CRC’s Growth Rebounds

After a number of years of enrollment decline, the college welcomed an increased number of students during fall 2014. Fall 2014’s Official Census enrollment of 14,767 is a 4% increase compared to a year ago. This means that the college has recovered to an enrollment level comparable to fall 2012. A number of factors influence the enrollment growth (including the state of the economy). The recent increase in enrollment most likely reflects the expanded offerings at the Elk Grove Center, which has experienced explosive growth during the past year combined with new enrollment processes that have been implemented to support enhanced student success.

The Trend Towards Gender Balance Continues

The trend towards enhanced gender balance continued during fall 2014. This trend may reflect internal and/or external factors that disproportionately affect enrollment. The college will be monitoring the effects of the implementation of the new statewide California Community College Application (CCCApply) to see if the new expanded gender options affect these proportions.

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Student Trauma Study Highlights
A recent study conducted by CRC Faculty Researcher, Dr. Jeanne Edman, examined incidents of trauma in our students. Based on her study, if you have 100 male students in your classes, approximately
- Thirty-four of them will have been threatened with death or serious physical harm by someone.
- Thirty-one of them will have seen someone else attacked and/or seriously injured or killed by a stranger or acquaintance.
- Twenty-seven of them will have witnessed family violence (such as their father hitting their mother; or any family member beating up or inflicting bruises, burns or cuts on another family member).
- Thirty-three of them will have had someone touch their body in a sexual way or made them touch their body in a sexual way against their will or without their consent.

If you have 100 female students in your classes, approximately
- Twenty-eight of them will have been stalked - which means that someone followed them or kept track of their activities, causing them to feel intimidated or concerned for their safety.
- Thirty-six of them will have had someone touch their body in a sexual way or made them touch their body in a sexual way against their will or without their consent.
- Twenty-five of them while growing up were physically punished in a way that resulted in bruises, burns, cuts, or broken bones.
- Thirty-eight of them while growing up will have witnessed family violence (such as their father hitting her mother; or any family member beating up or inflicting bruises, burns or cuts on another family member).

To learn about how these experiences might be manifested by your students, see page 2.
Increasingly Complex Ethnic Diversity

The college continues to experience increases in the percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic student populations this year. The college is also experiencing a smaller proportion of students who are not declaring their ethnic background on the new statewide Community College application (CCCApply). Students who are Hispanic as well as white students are showing small increases in their proportions of the total fall 2014 student population. CRC, where approximately 75% of the students are non-white, was recently identified in the top 10 diverse schools by the US Department of Education. It is anticipated that CRC will be a Hispanic-Serving Institution according to Title III guidelines by fall 2016.

Socio-Economic Diversity

Nearly two-thirds of the fall 2014 CRC student population have incomes and household sizes that are classified as poverty or low income. In 2012 the Department of Health and Human Services defined a household of one person with an income of less than $11,170 as poverty level. A family of four with income less than $23,050 would also be classified as poverty level. Low-income threshold levels are approximately 1.5 times the poverty level.

Trauma Study Reflections

Dr. Edman offers possible consequences stemming from the exposure to the violence experienced by many of our students. Consequences could include:

- Aggressive/Overactive behavior.
- Dissociation.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Fear of own home/neighborhood environment.
- Major Psychological distress including depression, PTSD, anxiety, and disordered eating.

Students may:

- Get easily frustrated.
- Disengage, fail to complete assignments, or have an inflated sense of their academic skills.
- Not be able to manage “quiet time,” mind chatter, tapping, etc.

For examples on how we might better support these students, turn to page 4.
Historically, the college's “First Generation” students have been approximately 40%, with slight but continuous growth. This semester the proportion of “First Generation” students dropped to 37%. An investigation into the phenomena revealed that the decrease most likely reflects the recent switch to the new statewide application for admission (CCCApply). The questions related to first generation status in this new application are different and more complicated, which may have resulted in a decrease in the proportion of students identified as “First Generation”.

First-Generation and Age Distribution Changes

The college is experiencing a continued increase of students between the ages of 21 and 29 as well as a continued decrease in the percentage of students at CRC who are 40 years of age and older, a trend that has been continuing for several years. The slight decrease in students between the ages of 18-20 may reflect the very modest increase in FTE this year (after several years of reduction) combined with registration priority changes. The college will be enhancing high school outreach in order to reverse this trend.

Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) Highlights

In spring 2014 the CCSSE survey was completed by 970 students in 51 classes at the college. Although the classes were selected at random, a review of the demographics of the survey respondents indicates that the sample does not reflect our demographics in several areas.

The CCSSE survey identified several strengths in the area of student engagement. In particular, CRC respondents reported being more engaged than their peers at other participating colleges in the following areas:

♦ Active learning.
♦ Collaborative learning.
♦ Analysis and synthesis of information.
♦ Coming to class prepared.
♦ Preparing multiple drafts of papers, using peer or other tutors.

In addition, CRC respondents reported that the college emphasized and encouraged contact among students of different economic, social and racial or ethnic backgrounds more than their peers at other institutions.

CRC respondents who attended full-time also reported receiving prompt feedback from instructors at greater levels compared to their peers. Finally, CRC respondents reported that they had obtained career counseling more frequently than their peers.
Persistence reflects a variety of factors, including academic success, financial and life stability, access to necessary classes, and lack of access to a transfer institution.

The percentage of students who attend CRC during a given fall term and persist in enrolling in the subsequent spring term is continuing to increase. This trend has been true for the most part since 2001. CRC’s persistence rates are strong compared to other California community colleges.

Distance Education Survey Highlights

The LRCCD Research Office recently completed an analysis of their Distance Education Survey. The survey elicited responses from students enrolled in DE courses. Although the results aren’t significantly different from the district, it is interesting to note that:

- A greater percentage of CRC students are enrolled in programs of study that can be completed online (8.0% compared to 4.6%).
- Convenience seems to be a greater motivator for enrollment in DE courses (by approximately 5%) for our students compared to the other colleges.
- CRC students are more satisfied with how easy it is for them to use D2L to access discussion boards (over a 5% difference compared to districtwide averages).

Dr. Edman and Dr. Esposito-Noy offer some ways to help students who have experienced trauma:

- Understand that disruptive behavior can be symptomatic of trauma (past and present).
- Discuss the situation and options when students make requests (late paper, take the test later, etc.).
- Compassionately uphold behavioral and academic standards.
- Teach students coping strategies (for managing a busy schedule, taking care of family members, etc.).
- Refer for support services and resources.
- Refer for discipline regardless of the reason for the disruptive behavior.
- Be consistent, avoid last-minute changes, check for learning.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Check your comfort level.
- Ask others for help, guidance, support.
- Understand what you can and cannot control.
- Prepare and practice responding to students in need.
- Understand your limitations and attend to self-care.