# Comprehensive Program Review Report



# **Program Review - Admissions & Records**

## **Program Summary**

## 2023-2024

Prepared by: Arianna Kennedy, Director of Admissions & Records

What are the strengths of your area?: COS Admissions & Records department serves the student from the beginning of their journey until the end and the leaps/bounds we see in our student's success is undeniable. Our office continues to grow in all directions whether that means adding more staff, student workers, certificates and degrees processed or high school students coming to our campus for the first time; growth continues to be part of our everyday life.

A&R is constantly trying to find the best way to serve our students with an equity and equality minded heart. Our windows see all type of student at various different stages of their journey so it is crucial to be able to meet students where they are at. With the unique opportunity to serve our students in Visalia, Hanford & Tulare, it is important to have staff available to help them holistically. This is why it is vital to have our campuses equipped with all opportunities to service our students.

Our 2022-2023 brought students back to their stomping grounds here at COS. We loved to see all the faces in person and online as our numbers continue to grow back to where we were previous to the pandemic. If anything, the pandemic put into perspective what COS really means to our students, staff, faculty and administrators. We were able to serve 16,776 students, 659 faculty and had 9,760 students as full-time students. The resiliency that we continue to show as giants never ceases to amaze me.

2022-2023 reminded Admissions & Records all aspects of a student's life that we truly impact when they are walking their path through all things COS. Our numbers for Admissions & Records are as follows:

Processed Applications- 19,602 Adds- 5,209 students Transcript Requests- 16,335 GE/IGETC Certifications- 2,323 Override Requests – 2,643 Evaluated Transcripts- 1,372 Degrees Awarded- 1,755 Certificates Awarded- 850 Dual/Concurrent Enrollment Forms- 12,102 Changed Grades- 425 Microfilm Conversion- 6,838

When looking back at these awesome numbers and thinking of all the students that we spoke to, saw and heard, there is no one to thank but the Admissions & Records staff. This team is truly one that I am in awe of on a daily basis. These numbers do more than showcase the hard work done by A&R but sheds a light on all the differences we are making from all aspects of the student' s journey. Our work is never done and that is evident at the numbers you see.

Admission & Records has really shown up for COS and continues to do so as we get over the hump of all things pandemic/shut down related. COVID really taught all of us but A&R specifically how much the student needs help when we are not physically on campus. This made and continues to help us think outside of the box of what we students need versus what they needed. Having the opportunity to turn in forms or ask questions not only in person but by email, fax or electronic DropBox submission provides

that ever expanding flexibility for our students. COVID will be a part of our lives but it did not and will not define us. We are GIANT!

In the year review, may we all continue to think about how we push ourselves to be the best versions of ourselves. This is vital to the work we do in Admissions & Records because the students need to know we are a safe place to land and go to in times of need. If one thing has never been truer its that hurdles can be overcome with the right mindset and path, but also by having great leaders to follow. Admissions & Records at COS will continue to be a beacon because know that to serve our students, to watch them achieve their dreams and goals means that we all win.

What improvements are needed?: When looking towards the future of what is to come for Admissions & Records, it really goes back to that growth mindset. One of the big questions is how can we/do we remain flexible so that we can help our students? The answer we believe to be ask the students what they want and really fill in those gaps so that we can help them in a wraparound manner. Far too often our students don't get a follow up or follow through, which leaves them floundering. We don't want to have them flounder but find way to help them fly.

Admission and Records will continue to put diversity, equity and inclusion at the forefront of the way we serve and help our students. Having the opportunity to work with CVC (California Virtual College) is one the many new and unique way we help students cross the stage. The ability to get courses can sometimes become a barrier, but having the opportunity to take a course at any of the other CA college who are participating in CVC, eliminates that. This also gives COS insight to what courses we need more sections of because we are able to see the data that CVC provides. We continue to fight for the student on getting them to their goals.

Improvement is similar to growth in my mind. When we look with a critical eye at things we did well and things that can use improvement we are left being able to grow into something better. When looking at improvements for the upcoming year, there is one area that comes to the forefront and that is FTES. After the COVID 19 pandemic, things drastically changed for what education and courses look like for students. Some students had to chose between school and work due to the complications that came with all things pandemic related. So now that we are rounding the corner of that place/time, it is crucial that we look at what does the 2023 student need. There wants and needs are again difference than what they used to be, so does this mean more hybrid options? Does this mean FTE look like taking your complete degree/certificate online? Does in person courses allow me to still work and go to school? These are some of the questions we get asked and must come to the table to answer for our students. Admissions & Records will meet that call by advocating for what we see for our full capacity courses and full waitlisted courses. We may not always be able to get it right but we have to seek out those answers for our students so they can get the courses they need.

The A & R team has had the amazing opportunity to grow as we have added one full time employee and looking to bring back an old position called A&R Technician. This news has been something to energize our department because it shows how much we need these positions. This is shown through the sheer volume of dual/concurrent enrollment as well as dabbling into the world of automatically awarding certificates for our students. With the growth that we have seen and will continue to see, we need expert staff members to fill in those gaps. Our office would not be the same without the fantastic work of these individuals. Improvement and growth then comes with change and although it make not always be easy, this change is transforming the lives we touch and the lives of this staff.

When thinking about areas of improvement, we want to find ways to align with the strategic plan of 2021-2025. The strategic plan gives our department and COS as a whole, a guideline of where our future should be headed. Being able to find ways to grow through the plan, just expands in the areas that we see the most need. The areas that we want to closely align with would be as follows:

\* Continue to expand concurrent and dual enrollment, this means remaining in contact with their new staff and students so that we can remain in the forefront of their mind. We want to be their point of contact with any questions, comments or concerns about how we help their high schoolers prepare for college. Seeing the continued expansion of high school students wanting to start their journey as early as 9th grade, will just set them up for success.

\* Build on the already amazing partnership with our other campuses. Having the solidarity with our sister campuses, Hanford & Tulare and providing the services they receive here at Visalia. It has never been more important to have our staff trained and knowledgeable on all campuses so they can really experience great customer service anywhere they are. Our students really appreciate the availability we are able to provide by having someone on each campus with the ability to help them.

\* Admissions & Records has the special opportunity to see students several times in one semester, which has them coming at all

different stages. I believe this provides us the unique ability to connect students to the correct areas or services they may need. When a student comes in they may only come to turn in a form or pick up transcripts but in that same transaction we can help them find success. Guidance comes in all forms so A&R is looking to get more in depth training for all our services on campus so that we can not only be involved but accurate. Students sometimes can walk around this campus before they get the answer to their one question so the knowledge will be indescribable.

\* Lastly, A&R will be working closely with Financial Aid & Welcome Center went it comes to outreach events and joining forces to help in any areas we are needed. Having the support of these fellow offices and vice versa, allows doors to continue to open when it come so student population growth. Being able to help and guide the student before they ever even step foot on our campus will just allow us to penetrate COS into the community even more than we are now.

**Describe any external opportunities or challenges.:** Opportunities continue to be provided by the Chancellors office as we come out of the years that COVID reigned over. There has flexibility at the community college level to help students in regards to the "EW" (Extenuating Withdrawal) & funding for extension on the 2 years free (California Promise Grant). These opportunities allow Admissions & Records to really help the student find gaps to their own personal inequities. Some students struggled in silence until the found a reprieve here at COS and now with these external options and flexibilities at the highest level of community colleges the student is able to find some relief.

Banner 9 is another place that is going to continue to bring opportunities to Admissions & Records. The implementation in the future of self service which allows the students to have more options and opportunities on their web portal will bridge another gap when it comes to the evolution of technology. COVID 19 has taught us that technology is not only the future but the way. We have be able to help student in so many manners with the help of expanded Wi-Fi, laptop rentals & so many more so but having just another way to help a student from their device allows the flexibility that this new normal requires. Continued work will be required to get us to this self-service piece but Banner 9 makes it within reach.

Rounding out my first year as Director of Admissions & Records here at COS, I have been given such a gift to be the leader of this amazing team. This opportunity has also taught me so much on what it means to be present physically and emotionally for my staff as well as the students. The goals of last year have slowly been chipped away and we are the path to closing those out. One of the main goals for my first year consisted of to develop/update manuals for each area including workflow, have updated policies and procedures and overall productive flow of A&R. This has allowed much needed cross training in our office along with continued updates for our best practices. Our office will never stop trying to find the best and most effective way to service the students we serve.

The never-ending external goal for Admissions & Records will the be the voice to the voiceless on our campus. This means make sure our COS Board Policies & Administrative Policies (AP & BP) are equitable and up to date to title 5 regulations. The California Community College Chancellors Office is constantly changing & updating regulations which we then have to make sure are in place for COS. Admissions & Records is always heavily affected by these changes. This shows how vital it is to be present at the local and state level for COS & students.

**Overall SAO Achievement:** Service Area Outcomes are really a peak into the heart and soul of what Admissions & Records would like to accomplish or implement in the coming year. 2022- 2023 was a great year for Admissions & Records and we were incredible blessed in so many ways. Our cross-training plan was up and in full effect so many of our staff are now prepared to jump in when we are short staffed or busy. One of the greatest achievements through our SAO's was the massive success around our fraudulent applications. Our IT department we have been able to create a fraudulent filter that stops the bad actors in their tracks and pushes them into a pending status. This allows us to check our checks and make sure these are legitimate students not trying to take up seats. Fraudulent students really plagued the community college system so being one of the leaders when it came to fraud was an amazing success.

**Changes Based on SAO Achievement:** Completing our outcomes allows us to open more doors to the future and what is ahead for COS. Changes will begin at the ground level which means that for my staff to serve the students with the utmost integrity and dignity, we will need to know what is working and what is not. This means really digging deep to see what our completed SAO's have done for the division, along with if there are any gaps that came with the change. Again, change is just another part of growth and although the growth may not always be easy, the outcome leads us to bigger, better and stronger versions of ourselves and this department.

**Outcome cycle evaluation:** The future is bright for Admissions & Records, because we are always determined to lead with a student services lens. We will constantly look to push the barriers to what do our students want and what do our students need. This year's perseverance was evident from students, staff, faculty and administrators. The main goal will to be empower the Admissions & Records staff to always serve with equity and equality. To enrich the students to have the knowledge and power to take their lives and futures in their hands. For majority of our students COS is just a stopping point on their roadway to success,

## Action: Staff Development Implementation

Offer staff development opportunities/days on or off campus to allow them to have ways to grow not only within our office but within our district

Leave Blank:

Implementation Timeline: 2022 - 2023

Leave Blank:

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Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Arianna Kennedy, Director of Admissions & Records

**Rationale (With supporting data):** Often as classified, the staff can feel underappreciated and not enriched. The goal is to refresh the staff with new and better ways to work, live and serve our student. Mental health is so important for our students and just as important for our faculty and staff. The data is supported by the national center for health statistics that shows 23% of adults seek mental health treatment. We need to treat those who serve our students in holistic manner as well. When looking at those who serve it is important that we remember to enrich others we need to enrich ourselves. Really making sure that we are supporting our staff with development will allow them to be at their best to serve the population at COS. **Priority:** High

Safetv Issue: Yes

External Mandate: No

Safety/Mandate Explanation: There can be some issues due to safety with opportunities that require off campus development.

#### **Update on Action**

#### Updates

**Update Year:** 2023 - 2024

10/06/2023

Status: Continue Action Next Year

We continue to want to enrich our staff so this will be a completed goal when we get more staff in different areas of district governance, CSEA board and conference attendance. This next year is really going to allow us to hit the ground running with the ability to really implement a set amount of time all student services staff should have for this important development piece. **Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):** 

## Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

**District Objective 4.3** - Improve professional development practices District-wide for all District employees to support equity and operational effectiveness from 2021-2025.

## Action: Hire Admissions & Records Technician (Range 24-27)

Hire Admissions & Records Technician position due to the sheer volume of increase we have shown in the recent work regarding the work being done in Admissions & Records and work soon to come. This is includes but is not limited to dual/concurrent enrollment, microfilm conversion, auto awarding certificates & CVC.

Leave Blank: Implementation Timeline: 2022 - 2023 Leave Blank:

Leave Blank:

Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Arianna Kennedy, Director of Admissions & Records

**Rationale (With supporting data):** In 2019-2020, Admissions & Records asked for an increase in A&R office/window staff. This directly supports the districts strategic goal to increase success rates by closing equity gaps because with a new position to be the middle person between our clerical & our specialist they can help on both ends of the board. Then Admissions & Records would be a new position to our office but one that has been utilized in the past. Bringing back this position only makes sense with the continued growth and need that our office has.

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With more staff we are able to address the many issues that arise when discussing equity and how to help our students. Equity is the future because there is no way to not recognize how many gaps need to be filled and how many students do not have the same opportunities. COS is moving into an increase of students on campus and online and with that increase we have to have the staff to serve them. It is important to note that often when we have our busy periods that we are hiring seasonal employees to fill in those impacted areas but I believe that be a disservice as we could hire a full time employee to keep our office constantly afloat and ahead. Its is important to get ahead of the curve for what is to come with Admissions & Records and not behind it.

Priority: High Safety Issue: No External Mandate: No Safety/Mandate Explanation:

#### Update on Action

#### Updates

Update Year: 2022 - 2023

Status: Action Completed

10/06/2023

This position was one we are in the process of hiring within the next year. This has been approved by the COS district and we are excited to see how much this position helps with our work currently and in the future. This person will be our middle man between our counter staff (helping students) and our specialist (doing particular specialized duties). This again will help us by allowing us to help our students in a wrap around manner.

Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

## Resources Description

**Personnel - Classified/Confidential -** Hiring an Admissions & Records Technician is necessary, due to the sheer volume of increase we have shown regarding the work being done in Admissions & Records. In 2019-2020, Admissions & Records asked for an increase in A&R office/window staff, this was necessary then and especially is now. The role of the Admissions & Records Technician has become vital to our department due to the continued rise necessary help in our office. The technician would help with the following things we do and those coming. They are as follows but not limited to rise in Dual/Concurrent Enrollment, Microfilm conversion, Automatic awarding of Certificates, & CVC

This new position will directly support the districts strategic goal to increase success rates by closing equity gaps. With more staff we are able to address the many issues that arise when discussing equity and how to help our students. Equity is the future because there is no way to not recognize how many gaps need to be filled and how many students do not have the same opportunities. COS is moving into an increase of students on campus and online and with that increase we have to have the staff to serve them. It is important to note that Admissions & Records is constantly having to hire seasonal help because of the high volume and demand in our work. This would be able to negate the need for so many season employees and have the opportunity to give them or someone else the opportunity of growth within our office. As the work load & numbers grow then so must our office. (Active)

Why is this resource required for this action?: Admissions and Records has continued to grow in multiple aspects which requires the work to continue. Having to continue to hire seasonal employees to fill in the gaps is not the best option. Give the classified professionals the opportunity to work full time and commit the full day to their work will not only help Admissions & Records but COS as a whole.

When looking at the way students are being serviced which is in-person and online, this requires staff to be taking on more duties that come with all the different ways of service (email, phone, walk up, appt & text). The main purpose for Admissions & Records Technician will fulfil the need of Admissions and Records because of our continued growth in areas of High School students (dual/concurrent enrollment), online courses, transcript requests and microfilm conversion.

One of the most important things to community colleges and COS is to be visible and available to students and we cannot be asking students to show up if we don't have enough staff to service them. Hiring an Admissions & Records Technician will give us the continue support that is needed and negate the need for so many seasonal employees during our busy

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period because the busy periods are coming around sooner and stretching out farther. **Notes (optional):** Classified range 24 step 2 full time 12 month salary at current rate is \$45,698 plus benefits at current rate 35.6295% is \$16,281.97 plus health insurance at current cost \$19,138.20 Total cost for range 24 step 2 at current rates \$81,118.17

Classified range 27 step 2 full time 12 month salary at current rate is \$49,234 plus benefits at 35.6295% \$17,541.83 plus health costs \$19,138.20 Total cost for range 27 step 2 is \$85,914.03

Cost of Request (Nothing will be funded over the amount listed.): 85915

## Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

**District Objective 4.2** - Improve communication practices needed to support organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement across all District units and constituents from 2021-2025.

**District Objective 4.3** - Improve professional development practices District-wide for all District employees to support equity and operational effectiveness from 2021-2025.

# Action: Move current vacant PT Clerical position to FT Clerical Position

This vacant position needs to be filled but filling it with another PT position will not fill the gaps that we currently experience with our continued growth.

Leave Blank: Implementation Timeline: 2023 - 2024 Leave Blank: Leave Blank: Identify related course/program outcomes: Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Arianna Kennedy, Director of Admissions & Records

**Rationale (With supporting data):** Admissions & Records continues to grow by leaps in bounds when it comes to Dual/Concurrent Enrollment students. This then requires more man power present in our office. Our numbers from last year more than tripled on the amount of forms that were processed. High school students are now making themselves more prepared for college by getting a jump start early. This large leap leads us to needing more than a part time clerical assistant. We had one long time staff member make the transition to retirement in Spring 2023, which allowed us to fill her position with an excited and eager COS alumni. This now leaves that person's part time position vacant but as the numbers show, we need more than part time work. We need a staff member here all day to fill in those areas where we have grown so exponentially.

One of the other large reasons we are asking to make this part time clerical position into full time is because we are looking towards the future and the growth that is coming. COS Admissions & Records is always taking on new tasks as they come down the pipeline from the CA Community College Chancellors office. With the growing changes coming from having a new Chancellor, it is important that we prepare for the increased number of students (Dual/Concurrent, Adult Education, Incarcerated Students, Students who are parents). These are all groups that he chancellor's office is pushing for growth which will heavily affect applications, forms and questions.

This position moving from part time to full time will be able to fill the gaps that have begun to show in our area. With the increase load and potential retirements within the next two years or more, this will allow the preparation that is much needed. This also allows us to fill positions that we have continually needed to hire seasonal or temporary employees for. Growth requires bodies to fill the need that comes with it.

Priority: High Safety Issue: No External Mandate: No

#### Safety/Mandate Explanation:

## Resources Description

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Why is this resource required for this action?: A&R has growth that needs to be filled in some way. We currently fill that growth with seasonal and temporary employees but if we can have someone here in a full-time capacity, then that will stop. The seasonal is a great way to stop us from sinking but for a long term, having someone already training and knowledgeable will stop the leak all together. This also allows us to grow our office as we have several positions that will be retiring soon, that gives us ability to train this individual up prior to those moving onto their retirement. This person will also give our office the flexibility that it needs when it comes to extended hours for our office to be open as well as potential to help students in an online forum basis. Giving students options is the future as not every student learns the same or has the same schedule. This will allow us to service the students in all the ways they take courses her at COS. That means in person, online or a hybrid version of that. This again will fill in all our needs current and future.

**Notes (optional):** Classified range 22 step 2 full time 12 month salary at current rate is \$47,549 plus benefits at current rate 36.4508 % is \$37,071 Total cost for range 24 step 2 at current rates \$84,620

Cost of Request (Nothing will be funded over the amount listed.): 84620

## Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

District Objective 3.1 - Reduce equity gaps in course success rates across all departments by 40% from 2021-2025.

**District Objective 4.2** - Improve communication practices needed to support organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement across all District units and constituents from 2021-2025.

## Action: Hire another Evaluation Specialist

With the rising projects of common course numbering, along with the CAL-GETC, we will need need another staff member to bare the load of what is to come.

#### Leave Blank:

Implementation Timeline: 2023 - 2024

#### Leave Blank:

Leave Blank:

#### Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Arianna Kennedy, Director of Admissions & Records

**Rationale (With supporting data):** Evaluations is growing by leaps and bounds, which cannot be more exciting especially as this deals so much with our transfer students and competition. This semester we had the opportunity to pilot a auto awarding process for CTE certificates. This means that instead of a student opting in to get their certification request process, we run a manual process that pulls the students who have met their requirements. This was such an amazing opportunity for our evaluations team but it was not without kinks. It showed the real holes we have when it comes to the staff power it will take to move all our certifications onto this path. This is the future and there are many community colleges already on this path & implementing this.

One large reason that we need another FT evaluator is the CSU & UC system has decided to overhauled their two current pathways (CSU GE & IGETC) and merge them into one called CAL-GETC. This will need to be implemented for our transfer students by 2025, which means we have only a little over a 1.5 to create this overhaul for our students. This is such a big deal as we will need more evaluations done for students to be prepared to transfer as well have our Lead evaluator create this pathway into our DegreeWorks program. This means that focuses will be shifted and work will need to be divided up as the work will not change but its nature will. We need to be prepared and ready instead of reactive to this large change coming our way.

Priority: High Safety Issue: No External Mandate: No Safety/Mandate Explanation:

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(Active)

Why is this resource required for this action?: Resources for this position will return to COS tenfold as this position will allow us to process certificates more quickly with more hands on deck as well as fill in the gaps that will definitely be coming with CAL-GETC. This new evaluator will also be able to help us with common course number which is another project coming down the pipeline from the California Community College Chancellors office. This piece means that all Community Colleges will be asked to create the same course name and numbering so that its easier for students to comprehend. With several projects hitting directly at the heart of what is evaluations work, this person is vital for the growth that will come with COS and the workload.

This new position/addition to our evaluations team will allow more cross training within our already amazing team, which then will never leave us without someone to process this ever important work. This person will also allow our Lead evaluator breathing room when it comes to our Degreeworks program as currently this is all manual work which with one issue or change can take up a whole day. This will create back up position for her as well as availability to free her up when those inevitable issues or fixes need to be remedied.

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**Notes (optional):** Classified range 36 step 2 full time 12 month salary at current rate is \$67,122 plus benefits at current rate 36.4508 % is \$44,206. Total cost for range 24 step 2 at current rates \$111,328

#### Cost of Request (Nothing will be funded over the amount listed.): 111328

## Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

**District Objective 2.1** - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.

**District Objective 2.2** - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025.

District Objective 3.1 - Reduce equity gaps in course success rates across all departments by 40% from 2021-2025.