

Meetings re: Puente Program

Meeting Notes

1. **10/8/13 meeting to learn about Puente Program.** Met with Yolanda Valenzuela and Sandra Rodrigues to hear from Sandra about her experiences as a Puente counselor. Sandra loved being the counselor for Puente because she could see that the program makes a big difference to students. But she also said it is easy to get burnt out because she was expected to accomplish more than she could in the number of hours she was assigned. For the program to be successful, the counselor assigned to the program should be full-time. The counselor spends a great deal of time coordinating social events, including field trips and family activities, which are effective in creating a sense of community in the classroom and increase family literacy. The family events help parents learn for the first time that their children have to spend substantial amounts of time outside of the classroom studying, which encourages parents not to overburden their children with too many other responsibilities at home.

Sandra made these key points about the program

- Puente is similar to our “First Year Experience” program that Cañada offered in the past
 - Students take English 836 and 1 counseling class (3 units, college success) together as cohort (Ask if Skyline and CSM include Reading 836, too.)
 - Students have mentors in first semester, optional after that
 - Have a “Noche de Familia” when parents come in
 - Lots of hand-holding for students first semester
 - Have 1 college trip per semester
 - Officially sanctioned programs have to track metrics: enrollment, withdrawals, transfers
 - Student club (CSM has one) is an optional piece
 - Students who place into English 836, are first generation, and have transfer as their goal
 - Students don’t have to be Latino, but English and counseling class materials focus on Latino authors, so students should be interested in that focus
 - The program typically serves 30-35 students at a time; that’s the size of Skyline’s program. Sandra recommends 30 max because a lot of intense work needs to be done with each student. They require a lot of counseling appointments, and extra time from faculty, as well.
 - Don’t keep students in program who fail English 836 because need to progress to English 100
 - Counselor comes to English classes to support students in class
 - Counselor finds mentors.
 - Both counselor and teacher need to work to keep students engaged
 - Counselor position needs to be full-time to coordinate program, teach class, and assist students
 - UC Office of the President offers very small amounts of funding that only help with some event and mentoring expenses.
 - Other support for the Skyline program came from Fund 1 and Fund 3 (what external source?)
2. **11/21/13 meeting.** Met with Yolanda to discuss next steps re: sharing information about Puente with Student Equity Committee and college leadership.
 3. **12/12/13 meeting.** Met with Yolanda to plan next steps for drafting a program proposal, as per David Johnson’s suggestion.
 4. **3/5/14 meeting.** Reviewed Yolanda’s draft program proposal with her and discussed how she could get the data and budget information she needs to complete the proposal. Sent her my editing comments in Word document using Track Changes.