

# Public Information/External Relations Department

## AUP for Academic Year 2021-2022

October 2020

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### Describe Department/Unit

#### Connection to College Mission

The mission of the CCCC Public Relations and Institutional Advancement Department is to support the college mission by enhancing public awareness and participation in the college's many programs, services, and activities. The department seeks to increase the overall visibility of the college and reinforce its brand and reputation within its diverse communities. Cerro Coso offers academic excellence, responsive student services, advanced technology, community and industry partnerships, and workforce and economic development. The role of public information and marketing efforts is to highlight the high-quality education and dynamic services the college provides to its unique rural communities resulting in the college's growth. To effectively communicate and market to existing and prospective students, Cerro Coso Community College must use a variety of strategies, based on target audience communication styles, and constantly re-evaluate marketing methods and messages to meet diverse student populations. Advancement efforts serve to engage alumni, friends, donors, parents, students, prospective students, faculty, and staff to treasure their association with the college, building relationships and partnerships with community and business leaders that strengthen their support, advancing the college. The department strives to inspire those who are not directly connected with the institution to take notice of the college's academic reputation and contributions to the region and beyond.

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### Report on Improvements Made and Gaps Identified in the Prior Year

#### Student Equity: Actions Taken

Student equity continues to be a high priority for Cerro Coso Community College. In order to positively and accurately reflect Cerro Coso's brand and to leverage its diversity to thrive in a competitive market place, the body of marketing, recruitment, and communications work that is produced strives to accurately reflect the diversity of the workforce, student population, and communities served. Marketing efforts convey value for all students and their unique skills and talents. Marketing, recruitment, and communication efforts overall (including stories and photography) accurately reflect the diversity of students by actively featuring a variety of classes and activities that highlight the college's diversity, including showing multiple ages, genders, ethnicity's, cultures, etc.

#### Student Equity: Gaps to be Addressed

##### No Gap Identified

Gap Identified:

#### Outcomes Assessment: Actions Taken

##### Actions taken in the prior academic year

The department continues to bring forward best practices in the areas of public relations, marketing, and advancement. The department seeks to increase brand awareness among prospective students, parents, families, current students, and alumni. Good progress has been made in promoting Cerro Coso Community College as a leader in higher education.

The addition of the Tehachapi campus, incarcerated education program, Next Up, Career Center, Navigate, Cerro Coso Promise, Outreach, Hunger Free, President's Circle, and other student support and success initiatives have resulted in a substantial increase in the demand from marketing design and materials. The increase has required the department to outsource or assign graphic work to another employee on a temporary basis while avoiding ongoing reassignment due to employee classification restrictions. In

September 2020 the Department Assistant II, with the talent and skill set for a Graphic Designer, was permanently reclassified 25% Graphic Designer and 75% DA II. This has worked very well for the department in meeting the increased demand for graphic services. Beginning July 1, 2020 the Print/Graphic Department was moved from Administrative Services to the Public Relations/Marketing Department where most of the work was being directed through a reorganization.

The earthquakes of 2019 followed by the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020 has made fundraising very difficult. Foundation assets have decreased 6.95% in the last year due to market fluctuations and the addition of two full-time employees. Employee Giving is up 8.6% over the previous year. Donations to the Foundation were up 4.38% and came to \$228,528 for 2019/2020. Scholarship awards by the Foundation were down 10.57% providing more than \$81,137 in cash awards to students. There are some concerns with the way the scholarship system is matching students to qualified scholarships that needs to be addressed.

A team to develop a Strategic Marketing Implementation Plan (SMIP) would be a cost effective way of implementing marketing strategies, budget, and metrics using the Integrated Planning Process. Good progress has been made in developing a (SMIP). A detailed marketing request form to identify specific marketing needs made through the annual planning process was used in developing the Marketing Resource Analysis last year. A SMIP Team is a high priority but has not yet been established. Marketing requests are being evaluated and the Resource Request Analysis is serving as the strategy for implementation at this time. The department and SMIP team will need assistance in developing assessment instruments and lead measures for implementation.

A social media strategy that includes more posts and videos and other forms of engagement was implemented and is now being tracked and sent to managers and faculty chairs on a monthly basis. Followers are up on all forms of social media, including 24% on Facebook and Instagram is up 30%.

The Department has hired a 10 hours a week student that provides content from a student perspective that is more engaging. A recent Tehachapi Podcast mentioned these student stories on a recent edition.

## **Assessments completed in the prior academic year**

A formal process for requesting publicity and printing that allows the department to be more calculated in planning and measuring for effectiveness and efficiency.

2017 93 Formal requests received (First year of process)

2018 112 Formal requests received - 20% Increase in formal requests

2019 227 Formal requests received - 102% Increase in formal requests

These numbers do not include major marketing campaigns submitted through the Annual Unit Planning Process like CTE, Navigate, Cerro Coso Promise, etc. It also does not include formal and informal printing requests, or updating and maintaining website pages.

Ryan and Katie completed an extensive investigation into student application and retention that included a number of questions related to communications preferences. The results indicated students liked the way we were communicating with them and that our communications were effective.

The department regularly conducts post-event surveys regularly, that provide meaningful feedback. This gives volunteers and attendees the opportunity to evaluate the events, make recommendations for improvement, as well as rate their overall experience.

The department review website analytics monthly to track traffic, evaluate most utilized pages, and user experience and satisfaction. This data is used to set priorities and make improvements.

The department also routinely measures the effectiveness of specific marketing campaigns utilizing a variety of methods.

## **Outcomes Assessment: Gaps to be Addressed**

### **Increase Scholarship Awards to Students**

**Type:**

AUO

**Target Missed/Gap Detected:**

Every year the CCCC Foundation approves a substantial amount of scholarship funds to be awarded to students and routinely a large sum of scholarships continue to go unawarded. There needs to be a systematic evaluation into the processing of applications, software management system, individual scholarship criteria, and administration and distribution that continues to prevents a number of scholarships from being awarded.

**Type of Gap:**

Need to improve operational processes.

**Analysis and Plan for Improvement:**

Work with Director of Financial Aid to systematically evaluate the processes, systems, criteria, and distribution of scholarship funds.

**Anticipated Semester for Implementing Planned Improvements:**

Fall 2021

**Anticipated Semester of Next Assessment:**

Spring 2022

## Program Review: Actions Taken

### Public Information/External Relations Department

**Year of Last Program Review:**

2015

**Actions Taken in the Prior Year to Address Strategies:**

Progress has been made in the department's identified three-year strategies.

- The department has developed a formalized process for requesting publicity and printing that allows the department to measure and evaluate its effectiveness and efficiency.
- The department's goal to develop, maintain, and continually renew the financial resources necessary to sustain needed resources for the college is an ongoing process through the CCCC Foundation. The Foundation played a significant role in the campaign and passage of Measure J in November of 2016 that provides the college with funding to modernize aging facilities and upgrade instructional technologies. The measure passed by a 65.17% margin, receiving 145,217 yes votes.
- Additional assistance has been hired to assist with the College Promise, and to maintain and increase development and marketing efforts of the CCCC Foundation in support of the college's need for increased human, monetary, and physical resources.
- The Alumni Association board of directors have been reinstated and their are plans to increase engagement that will provide valuable human, fiscal, cultural, and physical resources to the college.
- A program Manager for the Foundation has been hired, with the expertise and skills needed for Institutional Advancement that will move the institution forward and secure the funds needed for success by presenting fundraising initiatives as giving opportunities to prospective donors through a variety of channels including: a sustainable funding mechanism for the Cerro Coso Promise, and development of an active and viable alumni engagement program and President's Circle.
- An Alumni engagement strategy has been developed to improve participation in and understanding of the association.
- A website user survey is conducted annually to make improvements to the college website improving the user experience.
- Seven college sites, spread across 18,500 sq. miles, serving very unique communities ads to the complexity of the college's true "market". Developing a marketing plan that details the level of complexity of the college's service area and diverse needs is an overwhelming and tasking to existing staff. There just isn't enough time to research, develop a plan, and implement in a professional, collegiate, smart, and engages way that drives others to respond. The department has chosen

to take a different approach to meet the same need and develop a Strategic Marketing Implementation Plan (SMIP). Currently the Resource Request Analysis is serving as the SMIP and a team will be developed to address measures and assessments and develop timelines.

#### **Strategies Still to be Addressed:**

Formation of a SMIP team to establish marketing strategies, evaluate priorities, establish timelines, and manage expectations.

## **Annual Planning: Actions Taken**

### **Lead Foundation efforts in developing a sustainable funding source for the Cerro Coso Promise.**

A Foundation goal of \$3M for the Cerro Coso Promise was established and this goal will continue to be a priority for Institutional Advancement until the goal is met.

Special events and fundraising activities of the foundation have yielded very little over the last year following the major earthquakes in July of 2019 and the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020. Many events have been canceled or postponed, representing the potential loss of critical dollars to fuel the important mission of the Foundation. The Foundation has developed an aggressive marketing strategy for maintaining relationships with donors to mitigate the impact of potential revenue loss.

Foundation assets have decreased 6.95% in the last year due to market fluctuations and the addition of two full-time employees. Employee Giving is up 8.6% over the previous year. Donations to the Foundation were up 4.38% and came to \$228,528 for 2019/2020. Scholarship awards by the Foundation were down 10.57% providing more than \$81,137 in cash awards to students. There are some concerns with the way the scholarship system is matching students to scholarship opportunities that needs to be addressed.

### **Develop an annual strategic marketing implementation plan.**

This plan of action has been derailed by staffing shortages and other priorities. It still remains a goal of the department but is not likely to progress until employees return to work on the campus and positions within the department are fully staffed.

### **Develop and implement a social media strategy.**

A social media strategy was developed that included more posts from the student perspectives and other forms of engagement.

A student worker has been hired to assist in developing and writing student stories and implementing social media strategies.

Over the last year our followers on social media have increased on all social media platforms including 24% on Facebook, 30% on Instagram, 17.5% on Twitter, and 13.7% on LinkedIn.

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## **Review of Current Year Initiatives**

### **Reminder of Initiatives for the Current Year**

#### **Lead Foundation efforts in developing a sustainable funding source for the Cerro Coso Promise**

Recent economic set-backs and the stay at home orders have completely changed the Foundation's need and strategies for hosting fundraising efforts into a virtual environment. They are adjusting their strategies to let donors know the most immediate needs and how they can assist students in these uncertain times:

1. Sharing the immediate, acute need.

2. Turn in-person cancellations into online events.
3. Stay educated. Providing free training, webinars, and services to support CCCC students.
4. Use video as a way to stay connected and informed.

## **Improve Marketing Communications with Faculty**

Progress is being made on this initiative.

## **Improve connections with our communities through storytelling**

Progress is being made on this initiative.

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# **Plan Initiatives for Next Year**

## **Initiatives for Next Academic Year**

### **Lead Foundation efforts in developing a sustainable funding source for the Cerro Coso Promise**

**Is this part of a multiyear initiative?**

Yes

#### **Specific Action Steps to be Taken:**

This is an ongoing initiative until the \$3M endowment goal of the Foundation's is reached.

- Increase President's Circle membership
- Implement a capital campaign
- Increase Alumni Relation engagement and activities

#### **Lead Measure of Success:**

- Membership in President's Circle increased
- Capital campaign conducted
- Alumni memberships and activities increased

**Are any of the lead measures identified above lacking assessment instruments?**

No

**Does the department request help to develop these instruments?**

No

#### **Lag Measure of Success:**

#### **Person Responsible:**

Director of Institutional Advancement

**It addresses a program review strategy**

**Which strategic goal does this initiative address?**

Goal 1: Maximize Student Success, Goal 3: Ensure Student Access, Goal 4: Enhance Community Connections, Goal 5: Strengthen Organizational Effectiveness

**Increase Scholarship Awards to Students**

**Is this part of a multiyear initiative?**

Yes

**Specific Action Steps to be Taken:**

Every year the CCCC Foundation approves a substantial amount of scholarship funds to be awarded to students and routinely a large sum of scholarships continue to go unawarded. A systematic evaluation to include the review of:

- Processing of applications,
- Scholarship Software Management System,
- Individual scholarship criteria,
- Administration and distribution processes

**Lead Measure of Success:**

- Increase in applications for scholarships
- Improve accuracy of scholarship match (student to criteria)
- Review and adjust criteria preventing scholarships from being awarded
- Adjustment to administration and distribution processes to improve quantity of awards being made

**Are any of the lead measures identified above lacking assessment instruments?**

No

**Does the department request help to develop these instruments?**

No

**Lag Measure of Success:**

- Increase in scholarships awarded to students
- Improved accuracy of awards to established criteria
- Improved process for awarding of scholarships

**Person Responsible:**

Director of Institutional Advancement

**It addresses a gap in outcomes assessment**

**Which strategic goal does this initiative address?**

Goal 1: Maximize Student Success, Goal 3: Ensure Student Access, Goal 4: Enhance Community Connections, Goal 5: Strengthen Organizational Effectiveness

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## Evaluate Resource Needs

### Facilities

Existing space is adequate to meet department needs.

## **Information Technology**

Requesting computer camera and headset with mic for virtual meetings.

## **Marketing**

Additional funds are being requested to replace the department's 10 year old camera which is literally disintegrating. This was supported at the Division level last year but not funded. This remains a critical need for the department.

It is difficult to anticipate paper increase due to course expansion in the ISEP but there is a known increase in upcoming P.O.S.T. academies that will warrant a great deal of additional paper. Each academy utilizes about 1/2 pallet of paper. The department must continually request a budget augmentation to meet paper and maintenance fees. An increase is being requested of \$2,000.

There is a need to replace the very old paper folder in the print shop which may be original to the facility.

## **Professional Development**

Requesting reinstatement of \$2,000 for Director travel to annual PIO and Fundraising Conferences.

## **Research and Data**

Department will continue to request the assistance of IR with event surveys and data and the data needs for the annual community report. Assistance will be needed from IR in developing data points for benchmarking marketing efforts and material, and in developing program surveys.

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## **Staffing Requests**

### **1000 Category - Certificated Positions**

### **2000 Category - Classified Staff**