

PROPOSAL FOR FULL-TIME CWA COUNSELOR

A. Department/Discipline/Program Criteria

1. Identify current Comprehensive Program Review (in cycle) and current Annual Program Plan documents with position need and justification in the annual plan.

The proposed full-time counselor position will support the College for Working Adults (CWA). The counselor position was requested through the 2013-2014 program review process.

The College for Working Adults (CWA) is an evening and weekend degree program designed to improve access, retention, degree completion, and transfer for adult re-entry students. The CWA provides a clearly defined pathway that allows students to earn up to three Associate degrees in three years while working full time. The program delivers wraparound support services, including a designated counselor, predetermined curriculum, program orientation, peer mentoring, tutoring, and guaranteed enrollment in CWA courses.

The CWA currently serves more than 200 students who are on a pathway to degree completion. Our program is growing rapidly. We enrolled our first cohort of 22 students in Fall 2011; today the program has grown to include eight cohorts. In the 2013-2014 academic year we more than doubled the size of our program, enrolling 100 new students.

The CWA is supported by a designated counselor who provides counseling and case management for students throughout their entire three years in the program. Since most of our students work full time jobs, it is important for the CWA counselor to offer evening counseling appointments. As a part of the CWA program, all students are required to meet with the counselor at least once per semester to review and update educational plans. New CWA students are required to have a one-hour introductory counseling session to develop a comprehensive educational plan. By creating a comprehensive educational plan, the counselor motivates new students by presenting an estimated graduation date and a clear pathway to degree completion.

The College for Working Adults offers the following academic, career, transfer and personal counseling services:

- Creation and revision of Student Education Plans (SEPs)
- Career and major exploration
- Unofficial transcript evaluations from prior colleges
- Academic probation, reinstatement, and student success contracts (if needed)
- Transfer counseling, with an emphasis on local 4-year universities with evening and online programs
- Academic and personal counseling (i.e. issues with classes/workload, work/school balance, family responsibilities, personal concerns)
- Associate degree audits and petitions

Currently our program does not have any full-time staff and relies entirely on part-time personnel. During the 2013-2014 academic year, the program was supported by a part-time Project Director (15 hours/week), a part-time Faculty Coordinator (4 units reassigned time), and a part-time counselor. As enrollment in the CWA has grown, we have gradually increased the part-time counseling hours offered to our students. In Fall 2014 our designated counselor worked the part-time maximum of 18 hours per week for the CWA program.

However, even at 18 hours per week, our counselor did not have sufficient time to follow up with all of our students and accommodate their needs. For example, only 63% of CWA students met with the counselor in Fall 2014. It is unclear how many of our students do not currently have updated or complete educational plans. Two-thirds of our students were actively enrolled in courses in Spring 2015. Due to lack of staff time to follow up with students, we do not know why the remaining third of our students are not currently enrolled in courses. Some may be taking leaves of absence and others may have dropped out of the program. For this reason, we requested an emergency temporary hire of a retention specialist to support our part-time counselor. Yet many of the gaps in service cannot be met by a retention specialist and require the expertise of a designated counselor.

We believe the best way to provide consistent counseling, follow-up, and case management for our 200+ students is through a full-time CWA counselor. In the past, the frequent turnover of part-time counselors led to inconsistency and damaged the trust between students and counselors. Additional counseling support will have a great impact on student success, retention, and completion.

At this time, it is unclear whether or not a full-time counselor would need additional administrative support from a retention specialist or other supportive position. This question ultimately depends on the future growth of the program.

2. Identify specialized knowledge (area expertise) or training needed for the discipline/program.

Due to the detailed and specific nature of this position, the minimum qualifications to apply for a counseling position is a Master's degree in counseling and a minimum of one year of experience in counseling at a California Community College.

In addition to the expertise of a general counselor, this position requires the following:

- Knowledge of the matriculation process as it applies to California Community Colleges
- Knowledge of transfer, general education, HTP, and major requirements
- Experience in designing and preparing Student Educational Plans (SEPs) for community college students
- Experience with intervention programs that support student retention and success
- Experience assisting diverse student populations, including first generation students, re-entry students, students on academic probation and dismissal status, veterans, and basic skills students
- Expertise to identify and remove barriers to the retention and transfer of low-income, disabled, first-generation, and re-entry students

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- Ability to evaluate incoming transcripts from other colleges or universities
- Knowledge and ability to use computers and appropriate software applications utilized in providing academic counseling services
- Knowledge of and experience making appropriate college and community referrals
- Ability to communicate effectively and constructively with persons of diverse cultures, language groups and abilities
- Demonstrated sensitivity to and ability to work with the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of community college students, faculty, and staff, including those with disabilities

3. Identify extraordinary program development and/or needs (for example: are there laboratory oversight, industry connections, student mentoring, etc.).

Case Management: The CWA counselor must work closely with program staff and instructors to monitor student progress and provide early intervention for at-risk students. The counselor must attend regular meetings with staff and faculty, maintain accurate student files and records, and communicate effectively with all members of the CWA team. The counselor works closely with the Project Director to provide intake and registration for new students each semester. The counselor must also collaborate with instructors to identify and support honors students participating in the HTP.

Registration: Unlike other programs on campus, the CWA registers students each semester for courses within our program—students do not register themselves. The counselor is responsible for directing the registration process and ensuring that all students are enrolled in the courses they need to complete their educational plan. When a student drops or withdraws, it is critical for the counselor to follow up with the student in a timely manner to update their educational plan. The counselor is also responsible for advising and approving student requests to enroll in courses outside our program curriculum, as necessary due to scheduling conflicts or additional transfer requirements.

Transfer: The CWA counselor also keeps updated information about degree requirements at 4-year institutions in the Bay Area, with particular emphasis on evening programs for working adults in Psychology and related fields that tend to be popular among CWA students. As most of our students plan to transfer to a 4-year institution, the counselor must have expertise in advising and assisting students with the transfer process. This may include leading transfer workshops, etc.

4. Describe PT/FT faculty needs for the discipline/program.

CWA students require personalized attention from our counselor, who is required to meet with every student at least once (and often more) per semester. In addition, the counselor must register all students for their courses, schedule appointments, respond to student phone calls and emails, help students access support services on campus, complete paperwork, maintain accurate student records, attend CWA faculty meetings and counseling division meetings, and reach out to at-risk students to provide early intervention. It is not feasible to

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perform all of these tasks and functions in a part-time position. A dedicated full-time counselor is essential to support the 200+ students currently participating in our program.

There is need for at least a full-time CWA counselor to fulfill the following responsibilities and tasks:

- Meet with all incoming CWA students for a one-hour introductory session
- Meet with all CWA students in person or via phone conference once per semester
- Meet with all anticipated graduates for the coming year to confirm they are on-track to graduate and transfer
- Confirm courses and register all continuing CWA students in all CWA classes each semester
- Create and revise CWA Student Education Plans (SEPs) based on most recent CWA curriculum plan
- Conduct unofficial transcript evaluations from prior colleges and refer new students to TES
- Complete academic probation, reinstatement, and student success contracts (as needed)
- Help students complete Associate's Degree audits and petitions (in last semester of program)
- Schedule continuing student appointments and maintain counseling notes in SARS Grid for all CWA students
- Maintain student paper files, including an updated copy of the student SEP
- Regularly update spreadsheet with student data including: Expected grad date, AA degrees, transfer plans, counseling notes
- Maintain regular email and phone contact with students as necessary
- Transfer counseling, with an emphasis on local 4-year universities with evening and online programs
- Assistance with transfer, financial aid, and scholarship applications, including personal statements
- Academic and personal counseling (i.e. Issues with classes/workload, work/school balance, family responsibilities, personal concerns) and referrals to campus/local agencies for personal counseling if necessary
- Career and major exploration
- Maintain up-to-date spreadsheet of CWA students – keep track of who is currently in program, follow-up with students who are on LOA or currently unenrolled
- Follow-up with students of concern, setting up tutoring etc.
- Follow-up with students who have not paid fees and update fee records
- Maintain regular email and phone contact with students as necessary
- Post announcements and reminders via WebAccess

5. Describe any future economic, community or governmental initiatives/mandates this proposal is addressing.

N/A

6. Describe any budgetary implications of the proposal.

The cost of a full-time counselor is approximately \$84,732 (including benefits).

B. College Mission and Goals Criteria

1. Explain how the request supports the goals of the college strategic plan. Make sure to specifically address the strategic directions in the Educational Master Plan for the college (note: when document is finished, this will be hyperlinked).

This position supports the college's Educational Master Plan (Teaching and Learning Objective 1.2 and Completion Objectives 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.8 and 2.9).

<i>EMP Objective</i>	<i>CWA Accomplishments</i>
Teaching and Learning Objective 1.2: Assess, evaluate, and implement flexible course scheduling options and pathways to accommodate students' needs.	CWA offers convenient course scheduling options (including distance education) as part of a three-year pathway to degree completion.
Completion Objective 2.3: Improve connections with potential students by conducting an engaging, well thought out orientation program...	CWA students attend a separate program orientation before they begin classes.
Completion Objective 2.4: Improve entry by identifying clear student pathways for basic skills, career/technical, general transfer, specific majors, and courses/programs.	CWA provides a clearly defined pathway to degree completion for all CWA students. CWA curriculum is pre-planned and allows students to earn up to three associate degrees in three years.
Completion Objective 2.6: Improve progress through increased intentional counseling and other services to guide students to completion of their goals.	CWA provides a designated counselor who meets with students every semester to review and update educational plans.
Completion Objective 2.8: Improve progress by creating opportunities for faculty-student and student-student (peer) mentorships	The goal of the new CWA Mentoring Program is to provide a positive and successful transition back to college for new students through a semester-long mentoring relationship with a current CWA student.
Completion Objective 2.9: Improve completion by streamlining and removing bureaucratic barriers to receiving degrees and certificates.	CWA curriculum is pre-planned and takes the guesswork out of course selection. Enrollment in CWA classes is guaranteed.

2. What unmet needs will this position address (student, district, community)?

Student Needs: The CWA needs a full-time counselor to effectively serve our 200+ students. Many students do not meet with the counselor regularly to update SEPs. Some students “fall through the cracks” after dropping or withdrawing from courses. The part-time counselor does not have time to make appointments with all students nor to follow up with all students who need intervention or assistance. A full-time CWA counselor would have more time to meet with students to update their SEPs when needed and to monitor student enrollment and progress throughout the semester.

District Needs: The vast majority of CWA students enter the program as new Cañada students and many commute from communities outside San Mateo County. If this program did not exist, these students would not otherwise be enrolled at any college. Although the college offers evening classes, students with inflexible schedules often find it difficult to access all the courses and services they need (like counseling) at night. Cañada is currently the only college on the Peninsula that offers a program designed for working adults to earn a degree while working full-time. As evidenced by the enrollment growth described above, there is strong and growing demand for our program.

Community Needs: The CWA has built strong partnerships with more than a dozen state and local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private sector employers to help provide educational opportunities for their employees. The CWA program serves the needs of full-time employees who do not qualify for promotions due to lack of a college degree or completed college units. These degree or unit requirements are often written into job descriptions for state and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations. Working closely with Human Resources and Workforce Development professionals, the CWA Project Director recruits students who will benefit from completing degrees and courses that align with the goals of their workplaces’ employee development programs.

3. How will this position enhance retention and student success?

“They help you register. They counsel you. They check in with you every semester. They just make sure you're on course to get your degree.” – Siosuia, CWA graduate, Class of 2014

This position will promote student success by providing additional hours for counseling appointments and follow up with students. A full-time counselor will be able to meet with all students each semester to review and update their educational plans.

A full-time counselor will also be able to work closely with staff and instructors to promote retention by identifying at-risk students and reaching out to provide early intervention. This position will provide time for effective case management for all students, helping us to better retain students who struggle with coursework, drop or withdraw from courses, or take leaves of absence.

This position will also allow the CWA to enhance and expand services provided to our students. For example, a full-time counselor will be able to participate in the design and implementation of program orientation for new students. Additionally, a full-time counselor will help lead the new CWA peer mentoring program, identify students who would benefit from a mentoring relationship, and develop training materials and provide guidance for peer mentors. In the future, the CWA program will introduce a new pathway for Basic Skills students and we will rely on the expertise of our counselor to support the unique needs of this student population.

4. Describe how the position supports a pathway to student educational goal completion (certificate and/or degree) or GE transfer certification.

“The fact that the curriculum is pre-planned to help you obtain your associate degree is great. There’s no thinking involved about what classes you need to take to fulfill your degree requirements.” – Michael, CWA graduate, Class of 2014

The CWA provides a clearly defined pathway to degree completion for all students. CWA curriculum is pre-planned and allows students to earn three Associate degrees in three years. Although the program’s curriculum is fixed, students do have some flexibility in choosing which degrees they earn depending on their career and transfer goals. Because students come in with varying levels of academic preparation and numbers of prior units, they complete the program at different times. This requires the CWA counselor to provide individualized attention to each student, including initial review of transcripts from prior colleges attended and personalized advising around transfer goals.

C. Historical data criteria supporting request.

1. Discuss Department/Discipline/Program enrollment and student service trends the proposal addresses.

There is strong and growing demand for the CWA program, as evidenced by our enrollment growth. Without additional counseling support, we may be forced to impose a strict limit on the number of new students we enroll in Fall 2015.

CWA Annual Unique Headcount

2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
50	96	161

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CWA students represent different demographic categories and goals than the college's general student population. This requires specialized counseling expertise.

CWA Student Age, 2013-2014

	<i>n</i>	%	College %
Under 18	1	0%	5%
Age 18-22	7	7%	50%
Age 23-28	23	12%	20%
Age 29-39	56	33%	14%
Age 40-49	56	34%	7%
Age 50-59	23	12%	3%
Age 60+	4	2%	1%
Total	170	100%	100%

CWA Student Gender, 2013-2014

	<i>n</i>	%	College %
Female	130	81%	59%
Male	29	19%	39%
Unreported	2	0%	2%
Total	161	100%	100%

CWA Student Ethnicity, 2013-2014

	<i>n</i>	%	College %
African American	13	11%	4%
Asian	14	4%	9%
Filipino	8	4%	3%
Hispanic	57	39%	40%
White	33	20%	27%
Unknown	36	22%	18%
Total	161	100%	100%

CWA Student Goal Orientation, 2013-2014

	<i>n</i>	%	College %
Transfer	129	82%	57%
Other	35	18%	43%
Total	164	100%	100%