



**CERRITOS  
COLLEGE**

# Administrative Units: How to Write a Mission Statement

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**INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESEARCH,  
PLANNING, AND GRANTS**

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## Mission Statements

### What is a Mission Statement?

A mission statement is a concise action-based statement which communicates the purpose, direction, and values of an organization, department, or unit. A mission statement succinctly explains why you exist within the College. The mission statement defines the broad purpose your unit is aiming to achieve, describes the stakeholders your unit serves, and describes the primary functions provided by your unit.

Your mission statement must be aligned with the principles and purpose set forth in the Cerritos College's mission statement (see Appendix A).

### Primary Audience & Functions of a Mission Statement

Mission statements have three primary audiences: 1) external, 2) staff and volunteers, and 3) leadership.

#### *External*

A mission statement gives you the opportunity to inform others of what you do. You can summarize what your unit is about and provide context for additional information on your unit's programs and services.

#### *Staff & Volunteers*

A mission statement can focus and motivate your team. Individuals involved with your unit want and need to believe in the work they do. Your unit's mission needs to be easily understood, remembered, and owned by your staff and volunteers (if applicable).

#### *Leadership*

A mission statement should be a guide when considering priorities and new initiatives. It guides unit leaders in establishing the unit's strategic planning and decision making.

### Guidelines Mission Statements Should Follow

When writing a mission statement, the following key considerations should be kept in mind:

- **Clear:** use concrete language. Keep things simple and easy to understand.
- **Concise:** use clear and concise language aimed at a general audience. Stay away from buzzwords and fluff. Be short and to the point. Missions are between 1 to 3 sentences.
- **Useful:** informs other of your unit's purpose, your primary functions/activities, and stakeholders. It should inform, provide focus, and guidance. It's realistic and manageable.

- **Alignment:** clearly aligns with the mission of the department, division, and/or college.
- **Unique:** only applicable to your unit. A mission statement should be distinctive and not be applicable to another unit.

## Components of a Mission Statement

There are four (4) components that need to be in a mission statement: 1) name of the unit, 2) purpose of the unit, 3) the unit’s stakeholders, and 4) the primary functions or activities of the unit.

### *Name of your college and unit*

**Who:** a mission needs to identify the unit and college affiliation.

### *Purpose of the Unit*

**Why:** a mission needs to state the primary purpose of your unit. You need to articulate the reasons why your unit executes your primary functions and activities.

### *The Unit's Stakeholders*

**For Whom:** a mission identifies the primary groups to whom you provide and/or benefit from your services.

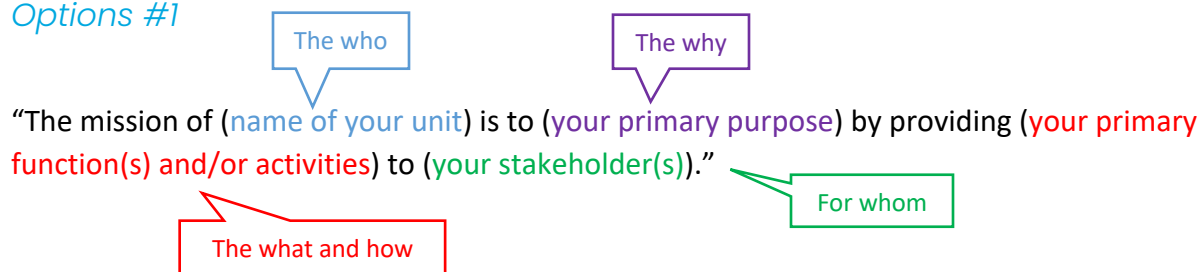
### *Primary Functions or Activities of the Unit*

**What and How:** focus on the most essential functions and services of your unit.

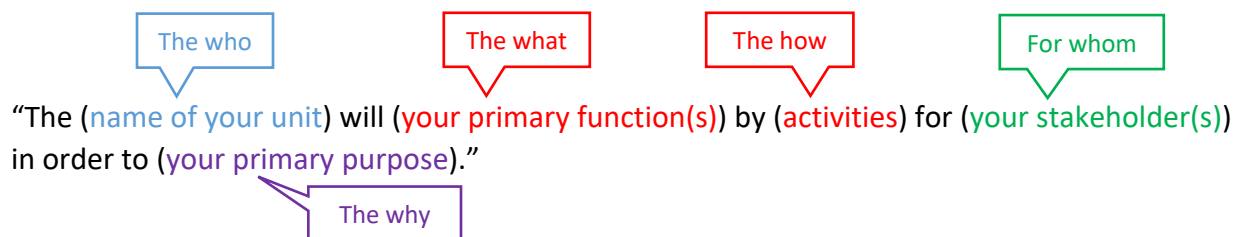
## Structure of a Mission Statement

The following are sample structures a mission statement may follow. Please note additional clarifying statements may be added, and the order of the components can vary.

### *Options #1*



### *Option #2*



## Developing a Mission Statement

Developing a mission statement needs to be a collaborative effort that involves your unit's leadership, staff, and volunteers (if any). Mission statements can be worked on by component and developed over various sessions -or- in a one-day workshop/retreat session. The conversations should concentrate on the who, why, what, and for whom. See Appendix B through C for the mission statement worksheet and checklist.

## Example of Mission Statements

- The mission of the Student Health Services Office is to provide quality medical care and innovative health education to empower and support student success.
- The mission of the Career Center is to assist students and alumni in identifying and developing the global skills necessary to successfully pursue and achieve lifelong career goals.
- The Institutional Effectiveness, Research, Planning, and Grants (IERPG) Division at Cerritos College provides unbiased research, analysis, and reporting that is grounded in a holistic understanding of complex college processes to facilitate data-informed decision making to support the college's mission and commitment to student success and equity. We enhance the colleges internal capacity to generate external funding from federal, state, and private sources and ensure compliance with federal, state, and institutional requirements and policies. IERPG serves the internal community of Cerritos College administrators, faculty, and students, serves as the clearinghouse for official college data, and responds to external requests for information.

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## Appendix A. Cerritos College Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals

### Mission

Cerritos College provides its diverse student population with high-quality, comprehensive instructional programs and support services through clear, equity-minded pathways to their educational goals. In doing so, the college develops culturally competent students with the knowledge, skills, and values that prepare them to be productive members of their local and global communities.

### Vision

Cerritos College will provide innovative learning opportunities and support services that will close persistent educational achievement gaps.

### Values

We have strong core values:

- Support and promote student success
- Promote excellence in teaching, learning, and service
- Support innovation and creativity to enhance and enrich learning
- Celebrate diversity in people, philosophies, cultures, beliefs, programs and learning
- Promote respect and trust in all people regardless of background, including students, community members and employees
- Foster integrity
- Develop nurturing and supportive partnerships with our educational, business and industry communities
- Support comprehensive curricular offerings
- Promote inclusiveness in a collaborative decision-making process

### Goals

#### GOAL A

Highlight clear educational and career pathways for ALL students and providing the programs, guidance and support they need to achieve their educational goals in a timely manner.

#### GOAL B

Ensure all educational programs are aligned with industry trends and labor market needs. Strengthen partnerships with high schools, universities and strategic business and industry to build a complete pathway to completion.



### *GOAL C*

Develop an organizational culture that supports professional growth for all employees, collaboration, institutional memory, and leadership continuity.

### *GOAL D*

Raise awareness about who we are and convey that message effectively, both internally and externally. Improve information transfer between all of our on-campus constituent groups as well as with our community.

### *GOAL E*

Continue with the ongoing modernization of campus buildings and information technology to ensure that all facilities and IT systems on campus meet the industry standard.

### *GOAL F*

Enhance organizational effectiveness by streamlining and simplifying College systems and processes. Diversify revenue sources to maximize discretionary funding opportunities which will support programs of excellence.

## Mission Statement



A mission statement is a concrete statement describing present activities.

Answer these questions about your *administrative unit*:

### 1. What do we do?

What do we *not* do?

How do these actions support the vision?

### 2. Why do we exist?

What is unique about us?

### 3. How do we do what we do?

### 4. Who are our customers/users?

### 5. What value do we bring?

### Top 3 adjectives to describe your unit

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Identify (highlight/circle) your favorite words or phrases from the previous answers!

It's time to draft your mission statement!

### YOUR UNIT'S MISSION

*It should follow the following structure:*

- The mission of (your unit) is to (2 & 5) by providing (1 & 3) to (4).
- The (4) will (1) By (3) for (4) in order to (2 &5).

### Checklist for a Mission Statement

**Does your mission statement include the four (4) components?**

- Who: name of your unit
- Why: your primary purpose
- What and How: your primary functions and/or activities
- For Whom: your stakeholders

**Is your mission statement:**

- Clear and concise?
- Unique and memorable?
- Does it clearly state the purpose of your unit?
- Does it indicate the primary function or activities of your unit?
- Does it reflect you unit's priorities and values?
- Does it indicate who your unit's stakeholders are?
- Is it aligned with the Cerritos College mission?

## **Appendix C. Mission Statement Worksheet and Check List 2**

**Directions:** Please use the following worksheet to generate a Mission for your unit. You may work with your team to brainstorm for ideas, using questions outlined in the worksheet to prompt discussion. After you have ideas, you can then synthesize these ideas and weave them into a Mission Statement.

**What are the primary functions and activities that your unit performs?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Why do you perform these activities (purpose of your unit)?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Who are your stakeholders? For whom does the unit conduct the activities?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Using the mission statement template, integrate the above information and compose a Mission Statement.**

“The mission of (name of your unit) is to (your primary purpose) by providing (your primary function(s) and/or activities) to (your stakeholder(s)).”

Mission Statement:

#### **Checklist for a Mission Statement**

- Is the statement clear and concise?
- Is it distinctive and memorable?
- Does it clearly state the purpose of your unit?
- Does it indicate the primary function or activities of your unit?
- Does it reflect priorities and values?
- Does it indicate who the stakeholders are?
- Does it support the mission of Cerritos College?