

### PURPOSE AND INTEGRATION WITH BROADER PLANNING

The comprehensive program review captures the longer-term strategic plan for a program. The CPR informs the campus of the program's goals and describes the means for achieving those goals. The CPR includes a reflection on annual program goals and student learning outcomes. CPR information may also be used to inform college planning including: the strategic plan, education plan, facilities plan, student equity plan, etc. *See AP/BP 3260*

### STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAM LINK TO COLLEGE MISSION

Statement of Mission: Feather River College provides high quality, comprehensive student education as well as opportunities for learning, workforce preparation, and achievement in a small college environment. The College provides general education, associate and bachelor's degrees, certificates, transfer programs, and life-long learning for a diverse student population by serving local, regional, national and international students through traditional face-to-face instruction as well as distance education. The College also serves as a cultural and economic leader for all communities that lie within the District and embraces the opportunities afforded by its natural setting. *Describe how the program serves/supports the College mission, vision, and values.*

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### SERVICES AND STUDENT POPULATIONS SERVED

*Provide a description of all the services provided under your program along with the staff who provide these services. An organizational chart may be included. Describe how services are provided both on campus and online. Describe the student and/or population served by the program, including any disproportionately impacted populations and data regarding student access to the service and success rates among populations (if applicable). Assure that the catalog, website and any other marketing descriptions are accurate.*

The Chief Student Services Officer (CSSO), now Vice President of Student Services (VPSS), wrote the last Comprehensive Program Review in 2017. At that time, she reiterated that the previous CSSO had shared in the 2012 CPR that the Director of Marketing and Outreach position was eliminated around 2008, during the economic downturn. Between 2018 - 2020, the VPSS continued to serve as the Director of Marketing/Public Information Officer (PIO). In an effort to improve and dedicate more time on to the College's marketing efforts, she experimented with hiring temporary Marketing Managers, with new funding from Guided Pathways. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States and directly affected all higher education enrollment and marketing efforts.

The Outreach department at the time consisted of two, part-time staff (recruiter with shared duties in academic advising, and a 50% recruiter assistant); together they handled all correspondence to prospective students, attended college fairs, assisted with coordination of the College's recruitment events, and creation of promotional material. Due to not having a formal Marketing & Communications department, staff from individual departments maintained program webpages, and the VPSS managed the College's home webpage and worked with a staff member in IT for any major changes to the Feather River College website.

In 2020, the College hired an interim full-time Marketing Manager who reported directly to the VPSS and assumed all marketing responsibilities. This was a critical hire at the time as the College was adapting to pandemic-related fallout in enrollment and a necessity for more digital connections with students. The COVID-19 pandemic created a dire need to begin more digital advertising efforts and begin implementing more digital communication operations on campus, as Feather River College was one of the only colleges to maintain in-person instruction during the early years of the pandemic.

In 2022, a new permanent position, Director of Marketing, Outreach and Communications, was created and advertised, while still funded by categorical programs. The new position continues to report to the VPSS and is a member of Student Services Council as well as other shared-governance committees. This expanded role was established in response to the ever-changing needs of higher education and was intended to bring a focus on digital engagement. This new position also assisted Feather River College in adjusting to post-pandemic life and pivoting towards more modernized marketing efforts including a digital advertising strategy to help with enrollment and retention, as well as an overall boost in the college's image. In addition to having a new position, the shared governance Communications Committee is still used as a sounding board to review marketing and communications efforts on campus and the Strategic Enrollment Management committee also continues to discuss and recommend strategies for marketing, outreach, enrollment and retention.

### **DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO REDUCE EQUITY GAPS AMONGST STUDENT POPULATIONS**

*You may refer to the Student Equity Plan to identify populations that the college has determined there are equity gaps or disproportionate impact. An example to reduce equity gaps might be implementing a change within the service for a specific population based on data. I.E. targeting a specific group for tutoring, changing intervention strategies, etc.*

Efforts to reduce equity gaps are based on our Student Equity Plan, which include messaging that is more accessible to different populations on campus and promotion of our more diverse student populations. The marketing department supports these efforts by creating promotional material that speaks to specialized, more diverse audiences, and includes terminology that is more accessible. The marketing department also directly supports our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI) initiatives by volunteering on the DEI committee and managing the DEI webpages, along with assisting with event planning and promotion of DEI-specific events. This is evident through the new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity website, which includes a calendar of all DEI events featured monthly.

In terms of recruitment, the outreach team works with our marketing department to create promotional material and assets that feature the diverse student body that Feather River College is known for. By using photos and videos of diverse populations of students, the College is helping to reduce equity gaps among students by demonstrating how diverse our student population is to prospective students, which in turn, encourages more diverse populations to enroll. All of our modern marketing efforts feature diverse populations of students throughout all digital assets, including videos, photography, testimonials, and social media posts.

### **UPDATED POLICIES RELATED TO YOUR PROGRAM**

*Please list any policies such as AP's or BP's (for internal) or State or Federal Regulations (for external) that have been updated since the last CPR, describe any changes or impacts to your services.*

AP 3725 Information and Communications Technology was updated in the Communications Committee. Goals for the Communications Committee are described in the Strategic Plans that span 2016-2021 and for 2021-2027, which include developing policies, procedures and guidelines that relate to marketing and communication.

### **ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT SERVICES STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*Note which Student Services Student Learning Outcomes you chose to assess, and what strategies you used to assess them. Examples may include student satisfaction data, records of student use of services, data describing a change in service after a program change has been made, anecdotal or focus group feedback from students, evaluations from programs, etc.*

1. Students will learn about programs and services and make an informed decision to apply and utilize these programs and services. (CWSLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
2. Students will demonstrate an awareness of their financial responsibilities for all college expenses by accessing resources to cover costs. (CWSLOs 2, 3, 4, 5, 7)
3. Students will utilize resources to acquire skills and knowledge to persist in attaining academic and personal goals. (CWSLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
4. Students will develop a sense of belonging and connection to the campus and community by participating in activities. (CWSLOs 1, 4, 5, 6, 7)
5. Students will grow their independence by learning to be resourceful and improve skills in self-advocacy, organization and leadership skills. (CWSLOs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

The Student Services Student Learning Outcomes (SSSLO) chosen to measure are #1 and #5. They state:

1. Prospective students will learn about the unique programs and support services available at FRC, and will make an informed decision to apply and take advantage of these services.
5. Students will access available resources within the campus and community to enhance their sense of belonging.

As mentioned previously, the best measure of the effectiveness of marketing and outreach efforts is the ability of the College to maintain one of the highest enrollment and retention rates in California during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The California Community College Chancellor's Office reported that overall student headcount declined system wide by 20% from fall 2019 to spring 2022.
- The VP of Instruction at FRC reported that FRC's resident FTES is expected to be about 7% lower in spring 2023 than it was in fall 2019. This is much better than many other CA community colleges, especially for the rural areas.

The hiring of a new Director of Marketing, Outreach and Communications has helped address SSSLO #1 directly by making the College's unique programs and support services more accessible through digital advertising efforts. All social media channels have seen consistent growth and engagement since the hiring of the new Director, and act as a key communication tool for promoting Feather River College. Included in this list of social media channels is the College's YouTube channel, which has added almost 40 new videos to its collection since the last CPR to help prospective students learn more about the College's unique programs and services.

### **PROGRAM SUCCESSES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

*Using results of assessments, APR reflection, or other data or evidence, describe successes and accomplishments that have occurred within the program since the last CPR.*

A review of Annual Program Reviews reveals how this program/service has evolved to accomplish many new initiatives. The following is a brief review:

In **2018**, the College worked with 25<sup>th</sup> Hour Communications and other third party marketing services to assist with marketing efforts and develop a marketing plan. Under the supervision of the VPSS, the Communications Committee developed social media guidelines and began engaging more consistently on social media platforms to connect with students. There was a heavy focus on the College's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, which provided many ancillary marketing benefits at the time, including organized activities in collaboration with the FRC Foundation.

In **2019**, a position was created through Guided Pathways funding to experiment with a part-time digital marketing position. An internal employee filled this role temporarily, with a background in photography and digital art, which contributed to digital advertising and other media needs. The focus at this time was expanding photography assets around campus, addressing adult education needs, assisting with website management, and enhancing the College catalog. The VPSS continued to provide oversight of social media and other advertising efforts with radio, newspaper, sponsorship, website, etc.

In **2020**, as mentioned above, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the U.S. and directly affected all campus operations and marketing efforts. The VPSS hired a new full-time Marketing Manager in December 2020 that brought expertise in the areas of digital advertising, modern

recruitment tactics, a comprehensive understanding of social media, and a background in higher education. Due to the pandemic-related effects of distance learning and virtual recruitment, this was a critical point in the development of a formal marketing department to help keep the College aligned with modern marketing techniques and maintain enrollment during the pandemic.

During 2021, the College was still dealing with the effects of the global pandemic and began using the Marketing Manager to strategize ways to bolster enrollment and adjust operations to be more digital-forward. The Marketing Manager, under the supervision of the VPSS, identified areas and assets of need for recruitment moving forward, developed advertising strategies, implemented marketing campaigns, enhanced the College's website, grew social media channels, modified local and traditional recruitment efforts, and researched more effective methods of campus communication. The Marketing Manager was also able to assist in moving staple recruitment events, such as the College & Career Fair, to a virtual platform; as well as developing a new virtual tour option for the College to help make the campus more accessible. The results of these efforts assisted in the College maintaining one of the highest enrollment and retention rates among California Community Colleges during the pandemic years. The VP of Instruction at FRC reported during SEM meetings that FRC's resident FTES count was higher than the majority of other CA community colleges statewide, especially for being such a rural institution. During this time, there were limited on-campus activities and events, which allowed the marketing department to strategize effective methods for bringing students back to the normalcy of campus life that once existed before the pandemic. At the end of 2021, the College developed a new position of Director of Marketing, Outreach and Communications to be hired beginning 2022.

In **2022**, under the direction of the new Director of Marketing, Outreach and Communications, the College began major efforts to bring enrollment and student engagement back to pre-pandemic levels. The new Marketing, Communications and Outreach department implemented college-wide communication guidelines, improved student life event promotion, leveraged marketing assets and the College website to begin strategic marketing campaigns, re-examined previous recruitment models to adjust for post-pandemic recruitment, developed more media to target younger generations, and began measuring effectiveness of these marketing efforts. The marketing department also focused on nurturing local relationships and leaning into traditional advertising platforms, such as local radio, magazines, news station websites, as well as in-venue video advertising at the local town theater. On top of this, the new marketing department expanded digital advertising efforts, began creating more promotional videos to be used for digital recruitment, introduced new digital signage on campus for promotion of FRC events, and created new recruitment opportunities for local students. In May 2022, Feather River College hosted its first ever Ninth Grade Navigation Day, which welcomed almost 200 local high school freshman students to explore the Feather River College campus and its various programs and resources. At this point, the College began seeing the results of these marketing and communication efforts, which were aiding in efforts to retain current students and engage prospective students.

By **2023**, the Director of Marketing, Outreach and Communications had developed a catalog of new video assets to aid with recruitment of both students and employees. The Director also created new processes for promotion of the College and aided in enhancing student life events to engage more students. COVID-19 directly affected student engagement at student life events and forced the College to become more digitally accessible. This meant the creation of more specialized websites for academic departments, enhancing current Student Services webpages, and consistently using social media as a vital communications tool. The Director also saw success in a new local radio show titled the “Golden Eagle Update”, which provided the College an effective traditional platform for communication to the local community on upcoming events, academic successes and awards, as well as educational opportunities for locals. By this time, the Marketing, Outreach and Communications department was utilizing a 3-prong strategy to reach prospective students through digital advertising, developing key digital assets to help reach its younger audience, and still nurture its traditional advertising platforms at the local level.

### **PROGRAM CHALLENGES**

*What challenges, if any, has your program experienced since the last CPR?*

Since the last CPR, our marketing department has experienced direct effects and aftermath of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The department has adjusted its strategy to be more digital-forward, and prioritized creation of more digital assets to help with recruitment and promotion of the College. The marketing departments has also assisted various departments on campus to help improve digital communication, which was a direct result of the pandemic and altered students’ preferred methods of communication and digital engagement. Other challenges include modifying outdated recruitment strategies, updating campus communication processes, engagement with students at in-person events, and updating websites to be more accessible as the world shifts to a more digitally reliant society.

In regards to staffing issues specifically, the outreach department will be undergoing a major change in 2023, as the College loses a longtime recruiter assistant to retirement and adjusts its outreach strategies accordingly to see if tasks can be absorbed between the Director and Recruiter. The outreach department is modifying recruitment travel strategies to target more fruitful regions that have higher probability of students enrolling at Feather River College. The department is also working to nurture currently established feeder areas that have proven successful for recruitment to help keep those channels thriving. The Director and recruitment staff are working collaboratively to identify and target these regions for top recruitment travel strategies.

### **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS AND PLANS**

*Based on the results of the assessment, APR reflection, or other data or evidence, describe any changes have you made or that you plan to make to improve your program or service.*

In general, the marketing department has seen tremendous improvements since appointing a designated director to this position to help guide the College forward into a more digital-forward society. This includes a major focus on website improvements and enhancing website user experiences by making College webpages more engaging and accessible. The marketing department has also focused on growing its digital assets to help recruit through digital methods, including the use of high-resolution imagery and video, both featured prominently throughout the College website. Other major improvements include the addition of a virtual college tour, making the College more digitally accessible, as well as growing the College's social media channels through utilization of social media strategies. On top of this, the department has been improving traditional methods of advertising, such as enhancing ads in local magazines and news publications, introduction of new FRC-specific radio shows, having more of a presence at local events, and really nurturing our local prospective student population by creation of targeted messaging and promotion of the Plumas Pipeline.

The Outreach team has adjusted its strategy to help improve recruitment tactics by modernizing outreach efforts through use of digital advertisements, QR codes at in-person events, and enhancements to the College recruitment webpages. The Outreach team has also implemented measurement strategies to gauge effectiveness of outreach efforts to help the department continue to evolve and improve. This includes monitoring view rates of QR codes and specialized websites to help assess where our traffic is coming from, which methods are most effective, and how much return we see from our efforts around traditional recruiting.

The Communications department utilizes the assistance of the Communications Committee to help review and develop a variety of strategies designed to communicate with all students and staff more effectively. In response to this goal, we have improved the College website to include more digital assets such as video, photos, and testimonials. The Communication department has also began improving campus communication through new processes designed to help streamline efforts and address concerns from staff and students in regards to campus communications.

### **POSSIBLE BARRIERS TO IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

*What challenges, if any, do you foresee in making program improvements. Examples may include budget, staffing, etc.*

The primary challenges we foresee for the marketing department would include those surrounding the College's budget and if it sees reductions due to California entering into recessionary headwinds as a direct result from the pandemic and specialized, one-time funding. We also anticipate staffing challenges due to the remote nature of our College's location and unique skill sets needed for recruitment. In combination, these challenges could be devastating to the department and its recent record of accomplishments.

### **LONG RANGE VISION FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS**

*Based on a review of your APRs for the past four years, the new and emerging trends in your area, and the results of the student services student learning outcomes assessment, what changes do you foresee for the future? What facility and staffing needs do you anticipate will be needed? What changes do you plan to make to your program to improve student-learning outcomes?*

As referenced in several planning documents (Quality Focus Essay, Education Plan, Marketing/Outreach Program Review, Superintendent/President Objectives, SEM Committee Goals, etc.) the college would like to see FTES growth by increasing enrollment on campus through our promotion of our unique programs, specifically our Career Technical Education (CTE) programs and 4-year bachelor's degrees. Strategies for growing enrollment include utilizing powerful third party marketing companies to help promote the college under the supervision of the Director of Marketing, Outreach and Communications, as well as leveraging current successful assets and strategies already in place. Examples include improving digital student experiences on our College website, continuing to engage students digitally on social media, and nurturing important community connections and partnerships, such as with Plumas Unified School District. In addition, we will develop strategies for leveraging core College programs to help promote the College as a whole through its success in specialized academic areas.

The Communications and Strategic Enrollment Management Committees will also continue to review current strategies and make recommendations for new strategies to help promote the college, communicate more effectively with prospective students including recruitment and retention. The committee will also continue to evolve policies, procedures and guidelines for the use of social media and communication standards.

**ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH CAMPUS**

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