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The Research & Planning Group  
for California Community Colleges

# Transfer Practices at San Diego City College

**Case Study #6 of 7 Featuring Colleges with  
Consistently Higher Than Expected Transfer Rates  
Fall 2008**



**Part of the Transfer Leadership Center Project**

**Funded by the State Chancellor's Office of the California  
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**Prepared by the Center for Student Success of the Research & Planning Group  
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**Abstract:** This report is one in a series of seven case studies of California community colleges with higher-than-expected transfer rates. Each case study is based on a site visit conducted in Spring 2008 by two Center for Student Success researchers to document and investigate the full spectrum of factors, inventions, strategies and practices that each college is implementing to support transfer.

The case studies are part of the Transfer Leadership Center (TLC), the most comprehensive study to date of two-to-four-year transfer in California.

The California Community College State Chancellor's Office awarded the TLC in Spring 2007, based on a competitive grant competition and grant written by Dr. Andreea Serban, Superintendent/President, Santa Barbara City College. The project has been implemented by the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges (CCC), the Center for Student Success (CSS) of the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges, and California Partnership for Achieving Student Success (Cal-Pass). The study is administered by the Santa Barbara City College and guided by an Advisory Committee including leading experts on transfer.

**Readers of the case study presented here may also be interested in the following, which are available on-line at <http://www.rpgroup.org/css/TransferLeadershipCenter.html> and <http://www.sbccc.edu/tlc>**

- TLC Literature Review
- TLC Cross-Case Analysis (an analysis of all seven colleges in the study)
- TLC Case Study #1: De Anza College
- TLC Case Study #2: Irvine Valley College
- TLC Case Study #3: Los Angeles Southwest College
- TLC Case Study #4: Porterville College
- TLC Case Study #5: Reedley College
- TLC Case Study #6: San Diego City College
- TLC Case Study #7: Skyline College

**For questions about any of these research papers, please contact Dr. Andreea Serban at [Serban@sbccc.edu](mailto:Serban@sbccc.edu) or Eva Schiorring at [ESchiorring@rpgroup.org](mailto:ESchiorring@rpgroup.org)**

## **SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE TRANSFER PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES CASE STUDY**

**Introduction:** In Spring 2007, the State Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges awarded the Transfer Leadership Center (TLC) study to investigate two-to-four year transfer practices and strategies. As part of the study's qualitative component, research teams from the Center for Student Success of the Research & Planning Group of the California Community Colleges conducted site visits to seven community colleges with higher-than-expected transfer rates. The site visits included extensive interviews and focus groups conducted with students, college counselors, faculty, administrators, classified staff, representatives from special programs, and high school counselors.

It should be emphasized that the research focused exclusively on what each of the seven colleges are doing to support and increase two-to-four year transfer. Accordingly, the case study that follows should be read not as an assessment of the featured college's overall performance, but rather as a review and analysis of one particular area of operations. Moreover, the case studies focus on what appeared to the researchers to be the most salient elements of the colleges' efforts to encourage and support transfer. The case studies are therefore not intended to present an exhaustive list of all transfer-related initiatives and practices at each college.

In addition to case studies on each of the seven colleges, the research team developed a cross-case analysis to identify common factors which appear to contribute to higher-than-expected transfer rates. The cross-case analysis – as well as the research protocols and the literature review upon which the protocols were based – can be found at <http://www.sbcc.edu/tlc>

**Acknowledgement:** The Research Team wishes to thank the many students, staff, faculty, and administrators at San Diego City College who contributed to the research. We greatly value the perspectives you shared with us and the experiences and insights you provided.

Special thanks are owed to President Terry Burgess, Transfer/Career Center Director Marilyn Harvey, senior student services assistant Cindy Oviedo, and English professor Elva Salinas, who allowed us to spend a class period talking with her students.

## CASE STUDY: SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE

<b>San Diego City College</b>
<b>President:</b> Terrence Burgess
<b>Southern Region:</b> San Diego, CA
<b>District:</b> San Diego Community College District
<b>Fall 2007 Enrollment:</b> 17,195
<b>Ethnicity:</b> 32% - Latino 31% - White 13% - African American 13% - Asian/Pacific Islander 11% - Other
<b>Gender</b> 54% - Female 46% - Male
<b>Age</b> 26% - Under 20 28% - 20 to 24 18% - 25 to 29 9% - 30 to 34 19% - 35 and older
<b>Faculty</b> 171 Full-Time and 523 Part-Time
<b>Counselors</b> 29 FTEs, including categorical counselors

### SUMMARY

"I think there was a huge shift, or the beginnings of a shift, when we hired a new Transfer/Career Center director. I think having someone in that position who was dynamic and organized, it was amazing."

– *San Diego City College Faculty Member, February 2008*

"It's the thing I always promote, that the college is the gateway to the university. And I believe that's the largest and most valuable role the community colleges in California play is at that access point."

– *San Diego City College President, February 2008*

San Diego City College ("City College") is approaching the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its 1914 founding, but continues to evolve in its efforts to meet the needs of its student body and the requirements of the local economy and job market. Traditionally, City College has been known for its strong career and technical education programs and for serving the needs of returning adult students. The hiring of a new college president in 2001 led to an increased emphasis on transfer, manifested in the hiring of its first full-time director for the Transfer/Career Center (TCC) and the establishment of a number of student services program focused on transferring underrepresented students.

The new TCC Director, who was not a counselor, designed the center to complement the counseling functions of the college. He set a priority on making information related to transfer easily accessible

to students, both online and in the office. He trained the TCC staff to interact with students in a way that would allow the students to identify where they were in the transfer process and to help identify appropriate resources for students to explore. He also actively marketed the TCC to students and faculty, and updated counselors regularly on transfer issues. In addition, he took advantage of his oversight of both the Transfer and Career functions to use students' career interests as a basis for setting educational goals and designing their educational plans.

City College is located relatively close to a large number of four-year, private and public institutions, and has developed guaranteed admission agreements with eight universities and articulation agreements with dozens of local and national public and private institutions. City College has particularly focused on its relationship with private institutions after discovering that 40% of students in its entering 1994 cohort transferred to an out-of-state or private university.

City College offers a number of support services that emphasize transfer as a goal, some of which are specifically focused on underrepresented students. These include TRIO/ASPIRE (for first-generation college, low income, and disabled students), Puente (for Latino students), Umoja: A Transfer Success Program (for African-American students), and MESA (for students interested in math, engineering, and science). In addition, the Title V grant, EOPS, First-Year Experience, and DSPS programs support students with a range of goals, including transfer. In recent years, the college has developed learning communities through these programs that help to link the student services and academic affairs programs. The Honors program has established alliances with more than a dozen four-year institutions and offers scholarships to students while at City College and after transfer.

During the last six years, the college has developed an active and successful outreach program that serves both the high school population and the broader community at large. Much of the communication with high school students is done by well-trained student ambassadors who can relate to students on a peer-to-peer level. Transfer is an "ever present" theme in these presentations, according to the Outreach Coordinator.

Finally, in interviews and focus groups with counselors, instructors, and students, many people emphasized the high level of concern that faculty and staff demonstrate for their students. These conversations, as well as the strategic plan of the college reflect an explicit commitment to students' success.

**Factors and Indicators Contributing to Higher-Than-Expected Transfer Rates at San Diego City College**

FACTORS	INDICATORS
<b>Administrative Support for Transfer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Active advocacy of the transfer function by the President</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Financial commitment for a well-staffed, comprehensive center</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Presidential support for transfer-oriented programs for underrepresented students</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Strong relationship with presidents of local two- and four-year institutions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Outstanding Communication between Transfer/Career Center and Internal Stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Exemplary transfer website</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Well-organized materials for students in the Transfer/Career Center that provides clear steps to follow for transfer</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Regular sharing of information with counselors, faculty, and students</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Visits by TCC director to classes to talk about transfer</b></li> </ul>

<b>Advantageous Pairing of Career and Transfer Center</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recognition of the link between long-term goals and student motivation</li> <li>➤ Career interests seen as first step in determining educational goals and course-taking</li> </ul>
<b>Transfer/Career Center Complements Counseling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Transfer/Career Center conceived as an information resource that enables students to explore career and transfer possibilities</li> <li>➤ Proactive staff that interacts assertively with students to guide them toward information that meets their needs</li> <li>➤ Students encouraged to discuss information with counselors to help set goals and devise an education plan</li> </ul>
<b>A Range of Academic and Programs that Support Transfer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Transfer is a major focus of the TRIO/Aspire program, Puente program, Title V grant, MESA program, EOPS, DSPS, and Umoja: A Transfer Success Program</li> <li>➤ Learning communities serve to engage and retain students and move them toward transfer</li> <li>➤ Personal Growth classes that address transfer</li> </ul>
<b>Student-Focused Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students perceive a high level of caring and enthusiasm from faculty</li> <li>➤ Explicit focus on student success from faculty and staff</li> <li>➤ Development of referral forms to direct students and to hold faculty and staff accountable for helping students</li> </ul>
<b>Strong Outreach and Recruitment Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Effective use of student ambassadors</li> <li>➤ Outreach efforts include high schools, current students, and the wider community</li> <li>➤ Outreach efforts have shifted the demographics of the college to include more traditional-age students who are more likely to transfer</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive Articulation and Transfer Efforts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Articulation Officer receives 80% reassigned time</li> <li>➤ Recognition of the importance of transfer to private institutions</li> <li>➤ Honors Program has alliances with 12 universities</li> <li>➤ Students can cross-enroll at SDSU and UCSD for reduced fees</li> </ul>

## 1. METHODOLOGY

The site visit was conducted February 27 and 28, 2008. It included 13 interviews and four focus groups with a total of 43 participants (see Appendix 1). In preparation for the site visit, the research team reviewed City College's 2004 College Self-Study and mid-term report, the college website and other documents relevant to transfer. Documents provided by the college during the site visit were subsequently reviewed, including statistical information provided by the institutional research office, and flyers and other information provided by the Transfer Center, Title V program, and Outreach program. Appendix 2 provides a list of documents used to generate the case study.

## 2. COLLEGE OVERVIEW

### 2a. College Profile

**College History and Community:** City College was established in 1914 and is part of the three-college San Diego Community College District. City College is one of eight community colleges serving the 1.3 million residents of the City of San Diego. The median household income for the city is \$47,816, which is slightly lower than the median income of the county and the state of California. In San Diego County, 27% of the residents over the age of 24 hold a Baccalaureate Degree. In 2006, 46% of city residents were White, 24% were Latino, 15% were Asian, and 8% were African-American.

**Student Profile:** The ethnic distribution of the city reflects a higher proportion of White residents than the college's students. In Fall 2007, City College's 17,195 students were 32% Latino, 31% White, 13% African American, 13% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 11% Other. Since 1999, the percentage of African-American students has decreased from 20% to 13%, while the proportion of Latino students has increased from 25% to 32%. The college is attempting to recruit and hire a more diverse faculty to reflect its student population. Currently, the college's teaching faculty are 64% White, 10% Latino, 9% African-American, 9% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 10% other or unknown. Fifty-four percent of the students are female, and 54% are under the age of 25. Forty-six percent of the students indicate transfer as their primary educational goal, a proportion that has been relatively consistent since 1999. More than three-quarters of the students, 77%, are enrolled in less than 12 units.

**Mission Statement:** The mission of City College has as its highest priority student learning and achievement.

City College provides:

- Lower division and general education courses that lead to Associate Degrees or transfer to a four-year college or university;
- Vocational education programs that meet specific industry needs, upgrade the employment skills of students, and fulfill licensing requirements of the state of California as well as contribute to the economic development of our region; and
- Important and essential student support services and basic skills instruction to assist all students in meeting their educational goals.

Students describe their faculty as enthusiastic and "excited about what they're teaching." One faculty member indicated her belief that "At City College, the focus on student services is huge. Students really get the message that we care about them and want to help them succeed. It's that individual relationship and the communication." Another faculty member commented on the great triumph that students feel at graduation time because so many of them face obstacles in meeting their goals. "Graduation is a significant achievement when you know where they're coming from, where they've been."

## 2b. Transfer Profile

**Transfer Indicators:** The cohorts who were tracked for the purpose of the transfer study (see Appendix 4) ranged in size from 1,378 to 1,448 full-time, first-time City College students. The actual transfer rate for these cohorts remained relatively consistent for those three cohorts, fluctuating only slightly from 44.6% for the first (entering in 1998-99) cohort to a high of 46.2% for the third cohort, which entered in 1999-00. The residual transfer rate ranged from 5.5 in 1998-99 to 7.0 in 1999-00.<sup>1</sup>

Additional data available from the California Postsecondary Education Commission reveal that the number of students transferring from City College to a CSU or UC for the past 5 years (from 2002-03 through the 2006-07 academic year) have totaled 2,458, and ranged from a low of 354 in 2002-03 to a high of 645 in 2004-05. The number of Latino students transferring to a UC or CSU from City College has increased by 86% (from 80 to 149) over the last five fall terms, and the number of African-American students has increased from 42 to 65 (an increase of 55%).

**Transfer Center, Articulation and Counseling Staff:** Prior to 2002, the two directors of the TCC were general counselors with part-time reassigned time to work with students on transfer issues. Both directors stated that during busy times they were expected to focus on general counseling, which resulted in a reduced ability to support transfer. In addition to counseling students, the first part-time director, who served in this role in the early 1990s, developed handouts explaining course requirements for a number of majors and popular programs (such as pre-med) for San Diego State University and, to a lesser extent, UC San Diego. She had access to a small office in the back of the current TCC. She and her successor returned to full-time counseling and indicated that there was not enough administrative support for transfer at that time

Around 1999, City College was listed by the State Chancellor's Office as one of the lowest performing transfer colleges in the state. The current president, who was interviewing for the job at that time, focused on this finding as a priority during his interview and in his presidency. "Transfer was an issue the college really needed to grapple with . . . we needed to figure how to make that a higher priority. . . . What we did fairly early on was to engage in a broader conversation institutionally about the transfer role, and what we were doing or not doing that would assist students to move on. We had a transfer center, but it wasn't a physical place, it was run out of the counseling center, and the assignment for heading that up was sort of bounced around the table." When the retirement of a counselor created an opening in 2002, the college created a full-time director's position, which was a classified supervisor position rather than a counselor, and hired a dynamic individual who reorganized the physical space of the TCC, pulled resources together, trained the staff, strengthened the relationship with the four-year institutions, and marketed the Center to both faculty and staff.

The current office for the TCC includes extensive racks of well-organized materials, a conference table, and computer stations for students. It is located in a central area of the campus. In addition to the full-time director, who oversees both the transfer and career functions, the center employs two full-time classified staff (one for transfer and one for career) and two part-time staff members. The current director is a counselor but still serves in a classified management position.

No counselors work specifically for the TCC, but all of them are expected to provide students with transfer-related counseling. There are 10 full-time counselors, some of whom work with special programs such as TRIO or EOPS. In addition, there are about eight or nine part-time counselors in general counseling. The director attends the weekly counseling meetings to inform counselors of updated transfer information, and also shares information through the website and newsletter.

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<sup>1</sup> The transfer rates used for this study were drawn from the 2005-06 Report, which contained the most up-to-date data available. Subsequent editions of the Transfer Rate Report (due out late in fall 2008) will include more recent cohort years (and drop the oldest cohort years); also, the rates themselves will be somewhat - although in most cases not markedly - different. To better understand how the rates may change, please see Appendix 4.

## **2c. Transfer-Related Investments**

The TCC is funded from a combination of general funds, matriculation funds, and grant money. The total budget for 2006-07 was \$168,919, which largely covered the salary and benefits for the director, two full-time classified staff members, and two part-time staff people. The articulation officer is funded separately. Expenses above and beyond the salaries include materials for students, the production of the newsletter, and the annual transfer reception.

## **2d. The Student Transfer Experience**

Many students obtain all their information about transfer through visits with counselors and from the website, and may not realize that the TCC exists as a separate office from the counseling office. To make students aware of the TCC, the staff maintains a bulletin board in the cafeteria and also places posters in classrooms. During the semester, the director asks faculty if she can visit classes to talk with students about the TCC. In addition to information provided during these ad hoc class sessions, the college's Personal Growth classes address transfer as part of their curriculum.

For students who do visit the TCC – and the 2006-07 annual report cited approximately 4,650 (duplicated) student contacts for the year – the approach taken by the TCC staff is one of active engagement: to proactively ask questions of students and to point them to appropriate resources. The first director conceived of the TCC as a place of “self-discovery” that provides students with information that they can explore and, when appropriate, discuss with counselors to help them make decisions. He created a 12-step “Transfer Checklist” that lays out a process for students to follow. Initial steps include choosing a career field, a major, and a transfer university, and the final steps include applying for admission and scholarships. Materials describing each of these steps are prominently posted in the TCC and are available online.

When students enter the TCC, the staff engages them to find out where they are in this process. The senior student services assistant related that many students who come to the TCC are unsure of what they need, so she will ask them a series of questions to get a discussion started. She stated that many of the younger students will take materials with them and work through the exercises online. Older students often spend more time in the TCC taking advantage of the staff's expertise. Early exploration for students often relates to career and major exploration. The senior student services assistant stated, “You need to know your career and major to help you succeed. You need to see the light at the end of the tunnel. . . What degree can you get to help you meet that career goal?” Once the students have had the opportunity to utilize the TCC resources, they are often referred to a counselor to discuss what they have found and to develop an educational plan that will help them to meet their goals. These include the counselors in general counseling, as well as counselors in the special programs, including TRIO/ASPIRE, MESA, EOPS, DSPS, Puente, and Umoja: A Transfer Success Program. This focus on the interaction between the TCC and other services on campus was reflected in the development of a “referral sheet” for counselors to use when they advised students to go to the TCC. It allowed the counselors to specify the needed services, thereby avoiding students arriving at the TCC without an understanding of what information they needed. The TCC staff listed what they did with the students and returned these sheets to the counseling department. The former director felt that this “closed the loop” and helped to establish the credibility of the TCC. In more recent years, this form has been adopted and expanded by the Title V Grant coordinator to help all faculty and staff refer students to needed services across campus.

## **3. COLLEGE CULTURE**

### **3a. Messages and Information About Transfer**

According to the Vice President of Instruction, transfer and vocational education are “equal importance, high priority for us.” The overall focus on student success appears to support students' goals, whether they are transfer or career-oriented. The Vice President for Student Services states

that, “We’re a dream incubator, and our students come with a lot of different needs. We’re a classic community college. We meet students where they are.” In recent years, there does seem to be an effort to emphasize the growing interest in transfer. The College President refers to transfer as “part of my being,” and makes efforts to “pitch the transfer role we play.” Graduation provides him with an opportunity to share about 15 minutes of student success stories. In addition, the college sponsors a transfer reception each spring to celebrate students who have been accepted to a four-year university. He says that the reception attracts a large number of faculty.

Transfer is prominently featured on the college website. Students and staff commended the college’s extensive and easy-to-navigate website, which was developed by the full-time director in 2002. A discussion with this individual revealed that raising the profile of the TCC among faculty and students was one of his major priorities as TCC director, and the development of online resources was a significant part of this strategy. The website is accessible from the college’s home page as well as the pages for “Current Students” and “Prospective Students.” It addresses both the transfer and career exploration processes, and includes updated information on the 12-step transfer process, articulation agreements, deadlines, course requirements, and information about “What can I do with a major in...?” for more than 50 areas of study. The transfer information provided is so thorough that one of the counselors stated that peers at other institutions use it as a resource for themselves. The director also bought six computers for students to use while they were visiting the TCC.

There does not appear to be an organized effort to encourage faculty to talk with students about transfer in their classes, but students claim that some of their instructors make time to discuss how their coursework compares to the requirements of a university and to talk about their own experiences in college. One student talked about a professor who organized a trip to a local university for students. The Vice President of Instruction talks about transfer as being part of the culture for faculty and counselors. A number of support programs, including MESA, TRIO/ASPIRE, Puente, and Umoja: A Transfer Success Program, are focused on fostering transfer. The VP for Student Services adds that “we are now focusing more on our transfer piece, and our counseling department is good at taking students who were looking at our two-year terminal program and putting together a plan for them so they have some options at the end of that to allow them to transfer.”

### **3b. Transfer Goals and Plans**

The transfer plan is developed by the TCC director in conjunction with the Dean of Student Development and Matriculation. The most recent version of the plan included the following goals:

- Increase awareness of Transfer Center services for students and staff
- Identify and develop a system for timely identification of potential transfer students
- Identify and increase the number of students who successfully transfer
- Increase the number of students applying to four-year colleges and universities
- Increase the effectiveness of the infrastructure
- Increase awareness of university campus life
- Expand communication linkages with universities, local high schools, and community
- Develop staff training opportunities
- Enhance transfer web page
- Increase instructional faculty involvement in the transfer process
- Assess student satisfaction of transfer center services
- Develop transfer activities designed specifically for targeted populations

Data are used to determine how well the above goals are being met. The TCC director tracks student activities through an automated system (how many students utilize the center and for what purpose, and how many students attend workshops), and the Dean uses data from the California Postsecondary Education Commission about the number of students transferring from City College. In addition, the district conducted a survey a number of years ago that uncovered the large number of students – especially underrepresented students – who transferred to private and out-of-state

institutions, which resulted in an enhanced effort to work more closely with several of these institutions.

### **3c. Communication and Collaboration Among Individuals Who Run Programs and Services That Promote and Support Transfer**

Communication between the TCC and counselors is effective. The TCC director attends counseling meetings on a regular basis to update counselors on changes in transfer policy. In addition, the website is updated regularly and the TCC produces a newsletter each semester. However, because some of the counselors are affiliated with programs that support transfer, such as TRIO/ASPIRE, they seem to provide the information to students rather than refer them to the TCC. Thus, students may be missing out on some of the resources in the center and career-related information that is also available. EOPS sends students regularly to the TCC for workshops and to use the career exploration software, DISCOVER.

Faculty also receive the TCC Newsletter, which includes a request from the director to speak to students for a few minutes during classes about the center's services. The former director stressed that the center's priority is to make faculty aware of the TCC and refer students to the center rather than to expect that faculty will be able to advise students on the specifics of transfer. Personal Growth classes (college success courses) help to support student success, goal-setting, and achievement. Learning communities, which have "caught fire" at City College, have become an integral part of a number of programs, including Puente, Umoja: A Transfer Success Program, and the First-Year Experience. A number of the learning communities include Personal Growth classes among the linked courses offered. These courses are transferable to CSUs and private institutions.

## **4. SERVICES AND PROGRAMS SUPPORTING TRANSFER**

### **4a. Role and Scope of Counseling, Transfer Center and other Transfer Support Services**

The TCC function and activities were described by the Director as including:

- Producing transfer materials
- Organizing and updating library of transfer-related materials from universities
- Coordinating and promoting transfer and career workshops
- Coordinating and promoting visits by representatives from 11 universities
- Producing a newsletter (paper copy produced once a semester with electronic updates published monthly)
- Sponsoring an annual transfer fair and participating in the annual HBCU transfer fair coordinated by the district
- Sponsoring the annual "transfer celebration reception" for students accepted at a four-year university

In addition, the general and special programs' counselors discuss transfer and educational planning with their students.

### **4b. Scope, Quality and Use of Articulation Agreements**

A faculty member is assigned .8 time to serve as the campus' articulation officer. City College has an extensive network of articulation agreements, including eight guaranteed admission programs and approximately 50 articulation agreements. One of her responsibilities is to monitor the development of new majors – which are sometimes proposed by City College and sometimes developed by the universities. She reported that some of the California State Universities have declined to develop course-to-course articulation agreements with community colleges that do not send them many students because of the extensive time commitment for developing such agreements. The

articulation officer meets regularly with the TCC director and serves on the curriculum committee and the CurricUNET steering committee.

The College President is part of the San Diego Imperial Valley Community College Association, which includes representatives from southern California community colleges, CSUs, and UCs. The group meets monthly and participates in data exchanges. He also has other opportunities to interact with the leaders from the community and other higher education institutions, such as at the bi-weekly gathering of the “Catfish Club” sponsored by a local minister, and finds the local colleges and universities to be tightly integrated compared to other places he has worked.

#### **4c. Financial Aid & Scholarship Information**

The outreach team includes several individuals who are funded through the financial aid office and provide financial aid advice and assistance to prospective students. Information about financial requirements and assistance after transfer is addressed in the 12-step transfer process outlined in the TCC materials, and a list of resources is also provided in materials available in the TCC and on the website to current and prospective students. The TCC director indicates that “the cost of college is a real fear factor for students” as they prepare to transfer.

For the most part, the Financial Aid Office focuses on providing information about support for students while they are at City College rather than how to obtain financial aid after transfer.

#### **4d. Special Services and Programs Supporting Transfer**

**Student Success Classes:** The College offers a series of “Personal Growth” classes that are designed for first-time students. According to the catalog, “the primary focus of the program is to help students develop critical thinking skills in relation to career, academic, and life-planning goals.” A number of these courses are taught by counselors, with different sections carrying between one and three units of credit. Some of the courses are transferable.

**Learning Communities:** Although these programs are just beginning to take root, everyone from the President to the Vice Presidents to the faculty to the Title V Coordinator are extremely excited about the potential of learning communities. The scheduling of linked classes, coupled with related support services such as tutoring, counseling, and supplemental instruction, has been shown to be very effective at many institutions in helping to engage and retain students and, as a consequence, allow them to meet their goals. Over the past year, a number of the academic support programs, including Puente, Umoja: A Transfer Success Program, and the Freshman Year Experience began offering learning communities as part of their array of services.

## **5. TRANSFER OF SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS**

City College offers a number of programs that are designed to enhance transfer opportunities for specific student populations. These include:

- Puente Program: Latino students
- DSPS: students with disabilities
- Umoja: A Transfer Success Program: African-American students
- TRIO/ASPIRE: first-generation, disabled, and low-income students
- MESA: students interested in careers in math, science, and engineering
- Honors program: high-achieving, self-directed students
- Freshman Year Experience: students testing into developmental English and Math

In most cases, these programs involve a combination of counseling support, tutoring, and specific academic courses.

## **6. TRANSFER CONNECTIONS**

### **6a. High School Connection**

During the last six years, the college has developed an active outreach program that serves both the high school population and the broader community at large. The program employs a full-time coordinator, a full-time senior student services assistant, a 35-hour per week financial aid outreach specialist, and 12-14 student ambassadors. The outreach director represents the college, and sometimes the district, at a number of community fairs throughout the year. “We like to call ourselves the face of the college.” Much of the communication with high school students is done by the well-trained student ambassadors who can relate to students on a peer-to-peer level. The coordinator has managed to partner with a number of different areas in the college, such as VTEA and financial aid, to obtain funding for the ambassadors.

During the fall semester, an ambassador is assigned to a high school and will visit at least once a week. Large groups of students from the Regional Occupational Centers are invited to visit the college. During the Spring semester, the outreach team is in “recruitment mode,” scheduling assessments and collecting applications from the high school students. Transfer is an “ever present” theme in these presentations, according to the Outreach Coordinator. “We want to convey our message that we have excellent transfer opportunities that are available and if you come in and take care of all the things you need to take care of, then you can access all of those programs. Every presentation that you ever hear always has a segment on transfer.”

The college has also developed a “middle college” program at one of the local high schools that works with students at risk of not graduating. Many of these students are succeeding beyond expectations. The college has also been funded by the Gates Foundation to start an Early College High School program with another local high school that will focus on assessing and enrolling sophomores in college courses.

### **6b. BA Connection**

The college has strong relationships with many four-year institutions, including San Diego State University, UC San Diego, University of San Diego, and National University. Guaranteed Admission Programs are in place with eight different universities (see Appendix 6). Articulation agreements have been established with approximately 50 universities.

The district sponsors an annual college fair for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The location alternates between City and Mesa College, and is attended by community college and high school students. The TCC director arranges for a bus to take City College students to the fair when it is hosted by Mesa College.

At present, representatives from 11 transfer institutions visit City College to meet with students on a regular basis. EOPS offers tours to local universities for their students, but the TCC does not have a budget for transporting students.

## 7. BUILDING CAPACITY AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

**Capacity Building:** In response to the question of how they would invest additional funds to support transfer, the largest number of responses dealt with the need for more counseling staff. Other suggestions included increasing the number of learning communities, supporting research to uncover obstacles to retention, enhancing student life on campus, supporting staff development, offering more on-campus orientation sessions, sponsoring visits to four-year campuses, and improving the marketing materials for the outreach efforts and the TCC.

**Key Findings:** The findings suggest that the development of the Transfer/Career Center, a focus on transfer by the president, and the emergence of special programs that support transfer have all played a role in explaining the college's higher-than-expected transfer rate. The following list identifies variables that contribute to create and sustain this culture:

- Presidential support for transfer
- An effective Transfer/Career Center that communicates well with students, counselors, and faculty, and links students' career interests to course planning
- A caring community of faculty and staff that are explicitly and firmly committed to student success
- A strong outreach program to the high schools
- A variety of academic support programs that target underrepresented students for transfer
- Comprehensive articulation agreements that do not ignore the importance of private institutions

## Appendix 1: San Diego City College Study Participants

<b>San Diego Study Participants</b>	
<b>Interviewee Position</b>	<b>Comment</b>
College President	
Transfer/Career Center Director	
Former Transfer/Career Center Director	Spoke by phone
Outreach Coordinator	
Financial Aid Director	
VP of Instruction	Recently appointed
VP Student Services	Interim
Articulation Officer	.8 Assignment
Dean, Student Development and Matriculation	Recently appointed
Student Services Assistant, Transfer/Career Center	
Senior Student Services Assistant, Transfer/Career Center	
EOPS Coordinator	Interim
TRIO/ASPIRE Director	
<b>Total # of Interviewees</b>	<b>13</b>

<b>Focus Group Participants</b>	<b># of Participants</b>
Faculty	3
High School Counselors	2
Students close to transfer	22
Counselors	3
<b>Total # of Focus Group Participants</b>	<b>30</b>

<b>Total # of Informants</b>	<b>43</b>
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## **Appendix 2: Documents Reviewed for San Diego City College Case Study Analysis**

- College's Self-Study (2004)
- Midterm Report on Accreditation Recommendations (2007)
- 2006-07 Master Plan
- College website
- Outreach materials distributed to high school students
- Survey Results and statistics from institutional research office
- Title V Materials for Students
- Informational newsletter and other materials distributed by Transfer/Career Center

### Appendix 3: San Diego City College Descriptors

<b>Descriptors</b>		<b>Comment</b>
<b>History and location</b>		
Year founded	1914	
Address	1313 Park Blvd. San Diego, CA 92101	
District	San Diego Community College District	
Other colleges in district	Mesa and Miramar	
Distance to nearest community colleges	7 miles – San Diego Mesa 15 miles – San Diego Miramar, Grossmont, Cuyamaca	
Distance to nearest four-year colleges	2 miles – University of Phoenix 5 miles – Chapman University 6 miles – Univ. of San Diego 10 miles – San Diego State 10 miles – Point Loma Nazarene University 13 miles – UC San Diego 16 miles – National University	
<b>Students and Faculty</b>		
Average Student Enrollment 2005-2007 (Fall Semester)	16,316	Note, this figure from the CCCCCO datamart differs from the calculation based on the SDCC website
% Students Receiving Some Financial Aid	25%	
% Students Receiving Federal Grants	12%	
Counseling FTE (Full Time Equivalent), including categorical counselors	29	
Counseling FTE (Full Time Equivalent), excluding categorical counselors	19	
Top Majors Declared	Undecided AA/AS: 5229 Business: 984 Allied Health: 788 Transfer: 702 Biology: 508	
<b>Community Indicators</b>		
BA indicator	27% of residents in San Diego County have a BA	

## Appendix 4: San Diego City College Transfer Indicators

San Diego City College Cohorts	Residual (Actual-Expected Transfer Rate)	Actual Transfer Rate	Cohort Size
1998-99 Cohort	5.3611	44.61	1,448
1999-00 Cohort	5.4553	44.81	1,417
2000-01 Cohort	7.0042	46.15	1,378

Source: Transfer Rate Study of the CCCs, 2005-06 at <http://www.cccco.edu>

All seven colleges selected for the study showed consistently higher-than-expected transfer rates (a relatively large, positive residual) in the 2005-06 transfer rate study conducted by the Chancellor's Office. Cohorts of first-time college freshmen who completed a minimum of 12 units of community college coursework and who attempted a transfer-level Math or English course at some point during their enrollment were followed for six years from the time of their initial enrollment to determine the number and proportion transferring within that timeframe. As indicated previously, the "expected" rates factor in the percent of students who are age 25 or older and the bachelor plus index of the region.

Subsequent editions of Transfer Rate Study will include more recent cohort years and drop the oldest cohorts. Beyond adding more recent cohorts, future editions will reflect some changes in the underlying data which will affect transfer rates. Most differences will not be marked (a transfer rate of 58.05 might be recalculated as 58.15, for example), but in a few cases differences may be more significant. The ARCC report, which uses the same transfer rate data, cites three primary reasons for these changes, as follows:

**“Why are the rates for some of the indicators for the same cohort different in the 2008 [ARCC] report when we compare them to the 2007 [ARCC] report?”**

The changes could occur in a college's denominator, the college's numerator, or both. The changes in the data relate to the following factors:

- 1) The course cleanup project (Curriculum Reporting for the Community Colleges, CRCC): The course changes can and did alter the student headcounts in the cohorts, as well as their outcomes.
- 2) Student Identifier (SI) updates: With the announcement of the SB00 cleanup project for 2007-08, more districts started to submit SI updates to get a head start on the project.
- 3) Improvements in the methodology for extracting the cohort for the NSC match: With the 2008 report, we began to request all records from students, as opposed to restricting by date. This change resulted in identifying fewer students as first time.”

Source: [www.cccco.edu/Portals/4/TRIS/research/ARCC/ab1417\\_faq.doc](http://www.cccco.edu/Portals/4/TRIS/research/ARCC/ab1417_faq.doc)

## Appendix 5: San Diego City College's Transfer Investments

Transfer Staff and Functions	Budget Items	Budget (FY....)
Transfer Center	Director (.6 for transfer)	\$45,783
Classified Staff	Two full-time and two part-time staff	\$68,969
Benefits		\$43,832
Supplies and Materials		\$3,991
Other:		\$6,344

**Appendix 6: San Diego City College’s Agreements with Four-Year Colleges and Representative Visits**

<b>Guaranteed Admission Agreements</b>	<b>Articulation Agreements (selected)</b>	<b>College/University Representative Visits (Spring 2008)</b>
UC San Diego	CSU San Marcos	Alliant International Univ.
San Diego State	CSU Dominguez Hills	CSU San Marcos
UC Davis	UC Davis	UC San Diego
UC Riverside	San Diego State	University of Phoenix
UC Santa Cruz	University of San Diego	Chapman University
UC Santa Barbara	Chapman University	National University
UC Irvine	National University	Springfield College
CSU Northridge	University of La Verne	CSU Dominguez Hills
	Alliant International Univ.	San Diego State
	University of Phoenix	