

# **A&R Program Review 2022-2023**

## **Mission**

The Office of Admissions & Records (A&R) is dedicated to assisting students in applying for admissions, registering for classes, paying fees, and accessing academic records, forms, and resources.

## **The Self-Assessment Process**

A&R participated in the Self-Assessment process during the Fall 2022 semester. The self-assessment team consisted of Frank Mixson, Dean of the Liberal Arts Division; Raquel Lizarraga, Coordinator, Educational Partners & Programs, and Michelle Mahoney, Counseling Faculty. Members of the A&R team included Laura Estrada, Assistant Director of Admissions and Records, Rinda Kaing, Admissions & Records Technician II, Kevin Nguyen, Records Evaluator, and Yvette Tafoya, Dean of Enrollment Services.

The team met for 10 sessions (i.e., September through December 2022) during which the team reviewed evidence, engaged in discussions, and scored the following 12 standards: 1) Mission; 2) Programs and Services; 3) Student Learning, Development and Success; 4) Assessment; 5) Access, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; 6) Leadership, Management and Supervision; 7) Human Resources; 8) Collaboration and Communication; 9) Ethics, Law, and Policy; 10) Financial Resources; 11) Technology; and 12) Facilities and Infrastructure. The scoring for each standard was established through a consensus of the team members.

## **Summary of Findings**

### **Meeting Expectations**

#### **2.1 Program and Services Goals and 2.3 Program Structure and Framework**

A&R is guided by a clear set of goals tied to the mission statement through its participation in the unit planning process. This process requires that the department assess goals from the previous year and develop and implement goals for the upcoming year. These goals are then 'rolled up' into the area plan where they are reviewed by the Vice President of Student Services and eventually Executive Council. A&R also continues to work collaboratively with several departments on campus. These include Academic Affairs, Information Technology (IT), Counseling, Academic Departments, and Business Services. While the collaborative efforts have improved significantly, the department believes it can always improve its collaboration and will strive to do so.

#### **3.1 Program Contribution to Student Learning, Development, and Success, 3.2 Student Learning and Development Domains and Dimensions, and 3.3 Assessment of Student Learning and Development**

A&R is actively engaged in SLO assessment. They gathered SLO assessment data, analyzed the data, created action plans, and implemented the action plans. In this round of SLO assessment, the goals were to improve the application process and to improve the time between when students apply to the college and when they actually enroll. In both cases, the action plans proved effective.

#### **4.1 Establishing a Culture of Assessment, 4.2 Program Goals, Outcomes, and Objectives, 4.3 Assessment Plan and Process, and 4.4 Gathering Evidence, 4.5 Review and Interpret Findings, and 4.6 Reporting Results and Implementing Improvement**

A&R participates in a regular SLO assessment cycle that includes assessing the SLOs, reviewing the data,

and creating action plans based on the data. Moreover, the department incorporates the SLO data and action plan into the annual unit plan as part of the resource request process.

### **5.1 Inclusive and Equitable Educational and Work Environments and 5.2 Organizational Aspects of Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

A&R has a diverse staff, many of whom are bilingual, and who have participated in a variety of diversity trainings, including Safe Zone, Vet Ally, and Undocu Ally. The department is meeting the needs of the students by providing diverse student liaisons to a variety of different programs, such as Cerritos Complete Promise Program, Dual Enrollment, and the Business Retail Management Program. The department has also served the needs of the students by responding to their requests for more flexible hours, including late hours on Wednesdays and extending hours to 5 PM on other days.

### **6.1 Leadership, 6.3 Supervision, and 6.4 Strategic Planning**

While previous management would not necessarily meet this standard, the current A&R management fully meets this standard in that they clearly convey the goals of the department and the expectations for each of the staff. They maintain clear communication by making themselves available whenever staff have questions or concerns; they conduct regular staff meetings, and for specialized staff, the managers meet one-on-one to discuss items specific to their specialized duties. The current managers provide consistent probationary and full-time reviews for each of the staff members. The managers participate in strategic planning by goal setting in the unit planning process and by contributing significantly to the enrollment management plan with their application completion workshops.

### **7.1 Staffing and Support and 7.2 Employment Practices**

A&R hires staff who have the requisite degrees, skills, and experience. Once hired, it follows the college policies and procedures, the laws, and regulations of state and federal government, and adheres to practices of the Human Resources department and the collective bargaining agreement.

### **8.3 Procedures and Guidelines**

A&R has worked with the public affairs department in order to ensure that it is complying with all campus-wide branding and logo requirements. It includes the proper branding and logo on all of its communication with students, staff, and public.

### **9.3 Legal Obligations and Responsibilities and 9.6 Addressing Harassment and Hostile Environments**

A&R follows all the state and local laws governing their functions. As mandated reporters, they work closely with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), Student Affairs, and various constituent groups, following all Crisis Assessment, Intervention and Response (CAIR) reporting processes. A&R managers and staff complete all mandatory trainings, and with respect to fraudulent students, they follow all processes and procedures provided by the college's legal counsel.

### **10.1 Funding, 10.2 Financial Planning, and 10.3 Financial Management**

A&R manages the budget effectively by meeting with the budget manager on a quarterly basis and with the administrative secretary on a more frequent basis in order to monitor expenditures, especially with the current inflationary costs and shipping delays. The department follows closely the policies and procedures set out by the college to govern expenditures. The careful management of the budget allows the department to better prepare its unit plan and resource requests, as suggested by the monies set aside for professional development to meet the goals of the department.

## **12.4 Facilities and Equipment Use**

A&R have their equipment inspected on a regular basis, and when repairs are needed, they are addressed with a work order.

## **Partly Meeting Standards**

### **1.1 Program and Services Mission and 1.2 Mission Statement**

A&R provides a clear and descriptive mission statement, making clear the functions of the area; however, the mission statement makes no clear connection to the college's mission statement. Moreover, the A&R mission statement is published on the area's website; however, it does not appear prominently on the website.

**Recommendations:** A&R will revise its mission statement to reflect their role in student success and align with the institution's mission statement. A&R will also place the mission statement on the landing page of the website and include it, where appropriate, on its communications and forms.

### **2.2 Information and Services and 2.4 Program**

The A&R department wishes to improve its records management. It has old records that need to be digitized and stored in a safe and secure manner. It would also like to establish a secure means of uploading documents that contain personal identifiable information. At this time, the department uses a single email address managed by multiple A&R employees to receive questions and requests from instructional and counseling faculty, college staff, and students, which occasional results in a backlog.

**Recommendations:** A&R should prioritize digitizing paper records, establishing electronic forms, and acquiring the software and cloud space necessary to receive and store all digital records securely. Ultimately, this enhancement will improve the business processes and decrease manual processes in PeopleSoft. A&R will also work to improve its response time to instructional and counseling faculty, college staff, and students, by creating email accounts for specific tasks, which is already in the works with the implementation of the "evaluator request" email.

### **5.3 Advocating for Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Design and 5.4 Implementing Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

A&R staff have participated in a number of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) trainings, but the department has not, as yet, determined how to embed these important ideas in their business practice and policy.

**Recommendation:** The staff will participate in department meetings that discuss how DEI practices can be embedded in their daily tasks and business practice. The management will also look out for professional development that pertains specifically to A&R and pursue additional resources outside of the department to ensure DEI practices.

### **7.3 Personnel Training and Development and 7.4 Paraprofessional Personnel**

Due to the pandemic, the A&R staff have not been able to participate in professional development activities. As a result, a good deal of training occurs with a new staff member shadowing a more experienced staff member and reading on standardized operating procedures (SOP).

**Recommendation:** For the next few years, A&R will prioritize professional development for its staff, and professional development that is intended for A&R professionals and paraprofessionals. A&R will

improve on SOPs throughout the department, establish an Onboarding process for new employees, and continue training for current employees.

### **8.1 Collaboration and 8.2 Communication**

While collaboration with other areas of the college has improved, there remains room for improvement. In particular, A&R would like to provide clear communication to other areas about changes in processes and staffing. The department would also like to better align its services with the needs of students and other areas of the campus, and while outreach and promotion have improved, the information provided to students should be more relevant.

**Recommendations:** When A&R makes changes to its processes and/or its staff, it should notify each of its internal and external partners. Moreover, the department should create a series of instructional videos that address students' most frequently asked questions.

### **9.1 Ethical Statement, 9.2 Ethical Practice, 9.4 Policies and Procedures, 9.5 Communication of Ethical and Legal Obligations**

A&R is confident that the staff conducts themselves in an ethical manner, but they have no written policies with which to refer. Instead, A&R relies primarily on board policy for its ethical standards, such as policies concerning the disclosure of student information. However, the department does not have policies specific to A&R and its handling of student identifying information (SII). As a result, individuals interpret ethical practices differently, creating a variety of standards. In addition, the department needs to improve its preparedness for emergency situations, such as student in crisis, threats, and electrical outages.

**Recommendations:** The department should consider developing its own code of ethics and FERPA training that addresses specifically the handling of student information in order to maintain privacy. It should also develop plans for various emergency situations (ex. Student crisis, medical emergency, and natural disasters).

### **11.2 User Engagement and 11.4 Communication**

A&R management and staff have worked hard to improve the student experience by introducing Qless in order to shorten in-person wait times, and the website chatbot to provide students more quickly with the information they need. However, the chatbot could only respond to a limited number of questions, so it was of limited value. A&R has increased the number of questions to which the chatbot can respond and has improved the quality of the responses by updating the answers, the links, and resources provided. The MyCerritos portal has an outdated interface, making for a lackluster user experience. While the website generally provides good information, it lacks instructional videos for students needing to perform a number of A&R -related tasks and does not provide enough information about the type of certificate or degrees and majors.

**Recommendations:** The department should improve the chatbot so that it can address more questions and improve the accuracy of the information. Also, the department should develop a process by which a student is connected to a live person when the chatbot is not able to answer the question. On the website, A&R should improve the information about the type of certificate or degrees and majors.

## **Not Meeting Expectations**

### **11.1 Systems Management and 11.3 Compliance and Information Security**

A&R technology infrastructure does not allow it to meet the needs of its constituents. The lack of data accuracy and integrity makes it difficult to report MIS data accurately to the state and to the National Student Clearinghouse. These inaccuracies extend to the security features, which continue to erroneously flag students as fraudulent who should not be. Because the infrastructure does not allow for the secure transfer of student information, students are required to drop off documents in person to the office. Students are also hampered by technology that is difficult to access and does not provide a positive user experience. Finally, the A&R staff need to be trained on the relevant features of PeopleSoft.

**Recommendation:** PeopleSoft should be updated so that the student and staff interface is easier to use and more effective. These updates also need to provide A&R with the ability to provide timely and accurate data to the state and to the National Student Clearinghouse and to send and receive this data in a secure manner. Updated PeopleSoft with different additional capabilities can improve the efficiency of the department and serve the student population.

### **12.1 Design of Facilities, 12.2 Workspace, and 12.3 Equipment Acquisition**

There have been improvements to the A&R facilities and workspaces. They reconfigured the area to provide greater security. They have installed a vault where important materials are secured, and they now have a locked drawer where they place all monies. However, there is no staff-only entrance and exit from the building and there is no emergency door for safety measures. While the work area is more secure, some of the workstations do not have the necessary privacy, especially those with monitors facing the counter. Finally, the replacement of equipment remains a challenge due to supply chain shortages.

**Recommendations:** In the design of the new space, A&R should create a staff only entrance and exit, arrange workstations so that monitors do not face the public, and provide adequate physical and digital storage for important documents.

## **Insufficient Evidence**

### **6.2 Management**

Over the past two years, there has been a change in the Dean position and the Assistant Director position. Indeed, the previous Assistant Director left in December 2021. The position was not filled until July 2022. For this reason, the committee believes there is insufficient evidence to assess this standard.