Get Your Life and Your Ed Plan—Student Outreach Conducted via Telephone for Late Start Classes

One component of the Get Your Life and Your Ed Plan program aims to provide coaching to CCSF students on various college-life issues, registration among them. After the admissions process, registration and persistence in the appropriate courses is critical.

As determined by the Admissions and Records Office, nearly 8,000 prospective students applied for fall 2013 admissions but did not enroll in classes. Between September 17 and September 30, 2013, phone calls are being made to this population of prospective students to encourage either enrollment in October late-start classes, spring 2014 classes, or to answer questions these prospective students might have about the enrollment/registration process. These brief conversations provide insight into student behaviors about their decisions to attend City College of San Francisco and subsequently register for classes.

With such a large number of students to reach, calls to the immediate 415 area code were prioritized over other Bay Area telephone area codes. The calls were made in the late afternoon and early evening, between 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Next, is a representative summary of student comments shared during the phone calls:

A number of students stated that they were attending colleges and universities other than City College. Among the many reasons given, we heard these:

1. *She is a student at SFSU, wanted to take a class at City College but couldn’t fit it into her schedule.*
2. *Attending DVC [Diablo Valley]; the commute was too long.*
3. *Attending UC Santa Cruz; didn’t need to take a class at CCSF after all.*
4. *Was trying to get into the Nursing program; didn’t happen, so she is studying RN near Fresno.*
6. *DOESN’T WANT TO BE WITH City College! She is going to another school.*
7. *He heard about the accreditation problems. Going to Skyline because can’t risk CCSF closing. Can’t take that chance on us [closing]. City was his first choice; it’s only one bus ride; Skyline is a lot farther.*
8. *Her Skyline counselor referred her to City for a general education class, but the schedule didn’t work out. And, the course numbers/titles aren’t the same so she didn’t know which class she needed to add.*
Other prospective students shared that their work schedules and personal commitments didn’t allow time for school this semester; however, they expressed interest and would consider CCSF in the future.

1. Will try to add a class next semester.
2. Registered for a Spanish class [in fall], but had to drop.
3. Work schedule changed so his school plans changed too. Works at the VA hospital, recently got a raise in pay. VA benefits are better in San Francisco than in Vallejo-Fairfield. He definitely wants to come to school in San Francisco when he has more time.
4. Works as a cook, doesn’t have time for school right now.
5. Not interested in taking classes. She’s due in October!
6. Going to China for four months; perhaps will look at the class schedule in spring and decide whether to register for class.
7. Recently took a fulltime job. Not interested in classes at this time.

Still other prospective students had difficulty accessing the specific courses they needed or wanted to take. The courses they needed to take were full or unavailable to them.

1. Wanted to take a Psychology 1 class; couldn’t get one.
2. Was looking for a Math class.
3. She has been trying to take science classes [for a few semesters] and can never get them. She doesn’t need any more units or unnecessary classes. She needs Anatomy, Chemistry, Micro Biology and Physiology.
4. Interested in Plumbing classes.
5. Couldn’t get the Cinema class he wanted to take.
6. Was not allowed to register in class; he was told he couldn’t repeat the course again. Will wait to see whether something else is offered in spring.
7. Already works as EMT. Chemistry and Phlebotomy were full. Doesn’t need any other classes. Just needs those classes.
8. Interested in EMT program; couldn’t get classes.

A few students were unclear about the registration process, expressing that they did not know what to do after submitting their admissions application, or indicated that they had difficulties with student services.

1. Didn’t know what to do with his transcripts from University of Minnesota. He wants to transfer any credits from CCSF back to Minnesota; he was close to finishing [his degree].
2. Wants to see a counselor.
3. Didn’t understand the email he received. He couldn’t get his pin and can’t get in.
4. He never heard back from Admissions. His name change wasn’t processed.
The last category of phone calls were those attempted but where a person was not reached. A number of calls went unanswered. Messages were left on answering machines and voicemail, if possible. Other calls could not be completed due to wrong numbers, unavailable service, or disconnected phone service. Lastly, some phone numbers provided to the college contained errors or insufficient digits.

These phone calls provide valuable insight into the world of our students. We can use this important information to guide our planning, course scheduling, and enrollment management. Students, particularly continuing students, are asking for more general education, transferable classes as well as highly impacted certificate program, Emergency Med Tech as an example. It reaffirms that the following should be considered when planning and balancing which courses to offer, always mindful of generating maximum FTE and meeting student demand:

1. Are enough general education courses/sections being offered?
2. What opportunities are there to have more seats available in popular classes during popular hours of day?