



California Community Colleges

SYSTEM WEBINAR SUMMARY: IN THEIR OWN VOICES (February 2022)

The primary item on the agenda was a summary of lessons learned while conducting the student-centered listening tour in Fall 2021, which involved visits to 7 colleges including Sierra College, Napa Valley College, Madera Community College, Los Angeles Valley College, Lassen Community College, Lake Tahoe Community College, and San Diego City College. Each visit included a student-led tour, a student-only lunch session, and a debrief with campus administrators, and additional data were collected through a survey. The webinar included a panel of students who had assisted the CCCCCO with, or participated in, the listening tour.

What Do Students Identify as their Primary Needs?

1. **Health and wellness support**, with a focus on mental health services due to stress, anxiety, and depression.
2. **Basic needs support**, including food, housing, child care, and technology needs.
3. **Accessible modalities with quality resources**, including course options and student services that are consistently available in various formats.

What Can Colleges Do to Address Mental Health Needs?

- Deliver professional development to faculty and staff related to providing trauma-informed support, especially those working in financial aid and counseling offices.
- Develop partnerships with four-year institutions to help meet demand by providing mental health services on community college campuses.
- Form an adult-learner re-engagement office to provide connections to resources that address the particular needs of these students, such as child care services.
- List available resources in every syllabus to increase student awareness.
- Encourage students to get trained as [Student Wellness Ambassadors](#), a service provided by the Foundation for CCC.

What Can Colleges Do to Address Basic Needs?

- Develop community partnerships to provide emergency housing, affordable housing, and child care.
- Provide healthy meals through an on-campus cafeteria.

- Implement a food pantry centered on providing services with dignity, staffed by student workers and providing access to a wide variety of food along with support to apply for food assistance programs.
- Develop partnerships with employers to provide internships and apprenticeships that help students develop self-sufficiency and dignity.
- Expand on-campus work-study opportunities.

What Can Colleges Do to Improve Accessibility of Courses and Services?

- Offer evening, weekend, and online classes and services to meet student demand.
- Develop a one-stop center for enrollment, financial aid, counseling, and special programs.
- Implement a first-year “on-boarding” program, including targeted counseling and peer outreach.
- Conduct specialized outreach to and develop resources for DSPS students.
- Provide WiFi, tutoring, and study spaces that are consistently open and available.

What Other Advice Did Student Panelists Offer for Colleges?

- Provide more personalized service to students, considering their individual circumstances when assessing their needs and determining their eligibility for programs. Design services in ways that meet the needs of today’s students, including extended hours and multiple formats.
- Focus on the needs of first generation students, especially related to financial aid and helping students understand college costs and available resources. Start to address misinformation early by engaging with middle and high school students.
- Fully implement AB 705 to remove the barrier posed by developmental courses.
- Simplify application processes for services, such as internship programs.
- Increase offerings of zero textbook cost courses and programs.
- Re-engage students lost during the pandemic through individual outreach efforts, high-touch case management that can connect students to the services they need, and continuation of more flexible times and modalities that were implemented as a response to the pandemic.

How Can We Continue to Learn about Students’ Needs?

- Colleges can gather information from their own students through surveys, town halls and focus groups, by engaging in regular and systematic communication with students, and through participation in the Student Ambassador program.
- The Student Senate for California Community Colleges is conducting additional campus listening tours this spring.