STUDENT SERVICES

Environmental scanning results reveal demographic trends that will significantly change the make-up of the college student population, their needs, and the service modalities they desire. An aging population will be seeking higher education and expanding the numbers of non-traditional students who want more flexible services at times that are convenient to working adults. Younger students, namely Generation Z students, are seeking more quality, personalized, and technology-mediated services. It will become increasingly important to adapt to serve the diverse needs of these expanding populations.

Greater emphasis must be placed on delivering quality and exceptional student services. The way VVC makes students feel is becoming increasingly important to appeal to a new generation of students that place high value on experiences. Quality services are also important for competing with online and alternative delivery providers that are growing but cannot provide the same in-person experiences. The continuum of service quality ranges from timeliness and accuracy (which is essential) to personalized services utilizing state-of-the-art technologies.

The expansion in both numbers and types of distance and digital learning programs will require a full-range of student services to be offered online, digitally, and via mobile applications. Ensuring these services accommodate students with disabilities will be necessary, as will attention to the language needs of ESL and bi-lingual students.

New technologies and approaches are improving opportunities to scale student services and engagement. Technology-mediated solutions can be utilized to simply processes and free-up staff to offer more personalized services. Mobile phone technologies, for example, may be utilized for automated, student-self-service and are mechanisms for capturing student data. Systems that manage this data make predictive analytics possible and enable the redesign of services to serve unique student segments. Student self-service tools, underpinned by "choice architectures", are managing how options and recommendations are personalized and presented to students.

Video interfaces with explanatory videos can also be utilized to handle routine questions or explain processes. The aim is for students to be able to handle routine matters via automated systems leaving face-to-face interactions for non-routine matters or more personalized attention.

VVC will soon be serving five to six generations of students including a much older population, likely beginning in 2024-2025. Anticipating services and other matters older students will need and desire should begin shortly. Posing questions such as "how will services need to adapt to an older population", are a good place to begin.

The rise of consumerism, as technology and access to information is greatly increasing the sophistication of students as consumers, is making accountability and transparency more important. This is especially true of Generation Z students. Providing transparent, "consumable" information that appeals to students as sophisticated consumers will be necessary. Information ranging from content on the college website, the status of in-process student activities (e.g., financial aid processing), and data on efficiency and effectiveness of services and programs is imperative and just the beginning.

Because students will also be demanding more personalized and customized services and experiences, human-centric design and innovation capabilities will need to be developed and employed—beginning with engaging students in creating and re-designing services. This will require a design mindset and skills. It will also require employing data- and outcomes-driven management and accountability. Student Services is already moving in this direction with its Student Voices project. Through this project, a "solution summit" process has been effectively used to ensure student consideration and input on important issues, with the goal of training Rambassadors and student leaders to facilitate the process.

The trends and changes above, and implementing solutions to address them, will require streamlining, simplifying, and changing policies, procedures, and processes. All with an eye on efficiency and service excellence. Collaboration with faculty and staff throughout VVC, other colleges, and other strategic partners will be essential in doing so.

Importantly, Student Services is committed to the pursuit of excellence in achieving the strategies, activities, and practices necessary to support college-wide Guided Pathways, Caring Campus, in addition to its own areas of focus.

Student Services Blueprint

The following is a Student Services blueprint for addressing the trends above and strategies, activities, and practices included elsewhere in this plan.

NEAR HORIZON 1-2 YEARS	MEDIUM HORIZON 3-4 YEARS	FURTHER HORIZON 5+ YEARS
SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS		
Retention, Persistence, Completion, and Post-completion Success		
• Integrate student supports (planning and advising, career services, financial aid and literacy, student life, counseling, wellness, teaching, and support services) to serve the whole student • Utilize full capacity of EAB Navigate as a student tool for journey mapping to increase student preparedness, identifying potential issues and developing/implementing retention strategies • Pilot integrated early and other alert systems/processes to monitor and intervene when students get off-track • Utilize data infrastructure to analyze and identify issues for enrollment, retention, and persistence (including by program and student cohort) and develop strategies for providing student supports • Implement targeted student engagement and communication strategies for increasing retention and persistence	• Regularly assess and improve support services and programs using 6 factors of student engagement • Implement strategies and activities whereby EAB Navigate is used by most new students who also highly rate the tool's ease of use and quality of assistance • Fully implement early alert and other alert strategies with documentation that interventions are successful, likewise early alert implementation and strategies continue to be developed and enhanced to increase student success • Regularly review and analyze data to support planning, decision making, and resource allocation	• Achieve high ratings of student support services and programs for their ease of access and quality of service • EAB Navigate is used by nearly all new students who also highly rate the tool's ease of use and quality of assistance • Analyze early alert impact on student retention and persistence, continue to develop and enhance early alert implementation and strategies to increase rates
Strategic and Efficient Enrollment Growth		
• Develop a comprehensive Student Communication Plan and Enrollment Communication Plan • Integrate K-12 and VVC career exploration processes with informed meta major and education planning (e.g., "Guided Choices" decision making) • Create First Year Experience (FYE) that provides a strong start and preparation for successful learning	• The Student Communication Plan and Enrollment Communication Plan is regularly reviewed with student feedback to enhance social media, website, outreach/in-reach materials, etc. • Fully integrate career exploration in FYE and education planning • Using student and faculty feedback, continually review and update FYE to	• Annual Career Fairs are regularly scheduled throughout the year • Assess the retention, persistence, and completion rates of students who fully participated in FYE; make necessary adjustments to improve rates • Student Communication Plan and Enrollment Communication Plan stays current, effective, and relevant

NEAR HORIZON 1-2 YEARS	MEDIUM HORIZON 3-4 YEARS	FURTHER HORIZON 5+ YEARS
• Establish ongoing strategic communications plans for new and returning student enrollment – including outreach and marketing (including VVC Caring Campus WOW strategies) • Collaborate with students to identify communication strategies, messaging, and methods – particularly input necessary to determine what works for different student populations – to create a Student Handbook	become highly responsive and effective • Student Communication Plan is regularly reviewed, with student input, to ensure it remains effective and relevant • Student Handbook is reviewed regularly to ensure it is easily accessible, used by most students, and effective in providing "just-in-time" information	• Student Handbook wins award for "Effective Student-Centric Information piece"

Distance and Digital Learning Expansion and Enhancements

• Redesign processes necessary to reduce barriers to distance education (DE) student enrollment and provide DE support services that increase retention, persistence, and success	• Redesign processes necessary to reduce barriers and provide DE support services that increase completion, transfer, success, and transition to employment • Regular reviews with online students and faculty are conducted to ensure the DE process and services provides access and support to all students to increase completion and post-completion success	• Evaluate DE prior years redesign of processes and implementation of DE support services; make necessary adjustments • Use evaluation, above, to demonstrate processes, services, and resources support access, readiness, and engagement for all learner populations across all distance and digital learning environments

Noncredit, Other Expanded Learning Options Development

• Re-engineer/develop new processes for noncredit enrollment, matriculation to credit, and credit for prior learning, including student communication and support processes	• Conduct ongoing discussion and review of current practices providing input that enhances the non-credit to credit processes and ensures students are able to access and use these options	• VVC offers a full selection of student support services in a variety of modalities that student's access and navigate with ease