CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids) SELF-STUDY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, Spring 2022

CalWORKs Mission

The Cerritos College CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids) program provides comprehensive support services to parenting students receiving cash aid to complete their educational and career goals.

CalWORKs Program Review Process

CalWORKs participated in the Program Review self-study process throughout the Spring 2022 semester, utilizing the CAS Standards. The purpose of the review was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the department and develop a plan for improvement. From the 12 content areas of the CAS standards available, 11 content areas were looked at, which were comprised of 40 indicators being reviewed in detail to determine the degree to which the program met each standard.

The Self-Study team was led by Dr. Patricia Robbins Smith, Asst. Director of EOPS/CARE/LINC. Her role was to facilitate an honest, non-judgmental discussion with the team, to arrive at a fair rating for each of the various sections.

Members of the CalWORKs program review team included:
- Dr. Patricia Robbins Smith, Asst. Director EOPS/CARE/LINC, Self-Study Lead
- Norma C. Rodriguez, Director of Student Program Services
- Blanca Gamez, CalWORKs Program Facilitator
- Marina Rodriguez, CalWORKs Program Technician
- Nellie Hernandez-Garcia, CalWORKs Counselor *(participated in 1ˢᵗ meeting only)*
- Pamela Sepulveda, Case Manager of Falcon Basic Needs
- Marisol Aguilar, Counselor, LINC/EOPS
- Veronica Castro, Financial Aid Technician

Following an introductory meeting on March 16, 2022, the team met 6 times to review evidence for 10 of the 11 standards and the related indicators for those standards. A meeting with the team and Dr. Perez, Vice-President of Student Services to share the draft of the Executive Summery happened on 5/25/2022. Then there was an additional meeting to review evidence for the last standard (standard 2) and the related indicators. The final report and this executive summary will be shared with Dr. Elizabeth Miller, our Interim Vice President of Student Services.

Evidence for each indicator was gathered prior to the meeting for which that indicator was reviewed, and during the meetings the team reviewed the evidence, discussed if the standard was met/partially met/not met, and held general discussion about opportunities to improve or enhance services to meet the standards. For the rating of each indicator, each member of the team provided their individual scores, which were then discussed, and a consensus score was determined. At the end of this summary is a chart with the summary of ratings for each indicator reviewed.

Summary / Main Conclusions

The CalWORKs (CW) program is a long-standing and finely tuned program at Cerritos College. California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) is a Welfare to Work program for parenting students with children under the age of 18.

CalWORKs is a state funded, categorical program funded through the California Community College Chancellor's Office, receiving Prop 98 funds and Federal TANF. The Cerritos College CalWORKs program also receives funding through a contract with the Los Angeles Public Social Services (LADPSS). These funds are provided to assist current welfare CalWORKs provides students with special support services in order to assist with educational and career planning, as well as ensuring compliance with DPSS and the Welfare-to-Work requirements. CalWORKs provide comprehensive support services for CalWORKs eligible recipients, with a very dedicated team serving its students and a strong team dynamic that enhances the quality of services offered.

The County CW program is heavily regulated by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and as such, it is imperative for the college CW program to keep accurate records and review the data of the program and its students, to ensure the college program is providing services to only CW eligible students and ensuring the support services are effective in assisting its students with attainment of their educational/career goals.

The evidence provided shows that the college CW program record keeping, data collecting, and reviewing of that data is systematically happening, so as to continue to make efforts to improve on what is offered and the students' experiences with the support they are receiving. There is also a strong emphasis on training and development of their staff, as well as a high level of collaboration with both college partners and community partners/agencies.

The areas to continue to work on would be beefed up efforts in recruitment/enrollment, and additional efforts on increasing student enrollment in the CW program at Cerritos, bringing back into play the job opportunities for CW students on our campus (with the hiring of the Job Placement Technician position). One other area to focus on would be working with IT to continue to develop some of our technology tools to be able to more effectively serve our students.

Self-Study Limitations
There was a departmental limitation to this self-study as the full-time counselor (Nellie Hernandez-Garcia) was out on medical leave for all but one of the meetings. This impacted the sharing of evidence and how the particular standards/indicators were being met. With a small program and this person being the only FT counselor for CW, the conversation could have been more robust/complete if the program review was completed with her as part of the review.

Additionally, another limitation was that using the CAS Standards, there is no standard that addresses specifically outreach, recruitment, and enrollment. This is such a crucial part of CalWORKs (and quite honestly, most of the categorical grant programs within student services), that with no standard within CAS that is focused on this limited the discussion and documentation of what is happening within the program in this area. Having a Standard or some tool/way to evaluate outreach, recruitment and enrollment would make the Program Review process more complete. Scheduling a broader conversation with those leading the Program Review efforts on our campus, as well as with the other Student Services Managers needs to happen.

Primary Strengths

The following were identified as strengths of CalWORKs:

<u>Standard 3</u>: STUDENT LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESS *(3.3 Assessment of Student Learning and Development)*

The entire team of professionals working in the CalWORKs department helped to develop the CalWORKs Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's). Their SLO's focus on contributing to the learning, development and success of their students. A detailed excel spreadsheet of the SLO data is kept, disaggregating the data to really try and drill down and see if each SLO is being met. The CalWORKs Team meets regularly to review and evaluate their SLO data & progress. The Team monitors their progress toward their SLO's meeting weekly/monthly to review the SLO's and respective actions, to assess what is working and what isn't.

<u>Standard 4</u>: ASSESSMENT *(4.1 Establishing a Culture of Assessment, 4.3 Assessment Plan and Processes, 4.5 Review and Interpret Findings, 4.6 Reporting Results and Implementing Improvement)*

Assessment seems to be an area where CalWORKs is particularly strong and a great deal of effort is put, in order to guide their efforts on the programs/services they are offering their students. It is clear that the CalWORKs team is very data driven; as they stated, "Our activities have a why behind them." This focus on data is evident in both the accurate and detailed County reports they must complete as well as the various ways they assess their own program/services and the needs of their students.

There is also a high level of reported data that is reviewed/analyzed and used to inform the direction of the program.   Data mining using the IERP data dashboard, CCCCO webpage, queries through PeopleSoft, as well as analytics/reports through EAB Navigate are some of the internal data that is looked at.

<u>Standard 7</u>: HUMAN RESOURCES (7.3 Personnel Training and Development)

There was a lot of evidence demonstrating the professional development/training taken by most (if not all) of the CW Team, including their STH staff. Examples of training include Civil Rights, Title IX, Various Ally programs, Undocu, SafeZone, VetNet, etc.

Other meetings and associations they are involved with include: The Chancellor's CW meetings, LAC-5 monthly meetings, and the CalWORKs Association meetings.

Within the program, there are regularly slated departmental meetings scheduled, such as weekly department check-ins (every Tuesday), monthly all-staff meetings, and annual strategic planning meetings. There has also been specialized training for the department from some of their on-campus partners, such as workshops on CAIR, Safety workshop (which included campus police, student health representative).

<u>Standard 8</u>: COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION (8.1 Collaboration)

An extensive listing of partners CW regularly works with was shared, both on-campus and off-campus/community partnerships. These partnerships play a critical role in providing additional supportive services to CW students, many of these services complement those offered by the college. CalWORKs also engages in regular communication with the campus through their printed material, website and technology platforms, social media accounts and campus presentations.

Primary Weaknesses

The following were identified as weaknesses of CalWORKs, as they were scored as "Partly Meets."

Standard 1: MISSION STATEMENT (1.1 Program and Services Mission, 1.2 Mission Statement)
Overall, the CalWORKs team feels satisfied with the Mission Statement and that it meets the services/purpose of the department. However, while the mission statement is succinct, outside members of this review team felt it could use more wording about student learning, development and success. In the end, the committee didn't come to consensus on whether or not the mission statement should be changed. Also, the word "parenting" was accidentally left out of the mission statement, but this was remedied very quickly, and the correct version of the mission statement is now on the CalWORKs website and other documents.

Standard 7: HUMAN RESOURCES (7.1 Staffing & Support)
The position of Job Technician was vacated July 2021 and has sat empty since then. There have been two Failed searches; currently it will be flown again. Once this position is filled, the CW Team feels their staffing will be adequate; however, with this vacancy, there has been no job placement for the CalWORKs students through the program for the past year, which has been a disadvantage to the CW students to not have the opportunity to work as part of their CW support.

Standard 11: TECHNOLOGY (11.1 Systems Management)
While the various technology has greatly enhanced how we can communicate and do the work that is done in the CalWORKs office, there are some areas where the staff sees some limitations, such as: CalWORKs Bolton in PeopleSoft needing to be improved, newer computers installed in the CalWORKs student lab, as well as not being able to upload to OnBase remotely. While the latter two were an issue when we were working remotely, these are much less an issue and almost a moot point now that we are returning back to campus full-time.

(Standard) ENROLLMENT
There is no CAS Standard/indicators focusing specifically on enrollment, so we would be remiss if we didn't include it here. It is an area that should be evaluated in any categorically funded student services program, where funding is tied to enrollment. It was a limitation that there were no CAS Standards looking specifically at enrollment, and in future program review cycles, it is our recommendation that there be a way to directly include this in Student Services Program Review.

With the pandemic, our college and all the subsequent programs saw a decline in enrollment. This trend of declining enrollment has continued for the past several semesters, and is not unique to CalWORKs, to categorical programs, or even Cerritos College – it is being felt at all colleges. To that end, while enrollment has always been a focus, there has had to be even more attention/efforts in this area in past couple of years, to try and counteract the declines seen due to the pandemic. The CW Team works regularly on their Outreach plan, Growth plan and Enrollment plan (with subsequent goals and action items in each plan), focusing on outreach, recruitment and enrollment. Also, the CalWORKs Team is very proactive in putting efforts in retaining the CW students for the duration of their educational journey at a Cerritos college in the program, while trying to also recruit new students to the program. But despite the concerted efforts, enrollment is and will continue to be an area that will need focused on, to try and increase the number of students in the CalWORKs program.

Final Recommendations/ Next Steps

Below are the recommendations listed below for the CalWORKs department. These are areas that can be focused on to improve/enhance the program. Each will be described briefly as well as the actions to be taken, with due dates/completion dates, who the responsible person(s) are to complete each, and the resources needed (if any).

1. Mission Statement: fixing the incorrect wording, to add the word "parenting" to the statement.
    a. Related Standard: 1
    b. Completion Target: May 2022 (completed)
    c. Responsible Position: Norma Rodriguez
    d. Resources Needed: none

2. Review of Mission Statement
    a. Related Standard: 1
    b. Completion Target: November, 2022
    c. Responsible Position: Norma Rodriguez, Blanca Gamez, Marina Rodriguez & Nellie Hernandez-Garcia
    d. Resources Needed: none

3. Hiring of Job Technician
    a. Related Standard: 7
    b. Completion Target: August, 2022
    c. Responsible Position: Norma Rodriguez
    d. Resources Needed: nothing new (in budget already)

4. Request to I.T. for Update on PeopleSoft CalWORKs Bolton:
    a. Related Standard: 11
    b. Completion Target: Fall, 2022
    c. Responsible Position: Norma Rodriguez
    d. Resources Needed: TBD (IT will need to tell us if there is any cost associated with this request)
    e. *Note that if this request is approved, the Bolton updates would need to be scheduled with IT*

5. Update CalWORKs Computer Lab Equipment
    a. Related Standard: 11
    b. Completion Target: Fall, 2022
    c. Responsible Position: Norma Rodriguez & Marina Rodriguez
    d. Resources Needed: N/A (funding secured)

6. Engage in a Discussion with the Student Services Managers, VP of Student Services about the Need for Standard added focused on Enrollment
    a. Related Standard: none
    b. Completion Target: Fall, 2022
    c. Responsible Position: Norma Rodriguez & Dr. Lui Amador
    d. Resources Needed: N/A

7. Efforts to Increase CalWORKs enrollment to pre-pandemic level
    a. Related Standard: N/A
    b. Started Goal: Spring 2022, putting in play
    c. Completion Target: end of Spring 2023 to reach enrollment numbers from pre-pandemic
    d. Responsible Position: Norma Rodriguez, Blanca Gamez, Marina Rodriguez & Nellie Hernandez-Garcia
    e. Resources Needed: N/A

Summary of Ratings

Part	Indicator	Rating
1.1	Program and Services Mission	partly meets
1.2	Mission Statement	meets
2.1	Program and Services Goals	meets
2.2	Program Information and Services	meets
	Program Information and Services	meets
2.3	Program Structure and Framework	meets
2.4	Program Design	meets
3.1	Program Contribution to Student Learning, Development, and Success	meets
3.2	Student Learning and Development Domains and Dimensions	meets
3.3	Assessment of Student Learning and Development	meets
4.1	Establishing a Culture of Assessment	meets
4.2	Program Goals, Outcomes, and Objectives	meets
4.4	Gathering Evidence	meets
4.5	Review and Interpret Findings	meets
4.6	Reporting Results and Implementing Improvement	meets
5.1	Inclusive and Equitable Educational and Work Environments	meets
5.2	Organizational Aspects of Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	meets
5.3	Advocating for Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	meets
5.4	Implementing Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	meets
7.1	Staffing and Support	meets*
7.3	Personnel Training and Development	meets
8.1	Collaboration	meets
8.2	Communication	meets
8.3	Procedures and Guidelines	meets
9.1	Ethical Statements	meets
9.2	Ethical Practice	meets
9.4	Policies and Procedures	meets
9.5	Communication of Ethical and Legal Obligations	meets
9.6	Addressing Harassment and Hostile Environments	meets
10.1	Funding	meets
10.2	Financial Planning	meets*
10.3	Financial Management	meets*
11.1	Systems Management	partly meets
11.2	User Engagement	meets
11.3	Compliance and Information Security	meets
11.4	Communication	meets
12.1	Design of Facilities	meets
12.2	Workspace	meets
12.4	Facilities and Equipment Use	meets

was the provisional score, as additional evidence referenced in the review still needed to be uploaded. Each of these indicators have had the evidence added and therefore, they meet the indicator.