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COMPLETE

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Page 1: Full-Time Faculty Position Form

Q1

Please enter the following:

Department	Student Affairs- Mental Health Counseling
Position Title	Mental Health Counselor

Q2

No

1a. Did you request a position last year (2023-2024)?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

1b. If yes, and that position was funded, do you want this position ranked as well?

Q4

Yes

1c. Is there dedicated funding for the position that is not unrestricted general fund (i.e. categorical/special funded programs)

Page 2

Q5

2. Why is this position essential to your program and college? Please discuss the potential impact of this position on the department, college, district and/or region (Rubric Criterion 1, 3). (300 words or less)

The Mental Health Counselor position is essential to our program and the campus since we have a critical need to provide mental health counseling for students. Based on the data for 2023-2024, there is a need for this position to support students. In the 2023-2024 academic year, Cuyamaca College's personal counselors conducted 588 therapeutic sessions. This number highlights the high utilization of services, including support for multiple students in mental health crises. National data further supports this trend, with studies indicating rising rates of anxiety, depression, and stress among college students, which negatively affect academic performance, retention, and overall well-being. The absence of a full-time licensed counselor adversely impacts students in several ways. Licensed professionals bring advanced expertise to address a broad spectrum of mental health challenges, from anxiety and depression to trauma and crisis situations. Without a full-time counselor, students may face delays in accessing services, leading to worsened mental health outcomes. These delays are especially concerning in crisis situations, where immediate intervention is critical to ensure student safety and prevent academic disruptions. Additionally, part-time availability limits continuity of care, making it harder for students to build the rapport necessary for effective therapy. Moreover, a full-time licensed counselor provides consistent support for faculty and staff, offering consultations, training, and intervention strategies to help them manage student mental health concerns. This holistic approach fosters a healthier campus environment. Without this position, faculty and staff may lack essential resources to respond to students in distress, further amplifying the adverse effects on the college community. Addressing the increasing demand for mental health services by hiring a full-time licensed counselor is crucial. It ensures timely, comprehensive care, improves crisis response, and enhances academic outcomes. Failing to meet this need risks exacerbating mental health issues, increasing dropout rates, and diminishing campus morale. Prioritizing mental health support is not just necessary but essential to student success and retention.

Q6

3. What are the racial and gender demographics of the faculty within your program? Outline your steps to ensure a recruitment of diverse candidates that reflect the mission, vision and values of the college. These steps could include: professional associations dedicated to the promotion of diversity in your content area (Rubric Criterion 1). (300 words or less)

We don't currently have any full-time faculty within our department. We recently hired three adjunct Mental Health Counselors.

To ensure a recruitment of diverse candidates that reflect the mission, vision, and values of the college, we will work with Human Resources and the General Counseling faculty to promote the position through various professional associations. In addition, we will reach out to graduate programs for counseling to advertise the position.

Q7

4. Please describe your planned onboarding process to support the new hires inclusion into community. Please share if there are any resources or collaboration that would assist. (Ex: AFT mentorship, THRIVE, Tenure Review, EMTLI, Communities of Practices, etc.) (Rubric Criterion 4: Support of Strategic Plan) Increase equitable access (enrollment) Eliminate equity gaps in course success (passing grade in class) Increase persistence eliminate equity gaps (re-enrolling the subsequent semester or year) Increase completion and eliminate equity gaps (graduating with a degree/certificate, or transferring) Increase hiring and retention of diverse employees to reflect the students and communities we serve (300 words or less)

As part of the onboarding process for the Mental Health Counselor, we will work with various departments on campus including General Counseling and Institutional Student Success & Equity. We will encourage the Mental Health Counselor to complete professional development trainings such as EMTLI and participate in AFT and THRIVE programs. In addition, we will provide opportunities for the Mental Health Counselor to meet with the Mental Health Counselors at Grossmont College and Mental Health partners in the community.

Q8

5. How will this position improve student learning and achievement, and close equity gaps in access and outcomes in your program? What steps are you taking to close equity gaps in access and outcome, for example: (Rubric Criterion 2: Program Student Achievement and Potential Growth) modify curriculum to reflect the college's diverse student population close equity gaps ensuring equitable access to courses that have pre-requisites removing barriers for students, especially those from historically marginalized groups adopt/create no cost/low-cost textbooks and course materials (300 words or less)

This position will improve student learning and achievement since students receiving mental health services can work with a licensed Mental Health Counselor to develop coping skills and ways to be successful as a student. In addition, Mental Health Counseling can also promote holistic student development. The interconnectedness of mental well-being and academic success, creates an environment that fosters the overall growth of students.

This position can impact student engagement. If students feel supported and are emotionally well, they are more likely to engage actively in their coursework, participate in extracurricular activities, and build positive relationships with peers and faculty.

Mental Health Counseling can improve student learning and achievement since the counselor can address urgent and crisis situations which may impact student persistence and retention. Having a full-time licensed counselor on staff can indeed enhance the ability to respond promptly to critical situations and serve as a valuable resource for ongoing consultation, support, intervention, and support to students.

The steps we are taking to close equity gaps and remove barriers for students include addressing the diverse needs of students by creating small groups sessions. The Mental Health Counselor can address the specific needs of different student populations, contributing to the college's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

The Mental Health Counselor will also work closely with various departments to develop programs to close equity gaps and remove barriers for students. The Mental Health Counselor will foster relationships with campus and community organizations to create a supportive network for students. The Mental Health Counselor will develop awareness campaigns that highlight mental health issues and resources available to reduce stigma and encourage utilization of services.

Q9

6. Has there been or is there evidence to demonstrate that there will be an increase in student demand for your programs and/or services? How are students being adversely impacted without this position? Please discuss supporting data from recent semesters. For example, enrollment trends, waitlist pressures, or wait time for appointments and support services, students served, etc. as they apply to this position. (Rubric Criterion 2)(300 words or less)

In the 2023-2024 academic year, Cuyamaca College's personal counselors conducted 588 therapeutic sessions. This number highlights the high utilization of services, including support for multiple students in mental health crises. National data further supports this trend, with studies indicating rising rates of anxiety, depression, and stress among college students, which negatively affect academic performance, retention, and overall well-being. The absence of a full-time licensed counselor adversely impacts students in several ways. Licensed professionals bring advanced expertise to address a broad spectrum of mental health challenges, from anxiety and depression to trauma and crisis situations. Without a full-time counselor, students may face delays in accessing services, leading to worsened mental health outcomes. These delays are especially concerning in crisis situations, where immediate intervention is critical to ensure student safety and prevent academic disruptions. Additionally, part-time availability limits continuity of care, making it harder for students to build the rapport necessary for effective therapy. Without this position, faculty and staff may lack essential resources to respond to students in distress, further amplifying the adverse effects on the college community.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, Personal Counselors provided support to students facing a wide range of mental health challenges. Students frequently sought help for anxiety, stress, depression, family conflict, and relationship issues, often dealing with multiple overlapping concerns. For instance, many students reported experiencing anxiety, depression, and stress, which are among the most common mental health challenges affecting college populations nationwide. Left untreated, these conditions can significantly hinder students' academic performance, retention, and overall quality of life. Other students identified family conflict and relationship challenges as contributing to their emotional distress, adding personal and social pressures that compound the stress of their academic responsibilities.

Without a full-time licensed Mental Health Counselor, students risk delays in accessing professional care, which can exacerbate their mental health struggles.

Q10

7. Which program review goal(s) is this request supporting? Please state how the position will help advance the specific goal(s). Please explain how this position would support historically marginalized groups? (Rubric Criterion 3: Critical Need - Critical to the Program/and Institution) Examples may include the following: Issues with Federal or State Mandates Replacement for Recent Retirement or Vacancy Specialty Areas within Discipline/Service Area results in difficulty in finding part-time faculty Required for Program, Courses, or Specific Service to Continue Ranking within division (per division dean feedback) Supporting students (300 words or less)

7. Goal #3: Students will be able to effectively identify and access resources to support their physical and emotional well-being.

The Mental Health Counselor position directly supports the goal of helping students effectively identify and access resources for their physical and emotional well-being. A dedicated counselor serves as a vital resource, providing individual therapy, workshops, and outreach efforts that empower students to recognize signs of distress, build coping strategies, and connect with appropriate support systems. This ensures that students can navigate mental health challenges and maintain their focus on academic and personal success. For historically marginalized groups—such as students of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, first-generation college students, and those from low-income backgrounds—this role is especially critical. These populations face unique barriers, including systemic inequities, discrimination, financial stress, and cultural stigma surrounding mental health. A Mental Health Counselor trained in equity-based care and cultural competence can address these challenges by creating a safe, inclusive space where students feel seen, heard, and validated. This position would also promote equity by reducing stigma and fostering a sense of belonging through targeted outreach and tailored interventions. For example, the counselor could organize support groups for students of color, provide LGBTQ+ affirming care, or offer workshops focused on navigating systemic barriers while prioritizing emotional well-being. These initiatives not only increase access to mental health resources but also empower marginalized students to advocate for their needs. By offering culturally responsive and trauma-informed care, a full-time Mental Health Counselor ensures that students from all backgrounds can access timely, professional support. This fosters trust, continuity of care, and a campus environment where all students—especially those from marginalized groups—can thrive. Ultimately, this position is essential to advancing equitable access to mental health resources, and empowering all students to achieve their well-being and academic goals.

Q11

8. Is this position new or a replacement? Please explain. (Rubric Criterion 3)(100 words or less)

The full time Mental Health Counselor is a new position.

Q12

9. Which strategic priority/priorities is this request supporting? Please state how the position will help advance the specific priority/priorities and the College's mission, vision and values. Note: the more goals addressed the stronger the request. (Rubric Criterion 4: Support of Strategic Plan) Increase equitable access (enrollment) Eliminate equity gaps in course success (passing grade in class) Increase persistence eliminate equity gaps (re-enrolling the subsequent semester or year) Increase completion and eliminate equity gaps (graduating with a degree/certificate, or transferring) Increase hiring and retention of diverse employees to reflect the students and communities we serve (300 words or less)

The request for a Mental Health Counselor supports the following strategic priorities:

- Increase persistence eliminate equity gaps (re-enrolling the subsequent semester or year)
- Increase completion and eliminate equity gaps (graduating with a degree/certificate, or transferring)

Prioritizing mental health support is not just necessary but essential to student success and retention. Timely intervention is crucial for issues such as anxiety and depression, as early support helps prevent worsening conditions and promotes emotional resilience.

Students facing family or relationship conflicts often require consistent counseling to develop effective coping strategies and maintain focus on their academic goals. In addition, the Mental Health Counselor can collaborate with various campus departments and programs to eliminate equity gaps.

The Personal Counselors contributed to expanding support for underrepresented and vulnerable student populations. Based on the 2024 data, the Personal Counseling services have notably increased their outreach to Hispanic/Latino students, rising from 54% in 2023 to 69% in 2024. They strengthened support for economically disadvantaged students, with representation growing from 57% to 69%. Additionally, there was a 5% increase in serving students with disabilities, reaching 35% in 2024. These achievements underscore the program's dedication to inclusivity and addressing the needs of diverse student demographics, particularly those facing economic or accessibility challenges. By having a full time Mental Health Counselor, this position can expand on these efforts and provide additional support which contribute to eliminating the equity gaps.

Mental health and wellbeing play a crucial role in supporting students' mental health and well-being. This, in turn, contributes to the overall success and satisfaction of students at the college. By creating a supportive network, the Mental Health Counselor can contribute to the prevention of mental health issues and intervene early when necessary, aligning with broader college goals related to student success and well-being.

Addressing the increasing demand for mental health services by hiring a full-time licensed mental health counselor is crucial. It ensures timely, comprehensive care, improves crisis response, and enhances persistence and retention.

Q13

Yes, I have discussed this position request with the Division Dean

10. Please confirm that you have discussed this faculty position request with the Division Dean and that you understand that Division Deans will be providing feedback to help inform the prioritization process.

Q14

If you would like to attach data to support your request in light of the rubric criteria, please upload a PDF, Word, or image file using the button below.

cuyamaca-personal-counseling-2023-2024-access-report-20240717-final.pdf (156.8KB)