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Peer mentors campus-bound

ASCC leaders work to bring mentors to college

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Peer counseling may become a reality at Cerritos College.

Associated Students of Cerritos College Vice President Ivan Oyarzabal and President Eduardo De La Rosa are working on making this program a reality.

Oyarzabal will be applying for equity funding for this program.

ASCC President Eduardo De La Rosa said, "We have more plan-

ning to do because we want to know how this program could impact departments."

He added that the peer mentors would receive training through Health Services to be prepared to give advice for various situations.

Soon De La Rosa hopes to form a committee to gather feedback from students.

Nursing major Samantha Sanford said, "I would much rather talk to a peer because I am not very social and I would feel more comfortable."

Computer science major Miguel Navarrete said, "I would tell my friends to see a peer counselor because the counselor will more than likely have experienced things we have."

According to Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. JoAnna Schilling, "The Falcon Mentorship program is to provide peer mentors for Cerritos College students by major and to provide resources to help them succeed at Cerritos College."

De La Rosa explained that he met with his major-specific counselor in order to help students in his major succeed in transferring.

Updates can be found in the Student Activities Office located near the Bookstore.

Enrollment stacks up



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: PERLA LARA

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Has a student ever wondered why they're sitting in a Cerritos College classroom? Did the services and majors offered play a part in the decision or was it a given?

Whatever the answer to those questions may be, the size of the college population went up 2.6 percent.

According to Vice President of Academic Affairs JoAnna Schilling, the number is not static and it goes up and down daily according to how many students drop or enroll.

Schilling said that as of Sept. 3 the number of enrolled students was 23,361 as opposed to the 22,770 from 2014.

What the school offers

President/Superintendent of the Cerritos Community College Dr. Jose Fierro attributes the number to the strategic approach in offering courses.

"At this point it's a lot of speculation because it is not really concrete to say people are coming here for x and y reasons, [...]"

We are trying to offer courses that are part of the degree completion programs and make more of those available"

Dr. Fierro stated that while the Cerritos College enrollment trend is moving upward, other community colleges have low enrollment.

"I was monitoring an email thread from the state and yeah many campuses are low in enrollment"

Fierro expressed that the reasons for low enrollment in other colleges are unknown and can vary due to different community needs and differences in population.

"We hope that students are attracted to Cerritos College because they know the college is invested in their success," Schilling expressed.

Our faculty and counselors truly care what happens to each student. We also try to be responsive to student requests for improvement, and the college is committed to adding key classes when and where needed."

Schilling explained that while other colleges were cutting classes during the recession Cerritos College didn't cut back as much and were quickly able to add classes.

"If a student can get their core courses at Cerritos College, feels engaged in the classes and activities, makes friends and gets to know his or her professors, there is no reason to leave," Schilling said.

Dr. Fierro agrees that activities help keep students at Cerritos College.

He believes student engagement like clubs, student government, and the other organizations in which students become active contribute to the retention rate.

Programs designed for students

Fierro expressed that services provided to students also play an instrumental part in why students choose to come and stay at Cerritos.

Schilling stated that services such as iFalcon and the new K16 Bridge to College program are integral for student success.

She also said that pathway and support programs like Puente, which helps improve college attendance of underrepresented students EOPS, a service for economically and educationally disadvantaged students, and Project Hope, a support program for underrepresented students in the healthcare or science field are important.

Faculty's aim for success

According to Schilling, it has been proven that the Success Center, which provides tutoring for students, has helped students do better.

Professors and majors offered also come into consideration.

"Our professors definitely play a key role in why students come to and stay at Cerritos College. Our faculty is engaged with the students in their classes, serve as club advisers and encourage students to speak up and advocate for their education and advise students on how to be successful in their chosen major," Schilling said.

Fierro discussed how majors offered at Cerritos are of high interest and high demand, such as business.

"Our business program is amazing; so once the word gets out, [students] want to be part of the program because it's a good program."

"I will also say that the federal report shows that Cerritos is first on transfers. The Los Angeles Times report had a lot to do because it gave us great exposure. People want to be in a place where they think they can do well, so I think that has helped significantly," Fierro stated.

Social Equality Club crucial in hour increase

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Saturday's library hours have now become a reality as students can now use its resources.

Shawna Baskette, dean of academic success, explained that the last time the library was open on Saturdays was Spring 2008.

The Social Equality Club worked since Spring semester to get the extended library hours.

Commercial music major and member of the Social Equality Club, Johnny Rodriguez works as a circulation desk clerk

in the library and explained that this was a collaborative effort. Rodriguez said, "Tutoring is important and the tutoring hours will be changing for the benefit of students."

The Social Equality Club wants students to take an online survey to determine what supplies the library should purchase.

The survey asks student opinion on how helpful would it be if the library got each of the following items; laptops, graphing calculators, white boards, projectors, maps, sound proof study rooms or specific other.

History major Abraham Venegas explained that one of the ways they received student feedback was having a booth outside of the library.

Venegas believes that students could benefit from Saturday

library hours because students may not be able to concentrate if it's loud at their homes; which makes the library the perfect quiet atmosphere.

Psychology major Bianca Michelle Vega said, "I think it is super cool that the library has extended hours because this semester I am taking a night class."

She believes it is highly beneficial to use the Library now that it has more hours.

The new library hours are: Monday-Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

According to Baskette the library will be collecting data regarding how many students are utilizing the library.

Lack of student interest kicks Game Room into high gear

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More desolate than the Sahara desert, the game room has been facing a critical lack of visits in the last couple years and is being forgotten by the students little by little.

ASCC President Eddie De La Rosa and his cabinet have had discussions regarding the actual state of the game room.

De La Rosa is concerned that for being a place of fun and relaxation, the room itself has too many rules.

"If that is our space, let's make it ours," De La Rosa said.

Majoring in architecture, De La Rosa has a vision to turn the game room into a more sociable place for everyone on campus.

He is willing to design it in order to fulfill the student needs and wishes for a more modern game room.

In order to know what kind of benefits the college community would like for the reboot of the space, De La Rosa and his cabinet invite students to fill out a survey.

During the In-N-Out truck event, which took place at the beginning of the semester, students expressed opinions of what the community of Cerritos College would like to have in the game room.

The top choices varied from having phone charging stations, movie nights, microwaves, computer stations and sitting areas.

Among the least popular choices, there were calls for beds, therapy sessions, a Subway restaurant and even a stripper pole.

Once the voices of the students have been heard, De La Rosa will take the concept to the Architecture Club to be reviewed and make any changes to get a better prototype.

Niza Arellano, Inter-Club Council Representative of Architecture and Technology club at Cerritos College, has been involved in the discussions for the project and has come to a realization of what the final image will be.

"There are plans to get phone charger stations, a stage, a PlayStation 4 installation and even a mural[...]which the main idea is to get all the clubs involved. Maybe it will go on the wall, or the roof. We are still discussing it," Arellano said.

But with many benefits and installations in mind, the estimated cost for the renewal could be a big obstacle for the project.

"There is no limit on the cost, it just needs to be made to be most economical," Arellano said.

The main purpose for the change is to get more students to use the room so they may benefit from it and get more involved in school activities.

Justin Rios, math and science major, is one of the few students that comes to the game room to spare some time and relax from school.

"It's a great privilege for the students, they don't understand what they have. I hope that they don't change it for the worse," he said.

According to De La Rosa, the project can be a chance to create job opportunities for students in Cerritos College as clerks and DJs for the room.

Campus Life

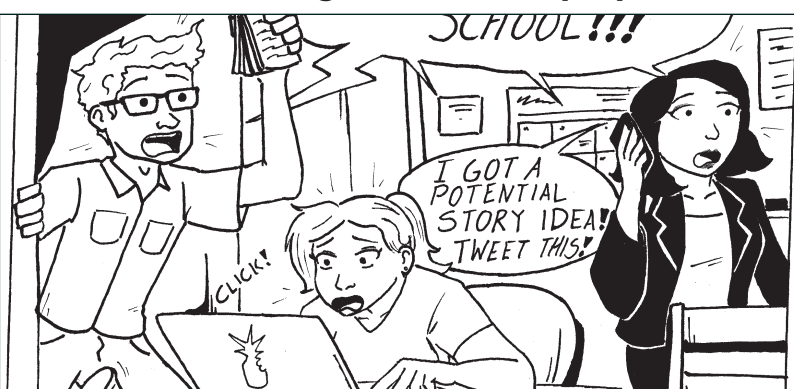
School celebrates its 60 years of existence



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Opinion

A misunderstanding, blown out of proportion



FULL STORY ON PAGE 3

SPORTS

Men's water polo defends home waters



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