



Academic Senate
Summer 2020
Resolution 8.01Su20
Counselor Contract Hours

Whereas, Counseling faculty are integral to the San Mateo Community College District as open access institutions committed to the goals outlined in the *Vision for Success*;

Whereas, Counseling faculty are critical in meeting the mandate outlined in the *Vision for Success*, in particular to “focus relentlessly on students’ end goals, design with the student in mind, pair high expectations with support, and enable action and thoughtful innovation” ([Foundation for California Community Colleges](#));

Whereas, the field of Counseling is an integral aspect of a student-ready college, and the pedagogical foundations and professional expertise of Counseling faculty are critical in supporting student retention and educational goal attainment;

Whereas, the contract for counselors in the SMCCCD clearly states, “Full-time counseling faculty shall be present on campus a minimum of thirty (30) hours per week, twenty-five (25) of which are for scheduled professional duties and five (5) of which are for performing other professional duties” ([source](#));

Whereas, the Guided Pathways framework as outlined in the *Vision for Success* and supported by the Guided Pathways Initiative, to which SMCCCD has fully committed itself, demands that Counseling faculty provide thorough wrap-around services that ensure a student-ready campus that moves students in, through, and beyond their programs of study through the delivery of “Intrusive counseling” ([ASCCC](#));

Whereas, In addition to meeting students’ emotional, and personal needs, Counseling faculty provide a staggering array of services including but not limited to: academic counseling, advocacy, creation of Student Educational Plans (SEPs), personal counseling, intervention services, referrals, transfer planning, university research and contact, policy interpretation, placement in accordance with AB 705, teaching, career counseling, and crisis management;

Whereas, Counselors are constrained in their work by appointments broken into 30-minute increments, not based on pedagogical, clinical, or therapeutic needs and effectiveness, or even on technological limitations of the scheduling system, but solely on the interpretation of a scheduling system by leadership that has resulted in counselors’ inability to adjust appointment times to best meet student needs;

Whereas, 30-minute counseling appointments are entirely insufficient to meet most student needs under normal circumstances;

Whereas, the impact of the Shelter-in-Place mandate as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an increased demand for counseling support to meet students' academic, emotional, and personal counseling needs, has increased the complexity of counseling to respond to crisis situations and constant processing of information, and has increased follow-up with email, phone calls, community, and campus referrals;

Whereas, The issues that students are bringing forward in the times of a pandemic - mass unemployment, food insecurity, housing concerns, and institutionalized racism - are even more complicated and acute than in 'normal' times, which is exacerbated by communication issues wrought by the shift to email counseling, resulting in a huge increase in workload and faculty stress;

Whereas, Due to the insufficient time period for counseling appointments, the 5 hours per week that counselors are allocated for "other professional duties" are now frequently used on paperwork, or to follow-up with students, or to book further appointments, such that the 5 hours per week become hours dedicated to counseling and not other professional duties;

Whereas, Counseling faculty invest enormous work with our increasingly diverse student body, yet struggle to experience equity themselves as reflected in different overload and adjunct pay rates, the lack of recognition of counseling faculty as faculty with pedagogical and professional expertise, and in programs that are entirely run by temporary and adjunct faculty; and

Whereas, Our campus community is changing rapidly in response to a cultural shift affected by pandemic and national events unfolding in social strife, yet our counseling practices have not been able to adjust to that change in a way that benefits students, nor has our leadership supported such a change to ensure better support of students;

Resolved, That the District Academic Senate hereby affirm to the SMCCCD Board of Trustees that the professional and pedagogical expertise of Counseling faculty should be recognized in determining the best way to meet student needs in providing counseling services;

Resolved, That the District Academic Senate work with the SMCCCD Board of Trustees to ensure that Counseling faculty be consulted to determine the appropriate length of counseling appointment time to provide adequate support to meet student needs; and

Resolved, The District Academic Senate president affirm to the SMCCCD Board of Trustees that the District Academic Senate supports efforts in negotiations to provide for longer counseling appointments that keep Counseling faculty within the negotiated 25 hours per week with 5 hours for professional duties.

Passed unanimously on July 6th, 2020.