Cypress Student Services - Support Service Review

1. **What are the primary services or outcomes provided by the support service area and what is the impact of those services and outcomes on students and other key stakeholders?**

Mission of Student Services:
Provide exemplary programs that support the teaching/learning process and increase opportunities for students to define and reach their educational and career goals.

Primary Services:

- *Intake/Welcome Center*
  Provide students individualized assistance and guidance in navigating potential barriers to becoming an ACC student, continued enrollment, or in support of counseling, advising, assessment, or disability-related services.
- *Counseling*
  Provide comprehensive educational counseling services, crisis intervention, career development, and specialized strategies for identified populations with the objective of enhancing student persistence and success. (Targeted populations include students who are: academically underprepared, not meeting Academic Standards of Progress criteria, mandated into developmental education courses, from underrepresented populations, exiting the state foster care system, in need of goals clarification [selection of a major, career], etc.).
- *Advising*
  Provide prospective, current, and former students information on course selection consistent with their major, transfer intentions, degree plans, and career goals. Facilitate student connections with various programs, services, and departments within the college (Faculty, Learning Labs, academic departments, Continuing Education, Adult Basic Education, support programs, Student Life, Financial Aid, etc.).
- *Testing*
  Provide out-of-classroom academic testing services for students enrolled In eligible courses.
- *Assessment*
  Provide assessment services for determining college readiness, course eligibility, and learning gaps.
- *Office of Students with Disabilities*
  Provide services to ensure equal access to college programs for eligible individuals with disabilities and monitor the effectiveness of student accommodations.
- *Student Conduct*
  Provide services and monitor campus activities related to the Student Code of Conduct, Student Rights and Responsibilities, and Due Process for Students.

Impact of the primary services:
The primary services listed above have a direct impact on student success and the campus and classroom environments.

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2. **What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats present that enhance or hinder the unit's ability to provide those services and meet expected outcomes during the next five years?**

As is consistent with College procedure, a SWOT was conducted February 1, 2013. Representatives from throughout the college participated and included instruction, police, the business office, and various areas of Student Services. The following themes emerged:

Strengths:
Cypress Student Services has friendly, high quality, student focused employees who are readily accessible when needed, exhibit collaborative attitudes, and are open to creative and innovative approaches to tackling student and college needs. In addition, the hours of operation; organization of CYP Student Services; and its location in regard to parking, various departments within the Student Services division and other campus units (Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, Cashier, police, etc.) are strengths enhancing the unit's ability to meet expected outcomes during the next five years.

Weaknesses:
Cypress Student Services
1. *experiences a demand for services that outpaces the resources available.*
2. *relies heavily on temporary employees due to a cyclical demand for services (peak & nonpeak periods) which results in employee turnover and increased training needs potentially impacting quality as well as taxing limited staffing table employee resources.*
3. *is a key college "go to" resource when response to a crisis, threat, or emergency situation is needed yet lacks thorough plans for dealing with various crises/threats.*
4. *operates in an open public space which is often crowded and noisy thus inhibiting thorough student screening (privacy issues) and weakens ability to quickly direct students to the correct college service provider.*
5. *lacks proper technical support for initiatives and routine activities.*
6. *desires to utilize existing technology more effectively but is limited by funding, administrative support, technical support, and work volume.*
7. *lacks sufficient student space and equipment (student-use computers, seating, interaction/meeting space, etc.).*

The above weaknesses impact Cypress Student Services' ability to meet expected outcomes during the next five years.

Opportunities:
Cypress Student Services' ability to meet expected outcomes during the next five years could be enhanced by:
1. *Increased understanding of the Student Services division among non-Student Services colleagues.*
2. *Utilizing technology to eliminate duplication of effort, increase efficiency, enhance student experiences, and minimize the impact of limited and/or shrinking resources.*
3. *Utilizing nonpeak/non-crisis times to prepare and execute plans for critical times*
4. *Influencing positive change across the ACC District through demonstration projects, initiatives, development of student-centered/focused practices, policies, and procedures.*
5. *Facilitating/improving 2-way communications and exchanges with students, colleagues, other departments, and coworkers.*
6. *Streamlining admissions, advising, and enrollment process to proactively address student barriers.*
7. *Securing timely access to pertinent information for Student Services employees who advise.*
8. *Strengthening internal Student Services tech support and usage.*
9. *Cross training*

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Threats

Cypress Student Services' ability to meet expected outcomes during the next five years could be threatened by:

1. *A College culture that tends to hold students accountable while neglecting to scrutinize and improve its own college systems.*
2. *Over reliance on internal Student Services resources to resolve external broader ACC issues & challenges.*
3. *Marketing campaigns not in sync with campus reality (encouraging people to register when classes are full, it's too late to begin the process, or the lines are already hours long on campus; one-on-one invitation when campus is barely staffed because employees are off campus at high schools & trying to take off-peak leave)*
4. *An excessively complex admissions, advising, and enrollment process that is discouraging to students.*
5. *Stricter Financial Aid mandates increase SS work load while also reducing college revenue and threatening student persistence.*
6. *Loss of potential students due to long waits and inability to respond to phone & email inquiries during peak registration times.*
7. *Loss of potential students due to procedures & practices counterproductive for targeted populations.*
8. *Student Services is the College's "easy" solution for many challenges that extend beyond the scope of Student Services. The SS "can do" attitude and willingness to take on challenges contributes toward this perception and the over-extension of SS employees and other resources.*
9. *Non-advising and non-counseling circumstances are mistakenly attributed to Student Services.*
10. *The cyclical nature of Student Services results in resources that are limited, overextended, and insufficient to meet the demands (especially during peak registration periods)*
11. *Untimely implementation of college actions/procedures (not considering the impact on Student Services ability to serve students in addition to working around faculty/instructional needs)*
12. *The college in general operates on a "business" schedule(M-F 8-5) rather than a student-focused schedule.*
13. *CYP services demand is disproportionate to campus enrollment numbers (due to CYP SS popularity with students and active nurturing of individualized student-employee relationships/rapport).*
14. *Staffing and funding are not proportionate to the hours of operation or the demand for services.*
15. *Heavier burden on CYP SS (time, mileage, expense, staffing, etc.) in order to have participation/representation in district meetings due to the college's HBC/Austin-centered focus.*
16. *SS employees feel ill-prepared for emergency or crisis situations.*
17. *Limited resources (state budget cuts, funding shortfalls, hiring freeze, reduced enrollment) all contribute toward increased demand for SS.*

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3. **Using the answers to the first two questions, what improvements to primary services and/or intended outcomes will occur during the next five years?**

   A. **Effective use of technology to enhance student experience and support student success**
   Addressing Weaknesses # 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7; Opportunities # 2, 4, & 5; and Threats #4, 5, 6, 10, 12, & 16

   Technologies that can be applied for the purposes of addressing identified weaknesses, opportunities, or threats will be identified and utilized in CYP SS to enhance student experience, support student success, and /or increase employee efficiency. Technologies that extend the reach of limited or shrinking resources, expand access to services beyond the hours of operation, bridge communication gaps caused by high demand and inability to respond timely to the increasing volume of inquiries (phone, email, chat, text, web, etc.) and walk-in students, or support efficacy analysis will be targeted. Due to the lack of technical support (Weakness # 5), a concerted effort will be made to identify and implement technologies that require little to no internal IT support. The five year goal is to pilot, refine, and demonstrate the value and utilization of various technologies that can enhance student success as stated above and which can be recommended for expansion to other campuses, for district adoption, or for the higher education arena.

   B. **Establish a proactive intervention, preparedness, and safety conscious work culture within CYP Student Services**
   Addressing Weaknesses # 3; Opportunities # 3, 4, & 5; and Threats # 16

   In an effort to establish a proactive intervention, preparedness, and safety conscious work culture within CYP SS, a campus Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) and campus Threat Assessment Team (TAT) will be formed. The BIT's goal is prevention and early intervention. The BIT's focus is to proactively consider small pieces of information to identify, reach out, and intervene in order to intercept or deter behavior and diffuse circumstances (while threat assessment is dealing with a critical incident after it's already too late for behavioral assessment/intervention). These two teams will be trained accordingly and will meet regularly to carry out their mission. In addition, professional development activities for SS employees will focus on emergency preparedness (weather, critical incidents, and awareness of existing campus resources [defibulators, CPR certified staff, college police trained in MH assessment], etc.), crisis intervention, suicide prevention, and, managing aggressive behavior, mental health encounters, and other incidents common to the campus student services work environment. CYP SS employees will be represented on the college Environmental Health and Safety Committee. Supervisors and counselors will strengthen relationships with local mental health agencies and emergency responders. Plans of action for various types of critical incidents will be developed, implemented, and re-examined periodically. The five year goal is to have an established proactive intervention, preparedness, and safety conscious work culture within CYP Student Services supported by a staff and faculty that are well trained and able to execute effective intervention plans in a variety of critical circumstances.

   C. **Increase communication with academic departments, faculty members, campus colleagues, students, and coworkers**
   Addressing Weaknesses # 1, 2, & 4 ; Opportunities # 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 9 ; and Threats # 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, & 10

   CYP Student Services will host a "Dessert and Dialogue" annually for faculty members, instructional department representatives, and campus colleagues to exchange information regarding new department developments and changes; establish connections; identify and tackle barriers for students; and, increase other collaborative efforts for student success. Additionally, counselors and specialists will serve as liaisons to departments of high concentration majors and campus-based programs to disseminate information and refer students as needed. A pre-peak preparatory training session for SS registration workers and other interested campus personnel will be held prior to each major peak registration cycle. The Welcome Center will be separated from the intake function and will provide one-on-one assistance for students in areas that potentially could inhibit successful admission, enrollment, or utilization of services. Student Services, faculty, staff, and students will benefit from the combined efforts. The CYP Student Services supervisory team will appoint a committee to plan and host "Dessert and Dialogue" each year, assign liaisons for various departments, and oversee the pre-peak preparatory training sessions. The five year goal is to reduce and

eliminate unnecessary obstacles related to student registration, enrollment, advising, and persistence through effective communication and solution focused exchanges within CYP Student Services as well as with key non-SS stakeholders.

D. **Implement cross-training opportunities for Student Services professional-technical and classified employees across departments**
Addressing Weaknesses # 1 & 2 ; and Opportunities # 5, 6,& 9

Student services must continue to provide high quality efficient services to students, staff and faculty, while facing budget cuts, a hiring freeze and enrollment changes. Cross training of testing and student services assistants (8 employees) and non-supervisory professional-technical (4 employees) will enable CYP Student Services to efficiently allocate limited staff resources, especially during peak periods, to critical areas responsible for greeting and serving the public. It will also promote shared responsibility among team members; increase the knowledge base and job skills of staff; and have a positive impact on all stake-holders. The department supervisors (Advising, OSD, Testing Center, & Assessment Center) will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the yearly cross training process. The five year goal is to train nonsupervisory Student Services staff to cover more than one position in intake, Welcome Center, OSD, advising, assessment, and/or the testing center.

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4. How will the unit measure the extent to which planned improvements have resulted in better service or intended outcomes for students or other key stakeholders?

Improvement	Measure	Baseline	Current	Target
Technologies that can be applied for the purposes of addressing identified weaknesses, opportunities, or threats will be identified and utilized in CYP SS to enhance student experience, support student success, and /or increase employee efficiency. The five year goal is to pilot, refine, and demonstrate the value and utilization of various technologies which can be recommended for expansion to other campuses, for district adoption, or for the higher education arena.	An average of one new Improvement technology per year (5 total) will be demonstrated. Selected technology must meet one or more criteria: 1) extends the reach of limited or shrinking resources, 2) expands access to services beyond the hours of operation, 3) bridges communication gaps caused by high demand and inability to respond timely to the increasing volume of inquiries (phone, email, chat, text, web, etc.) and walk-in students, 4) support s analysis or examination of efficacy, 5) requires limited or no internal IT support.	Remote queuing: Baseline addresses complaints regarding long waits, limited space, limited staff/service provider availability, and students who entered SS but left without (prior to receiving) service. Additional Baselines commensurate to the selected technologies will be identified. Various technologies will be examined and considered during the upcoming 5-yrs depending on the solution(s) being sought. Technologies currently under consideration include: Campus Safety ap, SSP Online Student Resource Guide, SSP coaching system for targeted populations, technology for ACC majors/Career pathways, iTunes.edu group advising for specific majors and transfer students, Group IM,	Demonstration project in progress for adaptation of remote queuing system (initiated in AY 12-13 as CYP SS mini-SSR)	**By year 5**, five technologies (four in addition to the current remote queuing demonstration project) which can be recommended for expansion to other campuses, for district adoption, or for broader higher education application will have been implemented and evaluated for effectiveness; Annual Review/Modification of target activities as needed
Improvement	**Measure**	**Baseline**	**Current**	**Target**
Establish a proactive intervention, preparedness, and safety conscious work culture within CYP SS.	1. Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) established; 2. Threat Assessment Team (TAT) established; 3. All SS employees receive training in any of the following: emergency preparedness (weather, critical incidents, and awareness of existing campus resources [defibulators, CPR certified staff, college police trained in MH assessment], etc.); crisis intervention, suicide prevention, managing aggressive behavior, managing mental health encounters, managing other incidents common to the	Collection of existing college plans will take place during Yr 1 to establish the baseline.	Existing SS plan primarily focuses on counselor intervention (suicide prevention) and needs updating in regard to procedure and emergency referral resources.	**Year 1:** BIT and TAT members identified, training started, meeting schedule established. College plans/procedures collected and examined for next steps (training of staff, immediate implementation, modification, etc.). Knowledge/awareness gaps identified and plan to alleviate gaps developed. 75% of employees will document related training in one area. **Year 2:** BIT and TAT established with regular meeting & continued training as needed; Employee training

campus student services work environment; or closely related training: 4. At least two CYP SS employee will serve annually on college committees such as the Environmental Health and Safety Committee; 5. Supervisors and counselors will strengthen awareness of and relationships with local mental health agencies and emergency responders. 6. Plans of action for various types of critical incidents will be developed, implemented, and re-examined periodically.				to address identified knowledge/awareness gaps secured. 75% of employees will document participation in two related trainings; Annual review/modification of target activities as needed **Year 3,4,5:** BIT and TAT established with regular meeting & continued training as needed; 75% of employees will document participation in two related trainings; Action plans in place and information/training available for all SS employees; Annual Review/Modification of target activities as needed
Improvement	**Measure**	**Baseline**	**Current**	**Target**
Increase communication: Counselors and specialists will serve as liaisons to departments of high concentration majors and campus-based programs to disseminate information and refer students as needed. CYP SS will host an annual "Dessert & Dialogue" each academic year.	A "Dessert and Dialogue" will be held each academic year and attended by faculty members, instructional department representatives, campus colleagues, and representatives from each CYP SS dept	No baseline documented	SS resources are often expended reacting to changes and smoothing the way for students as obstacles and changes surface	**Year 1** Liaisons assigned and relationships developed **Year 1, 2, 3, 4, 5**: A "Dessert and Dialogue" held each academic year and evaluated for effectiveness by the planning committee and through attendee satisfaction surveys.
Improvement	**Measure**	**Baseline**	**Current**	**Target**
Increase communication: The Welcome Center will be separated from the intake function and will provide one-on-one assistance for students in areas that potentially could inhibit successful admission, enrollment, or utilization of	Welcome Center services will be available a minimum of 20 hrs per week during peak registration periods	Data will be collected during Yr 1 regarding students served and type of service	Welcome Center has been established as an offshoot of Intake. Data re use has not consistently been collected but POS comments re WC employees is very favorable & frequent when compared to other student feedback	**Year 1:** Baseline data collection. Students will be surveyed with one question "Did the Welcome Center contribute to the ease of you becoming an ACC student or remaining enrolled?"

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services.

| | | | | Year 2,3,4,5: Continuation of data collection, secure funding/staffing if efficacy supports continuation |

Improvement	Measure	Baseline	Current	Target
Increase communication: SS registration workers and other interested CYP employees will meet as a single group each semester for a pre-peak preparatory training session prior to each major registration period	Number of staff members who attend and participate in pre-peak prep training sessions	No campus-based cross-departmental pre-registration training currently takes place. (This practice was discontinued several years ago but the SSR indicates re-introducing this practice would be beneficial for all.)	Departments meet separately	**Year 1:** 65% of SS staff who work registration will attend and participate in a campus pre-peak prep training session before each major registration period. **Year 2,3,4,5:** 85% of SS staff who work registration will attend the training. Non SS employees who also work registration will also participate in the training.
Improvement	Measure	Baseline	Current	Target
Implement cross training for nonsupervisory prof-tech and classified employees across departments	Number of staff cross-trained in other functions outside of their routine job duties	Two employees (of 12; 16%) have knowledge and understanding of the processes of another area sufficient for performing the duties effectively if temporarily assigned outside her/his designated area.	Informal training as needed when there is shortage of coverage	**Year 1:** 40% of targeted staff will be trained in one job function outside of their assigned duties. **Year 2:** 60% of targeted staff will be trained. **Year 3, 4, 5:** 84% of targeted staff will be trained.
Improvement	Measure	Baseline	Current	Target

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5. How will the planned improvements align with and contribute to the Mission and Intended Outcomes of Austin Community College?

Austin Community College's mission statement and intended outcomes are below. This SSR addresses Austin Community College's goal of student success, Mission Statement (items # e & f), Intended Outcomes 1, 2,3,4,5 and Effectiveness Measure # 4, 5,& 6.

The planned improvements align with and contribute to the College's Mission and Intended Outcomes by providing high quality, accurate, student-centered services to our students and general stakeholders. The planned improvements are designed to ensure that students reach their academic goals, and to assist them in successfully navigating the system. These goals will be achieved by effectively, efficiently, and accurately training, communicating and streamlining services, This outcome will be to increase student persistence, and facilitate successful course completion. Additionally, these improvements align with the College's values of Communication, Access, Responsiveness, Excellence and Stewardship (CARES), and the Student Success Initiative.

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Mission Statement

The Austin Community College District values and respects each individual student. We promote student success and improve communities by providing affordable access, through traditional and distance learning modes, to higher education and workforce training in the eight-county service area.

To fulfill its mission, the College will provide, within its available resources, the mission elements prescribed by the State of Texas:

[a] Vocational and technical programs of varying lengths leading to certificates or degrees.
[b] Freshman- and sophomore-level academic courses leading to an associate degree or serving as the base of a baccalaureate degree program at a four-year institution.
[c] Continuing adult education for academic, occupational, professional, and cultural enhancement.
[d] Special instructional programs and tutorial service to assist underprepared students and others who wish special assistance to achieve their educational goals.
[e] A continuing program of counseling and advising designed to assist students in achieving their individual educational and occupational goals.
[f] A program of technology, library, media, and testing services to support instruction.
[g] Contracted instruction programs and services for area employers that promote economic development.

Intended Outcomes

The Austin Community College is committed to enhanced learning success for all students. The primary goals of the College's efforts to promote student success shall be to:

1. Increase persistence (term-to-term & fall to fall)
2. Complete developmental and adult education course progression to credit courses
3. Increase completion of all attempted courses with a "C" or better
4. Increase degree/certificate graduates and transfer rates
5. Increase success equity across all racial/ethnic/gender/income groups

The Austin Community College District will establish institutional effectiveness measures designed to assess the College's success in providing:

1. Balanced instructional offerings among the College's mission elements;
2. A teaching and learning environment that encourages students to be active, life-long learners;
3. Accessible and affordable post-secondary and higher education programs and services for all who qualify and have the ability to benefit;
4. Enrollments reflecting diverse and traditionally underserved populations in numbers that represent the local populations of our Service Area;
5. Job placement from career workforce programs into family-wage careers;
6. Efficiently administered programs and services that create an institution that is a good place to work, learn, and otherwise experience the higher-education process.