ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, PRESIDENT'S CLUSTER, AND STUDENT SUCCESS AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS, COLLEGE CENTERS ANNUAL PROGRAM PLANNING WORKSHEET FOR 2024

Program: Career Connections   **Planning Year:** 2023   **Last Year CPPR Completed:** 2022

Unit: Career Connections   **Cluster:** Student Success and Support Programs

Please complete the following information. Please note that responses are not required for all elements of this document.

I.   **GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION**

Describe changes to program mission, if applicable.

The mission of Career Connections has not changed. As reported report by Dr. Matthew Green, Director of Community Program in this last APPW, "Under the broader mission statement: "Aligning students and employers with quality employment services"., Career Connections addresses three pillars of career services: 1) Job Search Readiness; 2) Workplace Readiness (workplace competencies); and, 3) Work-based Learning (e.g. internships). However, input from employers and initiatives coming from the Chancellor's Office (Work-based Learning, Internships, Project-based Learning, Employer Engagement, College Corps, RERP, LAEP, Revised Title 5 regulations for Work Experience) underscore the need for Cuesta to make instruction and support in these three components more readily accessible to and used by a greater percentage of students. This array of programming and initiative, combined with an engaged DEI perspective, compels Career Connections to diversify the content and modalities of delivery of each of these components. Additional lead staffing and resources in each of these areas are needed to ensure adequate program capacity.   Another factor that reinforces this enhanced mission is the change noted in the MIS Data Submission DED Updates for 2018-19 Reporting, which added the new element of SG21 to capture student work-based status learning status. The addition of College Corps to the programs within Career Connections is a significant change, although the objectives and structure of the program fits well into its mission and services."

Describe any changes in primary relationships, internal and external, to the District.

Due to a reorganization/restructure in December 2023, the Career Connections Department was assigned to Dr. Maria T. Escobedo, Dean, Student Success and Support Programs. As reported previously by Dr. Matthew Green, the "Career Connections staff continues to establish and renew relationships with both internal and external partners, including faculty and academic divisions, Student Services, Financial Aid Areas of Study

(Internships, Work Study, College Corps, LAEP), campus departments (on-campus student jobs, outreach events) and numerous individual employers seeking Cuesta students as employees and interns, as well as workforce and workforce support agencies, such as the AJCC (SLOCAL Careers center), Workforce Development Board, and Restorative Partners."

It is also noted that our Career Connections staff collaborates closely with various departments, such as Student Life and Leadership, Foundation Office, Guided Pathways Coordinators, faculty, and Aaron Borgeson, Director of Outreach and Enrollment services on the various student services events, both on and off campus.

Career Connections staff continues to identify the need for Cuesta career services staff to engage more readily in on-going employer/workforce-related groups and events, such as local Chambers of Commerce, Human Resources associations, job developer meetings, meetings.

List any changes to program service, including changes and improvements, since last year, if applicable.

The focus of career services has been to continue establishing internship opportunities for students in various Areas of Study, as well continuing to provide direct student support in job search preparation and placement in various venues, such as the Career Connections Office, campus student events, classroom presentations, to mention a few.

In last year's APPW, Dr. Green note the following "The (default) model for providing career services to students has been mostly one-on-one, individual interactions. This model limits the number of students served. With the Chancellor's Office vision for "all" students to engage in career development and acquire job readiness skills as part of the community college education, Career Connections is shifting the model to focus on embedding resources into regular coursework and integrating them as independent study (web-based/Canvas) into the processes of Work Experience, Internships and other Work-based Learning and career support services."

The strategy of providing students with additional resources with communication tools such as: creating personalized videos introducing career services by Career Connections staff and strengthening the visibility of local student-friendly/relevant employment, and work-based learning opportunities are currently under development. However, the partnerships with programs such as College Corps have strengthened and as well as collaborations with campus-wide departments. The staff from Career Connections working closely with the Guided Pathways Coordinators in developing joint programming that provides students the opportunity to be engage in internships and work place opportunities based on the respective Areas of Study.

List changes to program in the last year in reference to relevant statutory authority/program regulation and related compliance issues, if any.

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As outlined in the previous APPW by Dr. Green, "career services are key elements of any plan to associated with the Employer Engagement Plan of the Chancellor's Office, as well as the pending changes to Title 5 regulations of Work Experience (and RERP, College Corps, LAEP)."

II.   **ANNUAL PROGRAM SUPPORT OF DISTRICT'S MISSION STATEMENT, INSTITUTIONAL GOALS, INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES, AND/OR INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Provide updates, if any, in how your program addresses or helps to achieve the District's Mission Statement in the last year.

Cuesta College is an inclusive institution that inspires a diverse student population to achieve their educational goals.

We effectively support students in their efforts to improve foundational skills, earn certificates or associate degrees, transfer to four-year institutions, and advance in the workforce.

Through innovative and challenging learning opportunities, Cuesta College enhances lives by promoting cultural, intellectual, personal, and professional growth. We prepare students to become engaged citizens in our increasingly complex communities and world.

Career Connections continues to aligned it services to achieve the District's mission statement by providing the diverse Cuesta College student body with employment services that support and enhance their educational success in the areas of job search preparation and job development skills, continuous collaborations with the location with our local employers/agencies, outreach and communication with the faculty from various academic departments/disciplines, and with campus-wide departments that assist the students in their preparation for the workforce. As noted by the previous manager of Career Connections, the staff continue to be "committed to practices of diversity, equity and inclusion and make a conscious effort to address barriers to employment that our students face, and make sure our employer panels and organizations are representative of our diverse student body".

As previously report and historical context, in September 2018 Career Connections started the Cougar Career Closet, a donation-based gently used clothing closet of professional clothing for students. This service has continued to support students with clothing items that helps them as they prepare for their respective job interviews and first day on the job. As previously reported, "purchasing new clothing for interviews is expensive and the Cougar Career Closet removes a barrier and students have reported that they feel noticeably confident walking into interviews knowing that they look professional."

It is important to note the partnership with the College Corps Program and Career Connections continues to support the mission of the college.

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Provide updates, if any, to how your program addresses or helps to achieve the District's [Institutional Goals and Objectives](#), and/or operational planning initiatives in the last year.

Institutional Goal 1: Access: Increase student access to higher education/Institutional Objective 1D: Increase career pathways for local high school students

The topic of the cost of higher education continues to be a state and national topic which impacts the matter of "access to higher education" for underrepresented groups. Assisting students through their educational journey and providing them the opportunity to be prepared to be competitive in the job market upon graduation. The Career Connections Department provides this opportunity through its services in providing work-experience and internships opportunities. The staff provide exceptional support services in assisting students with job search, resume writing, guidance the importance of developing their interview skills. The comprehensive services provided to students is important for students to connect what they learn in the classroom and apply it to their career.

The Strong Workforce Job Developer continues to focus on developing pipeline partnerships to employment opportunities for Career Technical Education field of study. The Job Developer designs and implements outreach activities to include working with local employers, classroom presentations, monthly program activities, and partnering with campus-wide departments with the goal of informing students of the employment preparation opportunities that are aligned to their Area of Study.

Institutional Goal 2: Completion: Increase the number of students earning an Associate Degree including Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT), credentials, certificates, or specific job-oriented skill sets

As noted above, Career Connections continues to help students with gaining access to student-friendly jobs and entry-level jobs, which helps students who need to earn an income while they complete their respective degrees and education goals. As outlined in the previous APPW, the " Job Developer's continues to focus on placement in internships and part-time opportunities in the CTE programs helps students gain hands-on experience in the industry that they have chosen to study so they will be able to connect their studies to real world experiences and see what a completion or their degree or certificate will do for them…The data collected by the Department of Labor shows that program completion represents higher pay for community college graduates. When creating work-based learning opportunities, such as internships, Career Connections aligns skill requirements with curriculum and encourages students to consider internships in their last year or semester to emphasize academic achievement being a route to professional opportunities."

Institutional Goal 3: Transfer: Increase the number of students who transfer annually to a California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC)

The design and contribution of the Career Connections Program to Institutional Goal 3 can be considered as part of the educational journey. Students who identify as their educational goal of transferring to a UC or CSU institution, the information they received from the Career Connections staff can prepare them for future internship and work experience opportunities offered at the respective four-year institution. Preparation is key to being informed of what opportunities are available to them in preparation for their professional career.

Institutional Goal 5: Workforce-Increase the proportion of exiting students who report being employed in their field of study

The strategies outlined in the APPW has not had any significant changes, Dr. Green outlined the strategies and activities by each of the respective staff members:

- Career Connections continues to meet with local employers about current and future employment needs while providing opportunities for students to incorporate internships, work experience, work-study and other employment opportunities into their current course of study. We consider many local area employers to be our partners in developing a strong and highly skilled workforce. Career Connections hosts an advisory committee made up of employers from a variety of industry sectors including hospitality, retail sales, media, Department of Rehabilitation and Workforce Development agencies.
- The Employment Service Coordinator works with local employers to host one annual Job Fair for students and several smaller Internship Panels for non-profits and employers looking for interns two times per year (in collaboration with Cuesta College Counseling Department) and recruits employers to attend the Employment Panel at the Cougar Welcome Day events (three days across two campuses). The Employment Services Coordinator also maintains and updates the Employment Trainer Partnership List in coordination with the local Workforce Development Board and participates on the Workforce Development Taskforce Committee for the SLO County Economic Vitality Corporation, a collaboration of businesses, employers, government agencies and educational institutions.
- The Job Developer is focused on developing a pipeline to employment opportunities between CTE students and employers/ businesses and is placing the emphasis on building employer relations, in particular with businesses that will employ Cuesta College students as they reach the end of their programs. The Job Developer is also staying connected and current on relevant industries and required skills in San Luis Obispo County and then bringing that industry information back to departments on campus. The Job Developer is a member of multiple committees relating to workforce development, e.g. Employment Development Department, Department for Rehabilitation, and the job development committee, and attends many CTE advisory committee meetings representing career services for students. The job

developer will also be networking at South Bay Women's Network, Chamber of Commerce events and the Central Coast Human Resources Association.

Career Connections Department continues to actively provide paid internships placements for students who meet the eligibility for grant funded programs, such as the Title V Hispanic Serving Institution Guided Pathways and the GIS. The internships are in the job industries that would not typically have been funded for a work-based learning opportunity,. To this date, we have placed approximately twelve interns through HSI/ Title V funds and the GIS Internship opportunity.

C. Identify how your program helps students achieve [Institutional Learning Outcomes](#). .

As identified in the previous APPW, the following are the six Career Connections Institutional Learning Outcomes. It is important to note, the data for these outcomes will be compiled and reported on next year's APPW.

1. *Personal, Academic, and Professional Development*

Career Connections services and programs (both career and work-based learning services, which includes College Corps) assists students with making the connection between personal attributes, academic study and professional development through job preparation and interview prep, which forces students to consider their natural abilities and passion, academic training and technical skills when applying for and interviewing for work-based opportunities. Students receive extensive coaching during any placement/ job development. Career Connections organizes employer panels that are specific to industries, which provides students with information about core workplace competencies, the process of applying and acquiring a job, and being successful in keeping a job. Career Connections services systematically addresses professional development by providing support services for students in the areas of job search, resume/ application writing, employer engagement and feedback, and through using the Jobspeaker student on-line jobs portal with LinkedIn Learning access.

2. *Critical Thinking and Communication*

Critical thinking and communication are required for most students to be successful at interviewing for a job, keeping the job and navigating the application process. Career Connections (both career and work-based learning services, which includes College Corps) provides explicit instruction in navigating application portals and processes, interviewing skills and communication expectations in workshops and one-to-one meetings. We also provide students with an opportunity to reflect on interviews that did not result in a job offer and consider how they can respond to questions differently during the next interviews. We arrange for mock interview opportunities with industry professionals who give students feedback on their interview responses and advice on what can be improved.

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3. *Scientific and Environmental Understanding*

Some work-based learning opportunities to students achieving this ILO.

4. Social, Historical, and Global Knowledge and Engagement

Career Connection (both career and work-based learning services, which includes College Corps) provides real-time information in the areas of local job opportunities, labor market trends and larger scale opportunities outside of SLO County. We encourage students to attend employer panels to learn more about the history of local companies, as well as the personal histories of individuals who have overcome barriers with success.

5. *Artistic and Cultural Knowledge and Engagement*

Some work-based learning opportunities to students achieving this ILO.

6. *Technological and Informational Fluency*

The services students receive from Career Connections involve them using as well as enhancing their technological and informational fluency. Job search processes increasingly rely on technology; that is, all steps are now completely dependent on technology: identifying job/internship postings, participating in job fairs and employer panels, participating in workshops, completing the application process, building and posting a resume and other documents, and preparing for and completing job interviews.

III. **ANNUAL MEASUREMENTS, ANALYSIS AND IMPROVEMENTS**

Programs are often impacted by institutional or other organizational change. Please review program-relevant institutional data sources, such as institutional enrollment trends, which along with some other relevant program data, is available on the SLOCCCD Institutional Research website. Other organizational or departmental measurements may provide useful information for planning in your program; please describe those measurements and the data below.

Data Summary:

- Describe data collection tool(s) used

  Career Connections has four main program deliverables/ outcomes:

  - Students will increase awareness of career pathways, employers, work-based learning and employment opportunities and employment and career services through career services activities and events
  - Students will demonstrate knowledge and competency in job search skills
  - Students will demonstrate knowledge and competency in workplace

standards and expectations

- Students will engage in work-based learning related to their career pathway

- Include updates to program data results from the previous year, if any.

The following data points are from <u>RCC</u> Template and represent the activities of Career Connections activities in the <u>Fourth Quarter of 2023 (October 1 to December 31, 2023)</u>

Number of Employers (unduplicated) offering internship/CWEE opportunities: 49

- **Number of Internship/CWEE opportunities related to field of study (duplicated): Pending**
- **Number of paid internship/CWEE opportunities: Pending**
- **Number of unpaid internship/CWEE opportunities: Pending**
- **Number of on and off campus internship/CWEE opportunities: 74**
- **Number of Career Exploration Outreach Events and Courses Completed (including Pre-apprenticeships): Pending**
- **Number of Participants in Career Exploration Outreach Events (one-offs): 318**
- **Number of completers of Career Exploration Courses/Workshops (e.g. GFSF and pre-apprenticeships): Pending**
- **Number of training programs approved by the college (including CDCP, workforce skills-based fee-based offerings, and instructional service agreements): 0**
- **Number of training program completers (including CDCP, workforce skills-based fee-based offerings, and instructional service agreements): 67**

Quarters 2 & 4

- **Number of internships/CWEEs completed: Pending**
- **Number of paid internships/CWEEs completed & total hours: Pending**
- **Number of unpaid internships/CWEEs completed and total hours: Pending**
- **Number of on-campus internships/CWEEs completed and total hours: Pending**
- **Number of off-campus internships/CWEEs completed and total hours: Pending**

Data Interpretation:

- Describe results from previous improvement efforts to the program based on institutional or departmental changes.

  The department continues to gather data on these outcomes have been Excel spreadsheets that staff maintain to the best of their ability throughout the year. In 2023-24 as part of the Strong Workforce, Employer Engagement, RERP and Perkins Plans, Career Connections will enhance data collecting capacity by increasing use of Jobspeaker as well as direct access resources (e.g. LinkedIn, Career Launch, Essential-Skills.com…) for serving students and documenting/tracking services

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provided. The Employer Engagement Work Plan provides the framework for clarifying Chancellor's Office and college priorities

- Identify areas if any that may need improvement for program quality and growth.

A continued need for career services to improve direct-access training resources in two of the core pillars of Career Services:

- Students will demonstrate knowledge and competency in job search skills
- Students will demonstrate knowledge and competency in workplace standards and expectations

As previously noted, training resources that students access and complete as digital badges on Career Connections through its webpage, Canvas, and from faculty as required course content, will expand the number of students served and facilitate tracking and reporting.

- Recommend any changes and updates to program based on the analysis above. For elements that require funding, complete the Resource Plan Worksheet (download from this folder) and review the Resource Allocation Rubric

The data that is being reported in this report outlines a decrease in the respective data points. As noted at the initial part of this APPW, the Career Connections Department was reassigned and is now under the leadership of Dr. Maria T. Escobedo, Dean, Student Success and Support Programs. The data that was previously reported needs to be analyzed, however, at the initial review is the data points reported has decreased. Further review is needed to investigate the causes of decrease before a full analysis can be reported.

As outlined in the previous APPW, "an additional area of improvement or growth for Career Connections is the capacity for preparing and analyzing local labor market data. More detailed information about workforce needs, specific positions, employers, skills gaps, would help Cuesta identify opportunities for work-based learning and employment placements for students, as well as academic and other training program development. Ideally, this project would align with the capacity and efforts of the Workforce Development Board and the AJCC." Dr. Escobedo will work with the Career Connections team will be to develop strategies to work on this area of improvement that will best serve the students.

IV. **ANNUAL PROGRAM OUTCOMES (ASOS AND SSOS), ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS**
Your program has established either Administrative Service Outcomes or Student Service Outcomes. Those outcomes are assessed and tracked in the Course or Program Assessment Summary. Review CPAS documents for ASO or SSO assessment results for program outcomes.

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Describe any results from improvement efforts arising from ASO or SSO assessment in the last year.

N/A for this report- see above

Recommend changes and updates to program based on assessment of program outcomes. For elements that require funding, complete the Resource Plan Worksheet (download from this folder) and review the Resource Allocation Rubric.

N/A for this report- see above

V. ANTICIPATED SERVICE CHALLENGES/CHANGES

Provide a brief description of challenges or changes anticipated in the next year and any needs that have emerged as a consequence.

Suggested Elements:

A. Regulatory changes (Same as reported in last year's APPW)
   A factor, as noted above, that impacts career services is the MIS Data Submission DED Updates for 2018-19 Reporting that added the new element of SG21 to capture student work-based status learning status. Additional capacity is needed to both increase the outcomes (number of students completing Work-based Learning-related activities) as well as the ability to track and report these activities.

   Changes to Title 5 regulations in Work Experience are relevant to the activities of Career Connections, which houses Work Experience. With these changes and other initiatives, such as Employer Engagement, RERP, and MIS-SG21, the Chancellor's Office has heightened its attention to and expectation of Work Experience (in terms of numbers of students participating and the scope of student populations and programs served, e.g. adding Non CTE students (Service Learning), Noncredit, and Adults with Disabilities. Adequately staffing and supporting Career Connections as a program is critical to overall capacity and success of workforce development activities.

B. Internal and external organizational changes
   Internal organization changes were implemented in December 2023, when the Career Connections Programs was restructured and moved from the Office of Instruction Division to the Student Success and Support Programs Division and assigned to Dr. Maria Escobedo, Dean, Student Success and Support Programs.

C. Student and staff demographic changes
   The Career Connections staff continue to stay abreast of the changes of the modality of instruction, whereby, approximately 50% to 55% of on-line courses are being offered. This creates a challenge in student engagement in activities designed and implemented by the staff. However, new strategies are currently being developed to

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assist those students are primarily taking on line courses. Career Connections has continued to offer virtual office hours and services.

D. Community economic changes – workforce demands
A goal of the next reporting period is to improvement or growth for Career Connections staff is the capacity for preparing and analyzing local labor market data. More detailed information about workforce needs, specific positions, employers, skills gaps, would help Cuesta identify opportunities for work-based learning and employment placements for students, as well as academic and other training program development. Ideally, this project would align with the capacity and efforts of the Workforce Development Board and the AJCC.

E. Providing service to multiple off-campus sites
Career Connections continuous to be committed to providing comprehensive and comparable services at all off campus sites.

F. Anticipated staffing changes/retirements

Employment Services Coordinator, Shamarah Giannetto, went on leave in December 2022. Her gradual return began on June 15, 2023 with minimal work hours. As a result, a substitute staff position was brought on to make up for the 32 hours of work responsibilities to fill the need for program services.

Additional staffing is needed to support Cuesta commitments for the college vision for Work-based Learning initiatives (e.g. RERP, SCRCC Employment/Employer Plans, MIS SG21 requirements). These positions include:

- A second full-time Job Developer position (fully funded by RERP grant) was brought on during this reporting period.

VI. OVERALL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS
Provide a brief description of the immediate budget request(s) made in your Resource Plan (download from this folder) (after having reviewed the Resource Allocation Rubric). These elements will be reflected in the District planning and budget process.

Elements:

A. Personnel
No changes from last year's APPW. "Additional staffing is needed to support Cuesta commitments for the college vision for Work-based Learning initiatives (e.g. RERP, SCRCC Employment/Employer Plans, MIS SG21 requirements). These positions include:

- A second full-time Job Developer position (fully funded by RERP grant),
- A full-time Work-based Learning Coordinator that would lead the tracking and reporting for these initiatives and projects, as well as add capacity to

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engage students and faculty about work-based learning, project-based learning, and job search and workplace competencies development and related workforce and grant requirements.

B. Equipment/furniture (other than technology)

No specific equipment/furniture has been identified, however, the design of the office space will be revisited to ensure efficiency of office for students, services, and staff.

C. Technology

Jobspeaker evaluation for continued subscription was paid by Strong Workforce fund during this reporting period and as noted in last year's APPW needs to be integrated with Banner/CurricuNet in order to be fully operational for students, employers and faculty.

The need for updated student computers will be assessed during this upcoming reporting period.

D. Facilities

As noted above, the office space needs to have a full assessment to be meet efficiency for students, staff, and direct program services. A clear plan needs to be developed along with the cost of a future remodel of the area.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Director(s), Manager(s), and/or Staff Associated with the Program

Student Success and Support Programs, College Centers and Administrative Services Programs: All full-time director(s), managers, faculty and/or classified staff in the program must sign this form.

Division Chair/Director Name	Signature	Date

Name	Signature	Date

Name	Signature	Date

Name	Signature	Date

Name	Signature	Date

Name	Signature	Date

Name	Signature	Date

Name	Signature	Date