



New Classified Hiring/Position Justification

Hiring Division/Department:	Student Services/ Transfer Center	Position Title:	Retention Specialist
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Classification

Position type:	Permanent <u>X</u>	Full Time <u>X</u>	# of months <u>12</u>
	Part Time _____	% of Full Time <u>100%</u>	# of months _____

Position:	General Funds <u>X</u>	
Allocation:	External Funds* _____	Expiration Date _____

Budget Information

Grade	<u>24</u>	Step	<u>3</u>	Annual Salary	<u>64,452.00</u>
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Justification

Please respond to the following questions in electronic format to the appropriate Dean, Manager or Vice President. Additional information may be provided as relevant for position justification.

1. Describe the specific needs for the position requested and the duties of this position in a brief statement.

Our department is requesting a full-time Retention Specialist to provide an equal access of transfer support to our diverse student populations with a transfer goal. Currently, the Transfer Center provides a wide range of support to students, faculty and staff in different programs. The services we provide include, but are not limited to, review and evaluation of academic records, assisting students with admission applications and appealing admission decisions, and guide and follow up with students who apply for UC TAG and Associate Degrees for Transfer. To connect our students with universities and available options, we invite and coordinate the universities' visits and their activities on our campus, including college fairs and informational sessions on specific majors such as the high demand nursing programs. Additional we offer workshops on a variety of topics based on students' needs and requests such as admission application process, scholarship applications, UC TAG, UC Personal Insight Questions, transfer planning, financial aid options, etc. In addition to these workshops, we provide specialized workshops and support to students in special programs such as College for Working Adults (CWA), EOPS, COLTS CON, ESO Adelante, Promise program, International Students, STEM, etc.

With the development of the Guided Pathway, the Transfer Center implemented the Student Transfer Educational Pathway (STEP) program, which is a case management program to help students to identify their area of interest, select universities of their choice, map course requirements, and support them to reach their transfer goal in a timely manner and become a stronger transfer candidate for admission. For example we invited 900 students who are within the first or second semester of attendance to the “Transfer Orientation”, and 400 students who did not declare a major to “Selecting a Major” workshop, where students had hands-on experience exploring their options and learning about the transfer process and becoming more focused on their major.

As they become knowledgeable, they become more open to the transfer options and more able to advocate for themselves which leads them to seek more assistance tailored to their needs. Consequently, it is helping us to understand the student’s needs, and the gaps or barriers preventing students to reach their goal that allows us to modify our programs to be more effective and offer greater support.

To streamline all the transfer efforts, the Transfer Center also collaborates with other departments by providing guidance and training on transfer matters to faculty counselors and staff at other departments, and in general being available as a resource to all.

Based on the list we have gathered at the beginning of the Fall 2018 term, we have 2478 students with a transfer goal, with about 68% of them are not affiliated with any programs on campus that support them through the complicated transfer process. As we are trying to reach out and follow up with all transfer students, especially those who are not currently receiving transfer support, we would like to hire a retention specialist to support the Transfer Center with the following tasks:

- Maintain an accurate list of transfer students – This list is crucial to our program development as providing information and preparing students for transfer. Students are at different levels of education with a wide range of majors. They need support at each level of their education, and require specific guidance and information related to their field of study. With the implementation of AB705 this becomes more essential because more students will be placed into transfer level courses as they enter college. So it is important to reach out to students early on to acclimate them with the college works and expectations, and make them focus on their goals through group and individual advising, as well as electronic and online platforms.

Currently we receive a list of transfer student from the PRIE Office once a semester. However, the students’ information such as major and goals are changing constantly. To keep up with the changes and following up with students, it is important to have a classified staff member dedicated to this task as it will make them connected with the transfer program and receive the information they need in a timely manner. For example, among those students who were invited to attend the “Selecting a Major” workshop, there were several students who have already selected a major and were confused with our email. To avoid this confusion, a retention specialist can follow up to help students update their records and to update our transfer list.

- Keep track of students to find what universities they applied to, and whether they actually transferred and where. This will help our department not only with having an accurate database, it also helps us to identify the students' destination and to provide information they need for specific campuses. This will also help the Transfer Center to have a better understanding of our student's transfer behavior when developing and/or improving services and programs. Often other departments reach out the Transfer Center for accurate transfer data, and developing a just-in-time tracking system will be beneficial college-wide.
- Follow up with students to ensure they meet with a Counselor at the Transfer Center at least once a semester to develop a transfer plan, and a Student Educational Plan (SEP) or revise their SEP as needed. Often the program requirements, articulation agreements, and/or admission requirements change in ways that can impact student planning. Keeping track of our students and changes they made to their majors will help us to effectively advise students who are effected by those changes.
- Follow up with students and with their academic status to ensure they are on track to transfer. This is important to gather information on students' progress not only to ensure they are successfully completing the courses, but also find about any alerting circumstances that may impact their performance in the class. This position will assist students to identify resources, make referrals, and connect students to the appropriate departments at our campus and at the universities. This early intervention results in students' success, retention, and persistence to the next term.
- Follow up with students to ensure they are following the SEP developed by counselor.
- Assist the Transfer Center with the transfer related events, workshops, and classroom presentations, and reports using SARS. This will be a great support to the Transfer Center's counselors and the program supervisor to have additional time meeting with students and/or provide additional transfer resources for students, counseling faculty, and other programs on campus.
- To support the Transfer Center during peak time for follow up with students and preparing documents. During the peak time students apply for UC TAG, submitting petitions for Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT), and submit the ADT verifications to CSU campuses within a short window of three weeks, when supporting students to apply to CSU and UC campuses. During the peak times, the Transfer Center reviews and follows up with about 100+ UC TAG applicants in a short period of time, it is a very detailed process that requires review and evaluation of transcripts from in-state and out of state universities, and the UC TAG application for its accuracy and student's eligibility from.

We also follow up with the students who filed ADT petitions, with an average of 300 petitions every year, to make sure they take advantage of the benefit of the ADT at the time of transfer. There are students who do not report their ADT on their Admission application which prevents us from verifying the status of their ADT electronically, and spend additional time on providing a hard copy of the verification, which creates hardship for students to deliver the verification to the CSU campus on time. Having the support of the Retention

Specialist will allow us to identify and reach out to these students before they submit their admission application to a university. Some of the students may not even know that they are eligible for an ADT as they are not meeting with a counselor. This will give all our students who meet the requirements an equal chance to take advantage of the ADT benefits. This not only makes students more competitive for admission to four year universities, it also increases completion and graduation rate.

2. Explain how this position aligns with and supports the mission and strategic goals of the college.

The College Mission Statement states that we provide a Learning-Centered environment for all students with diverse backgrounds to have the opportunity to reach their educational goal. In accordance to the Educational Master Plan (EMP), as mentioned above, the Transfer Center is focusing on preparing all students with their transfer goal by engaging them to understand the transfer process, the course requirements, the selection criteria, and guide them with transfer planning that includes academic and financial planning. These efforts and the STEP program align with the college Mission Statement as it supports students to understand the transfer process, making informative decisions, and plan and develop a transfer path based on their own needs. Being involved in the decision making of their own path will allow students to persist from one term to the next, and consequently, we will have a higher retention, completion, and success rate.

These efforts, also comply with the following College goals:

- Student Completion/Success
 - Develop the STEP program to track and case manage all students with a transfer goal, and consequently increase the transfer and retention rate.
 - Breaking down the transfer information as appropriate for students' education level.
 - Encouraging involvement early in the students' academic career
 - Through collaborative activities, group and individual meetings, and presentations, assist students to understand:
 - All of the options and opportunities available to them, such as UC TAG and Associate Degree for Transfer, Honors Program, etc.
 - How to finance their education - this is one of the challenges our students encounter
 - Community Connections
 - Working with 4 year universities to expand transfer options (like HBCU) agreements, or expanding ADT benefits with private universities, and/or collaborating with the transfer pathway to 4 year universities such as partnership with Mills College
 - Organizational Development
 - Although we are aiming to support all transfer students on our campus, but we are giving priority to those students who need assistance with their transfer goal, but are not eligible for any other programs that are providing transfer support.

3. Explain how adding this position will strengthen the department or division.

This position will allow us to maintain and enhance our services as we are implementing AB705, emerging with Guided Pathways, and increasing the ADT offerings which increases the number of applicants, as well as maintaining a list of transfer students and following up with students on their Student Educational Plan, and their academic progress.

This will allow us to ensure students understand the basic admission requirements to universities. As we are implementing AB705 by placing students into transfer level math and English. These courses not only are considered the minimum admission requirements for admission to universities, they are also the base course to succeed in other academic courses. Students need to be guided to understand the importance of successfully completing these courses for their admission to a four year university.

With the guided pathway, it is more essential for us to have a retention specialist to be able to follow up with our students to ensure they are taking courses as planned, and making referrals and connect them with the support programs such as academic support services, financial aid and Spark point to identify and secure financial resources. Many of our students decide not to transfer, even though they meet the transfer criteria, due to financial hardship. In addition, by having this position we can connect students to the programs at the universities such as transfer, housing, scholarship, academic departments. Connecting with our students and connect them with the university of their choice, providing the support they need, and guiding them to be focused and make informative decisions are keys to higher retention and consequently higher transfer completion rates.

Additional benefits are to become more visible to the campus community through classroom presentations, and to create flexibility for the Transfer Center to continue participating in the college-wide initiatives, strengthen relationships with universities, creating pathways, collaborating with other departments in Student Services and instructional divisions, and to develop programs enhancing the transfer opportunities for diverse students.

This position is essential to achieve our department's goal of preparing students for transfer.

4. Explain how this work will be accomplished if the position is not filled.

With new initiatives and emerging new programs such as ESO Adelante and the Promise Program on our campus, constant changes at the universities, and providing continuing support to counseling faculty and all programs offering transfer support, there is a huge need for additional support at the Transfer Center.

This is hardly sustainable as the Transfer Center lost the AOII position. The Staff at the Welcome Center are occasionally available to make phone calls for the Transfer Center and assist in small projects. However, their main duties are at the Welcome Center and their duties are restricted to certain levels of responsibilities.

In addition, the Center will continue requesting Federal Work Study Student Assistants to fulfill some of the duties as appropriate. However, this option does not offer a wide range of support due to confidentiality of the students' records and limited range of responsibilities. In addition, the works study position is time consuming as it has high turnover as students move on after a semester after we complete the hiring documents and training them.

Please submit completed Classified Position Hiring/ Position Justification electronically to the responsible administrator in your division or department.

This position has been reviewed by the department or division and is recommended for hiring.

Max Hartman
Dean / Director / Hiring Supervisor

10/18/18
Date