

SAN DIEGO
MESA COLLEGE



Program Review

Summary and Reflections with Unit Goals, Action Plans, and Updates

Student Services - AVANZA (Peer Navigators/CRUISE)

Executive Summary

Describe the successes and challenges your unit has faced since the last comprehensive review.

The AVANZA Student Engagement Center was established, allowing students to engage with each other in a physical space. Adjacent to the engagement side is a workshop room. The designated area facilitates academic and student success workshops, aimed at increasing student retention, participation and academic success rates. In addition to program resources, the workshop room is also a place for students to study quietly when no events are taking place. The space in AVANZA also helps the greater campus community by providing space for student gatherings, classes to hold events and a quiet study area for students when not in use. The student engagement side, allows for students to connect with each other or take a break from their school day. Interactive components, like Game Day/Night and student-on-student workshops, have led to a greater sense of belonging. As evident by student feedback, the center is described as “welcoming” and a “safe place to relax.”

AVANZA also houses the Peer Navigators, current second-year students who serve as mentors to first-year students. Their mentorship supports the institution’s goal of being the leading college of equity and excellence. Another accomplishment the center celebrated was the installation of art work from a prominent Latinx artist. Paintings promote Latinx culture, explore Latinx identity and self-awareness. AVANZA has evolved into a hub for all students. Adding to the success of the center was the full-time hire of a Program Assistant. The additional personnel allows for the day-to-day support required to hold the center open, while providing services to all.

One of the main challenges the center has encountered is striking a balance between a “hangout” space and a study space. With the implementation of using the workshop room as a quiet room for students to study, many expect it to be free of noise. However, due to the popularity of AVANZA, the volume from student voices tends to travel. Staff has been made aware of the request to keep the volume to a respectable level and the team is actively working on it. Supervising the mixed-use space is something the team delicately manages. Staffing fluctuates as the center is dependent on Peer Navigators (current students) and their availability. A challenge the center contends with on a semester basis.

*The Peer Navigator program recruits and trains a new team every year to ensure incoming students are supported. Making the team’s accomplishment of serving their mentees during the pandemic noteworthy was pivoting overnight and incorporating wellness checks. The program had to adapt to the sudden change in programming. Peer Navigators called, e-mailed, texted, and made every reasonable effort to reach out to their mentees with the goal of retaining as many as possible. In the early days of the pandemic, many students stopped attending school, citing the sudden change to online learning as a reason. Leading by example, the Peer Navigators continued mentoring and conducting wellness checks on a monthly basis. Such efforts helped retain their remaining mentees. The wellness checks turned into an integral part of the one-on-one process throughout the pandemic. In addition to their accomplishments, Peer Navigators also led all components of the online Summer and Winter CRUISE. As the pandemic subsided, less students returned, leading to a challenge the program is still trying to manage. With a return to in-person learning, participation has also increased, as noted by overall attendance with the CRUISE program. Another challenge the program contends with every term is keeping staff turnover at a minimum. Should a member from the Peer Navigator team be found to not meet academic standards, the individual would be placed on a progressive academic plan, complete with tutoring and professor office hour requirement.

*Summer CRUISE has seen a steady increase since the early days of the pandemic. At the peak of Summer CRUISE (2019), a total of 1,100 students attended the program in person. The following year the program adjusted to Covid by going fully remote. CRUISE welcomed just over 800 new students in 2020, and just under 600 participants in 2021. Most recently in 2022, Summer CRUISE welcomed 650 new students to campus, and continues to work towards increasing participation for next year.

Summary and Reflection

The synergy created with Technology Services facilitated the loan of laptops and hotspots for students participate in the CRUISE program. Through multiple redesigns, student and team feedback, and a return to in-person services, the CRUISE program has seen an increase in attendance. Another accomplishment of the program was the creation of an online session. Witnessing the success of a virtual CRUISE session, the program now offers a remote option for students who remain online or in a hybrid format. CRUISE continue with its strong partnership with the San Diego Promise Program at Mesa College. The continued collaboration between Promise and the CRUISE program combines mentorship and the financial support needed for students to excel in school.

If applicable, describe any major curricular or service changes your unit has engaged in and the impact of those changes since the last comprehensive review.

Major service changes the mentorship component of the Peer Navigator program initiated and has kept since the pandemic is the remote option of meeting with their mentors. Mentees have the option of meeting their Peer Navigators via Zoom or continue to hold their meeting on campus / in AVANZA. The approach has led to a greater availability for students who may not otherwise be available to come to campus or remain online. In addition, end of the year participant feedback expressed a continued need for remote options, citing work and familial responsibilities as the main reason. A reflection of Covid, CRUISE adjusted from a three-day session (2019) to two-days online (2020 – 2021). In an effort to increase enrollment and turn the corner from the pandemic, Summer CRUISE offered various iteration to best support students, from fully remote to hybrid to fully in person, and working towards a fully in-person, three-day on-campus session.

If applicable, describe the impact of any new resources (human, fiscal, etc) on the unit and/or action plan implementation.

Securing a full-time assistant has led to consistent and a streamline delivery of services. AVANZA center needs are met, scheduling of program staffing is secured, and all logistical matters are taken care of by the program assistant.

If you assess OUTCOMES, please confirm that the outcomes have been reviewed for accuracy. If you do not assess Outcomes, skip this question.

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Executive Summary Complete

Yes

Data Reflection

Trends observed in program/service area's data.

A noticeable trend from the pandemic -- that is also reflective of the campus / District -- is trying to increase enrollment. In 2019-2020, the Summer CRUISE program successfully onboarded close to 1,200 new students. The year after, 860 new students were welcomed through an online session. And under 600 for 2022-2023. Feedback received from each session does point to a deep appreciation and recognition of our program's efforts. They range from anecdotal, team and participant responses to data from the institutions dashboard (<https://www.sdmesa.edu/about-mesa/institutional-effectiveness/institutional-research/data-warehouse/CRUISEDash.shtml>). The majority of CRUISE participants identify as female (< 50%), Latinx (50%) and continue to not be first-generation students (60%). Black/African-American representation has remained steady since 2018-19 at five percent. The percentage of students identifying as White has steadily increased from 19% (2018-19) to 24%, with Latinx being the largest population attending CRUISE sessions. Demonstrating the impact mentorship has on students, CRUISE participants who go through their respective session and receive monthly one-on-one meetings (mentoring) demonstrate a higher GPA (3.06 vs 2.80) and stronger retention rates (93% vs 87%). Persistence rates are also strong. Evident by the 87% vs 64% (CRUISE participant vs. comparison group) in 2018-19 and the consistent average of above 85% over the past four years, mentorship from the Peer Navigators

Summary and Reflection

directly impacts student success rates. Feedback from CRUISE participants from a recent survey point to a positive sense of belonging (90%), greater familiarity with academic and student services program, and deep appreciation of the program. For example, “knowing where to go for support and knowing I don’t have to go through this alone” and “meeting with the organizations in person and having fellow peers explain in the different aspects and programs for the school,” are just a few of the positive statements participants share about their experience with CRUISE.

Describe any equity gaps in the data. Are there differences and/or patterns observed by demographics (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, age, etc.)

As reflected in the program’s data dashboard, CRUISE participants have a significantly smaller equity gap when analyzed with a comparison group. However, our students of color do exhibit an equity gap of 4%, but far smaller than the comparison group of 14%. Further analyzing rates, students who identify as low-income have higher success rates (72% vs 64%) than those in a comparison group. Another interesting correlation worth noting is the amount of units taken and success rates. The more units a student takes (>12 units), the higher their success rates (76% vs 69%). Adding to the higher rates is the amount of contact provided by their mentor. Similarly, the more frequent meetings a student has with their Peer Navigator, the higher their course success, course retention and GPA will be. The majority of our students tend to be in the 18-24 demographic and have stronger rates than the comparison group.

Describe the discussion(s) that took place about the unit's learning outcomes assessment data.

In addition to setting and discussing the goals of the program at the beginning of each semester, learning outcomes are embedded in new team training. During the academic year, time is set aside to review and ensure goals of the programs are being met. Typically, during weekly meetings. To help support the creation of tracks for CRUISE sessions (2018-19 goals), partnerships with the International Student Orientation, Promise, and Athletes have led to a greater sense of belonging. The programs have been intentional about their recruitment and delivery of services for our Black/African-American population.

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Data Reflection Complete

Yes

Practice Reflection

Describe current practices your program/service area has engaged in that you believe impact the above data trends and equity gaps.

Both programs are intentional in their approach. Citing the CRUISE data dashboard, coupled with the DEIA Discussion Guide, the information provided facilitates the space to hold an honest discourse to not only take place, but encourage each of our members to go the extra step with students. Seeing that our male students of colors are so underrepresented, a new partnership took place with the campus’ Black Student Initiative. (The initiative was not present during the last cycle) As a result, the Peer Navigator program does presentations with Umoja and works with the BSI liaisons to recruit strong leadership. Similarly, our AANAPISI and Latinx learning communities have been excellent stewards of promoting our programs to boost said representation.

What other factors (internal or external) might also impact the above data trends and equity gaps?

Peer Navigators do their best to balance a full course load (12 units) while meeting the expectations of the job. The program sets and holds the team to a high but attainable standard. However, being a Peer Navigator is a job. As such, the program does contend with staff turnover, leading to a direct impact on mentees. A GPA requirement is required of all team members. Should a Peer Navigator not meet academic program requirements they are counseled and placed on an academic progress plan. Students mentored by Peer Navigators may also drop from the program for various reasons. No longer needing a PN being the most common answer. To help best support learning communities and bridge equity gaps, liaisons were created. The purpose of the PN – Liaison is to help augment existing learning communities’ programming while disseminating information to the team. The effort has yielded positive results as other programs have asked how to get a liaison. Both programs

Summary and Reflection

have grown from their inception, and required staffing. A dedicated program assistant exists to help various campus and program endeavors. Helping the process, a Project Assistant was also hired in the past year to help with the day-to-day operations. The PA is instrumental during peak periods, like summer and winter sessions.

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Practice Reflection Complete

Yes

Mid-Cycle Updates

Are there any edits or updates to the Executive Summary above?

The AVANZA Student Engagement Center has grown in popularity. Learning communities, like Kapwa, Puente, Umoja, and Dreamers often reach out to request usage of the workshop room. The space is very inviting and has led to more requests to use the space. The workshop room is now used to hold department meetings, student and campus events, and culturally impactful activities that have led students and the campus community a sense of belonging. In addition, the Peer Navigators use the workshop side to host monthly workshops focused on student success. The topics range from time management to researching scholarships and cover test taking strategies and tips on selfcare. Students have come to rely on the center to offer quality student programming.

The Peer Navigator program continues to include wellness checks with their mentees. Peer Navigators ask their mentees if they have the essentials, like access to food and housing, to ensure a firm base before segueing to their classes. If a student needs such items, a referral to the Stand is then placed. Unit requirements for Promise are also included with each monthly check-in. Helping students with their retention and persistence, Peer Navigators inquire if their students are fully enrolled in each term, along with reminders about any upcoming registration dates. The modality in which Peer Navigators provide mentorship is delivered in person or online, but always on-campus. Similar to supporting CRUISERS, Peer Navigators also require constant support to keep them in the program. Each mentor needs to meet a GPA and unit requirement each semester, along with meeting the standards of the position. A significant challenge that the Peer Navigator program experiences has been staff turnover, despite providing all support needed to each member of the team. This turnover shows in our NANC Employees (Peer Navigators). During the 2022-2023 academic year, we started off with 13 Peer Navigators, but ended the year with 9. As for the 2023-2024 academic year, we started the year with 12 Peer Navigators, and will be entering the spring semester with 10. When losing a Peer Navigator, it is both a loss to the team, as well as to the students they were mentoring – as they will now have to connect with a new Peer Navigator, should they choose to continue. The addition of a Project Assistant has helped streamline a majority of both programs processes. This proved useful as the program did not have an existing Peer Navigator apply for the Lead position the following year. The Lead Peer Navigator position was fulfilled after Summer CRUISE (typically done before the start of the fall semester). Due to turnover, the Peer Navigator program was unable to offer or continue with a second-year pilot.

Are there any edits or updates to the Data Reflection above?

Enrollment for 2023 Summer CRUISE remained steady at around 600 students. (Official data from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness is pending as of this update) Preliminary, raw data reveals a substantial increase in students identifying as multi-ethnic, 24% vs 9% (2022), which may explain the decreases in student data. For example, Latinx/Chicanx/Hispanic students saw a drop of 20% (55% in 2022 vs. 35% in 2023), similar to White students (124 vs 139 in 2022). There was a slight increase with our Black/African-American student population (36% vs 35%). Summer CRUISE also had a slight increase with female students (57% vs 53%), while our male population reflected a slight decrease (41 % vs 44%), and our non-binary students remaining the same (.08% vs .09%). To aid in the growth of the Peer Navigator program, surveys are conducted at the end conclusion of each monthly workshop. Presentations are ranked from zero (needs improvement) to five (excellent presentation). The majority of Peer Navigator workshops earn high marks, four and above. Open-ended questions are also included to allow attendees an opportunity to provide feedback. It ranges from "I think it was perfect" to "it was good! no suggestions." In addition to the workshop survey, Peer Navigators are also asked to provide their thoughts on the

Summary and Reflection

CRUISE and the Peer Navigator programs. A practice that aids in the implementation of new methods to deliver student services.

Are there any edits or updates to the Practice Reflection above?

To help bridge equity gaps, certain Peer Navigators continue to serve as liaisons with Kapwa, Umoja, Puente, Dreamers, Pride and the Promise program. Their main focus is to be the conduit between both programs by supporting current program endeavors, while sharing information with the rest of the Peer Navigator team to disseminate with their mentees. The pilot has yielded strong results, as the team is kept abreast of the learning communities' practices, and encouraging students to attend such events. Current leadership among Kapwa, Umoja and the like, helps facilitate the partnership between programs and the Peer Navigator. Since a new team is created each year, getting a liaison to understand the flow of things does take time. To help draw a larger pool of candidates, the wording of the help wanted flyer now includes verbiage to invite more students to apply. For example, "working towards" precedes the GPA requirement. And to streamline the hiring process, group interviews have been switched in lieu of additional interview questions.

Summary and Reflection

Student Success

Unit Goal: -CRUISE participants will have higher retention, persistence and academic success rates
-Peer Navigators will deliver intentional mentorship focused on student success

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Community - Objective 1: X
- Community - Objective 2: X
- Community - Objective 4: X
- Completion - Objective 3: X
- Completion - Objective 4: X
- Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 1: X
- Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 4: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan Status: Active</p> <p>Action Plan: 1. Peer Navigators will provide and offer students with the advice and guidance necessary to excel in school 2. Peer Navigators will connect with mentees via various forms of communication (Zoom, text, email, etc.)</p> <p>Action Plan Cycle: 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	

Onboarding and Job Readiness

Unit Goal: -CRUISE participants will gain an edge over incoming students through various onboarding sessions
-Peer Navigators will create a foundation focused on job readiness

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Summary and Reflection

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Community - Objective 3: X
- Completion - Objective 2: X
- Completion - Objective 3: X
- Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 3: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan Status: Active</p> <p>Action Plan: 1. Utilize existing resources to expand CRUISE efforts to include connections with more Classified Professionals and faculty 2. Deliver presentations about expectations and provide anecdotes</p> <p>Action Plan Cycle: 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	

Peer Navigator Recruitment

Unit Goal: -CRUISE participants will apply to become Peer Navigators the following year

-Peer Navigators will serve as role models for the mentees while increasing their confidence and self-esteem

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Community - Objective 4: X
- Completion - Objective 2: X
- Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 1: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan Status: Active</p>	

Summary and Reflection

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan: 1. Conduct presentations on what being a Peer Navigator means to expand the recruitment process</p> <p>2. Peer Navigators will lead by example, demonstrate model behavior, utilize appropriate language in AVANZA and during campus events</p> <p>Action Plan Cycle: 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	