**Los Medanos College**

**New Instructional Program Proposal – Phase 1**

**Date:** 10/08/19

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**Program Name**: Non-Credit Counseling

Career and College Preparation Certificate of Competency

**Mission/Goals**

*Describe the purpose and goals of the program. Who is it designed to serve? Will the program offer an Associate Degree?* No A *Certificate of Achievement?* No

**Rationale**

*What role would this program fulfill in the college curriculum? Why is it important to offer this program?*

In order to more equitably and successfully serve and support the East Contra Costa County population of adult learners and non-traditional students, the LMC Counseling department is developing three new non-credit counseling courses (COUNS-30N, COUNS-32N, COUNS-34N) and one certificate of competency, Career and College Preparation Certificate of Competency. The proposed counseling courses are college preparatory courses and will support students’ acquisition of skills and competencies that support success in the college setting. These skills will enable them to effectively access and utilize college and career programs with increasing confidence and competence and will, thus, meet what our data and experience have shown are the most immediate needs of students who come to Los Medanos College from within our service area particularly those coming from low income, first-generation college, ESL, Adult Education, and/or formerly incarcerated backgrounds. Essentially, non-credit counseling courses aim to support students who do not see themselves as ready or prepared to be a college student in transitioning to college-level coursework and entering into academic credit-bearing coursework, certificates, and degree programs.

Additionally, the courses, in direct alignment with Guided Pathways will aim to support students in clarifying an academic path, choosing and entering an academic path, and developing essential skills in staying on their chosen path at Los Medanos College. As these counseling courses will integrate career, college, and personal success content, skills, and behaviors, students engaging in and exiting our program will be prepared to pursue their interests and be prepared to participate and succeed in any of the general and career technical education courses that make up their educational plan.

Our students’ ability to achieve their chosen academic goal will be significantly increased by our new Noncredit Counseling courses – and program and certificate –for several populations. First, they will enable adult learners, comprised of older adults, new immigrants who have had limited exposure to English and are unfamiliar with the U.S. educational system and the college classroom, to benefit from the needed additional time and practice and the more flexible entry and exit system that the Noncredit Counseling courses’ repeatability and managed enrollment features allow for. The flexible entry and exit system of Noncredit Counseling courses also supports first time students who may not be ready to begin credit bearing courses but are interested in gaining skills in order to become prepared to attend college including older adults who are attempting college for the first time or returning to college from an extended break or formerly incarcerated students. The repeatability of noncredit courses also supports students who may have passed Couns 32 and/or 34 as HS articulated courses to repeat the courses if further learning or training is desired, for example, if a student desires to change his or her major or career and would like to take a short term 27 hour Couns-32N course to do this.

Furthermore, the ‘no tuition/no fees’ feature of the Noncredit Counseling courses will help support our low income students’ ability to access LMC as it helps us improve our capacity to address the economic realities and financial challenges we know that they face. Offered as non-credit, these courses will be offered at no cost to students thereby increasing access to students, particularly those who are not traditionally accessing the college.

Finally, the LMC Noncredit Counseling program at LMC has established solid and meaningful course student learning outcomes (CSLOs) for each of the three courses. Additionally, these CSLOs have also been systematically mapped to determine a) the degree to which they support the introduction and practice of the combined noncredit and credit Counseling program student learning outcomes (PSLOs), and b) the manner in which they help bridge students into transitioning into credit courses in their chosen academic path.

Overall, the above purpose, goals, rationale for and description and explanation of the LMC Noncredit Counseling program, the manner in which it has been designed, and how it has been positioned serve to address the opportunity and achievement gaps that the LMC Student Equity Plan data show that adult learners, English language learners, low-income, and/or formerly incarcerated students face in terms of access and numerous completion categories of success. We are, thus, excited to see it implemented as part of a comprehensively designed and institutionally supported program working to meet the needs and challenges of this unique population of students.

**Curriculum and Needs Assessment/Feasibility**

*List the proposed new courses for the program, including the title, number of units, and a brief course description.*

***Career and College Preparation Certificate of Competency (45 or 54 hours)***

**Career Exploration COUNS-032N 0 Units / 27 hours**

Career Exploration is an intense career exploration designed to engage students in their own career development. Topics include how to realistically assess, review, and interpret various areas such as interests, attitudes, values, priorities, skills and strengths, goals, and career options in the current job market. This course also covers financial literacy.

***AND One (1) of the following courses:***

**College Orientation COUNS-030N 0 Units / 18 hours**

College Orientation is designed for first-time students to understand navigating the higher educational system and orientation to Los Medanos College. We will cover academic policies, resources, academic programs and services; introduction LMC’s majors, degrees and transfer opportunities. The class will focus on academic goal completion, California system of higher education; standards of scholarship, formation of a comprehensive educational plan. The course covers topics including: use of student services, LMC certificates, associate degrees, and requirements for transfer.

***OR***

**College Success COUNS-034N 0 Units / 27 hours**

College Success is designed to help students develop the critical thinking skills and personal confidence necessary to succeed in college. Topics will include problem solving techniques, learning styles, time- management, goal-setting, study skills and test-taking strategies, stress management and LMC support services.