Lake Tahoe Community College

Comprehensive Program Review

COUNSELING AND ADVISING

September 15, 2016

Submitted by:

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& the LTCC Counseling Staff

Counseling and Advising

PROGRAM REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Counseling and Advising program is a critical component of the student experience and part of the Student Services department at Lake Tahoe Community College. LTCC counseling faculty work with new and returning students, assisting them throughout their academic journey. Faculty counselors also present information about college majors, programs and services to potential students in various outreach events. Counseling and Advising provides a comprehensive menu of services such as degree and certificate program selection guidance, educational planning, new student orientation, career and transfer counseling, general personal counseling and referrals, connections to other college support programs, articulation development, transfer information and assistance, career exploration opportunities, degree and certificate applications, graduation process assistance, guidance in the navigation of enrollment issues, and teach workshops and courses designed to enhance student success. The program also manages the retention and intervention services related to academic probation and at-risk student populations.   With the implementation of the California Community College Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), the counseling area has experienced an infusion of much-needed additional funding to support activities and initiatives designed to improve student success. As state requirements for student support continue to evolve and change, the Counseling and Advising program will adapt and grow.   The experience and stability of the staff within this department is its strongest asset. Challenges include the lack of a comprehensive student mental health program and a growing dependence on categorical funding to ensure maximum program quality.

Program Overview

Program Purpose and Support of College Mission:

College Mission: *Lake Tahoe Community College serves our local, regional and global communities by promoting comprehensive learning, success, and life-changing opportunities. Through quality instruction and student support, our personalized approach to teaching and learning empowers students to achieve their educational and personal goals.*

The Counseling and Advising program supports the college mission by working in partnership with students, faculty, and staff to create a caring environment that facilitates the development of the individual, enhances their quality of life, and assists them in achieving their academic and career goals.

The Counseling and Advising program embraces three core beliefs:

#1. Education is important in the development of the individual, improves the quality of ones' life, and maximizes career opportunities

#2. The ability of students to access, interpret, and apply accurate information is essential in the establishment and achievement of their educational goals.

#3. Students arrive at Lake Tahoe Community College with a unique set of life experiences, abilities, and needs. The diverse needs of the students are best achieved within an environment that is supportive, inclusive and welcoming and which:

*Operates from a student-centered perspective

*Assumes that each student possesses both the potential and ability to succeed

*Respects the uniqueness and self-worth of each individual

*Models effective, open communication, mutual respect, and interdependent collaboration
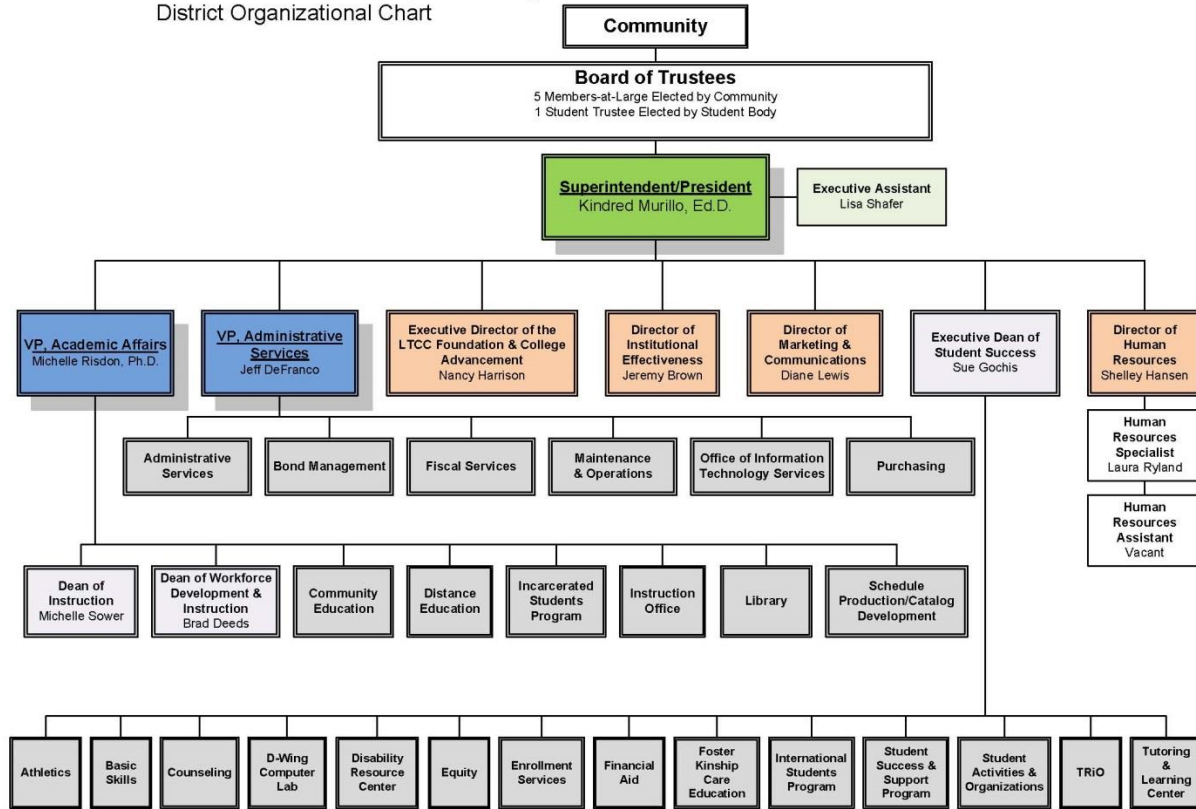

Program Summary

A. Organizational Structure

The Counseling and Advising program is part of Student Services at LTCC and operates under the direction of the Executive Dean of Student Success, who reports directly to the President/Superintendent.   The district organizational chart is illustrated in DIAGRAM 1A.

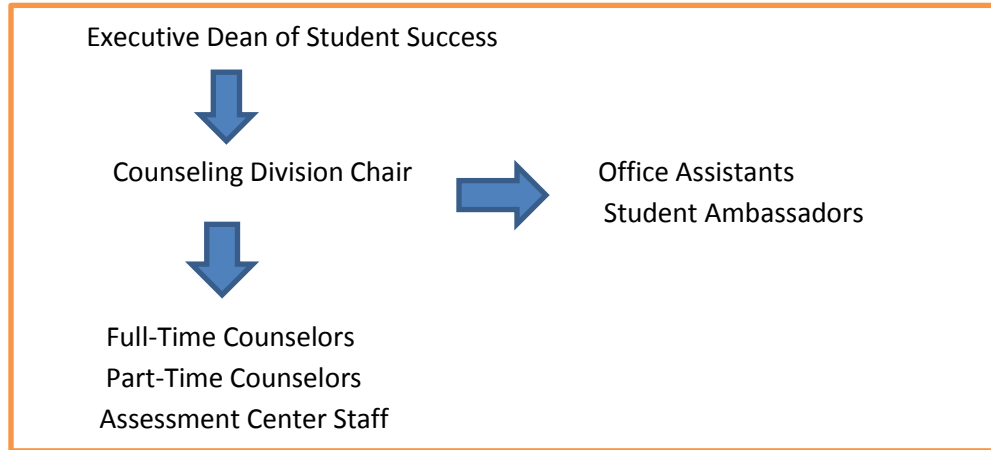# DIAGRAM 1A.   District Organizational Chart

Lake Tahoe Community College
District Organizational Chart

Community

Board of Trustees
5 Members-at-Large Elected by Community
1 Student Trustee Elected by Student Body

Superintendent/President
Kindred Murillo, Ed.D.

Executive Assistant
Lisa Shafer

- **VP, Academic Affairs** — Michelle Risdon, Ph.D.
- **VP, Administrative Services** — Jeff DeFranco
- **Executive Director of the LTCC Foundation & College Advancement** — Nancy Harrison
- **Director of Institutional Effectiveness** — Jeremy Brown
- **Director of Marketing & Communications** — Diane Lewis
- **Executive Dean of Student Success** — Sue Gochis
- **Director of Human Resources** — Shelley Hansen
  - **Human Resources Specialist** — Laura Ryland
  - **Human Resources Assistant** — Vacant

Under VP, Administrative Services:
- Administrative Services
- Bond Management
- Fiscal Services
- Maintenance & Operations
- Office of Information Technology Services
- Purchasing

Second tier (under Academic Affairs):
- **Dean of Instruction** — Michelle Sower
- **Dean of Workforce Development & Instruction** — Brad Deeds
- Community Education
- Distance Education
- Incarcerated Students Program
- Instruction Office
- Library
- Schedule Production/Catalog Development

Third tier:
- Athletics
- Basic Skills
- Counseling
- D-Wing Computer Lab
- Disability Resource Center
- Equity
- Enrollment Services
- Financial Aid
- Foster Kinship Care Education
- International Students Program
- Student Success & Support Program
- Student Activities & Organizations
- TRiO
- Tutoring & Learning Center

Updated August 31, 2016

The Counseling and Advising program was restructured in 2015 - 2016 due to the increased demands of Student Success and Support Program (SSSP). The SSSP program was rebranded locally at the college as the Guidance and Planning for Success (GPS) program. One of the counselors was reassigned as the Counseling Division Chair. This position oversees the counselors and SSSP/GPS designated staff as well as having some additional related responsibilities. The Division Chair position reports to the Executive Dean of Student Success. This new organizational structure will allow the area to function more efficiently and to also improve communication among the personnel in the areas involved with SSSP/GPS. DIAGRAM 1B illustrates the newly approved program organizational chart.

DIAGRAM 1B. Counseling and Advising Program Organizational Chart

Executive Dean of Student Success

Counseling Division Chair → Office Assistants
                              Student Ambassadors

Full-Time Counselors
Part-Time Counselors
Assessment Center Staff

B.   Personnel

Due to the increases in categorical funding in the Counseling and Advising area, there have been additional positions added to the program in 2015. TABLE 2 illustrates the personnel changes in the last year.

TABLE 2. FTE changes from 2013 to 2016 for the Counseling and Advising Program

Position	Headcount 2016	Headcount Change from 2013 (+ / -)	FTE 2016	FTE Change From 2013 (+ / -)
Administrator	1	+1	.10	+.10
Full Time Counselors	5	5	4.25	None
Part Time Counselors	3	+2	1.20	+1
Full Time Classified	2	+1	.70	+.5
Part Time Classified	3	+3	.80	+.4
Student Ambassadors	12	+12	1	+.7

C. Key Functions

The Counseling and Advising program serves students in a variety of ways.   While the primary function is to advise students on a pathway to achieve their educational goals at LTCC, there are several additional services provided by counselors including:
*assessment and placement assistance
*career information and exploration opportunities
*course registration assistance
*course selection assistance
*financial aid information
*graduation assistance

        *guidance in navigating appeals and probation
        *intervention services for at-risk student populations
        *referrals to campus support resources
        *referrals to community resources
        *scholarship information
        *transfer advising and assistance
        *workshops and courses in academic, personal and career development

    D.   Facilities, Equipment and Technology

The Counseling and Advising Program is located in the main building of the college on the first floor and shares space with Financial Aid. Student access to the area is very good. In the fall of 2015, the college opened the One-Stop Center for Enrollment Services which is adjacent to the counseling area. A wall between the two areas was literally and figuratively removed to allow better communication and traffic flow. The One-Stop allows students to meet many of their needs in one location and also provides seamless access to counselors. Two new offices were constructed in the counseling area to accommodate the addition of the part-time counseling staff. The Transfer Center is located within the counseling area and provides computers for students to use to gather information about possible transfer schools. The Career Center is currently located in the library to provide evening access to the resources. A long-range plan for facility enhancement is to move all student services programs nearer to counseling and the One-Stop Center and to improve technology for student use. This change will allow all support programs to be more visible and accessible to the students. Construction plans for this are preliminary set for the fall of 2018. As far as equipment, the program appears to have all the equipment necessary for effective operation. Computers and printers have been upgraded recently. Two large-screen television monitors were installed in the counseling waiting room area in the fall of 2015 to help promote services and display announcements to students. Modern and comfortable waiting room furniture was also purchased in 2015 which helped create a more welcoming environment. There is a lack of wireless access within the counseling waiting room and there are often Internet and cell phone connectivity issues; however, many of the technology problems are being addressed with the Measure F Bond Projects that are ongoing. The college added a text messaging system and a Mobile Application for the website in 2015. This new technology will increase the ability for the college to contact students and improve student access to college services and information.

    E.   Budget

The college faced significant reductions in the general fund beginning in 2012 due to enrollment declines.   This would have resulted in the elimination of positions at the college, including a full-time counseling position and some related staff. However, the state launched the SSSP/GPS program that same year which allowed the college to retain the positions as well as to employ additional student ambassadors and part-time counselors to assist with GPS implementation and operation. The continual increase in the Counseling and Advising program budget over the

past three years is due to new categorical funding as well as some augmentation of existing funding for student support. While this new funding has certainly enabled the college to continue to maintain efficient and effective counseling services as well as develop new programs for student success, the long-term funding is a concern. Ongoing enrollment declines at the college have not enabled LTCC to institutionalize these new positions and services, and at this time, the program is heavily dependent upon continued categorical funding.   The state reports that it is committed to this funding; however, historical trends and the current proposed funding formula indicate that funding could be volatile in the future. The Counseling and Advising budget for the past five years is illustrated in DIAGRAM 1C.

<u>DIAGRAM 1C.   Counseling and Advising Budgets: 2010 - 2016</u>

Program 6310 Student Services - Counseling Expenditures

Object	Fund	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1000's	Fund 10	$ 57,451	$ 51,860				
	Fund 11			$ 29,860	$ 45,507	$ 11,219	$ 9,525
	Fund 12			$ 155,329	$ 90,514	$ 184,240	$ 255,261
	Total	$ 57,451	$ 51,860	$ 185,189	$ 136,021	$ 195,459	$ 264,786
2000's	Fund 10	$ 848	$ 2,718				
	Fund 11			$ 7,222	$ 1,525	$ -	$ -
	Fund 12						
	Total	$ 848	$ 2,718	$ 7,222	$ 1,525	$ -	$ -
3000's	Fund 10	$ 15,137	$ 21,150				
	Fund 11			$ 17,594	$ 17,002	$ 3,960	$ 6,151
	Fund 12			$ 51,852	$ 27,800	$ 47,542	$ 74,906
	Total	$ 15,137	$ 21,150	$ 69,446	$ 44,802	$ 51,502	$ 81,057
4000's	Fund 10	$ -	$ 132				
	Fund 11			$ -	$ 74	$ 81	$ 330
	Fund 12			$ 1,337	$ 3,064	$ 22,568	$ 60,383
	Total	$ -	$ 132	$ 1,337	$ 3,138	$ 22,649	$ 60,713
5000's	Fund 10	$ 1,700	$ 1,322				
	Fund 11			$ 76	$ 410	$ 1,911	$ 727
	Fund 12			$ 3,482	$ 1,685	$ 16,868	$ 30,507
	Total	$ 1,700	$ 1,322	$ 3,558	$ 2,095	$ 18,779	$ 31,234
6000's	Fund 10						
	Fund 11						
	Fund 12					$ 124	$ 1,414
	Total	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 124	$ 1,414
Total	Fund 10	$ 75,136	$ 77,182	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
	Fund 11	$ -	$ -	$ 54,752	$ 64,518	$ 17,171	$ 16,733
	Fund 12	$ -	$ -	$ 212,000	$ 123,063	$ 271,342	$ 422,471
	Total	$ 75,136	$ 77,182	$ 266,752	$ 187,581	$ 288,513	$ 439,204

Program Analysis:

A SWOT analysis was performed by the counseling staff and the administrator for the area. Information used in the analysis was also obtained from the Student Satisfaction Survey administered in the spring of 2016. The results are listed in TABLE 3.

TABLE 3: SWOT ANALYSIS FOR COUNSELING AND ADVISING

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Stability of counseling staff Friendliness of counselors Low Student to Counselor ratio Small and informal atmosphere Easy access to counselors Increase in PT counselor funding Student Success and Support funding Bilingual Counselors	Services for online students Services for Incarcerated Students Technology integration for services Minimal mental health services Student wait time during peak registration
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Veterans Services Mental Health funding opportunities Potential online services funding Enhancement of SSSP initiatives Bond Initiatives for facilities Common Assessment Initiative	Overdependence on categorical funding Continual enrollment decline Student apathy and disengagement Reduced Work Load option/retirements

Summary of SWOT Results:

The SWOT exercise served as a comprehensive and objective tool to help gain a full analysis of the effectiveness of the Counseling and Advising area. Obvious strengths included the longevity and expertise of the current counseling staff. This stability provides students with counselors who have an extensive knowledge of the California Community College system as it relates to CSU and UC transfers and a thorough awareness of college and community resources available to students. The addition of part-time counselors has created opportunities for summer and evening counseling services.   Technology continues to be an issue for the area as it is for the entire college. Information Technology staffing limitations have created difficulty in the ability to add new features to the current system as well as to provide accurate data to the Chancellors' Office. The weaknesses identified are being addressed and strategies for improvement have been implemented.   Due to new funding possibilities, opportunities for enhanced and improved student services continue to grow. The GPS/SSSP initiative has infused funding for part time counseling and allowed for a restructuring of the counseling area to better serve students. While declining enrollment was identified as a threat to the college overall, smaller enrollment does allow for a lower student-to-counselor ratio. Counselors are able to spend more time working directly with students individually and provide personal attention. This actually improves their ability to serve students.   Another identified threat in this

program is the possible loss of experienced counselors due to retirements or the reduced work load option.   To prepare for this possibility, the Counseling and Advising is developing a comprehensive training plan for new counselors. While this training is valuable for new counselor development, the loss of longtime counselors will certainly impact the program. Overall, the SWOT analysis provided the area reliable information for some short and long-term improvement goal development.

Another instrument used for program analysis was the LTCC Student Engagement Survey. In the spring of 2016, the college implemented a customized survey which captured student feedback for all service programs.   The results from the survey related to counseling and advising, including transfer and career services are listed in TABLE 4.

TABLE 4.   Students Engagement Survey 2016
Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent so a slight variation from 100% total is possible.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The counselors are concerned about my success	3%	5%	8%	30%	54%
The counselors provide accurate information	4%	6%	10%	21%	59%
Satisfaction Statements	**Very Dissatisfied**	**Somewhat Dissatisfied**	**Neutral**	**Somewhat Satisfied**	**Very Satisfied**
Career Services	0%	0%	8%	31%	62%
Counseling Services	2%	4%	4%	30%	59%
Transfer Services	0%	0%	18%	29%	53%

Impact Statements	No Impact	Some Impact	A Great Deal of Impact
The use of the counseling and advising services had an impact on my personal/professional growth	7%	38%	56%
The use of career services had an impact on my personal/professional growth	14%	57%	29%
The use of transfer services had an impact on my personal and professional growth	13%	33%	53%

Counseling and Advising is the highest accessed student service on campus with 80% of the students surveyed indicating that they had met with a counselor in the 2015-2016 year. Additionally, 90% of those students reported that they were satisfied with the counseling and advising services LTCC provided.   For Career services and Transfer Services, the access numbers were significantly lower, but satisfaction rates were very high for those students who used the services.

A third measure of program analysis is the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) for the Counseling and Advising area. There are five Student Learning Outcomes for the program and they were assessed in 2016.   Results of the SLO's are summarized in TABLE 5.

TABLE 5. Counseling and Advising Student Learning Outcomes. 2016

SLO	Measured By	Goal	Outcome
#1. As a result of using counseling services, students will demonstrate the ability to access support services at the college.	LTCC Student Engagement Survey results	An overall average of 90% of the students who complete the survey will indicate a knowledge of the fifteen identified student service programs available to them for support.	The average overall percent of students indicating **some, moderate**, or **extreme**ly **high** knowledge of all service programs was 81%.
#2. As a result of counseling services, matriculating students will identify the requirements needed for them to reach their educational goal	Capture rate of new students from fall 2015 quarter who have an educational plan on file by the end of the winter quarter, 2016	80% or more of new matriculating students from fall, 2015 will have an abbreviated or comprehensive educational plan on file by spring, 2016.	35% of fall 2015 matriculating students had an educational plan on file by spring, 2016
#3. Students who attend the career services workshops or who take a career exploration course will generate a list of majors and/or careers that align with their interests, abilities, and values	Students who complete the career exploration workshops and courses will generate a career profile that includes a summary of interests, abilities and values along with potential career paths related to those.	100% of students will have a completed profile by the end of the course or workshop	In workshops and/or courses related to career exploration, 100% of participants completed the career profile.
#4. Students at Lake Tahoe Community College will demonstrate knowledge of career services at LTCC or the ability to get more information about the program.	Students who complete the LTCC Student Engagement Survey will demonstrate through a response of "some" or "extensive" knowledge of the career services available at the college or where to go to get information about the program.	80% of students will demonstrate knowledge of Career Services	71% of the students surveyed indicated a knowledge of career services.
#5. As a result of utilizing transfer services, students will demonstrate that their transfer information needs were met.	Students will indicate a response of "met" or "exceeded" their needs on the Student Engagement Survey	90% of the students will indicate a positive response	82% indicated a positive response

The data for SLO #1 indicates that the Counseling and Advising program fell slightly short in meeting the overall goal of 90% in the number of students who stated they were aware of the fifteen student servcies available to them. While certain **individual** services were in the 90% range (individually counseling was 94%, financial aid was 91%, and tutoring was 90%), there were other individual areas which scored in the 60-70% and a few scored below that. Career Services (SLO #4) was one of those areas, scoring a 71% instead of the individual 80% goal.

An action plan has been developed to improve in this through the use of increased marketing materials for the students who attend Orientations or who visit a counselor. Website improvements have also been implemented. Improving signage and a plan to increase the number of classroom presentations which highlight services are also part of the strategy. Data from SLO #2 indicates that the counselors are doing a good job of developing abbreviated and comprehensive educational plans for many students; however, there are still some students who have not created one by the proposed timeframe. Only 35% of the matriculating fall, 2015 students had an educational plan on file by the spring quarter. Investigations into this low percentage revealed that certain programs such as fire academy and the incarcerated student program did not input data to indicate the educational plans. Also, there were several students who misidentified themselves as matriculants, who hadn't updated their goals. A plan of action to obtain lists of students who are lacking educational plans each quarter and to contact them to meet with counselors will be implemented in the upcoming year. Additional strategies will include better data entry for outreach programs such as online and incarcerated students. SLO #3 data results indicated an interesting trend with career services at the college. For the past few years, the number of students attending career workshops has drastically declined; however COU108, the Career and Life Planning credit course has continued to retain stable enrollment numbers. In summary, workshops may not be the most effective way for the college to deliver career services and the counselors will explore alternative delivery methods in the future. SLO #5 indicates that counseling and advising does a good job of assisting students in transfer services with 82% of the students recording a positive experience. While this was a little short of the program's 90% goal, the results were well above the average for all services provided.

A final method of program evaluation was the use of information collected from Data Mart and SARS. Data Mart is the data tracking tool for SSSP/GPS services and is accessed from the Chancellor's website. A summary of Data Mart results for LTCC is listed in TABLE 6 which identifies the quantity of services provided over the last two years. TABLE 7 lists the SARS data for wait time for students in the last year. SARS is the software scheduling tool used by the counseling office.

TABLE 6. Individual SSSP/GPS Services Provided

Service Provided	2014-2015	2015-2016
Orientation	839	884
Assessment and Placement	220	1426
Educational Plans	1426	2196
General Counseling	2723	3504

*Duplicated headcount of summer, fall, winter, spring services to nonexempt matriculating students.

TABLE 7.   SARS Student Appointment Data. 2015-2016

Metric	Peak Registration	Non-Peak Registration
Average wait time to see a counselor in 2015-16	33 minutes	9 minutes
Number of appointments in fall, 2015	3,305	1,072

*Duplicated headcount

The Data Mart and SARS information is helpful in identifying staffing scheduling needs, student visitation trends, and efficiency issues.   According to the data collected, the area appears to be managing staffing, scheduling, and efficiencies well. While the SSSP/GPS requirements have increased the number of services provided from 2014-15, the 2015-16 year is representative of the expected volume in future years and   large increases aren't expected.   Wait time is excellent considering state averages range from 4 hours to 2 days.

Goals and Recommendations

In 2009, the Counseling and Advising Program review identified six recommendations for the area.   TABLE 8 identifies each recommendation and the current status.   All recommendations have been implemented, and many are revisited for ongoing assessment and improvement.

TABLE 8. Recommendations and Outcomes from 2009 CPR for Counseling

Recommendation	Status	Achievements
#1. Investigate new technologies for delivery of information and provision of services	Completed, Ongoing	*SARS Texting Implemented (students receive reminder text from counseling), Summer, 2016 *GPS Educational Planning Template and Repository Developed, Fall, 2014. *Mobile Application for website navigation piloted Summer, 2016. *Emergency Text system implemented, Fall, 2015 *New Website Content Management System, Summer, 2016 *Improved on-line counseling system implemented, fall, 2016
#2. Implement new face-to-face Orientation	Completed	*New face-to face orientation implemented, fall, 2011 *Revised face-to-face orientation implemented, fall, 2013 and in fall 2016.
#3. Conduct quarterly in-service refresher training on various topics, such as how to effectively use the counselor intranet, EOPS & DSPS services refresher, basic skills issues, etc	Completed, Ongoing	*This has been completed and is now integrated into the monthly counselor meetings.

#4. Improve signage to make it easier for students to find counseling and financial aid.	Completed, Ongoing	*New temporary signage for the One-Stop Center, fall, 2015 *Permanent signage scheduled for fall, 2017
#5. Enhance Counseling webpage and navigation to site	Completed	*New web content management system implemented, summer, 2016
#6. Implement online orientation with a specific focus to the needs of the online student	Completed	*Online Orientation developed, fall, 2013 *Online Orientation implemented, winter, 2014, revised fall 2016.

Based on the information provided through the analysis and overview from 2016, seven new Counseling and Advising program recommendations have been established to improve the quality and effectiveness of the program.   They are as follows:

#1.   To continue to examine new technology as it relates to counseling and advising and implement technology appropriate for LTCC students. Annually.

#2.   To develop an improved intensive counselor training program to prepare for possible retirements and reduced work load.   2016-17.

#3.   To integrate 50% of the new SSSP/GPS expenses into the general fund by 2019.

#4. To successfully implement the new phase of the One Stop Center for Enrollment Services. This will include services for Veterans and students with disabilities as well as relocating the Assessment Center to be closer to counseling. Fall, 2019

#5. To refine and improve the SSSP/GPS systems to serve more students. Ongoing

#6. To pilot a part-time mental health "Life Coaching" program for students to determine if there is a need for additional personnel in this area. 2016-2017.

#7. To improve the accuracy of MIS reporting as it relates to SSSP/GPS services