I. OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Submitted:</th>
<th>February 11, 2009</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President:</td>
<td>Josué Hoyos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Chair/Coord</td>
<td>Carlos McLean</td>
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### Mission Statement

The purpose of the program is:

The mission of the Merritt College Counseling Department is to provide students comprehensive academic, career, and personal counseling and to help them develop effective decision-making skills. We also strive to support a diverse student population as they identify and accomplish their educational goal(s). To do so, we work collaboratively with instructional programs and all campus personnel to create an environment in which a student's positive academic and personal development can take place.

### Student Learning Outcomes

Upon interaction with the program or unit, students will be able to:

**SLO 1 - Educational and Career Goals and Plans:** Students will be able to clearly state their academic and/or career goal(s) and record them in a Student Educational Plan (SEP) as one outcome of a counseling session.

**SLO 2 - Educational Resources:** Students will be able to identify, access, and use educational resources (electronic and otherwise) to plan and pursue their academic, career, and personal goals.

**SLO 3 - Campus Resources:** Students will be informed about campus resources available to meet their individual needs and to support them as they pursue their academic, career, and personal goals.
## II. EVALUATION AND PLANNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative Assessments</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Include service area data such as number of students served by program. Include data and recommendations from program review.</td>
<td>Current enrollment for F08 is approximately 7,000. General Counseling is available to serve all enrolled and potential students. Current General Counseling staff consists of 6 FTE Contract Counselors (3.75 FTE after allocating special assignments) and 4.4 FTE Hourly Counselors.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Qualitative Assessments</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community and college relevance</td>
<td>Awaiting results of current Environmental Scan. June 2007 Student Needs Survey stated, “The data indicate that Merritt College students are pleased with the services provided by . . . Counseling Services.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present evidence of community need based on Advisory Committee input, McIntyre Environmental Scan, Student surveys</td>
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### College strategic plan relevance
- Counseling services and the ability of General Counselors to serve and support all students is a major element of the Merritt College mission.

Check all that apply:
- [ ] New program under development
- [x] Program that is integral to the college’s overall strategy
- [x] Program that is essential for transfer
  - Program that serves a community niche.
- [ ] Programs where student enrollment or success has been demonstrably affected by extraordinary external factors, such as barriers due to housing, employment, childcare etc.
- Other _______________________

### ACTION PLAN
--- Include overall plans/goals and specific action steps.

- Mission statement completed and published.
- Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) with assessment measures completed in consultation with campus Research and Planning Officer.
- Reviewed and revised Student Educational Plan (SEP) form to ensure effective use by both counselors and students. it is most effective for counselor and student use. Revised form clearly reflects the relationship between differing general education and major preparation plans and points the way toward completion of student educational and career goals.
- Reviewed and revised existing Probation and Dismissal procedures to conform with district-wide policies and procedures. Revised policies and procedures emphasize counselor contact and success contracts to ensure counselor support and student accountability, both of which focus on student retention and persistence.
- Continued collaboration with campus instructional faculty to ensure General Counseling faculty has the most current and accurate information about instructional programs. Continued collaboration with district-wide counseling faculty to ensure consistency of advising information between all Peralta colleges.
- Continued inclusion of reports from categorical programs in counseling meetings at least once per semester.
- Attend Passport training sessions, as scheduled, on Student Services functions.
- Increase proficiency of entire Counseling Department faculty in the use of basic office software (MS Office applications, SARS, Passport, etc.).
Counseling Department faculty will support programs that involve mentoring and collaboration whenever possible. This may include participation in programs such as Puente as well as mentoring student interns and new counseling faculty members.

Continued collaboration with community-based organizations, providing events and services such as Transfer Day, Welcome Day, Centro Latino, Maximum Achievement Program, Puente Program, and the like. Continued collaboration with local academic institutions to develop and maintain articulation agreements as well as services that support and increase student transfer.

Additional Planned Educational Activities

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Health/safety/legal issues:</th>
<th>Widespread distribution of Emergency Preparedness information sheet. Counseling Department has representative on college Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response Team and Crisis Intervention Team.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Retention and Success</td>
<td>Matriculation Counselor member of President’s Task Force on Retention and Persistence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progress on Student Learning Outcomes. (SLOs 100% Complete)</td>
<td>SLO 1 - Educational and Career Goals and Plans: Students will be able to clearly state their academic and/or career goal(s) and record them in a Student Educational Plan (SEP) as one outcome of a counseling session. SLO 2 - Educational Resources: Students will be able to identify, access, and use educational resources (electronic and otherwise) to plan and pursue their academic, career, and personal goals. SLO 3 - Campus Resources: Students will be informed about campus resources available to meet their individual needs and to support them as they pursue their academic, career, and personal goals.</td>
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III. RESOURCE NEEDS

Personnel Needs

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<tr>
<th>FT/PT ratio</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>If filled</th>
<th>If not filled</th>
<th># FTE faculty assigned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.75 FTE (after special assignments)/4.4 FTE</td>
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Narrative: The current ratio of full-time to part-time faculty in General Counseling is woefully insufficient to adequately serve a student population of approximately 7,000. Even after filling two recent vacancies, General Counseling needs more full-time counselors to adequately serve students. While part-time faculty are important, and vital to serving students, there is no substitute for full-time faculty. Full-time faculty develop ongoing relationships with students (who often ask to see “their counselor” only to be told that “their” part-time counselor isn’t working that day) as well as with other faculty, classified staff, and administrators to increase service levels to students. Also, full-time faculty develop a level of experience and expertise with Merritt College and PCCD programs and services that can rarely, if ever, be achieved by part-time faculty.
Equipment/Material/Supply/ Classified/Student Assistant Needs:
Please describe any needs in the above categories.

It is critical that the college provide the Career and Transfer Center with a full-time, permanent classified assistant. With the current layout of the center, faculty and classified staff who work there are continually interrupted by students, visitors, and others seeking information and assistance. This results in a twofold loss: 1) those seeking assistance are short-changed because faculty and staff often do not have the time, information, or resources to meet their needs and, 2) the students being served by faculty and staff who were interrupted get less time, attention, and assistance.

The General Counseling Department, including the Career and Transfer center, is in dire need of a technology upgrade. The computers available to students and for workshops in the Career and Transfer Center are functionally inoperable with little or no provisions for maintenance and/or support. All hourly counseling offices must have, at a minimum, a computer, printer, and telephone (and each of these must be at current industry performance standards--computers with insufficient speed and memory, printers that are poor and slow, software that is obsolete, and internet access that is intermittent and slow are obstacles to effectively serving students).

A major issue that must be addressed (and quickly) is the lack of keys for offices and building access for those whose work depends on ready access to office space, especially during off hours.

Workstations and supplies in the Counseling Department also need an upgrade. Classified staff and student workers need workstations that are fully equipped with working computers (including laptops), fax machines, printers, shredders, office supplies, and other materials necessary for smooth and efficient service to students and campus personnel. Furniture and shelving need to be installed in some areas of the Counseling Department as well.

Facilities Needs (Items that should be included in our Facilities master Plan) for Measure A funding:
Please describe any facilities needs.

The signage in the Counseling Center and surrounding areas ranges from inadequate to confusing to nonexistent. Students and visitors continually wander the hallways lost or misdirected. As noted above, one consequence is interruptions of on-site faculty and staff to ask for directions. Another far more unacceptable consequence is that students (and potential students) often leave out of frustration. In an attempt to address this, faculty and classified staff have posted hand-made signs which, while marginally effective, nevertheless give the Counseling Center and surrounding areas a very unprofessional appearance.

In addition, the General Counseling work area is poorly designed and overcrowded, greatly compromising the ability of faculty and classified staff to effectively serve students. Students wait to see counselors in a cramped reception area, often spilling out into the hallway. This results in students not hearing their names called for drop-in or scheduled appointments, causing delays, missed appointments, or students simply leaving. In an attempt to make this work, counselors and classified staff often have to shout the names of students in order to be heard, setting a very undesirable and unprofessional tone for the work area. In addition, the Counseling Center does not have enough offices for hourly counselors, requiring the use of inadequately equipped offices in the Career and Transfer Center (which are often unavailable). Finally, the General Counseling unit is housed with four other Student Services units (EOPS, DSP&S, Assessment, and CARE) in overcrowded quarters, resulting in congestion, crowded hallways, and lack of the essential privacy needed to provide students a supportive and confidential environment. Wherever and whenever possible, Merritt College needs to provide the Counseling Department with a larger, more appropriate work space to effectively carry out our mission.