catalog.

Guest Speaker: Fernanda Castorena:

Dreamer Liason and Specialist, first generation student

Supports Undocumented Community Resource Center (enrollment and financial aid)

Wants to support undocumented student clubs

Free immigration - free consultation, daca renewals

Undocumented students do not qualify for federal aid which includes FAFSA, Pell Grant,

Work Study , but can get California Dream Act Application (State Aid)

Try and use more inclusive language if have you completed FAFSA or CA Dream Act Application instead of saying only FAFSA when talking with students

Dream Services Incentive Grant- undocumented students can try and get paid to volunteer

Other resources in Bay Area: Dream SF Fellowship, UCLA Dream Summer, UCB

Students will be paid 300 hours per academic year (150 hours for Fall, 150 for Spring) - \$4,500 once they complete this hours

76 students that qualify for CA Dream Act Application, but have served so many students at the other PCCD campuses

Give students "red know your rights cards"- she has extra if counselors need it

Free immigration legal services for students, faculty, and staff

Immigrant Rising- great resources and provides free mental health for students

Connecting students with UCRC

Book an appointment on her calendar or via email if no appointments available

See attached PowerPoint

Guest Speaker: Susana Abdurahamn

Basic Needs Coordinator, Center is open Monday-Friday

She has a student team, 2 spanish speaking student workers and 1 chinese speaking

Food pantry is every Thursday , also provides hygiene products

Financial aid literacy series (Wed at 1 March 26, April 9, April 23)

Real College California Survey - over 500 students have completed the survey

Transportation Vouchers- gas card applications are currently capped

Self care event and clothing drive happening in April

Still accepting clothing until April 11, needs masculine, mens clothing and
childrens clothes, event is at the end of the month

Partnering with Oakland Museum of California - all Merritt staff/faculty will get free
admission now until January 30, 2026.

Still doing ECMC grant- need to demonstrate need - lots of applications getting denied
because they do not meet the criteria- students should read the directions

Students can drop in and see Susana any time at the Basic Needs Center

Program & Committee Updates

Curriculum: Repeat information from Fall: The five degrees that have both a local and
transfer version are: Anthropology, Business Administration, Early Childhood Education,
Economics, and Mathematics. Local degrees have been approved to be deactivated for
Fall 2025 because there is an ADT degree (except Child Development, will continue to
have an AA degree). Students have catalog rights.

The motivation behind this is that as part of AB 928 (CalGETC), students who declare
for a major will automatically be placed on the transfer associate degree pathway, if one
exists, and would therefore have to opt out of that placement to enter the local associate
degree pathway.

Graduation Committee: Let Lesley know if you want to participate in Graduation. They
need help with set-up and walking the stage. Order cap and gowns for faculty by April
14th so it can ship to Merritt. Students will be able to attend informational sessions and
will try to have 1 in person and 1 virtual. TBD, but might be May 1st and May 7th. SAS
confirmed that they will be purchasing the cookies.

FYE: Going to Saint Mary's on April 24

SAS: SAS and Hilary A are partnering with personal assistance for resumes,
networking, interviewing, (does not have to be only SAS students)

The event will be on April 22 from 12-3. 100 people expected to attend and it will be in
the student lounge