

Student Services

Sabrina A. La Velle

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Programs that are put in place to help students achieve success and are lumped under an umbrella term known as student services or student affairs. Many branches are presently focused on helping at-risk students, but that is not how it all started. According to Best College Reviews (2018), student services can be traced back to its roots in the late 19th century when residential universities had live-in positions – Dean of Men and Dean of Women- acting “in loco parentis” (translating to “in place of the parent”) ensuring the success of the students that lived in their dorm.

In 1937 “The Student Personnel Point of View” was written and began to change the trajectory of the student services. The document purported seeing the student more holistically, focusing on the mental, physical and emotional needs of the student rather than just discipline. Over the years the profession has expanded to include several divisions such as; admissions, financial aid, campus life, career development, transfer connections, first generations programs, multicultural, veterans, LGBTQIA+ and academic support such as; assessment, test accommodations, advising, tutoring, labs, resource centers, special services and equipment, and other student supports.

Different higher education institutions publish their budgets in different ways. NAU breaks it down into tiny dollar increments for each category and sub-category, making it difficult to compare to El Camino Community College District, which had broader umbrella categories with percentages assigned. Without substantial calculations, the exact dollar amount that NAU spends on student support services is not explicitly stated, but over \$25 million per year out of the total budget requested out of \$717 million, which would be less than 5%. (NAU FY20 State Budget Request) According to

the “Final Budget for the 2019-20 fiscal year for the El Camino Community College District” (2019), they compose the budget using the Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF), in three parts, 70% goes to base allocation, 20% allotted to supplemental allocation, and 10% to Student Success Allocation. No definitive rule of how much institutions should be spending exists, nor any continuity of what they should be spending their money on can be found.

Some programs like admissions, financial aid, veterans’ affairs, and some academic support like assessment, advising, and labs are in every institution. Other programs are specified to a community like colleges that draw a large Deaf population have classes taught in American Sign Language (ASL) and have a higher number of interpreters and note-takers. Whereas, a school that has only a handful of Deaf students may only have limited interpreter services. Understanding the community in which the school is located can help schools determine which programs they should focus on. Also, determining which schools are in proximity and what programs are available at those schools, can help schools focus on their priorities. For instance, in Torrance, California, there are over ten colleges within driving distance to choose from. El Camino has focused on providing extensive services for students with disabilities, both learning and physical. They have core curriculum classes taught in ASL, offer Braille translating services, run an assistive technology lab that uses the newest integrative technology, to name a few of the services they offer. They have created a niche market for the recruitment of students with disabilities.

On the other hand, Mohave Community College (MCC) is the only in-person college in Mohave county, the 5th largest county in the United States. If someone wants

to attend live classes to obtain an associate degree or prepare for a transfer, MCC is the only option. It is of greater importance for EL Camino to have specialized programs to keep up live enrolment than it is for MCC.

Including online programs can be convoluted, as online students do not utilize student services programs to the extent as an in-person student does. Maybe the future of student services needs to focus on including more programs for online learners. Video or shared document services like tutoring, writing labs, and academic advising would be beneficial to many online students. Student services is a growing and ever-changing field. Seeing the direction schools will take and what innovative services they will offer our students in the future will be interesting,

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