STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES WEBSITE EXPERIENCE STUDY

SAN DIEGO-IMPERIAL

JUNE 2023

C·O·E CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE For Labor Market Research

COMMUNITY COLLEGES
SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES
CAREER EDUCATION

POWERED BY
California Community Colleges

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Existing research emphasizes the importance of student support services in retaining students in the community college system.[1] Student support services, also known as student services and student affairs, are services and programs that focus on student success and growth—ensuring that students are well-prepared to thrive in their learning environments. The Center of Excellence (COE) for San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges commissioned this study to better understand how members of the general public access student support services online. The research team surveyed 30 residents in San Diego and Imperial Counties between June and August 2022 about their experiences with the region's community college websites, specifically with student support services pages. Based on the findings from the survey and interviews, this study offers insights and recommendations for the community colleges regarding their website organization and development; internal structure of programs and services; terminology or language used within and across colleges; and use of automated features such as chatbots or scheduling systems.

Consequently, research participants provided a variety of recommendations with a common goal in mind: To make community college websites more accessible to individuals unfamiliar with the system. The research team compiled this study to share the public's ideas and to support the community colleges' efforts in improving the student experience at their institutions.

1. Website Organization and Development

Recommendation: In collaboration with students, assess and revise student support services pages using the reflection questions developed from this study.

Both interview and survey participants agreed that the community colleges could improve the public's experience with student support services webpages by improving navigation between the landing page and specific student support services pages; including a comprehensive list of various services and organizing that information into groups; providing concise descriptions of available services; making contact and appointment information easy to find; and using professionally made materials with visually appealing layouts. The reflection questions provided in this study address these recommendations.

2. Internal Structure of Programs and Services

Recommendation: At a minimum, make the internal structure of programs and services clearer for students by including a hierarchy of student support services on the main navigation bar and reducing duplicative language across pages.

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[1] "2021 State of the System Report," California Community College Chancellor's Office. cccco.edu/About-Us/Reports

Because more than one department offered "counseling" or "advising" services, participants repeatedly shared their confusion about where to find academic, career, and mental health counseling services. Not only did multiple departments seem to offer similar services, but multiple pages also had duplicative content. For example, participants relied on the main navigation bar to find a landing page for student support services, followed by a dropdown of specific services; however, they found links to services alongside the link for the main student support services page.

3. Terminology or Language Used Within and Across Colleges

Recommendation: Using student input, develop a regional lexicon for student support services that the general public (especially first-generation college students) can understand. If common language cannot be used across colleges, they should at least explain *why* and *when* students would need specific services.

There is no consistency among the region's community colleges in how they communicate student support services on their websites. Each college uses different terminology to describe its portfolio of services, and the language may be apparent to community college staff but not clear to students or the general public. Participants recommended working with students to determine which terms resonate with the public and identifying self-explanatory terms that can be used across colleges. However, if regional collaboration is not possible, participants recommended that the colleges clearly define specific student support services by explaining *why* students would access certain services. Not all students know what resources they need, especially if they are first-generation college students.

4. Use of Automated Features on Websites (e.g., Virtual Chatbot, Scheduling)

Recommendation: Streamline the scheduling process so students can easily find open appointment times and designate a point of contact who can answer questions about student support services.

Research participants requested that the community colleges modernize their online appointment booking system because of the challenges they experienced with finding forms, contact information, etc., to schedule appointments. Additionally, participants suggested keeping the chatbot feature to help individuals navigate through extensive websites; however, to effectively use that feature, participants said they had to know what to specifically search for to generate accurate results from the chatbot. Finally, participants preferred to use a live chat to speak to a staff member or to have a staff member contact them directly.

Introduction

Community colleges play an essential role in the educational landscape of the United States. Because they offer low-cost and open access to higher education, community colleges are the most accessible way for many Americans to obtain education and training.[2] Community colleges also offer an array of programs and services such as academic counseling, career counseling, student health services, and financial services. These programs and services are collectively referred to as "student support services" for the purpose of this study.[3] Student support services are integral to helping students achieve their personal, career, and academic goals. Student support services cover a wide range of student needs, from addressing challenges faced by foster youth to helping students with social and economic barriers, to offering financial aid programs that help cover college costs, to serving veterans.[4]

Students typically rely on community college websites to access and learn about available resources.[5] Finding resources online is more vital than ever in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.[6] To support the region's colleges in developing websites to better meet their students' needs, the Center of Excellence (COE) for San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges commissioned this study to understand prospective and current students' experiences with accessing student support services online.

The research began with informational interviews with members of the general public and consultation from a user experience design professional in June 2022, followed by a web experience survey with 30 participants between June and August 2022. The survey asked participants to locate the student support services landing page as well as information about academic counseling, career center services, and student health services. The study focused on these three broad services because they are among the most recognized student support services offered by community colleges.[7] For more information on the methodology, see Appendix A.

In addition to summarizing the themes derived from interviews and survey responses, this study provides an overview of the participants' experiences and makes recommendations for the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges based on these findings. The COE encourages the region's community colleges to use this study for strategic planning, program development, and meaningful discussions about student support services.

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[2] "4 Reasons to Consider Community College," The Princeton Review. princetonreview.com/college-advice/community-college
[3] "2021 State of the System Report," California Community College Chancellor's Office. ccco.edu/About-Us/Reports
[4] "Services That May Help Low-Income Students Succeed in Community College. Opening Doors," MDRC. eric.ed.gov/?id=ED484621
[5] "Student Support Services at Community Colleges: A Strategy For Increasing Student Persistence and Attainment," White House Summit on Community Colleges. ed.gov/PDFDocs/college-completion/04-student-support-services-at-community-colleges.pdf
[6] "COVID-19 and Community College Instructional Responses," Online Learning Consortium. eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1287109
[7] "Student Support Services at Community Colleges: A Strategy For Increasing Student Persistence and Attainment," White House Summit on Community Colleges. ed.gov/PDFDocs/college-completion/04-student-support-services-at-community-colleges.pdf

Informational Interviews

To develop this study's survey questions, the research team consulted a user experience designer and a handful of the general public to assess their experiences with community college websites, specifically with webpages dedicated to student support services. Community colleges offer a significant number of student support services, some of which were beyond the scope of this study. Using interviewees' feedback and prior research,[8] the survey focused on the three most recognized student support services:

1. **Academic counseling pages**

2. **Career center pages**

3. **Student health services pages**

Academic counseling services are essential to helping students achieve their educational goals such as receiving training, acquiring a degree or certificate, transferring to a four-year institution, or completing a vocational program.[9] Career centers offer career development activities such as career counseling, workshops, job readiness training, and opportunities to engage with employers.[6] Student health services have healthcare professionals and staff who support students with their physical and mental wellness needs.[10]

→ Website Experience Survey Areas of Focus

In addition to prioritizing the three most recognized student support services webpages for this study, the interviewees also recommended that the survey ask questions about user experience in the following areas:

- **Ease of Locating Landing Page and Specific Student Support Services Pages:** Because the main (landing) page is the starting point for discovering institutional resources, users need to easily locate the student support services main page first, then pages for specific services such as academic counseling, career center, and student health services.[11]

- **Comprehensive Lists and Descriptions of Services:** Interviewees shared that well-designed websites have a comprehensive list of services on the landing page, with hyperlinks to the services' respective pages. Participants also stressed the importance of having brief descriptions of the various services on the student support services main page, which gives readers an overview of what to expect. Similarly, within the academic counseling, career center, and student health services pages themselves, there should be descriptions of the services offered in each category.

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[8] "Student Support Services at Community Colleges: A Strategy For Increasing Student Persistence and Attainment," White House Summit on Community Colleges. ed.gov/PDFDocs/college-completion/04-student-support-services-at-community-colleges.pdf
[9] California Community College Chancellor's Office (2022a). cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/General-Counsel
[10] "Services That May Help Low-Income Students Succeed in Community College. Opening Doors," MDRC. eric.ed.gov/?id=ED484621ED484621
[11] California Community College Chancellor's Office (2022a). cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/Student-Service

- **Contact Information and Appointment:** Interviewees stressed the importance of having contact information in an easy-to-find place on each student support services page. Participants also expressed the need for webpages to provide instructions on scheduling appointments.
- **Virtual Chatbot:** Not all colleges included a virtual chatbot for real-time responses on the website, but for those that did, the study should assess the usefulness of this feature in finding information about student support services.
- **Overall Satisfaction:** Results show that 74 percent of survey respondents were satisfied with their experience navigating the student support services pages at their assigned community college.

Survey Questions Based on Informational Interviews

With these areas of focus, the research team developed the following survey questions for this study (Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1: Website Experience Survey Questions

SURVEY QUESTION	SECTION			
	Student Support Services (Main)	Academic Counseling Page	Career Center Page	Student Health Services Page
How easy or difficult is it to find the [section] page?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Is there a comprehensive list of all student support services offered by the college?	✓			
Is there a detailed description of the types of [section] offered?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Which of the following information is included on the webpage? Select all that apply: A. Contact information B. Hours of operation C. How to schedule an appointment D. None of the above		✓	✓	✓
Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the [section] webpage.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Additionally, the survey asked participants to share their experiences with a virtual chatbot, wherever available. Not all college websites had a chatbot feature. To wrap up, the survey asked participants to share their overall satisfaction with navigating the student support services webpages.

Website Experience Survey

After completing informational interviews to develop survey questions, the research team recruited 30 members of the public to participate in the survey (Appendix C) and assigned three participants to each of the 10 community colleges in the region (Appendix E). This section summarizes their survey responses and experiences with the student support services main page, academic counseling pages, career center pages, and student health services pages. This information is based on the areas of focus identified in the informational interviews: 1) Ease of locating landing page and specific student support services pages; 2) comprehensive lists and descriptions of services; 3) contact information and appointment; 4) virtual chatbot; and 5) overall satisfaction with student support services pages.

→ Ease of Locating Landing Page and Specific Student Support Services Pages

The survey asked participants to describe the ease of locating the main student support services page as well as the academic counseling, career center, and student health services pages. Of the 30 survey respondents, 90 percent reported that it was "Very easy" or "Easy" to find the main student support services page (i.e. landing page), compared to 74 percent, 77 percent, and 74 percent who reported that it was "Very easy" or "Easy" to find the academic counseling, career center, and student health services pages, respectively (Exhibit 2). Respondents found it relatively easy to locate the landing page for student support services, but not as easy to locate the pages for specific services.

Exhibit 2: Ease of Locating Student Support Services Pages
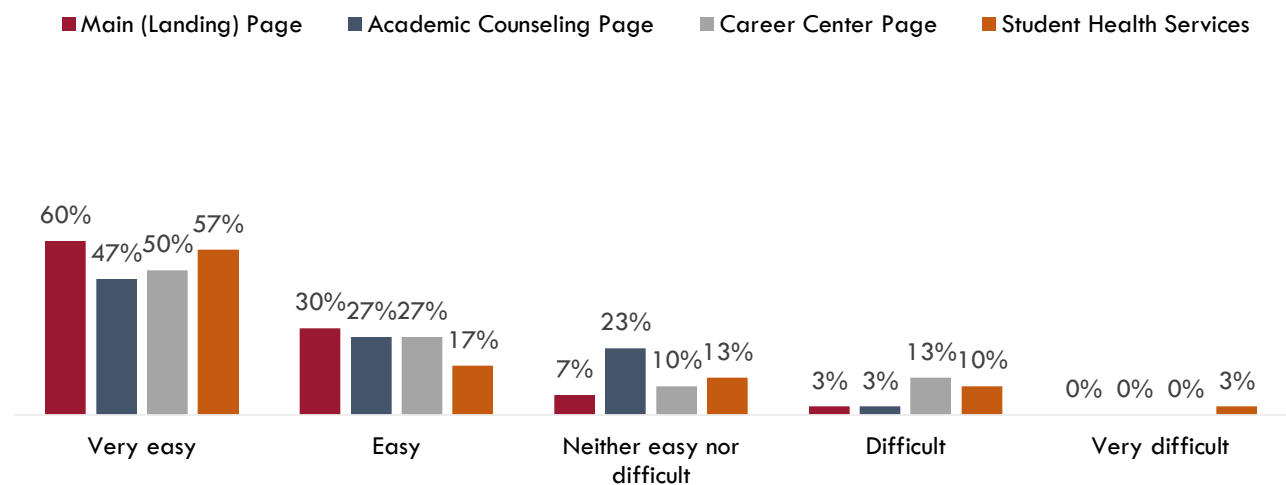
■ Main (Landing) Page   ■ Academic Counseling Page   ■ Career Center Page   ■ Student Health Services

According to the open-ended survey responses, the community colleges could improve the public's experience by improving the navigation in, and between, the landing page and specific student support services pages (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3: Participants' Experiences with Navigating Student Support Services Webpages (Quotes)

- "The front page seems disjointed from the rest of the items listed on the dropdown and they have seemingly no association with the rest of the student services."

- "If you click the 'student services' link, it takes you to a page with no detailed descriptions and a lot of large images you must scroll down for a while to see all the information."

- "Career services information is not listed on the student services main page as a hyperlink but is listed in the dropdown menu in the taskbar."

"The page itself wasn't easy to find. I found it using the search bar, which was pretty easy but only assuming you know what you are searching for. Then I was able to find it by scrolling to the bottom of the website. I would suggest maybe including it as part of the dropdown menu on the student services tab."

- "The search function turned up two links for the career center that could have been the correct landing page, one said 'Career Center Services,' and the other was 'Welcome to the Career Center,' which of course seems like it would be the home page, so I started there. The two links in the search feel somewhat redundant, and I would rather the landing page be the one that has the info. that [someone] most likely is searching for, which is all on the center's services page."

- "Suggest having the 'About the Career Center' section and specific services dropdown on top of the webpage rather than on the bottom."

- "[What] I was uncertain about was the understanding of where to go for mental health concerns such as stress and anxiety. Even though the Health and Wellness sections speak about personal counseling vs. general or educational counseling, [I] am unclear if all students would understand this. I would be concerned that the term 'counseling' for both could create some confusion."

⊕ Comprehensive Lists and Descriptions of Services

While on the student support services main page, the survey asked participants if they found a comprehensive list of the various services offered at the college and whether the college provided a detailed description of each of those services on the landing page.

Ninety-three percent of survey respondents reported seeing a comprehensive list of all student support services offered on the main (landing) page and 83 percent indicated seeing detailed descriptions for the various student support services (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4: Whether Student Support Services Main Page Had a List of Services or Detailed Descriptions of Services

93% — Had a comprehensive list of services	7% — Did not have a list of services
83% — Had detailed descriptions	17% — Did not have detailed descriptions
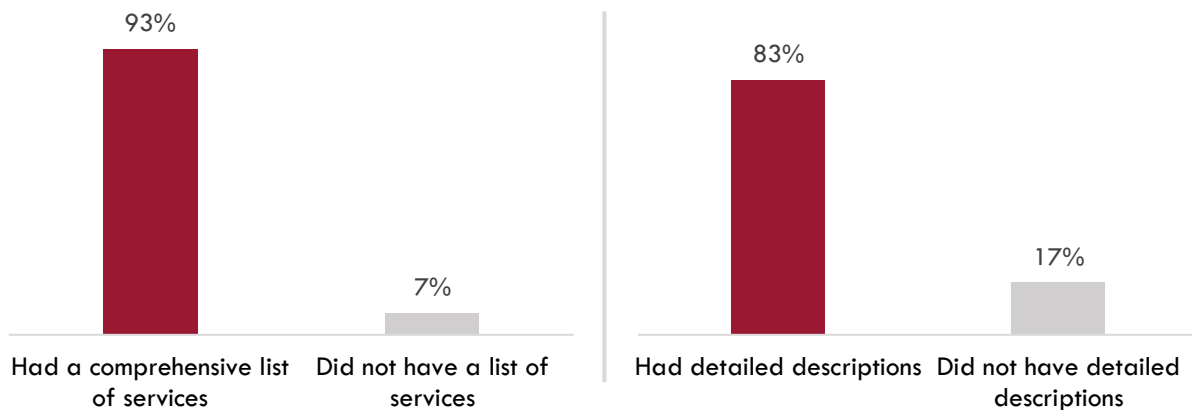
Beyond brief descriptions of the student support services offered on the landing page, the survey also asked participants to identify detailed descriptions of services specific to academic counseling, career center, and student health services. Eighty-three percent of respondents found detailed descriptions of various services within career centers and student health services, but only 77 percent reported finding detailed descriptions of services within academic counseling (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5: Detailed Descriptions of Services within Academic Counseling, Career Center, and Student Health Services Pages

■ Academic Counseling ■ Career Center ■ Student Health Services

	Had detailed descriptions	Did not have detailed descriptions
Academic Counseling	77%	23%
Career Center	83%	17%
Student Health Services	83%	17%
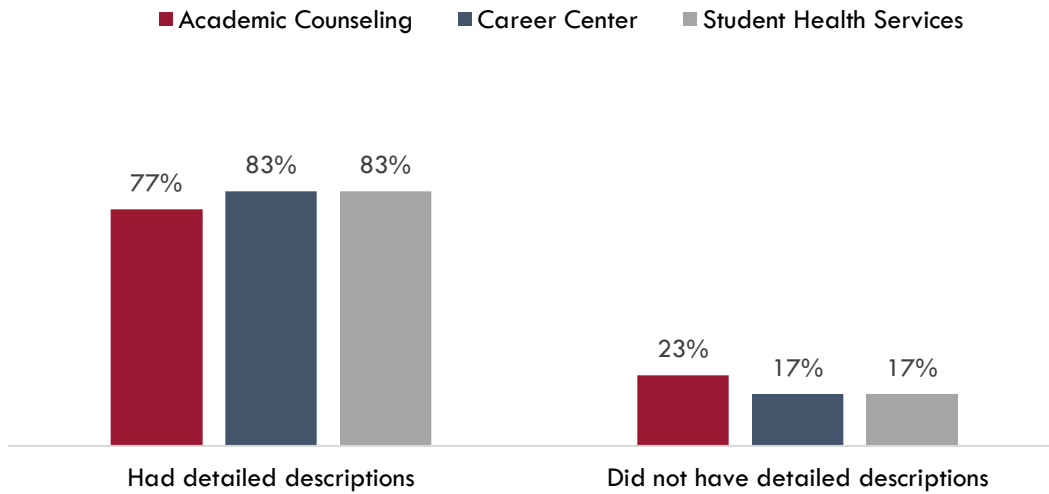
According to the open-ended survey responses, the community colleges could improve the public's experience with their student support services pages by including a comprehensive list of various services, organizing that information into groups, and providing concise descriptions of available services (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: Participants' Experiences with Comprehensive Lists and Description of Services (Quotes)

"I would expect to see a list of services provided by the center on their home page, but it's nowhere to be found. When you click on the telehealth appointments option under 'Appointments,' there is a list of services offered on the infographic, but that is what I would expect to see on the homepage."

- "It doesn't include a list of services provided; at least none that I can easily find."

- "It would also be beneficial if the services were organized based on topic (i.e., academic, health, professional development, etc.)."

- "Another improvement could be to divide the resources into categories instead. For example, categories could be: billing, programs (summer programs), incoming students."

- "Cluster the services together; layout can be improved to be more like drawers; it's difficult to read all the different sections because the subsections aren't obvious. It's like you have to follow the indents to know which section you're in."

Exhibit 6 (Continued): Participants' Experiences with Comprehensive Lists and Description of Services (Quotes)

- "While there is a comprehensive list of all of the services offered, it would be helpful if there was a short description of the service under each hyperlink."

- "For each of the sections (ex: Assessment & Testing, Evaluations, etc.), it would be nice to provide a brief sentence or two describing what each of those areas are about. This will help students to navigate what types of services and support are even available, at a glance."

- "I like the breakdown and quick explanation of the student health clinic and the video."

- "It would be nice to have some step-by-step examples of why a student may go into the office. I think it assumes a student has knowledge of college. There should be a one-sentence description that the counseling page covers academic, career, transfer, and personal counseling needs."
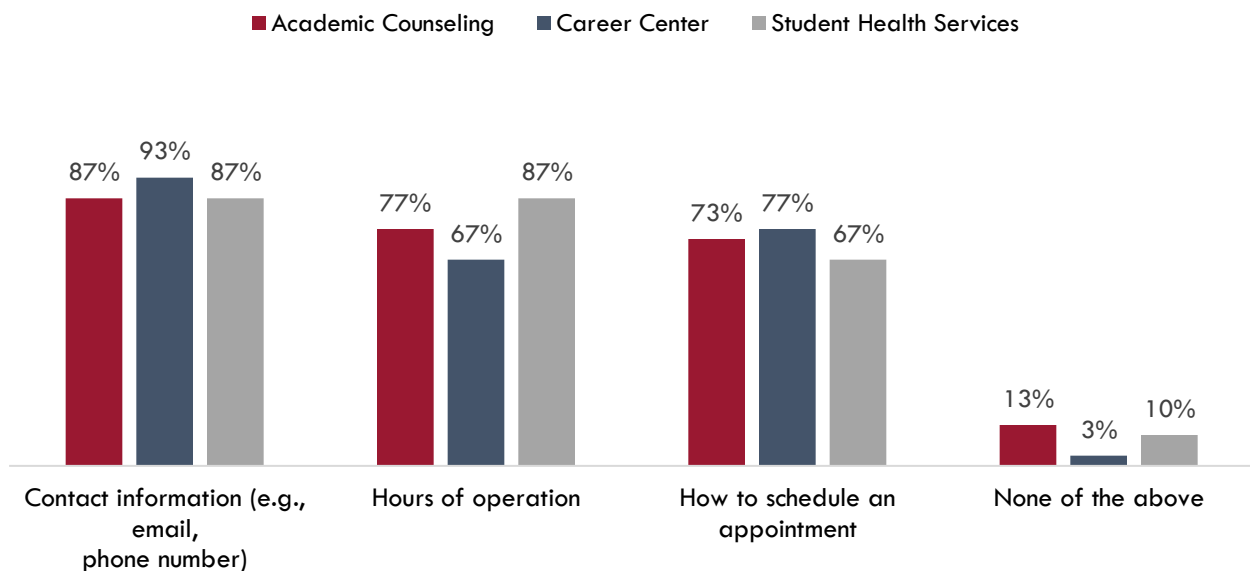
"While it's amazing to see a list of services, it looks overwhelming, and I wouldn't know where to begin. Especially being a first-generation college student myself, I would appreciate if each service had a brief description rather than having to click on each page."

Contact and Appointment Information

Overall, survey respondents found contact information on the academic counseling, career center, and student health services pages, but only 67 percent found hours of operation listed on the career center pages and how to schedule an appointment on student health services pages (Exhibit 7). In addition, four out of 30 respondents could not find any contact or appointment information for academic counseling. Similarly, three respondents could not find contact/appointment information on the student health services pages (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Percent of Participants That Found Contact and Appointment Information on Select Pages

■ Academic Counseling ■ Career Center ■ Student Health Services

	Academic Counseling	Career Center	Student Health Services
Contact information (e.g., email, phone number)	87%	93%	87%
Hours of operation	77%	67%	87%
How to schedule an appointment	73%	77%	67%
None of the above	13%	3%	10%

According to the open-ended survey responses, the community colleges could improve the public's experience with student support services by making contact and appointment information easy to find (Exhibit 8).

> "I expect to see how to schedule an appointment as the first thing or as a hyperlink embedded within each service/special program listed. I expect to see a way to add the appointment to my calendar via Google, Outlook, etc."

Exhibit 8: Participants' Experiences with Contact and Appointment Information (Quotes)

- "Was not able to find the hours of operation nor how to schedule an appointment. It only stated the general contact information of the campuses and to contact them for more details."

- "Had to click 3 links to get to a page with address, hours of operation, and contact info. This should be on the landing page for academic services."

Exhibit 8 (Continued): Participants' Experiences with Contact and Appointment Information (Quotes)

- "The hours of operation for each individual [service] need to be listed with a general overview of what is needed to make an appointment."

- "The contact information and hours of operations are a bit small on the page, and can be easy to miss if scrolling fast. Suggest bringing more prominence to that information."

- "There are no direct contact links to the counseling office or directions for scheduling appointments (or at least none that I saw)."

→ Virtual Chatbot

Four of the ten community colleges offered a virtual chatbot feature. This feature is intended to answer general questions about the college's programs and services. Selecting the message icon on the website opens a conversational interface that mimics human interactions. Research participants reported that the chatbot window was too large and blocked website content. When a participant sought information about student support services, the chatbot provided unexpected responses (Exhibit 9):

"[The chatbot] seems friendly, but when I typed 'Where can I find the academic counseling services?' it resulted in a list of services/areas and that was overwhelming. When I looked for the student health services it asked for my name, and [that] gave me pause. I wasn't sure why it wanted my name."
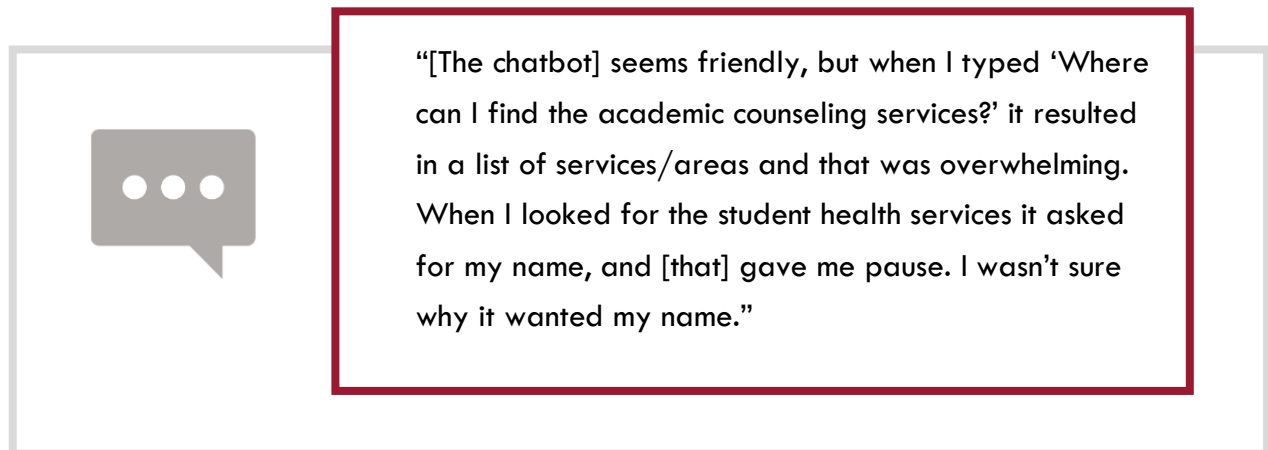
**Exhibit 9: Participants' Experiences with Virtual Chatbot (Quotes)**

- "I would have liked to try the live feature, but it wasn't available right now."

- "There was a website error and the chatbot was inaccessible."

- "Box pops up too much."

- "Stop having the chat pop up."

→ Overall Satisfaction Navigating Student Support Services Webpages

Exhibit 10 shows that 74 percent of survey respondents were "Very satisfied" or "Satisfied" with their experience navigating the student support services pages at their assigned community college.

Exhibit 10: Overall Satisfaction with Navigating Student Support Services Webpages
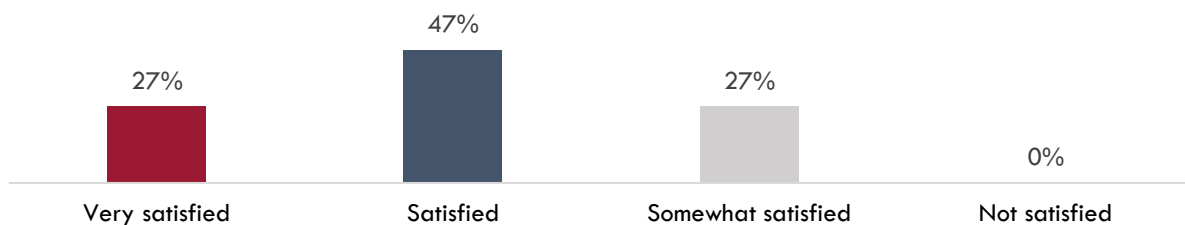
The open-ended survey responses also suggest that the community colleges use professionally made materials and visually appealing layouts. Research participants reported visiting webpages that were cluttered, text-heavy, and lacked imagery. Pages with long text passages, large images, or PDF-embedded pages had poor readability (Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11: Other Experiences with Student Support Services Pages (Quotes)

> "This page has a lot of red and it's hard to focus or find the information you are looking for. It does have a lot of info on COVID, but other than that I don't see anything else health-related."

- "The career spots video feeds look spammy/unprofessional."

- "If you click the 'Student Services' link, it takes you to a page with no detailed descriptions and a lot of large images; you must scroll down for a while to see all the information."

- "Less wordy, I wasn't even reading all the information there, I just glazed over it."

- "Too much verbiage. Provide hours of operation/appointment information in bullet points to be easy to read."

Insights & Recommendations

Based on the findings from the survey and informational interviews, this study offers insights and recommendations for community colleges on the following areas:

1. Website organization and development
2. Internal structure of programs and services
3. Terminology or language used within and across colleges
4. Use of automated features on their websites (e.g., virtual chatbot and scheduling systems)

→ Website Organization and Development

Insight #1: Research participants agreed that the community colleges can improve the public's experience with student support services webpages by:

- Improving navigation between the landing page and specific student support services pages
- Including a comprehensive list of various services and organizing that information into groups
- Providing concise descriptions of available services
- Making contact and appointment information easy to find
- Using professionally made materials and visually appealing layouts

Research participants also reported having difficulty navigating between the student support services main page and the academic counseling, career center, and student health services pages. They suggested creating a hyperlinked student support services tab in the horizontal navigation bar with a list of the most common support services in a dropdown navigation menu. Research participants repeatedly recommended that the student support services pages contain a comprehensive list of the services available and short descriptions of each service.

To reduce the clutter, websites could categorize student support services into drawers that organize and group similar services, or colleges could organize content by highlighting commonly used services and providing a link to a comprehensive list at the bottom. To enhance the experience for viewing content on multiple webpages, the backgrounds, color schemes, and text formatting should be consistent and aesthetically pleasing.

Recommendation #1: **In collaboration with students, assess and revise student support services pages using the reflection questions developed from this study.**

The research team found participants for this study from the general public and summarized common experiences across all college websites in this study. We recommend each college work with their students directly and obtain feedback on improving the webpages. To help with the process, the research team developed the following reflection questions for community college staff and students.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Are the pages visually appealing with a consistent layout? Are the pages' look and feel (e.g., font types, color schemes) consistent throughout the website?
2. Are any of the key contents (e.g., description of services, appointment scheduling process) blocked by large images, thumbnails, or other distracting visuals? Do we have any outdated information?
3. Can students easily navigate the pages and find the information they are looking for? How many clicks does a student make to find contact information or learn how to schedule an appointment?
4. Can students easily differentiate between different types of student support services? Do we use similar language for different services? Do different departments (e.g., academic counseling, career center) seem to offer similar services?
5. Can students easily schedule an appointment with an advisor or representative using an online system? Is this process automated? How quickly does a student receive a response from a college representative after they make a request?

→ Internal Structure of Programs and Services

Insight #2: Because more than one department offered "counseling" or "advising" services, participants repeatedly shared their confusion about where to find academic or career counseling services. For example, in addition to academic advising, many counseling departments offer career, transfer, and personal services. These services can also be offered by separate departments such as the career center, transfer center, and student health center. Multiple departments providing similar-sounding services confused participants because the word "counseling" was associated with both academic and career counseling.

Multiple webpages also had similar information. Research participants reported that they relied on the main, horizontal navigation bar of the website to locate the student support services main page as well as the academic counseling, career center, and student health services pages. However, they expressed challenges in

navigating these pages due to duplicative content. For example, several colleges included multiple student support services pages in the horizontal navigation bar instead of just the main (landing) page for all student support services.

Recommendation #2: **At a minimum, make the internal structure of programs and services clearer for students by including a hierarchy of student support services in the main navigation bar and reducing duplicative language across pages.**

Research participants explained that websites with a clear sitemap or a hierarchical display of information significantly reduced their confusion about where to find specific services (e.g., academic or career counseling). The community colleges could show the hierarchy of student support services by including *only* the main student support services page on the navigation bar (which has a dropdown list of the most accessed services) instead of placing links to specific services adjacent to the main student support services page. Additionally, because multiple departments offer "counseling" or "career counseling," participants recommended that community colleges differentiate among departments by explaining that the broad career-related services provided by the academic counseling department, for example, differ from the extensive services offered by career center counselors.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Does your college's website have a navigation bar where student support services are featured?
2. Is there a dropdown list of student support services located there?
3. Is it easy to understand the difference between academic counseling and the career center when looking at the respective webpages?

Terminology and Language Within and Across Colleges

Insight #3: Participants reported that community colleges used the term "counseling" to describe various services. For example, one participant was uncertain about where to go for personal counseling because it was unclear if the student health center provided mental health services in addition to physical health services: "I was uncertain about … where to go for mental health concerns such as stress and anxiety. Even though the Health and Wellness sections speak about personal counseling vs. general or educational counseling, I am unclear if all students would understand this. I would be concerned that [using] the term 'counseling' for both could create some confusion."

Additionally, each college uses different terminology to describe its portfolio of services, and the language may be clear to community college staff, but not to students or the general public. As one participant explained, "a student may qualify but not know what EOPS is by the name," so the college should "find a way to incorporate as much colloquial language" as possible for those unaware of official program names.

Recommendation #3: Using student input, develop a regional lexicon for student support services that the general public (especially first-generation college students) can understand. If common language cannot be used across colleges, then, explain at least *why* and *when* students would need specific services.

Research participants experienced confusion with academic, career, and personal (mental health) counseling services because different departments use similar terminology and each college structures these services differently. Consistent language and messaging across the colleges would help address these challenges. However, if regional collaboration is not possible, participants recommended that the colleges clearly define specific student support services by explaining *why* students would access certain services; not all students would know what resources they need, especially if they are first-generation college students. As one participant explained, "It would be nice to have some step-by-step examples of why a student may go into the office. I think [the website] assumes a student has knowledge of college." Research participants said they could mitigate the confusing language by "using the search bar, which was pretty easy but only assuming you know what you are searching for."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Does your college title the student service areas listed in this study (academic, career, personal) differently than other colleges in the region?
2. Is the reason why a student would access each service clearly explained on the webpage?
3. Is the same service described in different ways on the various student support services webpages?

Use of Automated Features on Websites (e.g., Virtual Chatbot, Schedule System)

Insight #4: Research participants reported having difficulty using the virtual chatbot to schedule online appointments or to locate information about specific student support services. Participants had to be particular in their written queries to the virtual chatbot to find desired information. As one participant expressed, "You kind of had to know what you were looking for" to interact effectively with the chatbot. Additionally, many research participants noted challenges with scheduling online appointments to meet student support services staff. They expected a calendar of events or a list of time slots to select from—which would lead to an automated calendar invite or appointment with a staff member—but not all colleges had this feature. Several webpages stated that students could schedule appointments by emailing, calling, or filling out a Google Form, with no information explaining how to do so.

Recommendation #4: Streamline the scheduling process so students can easily find open appointment times and designate a point of contact who can answer questions about student support services.

At minimum, research participants requested that the community colleges modernize and standardize their online appointment booking system. As one participant explained, "I expect to see a way to add the appointment to my calendar via Google, Outlook, etc." Participants recommended that all student support services use a uniform system instead of one department using a Google Form and another department using email to schedule appointments, for example. An automated, standardized system would streamline the scheduling process, making it easy for students throughout the institution.

As for the chatbot, research participants suggested that the colleges continue to offer this feature, if they have it, to help sort through the magnitude of information on the websites. To improve experiences with a chatbot, the community colleges should review questions that the system has received and develop specific, customized responses accordingly. Participants reported that a live chat function with a staff member—similar to a concierge service—would be preferable to a chatbot.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Can you easily make an appointment using your college's chatbot?
2. Is it difficult to get in contact with a staff member?
3. Does your college have data on the questions most often asked to the chatbot or to staff members? How could these data inform how you manage the scheduling feature?

Conclusion

In addition to the recommendations listed above, research participants offered other suggestions for the community colleges such as creating professional, short, and informative videos about what student support services are available at each college and how to access them. Ultimately, research participants provided various recommendations with a common goal in mind: To make community college websites more accessible to individuals not familiar with the system—this was the goal of the study. Ensuring community college websites are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and are navigable for disabled populations will be an important next step in the next iteration of this study. Ultimately, the research team compiled this study to share the public's ideas and to support the community colleges' efforts in improving the student experience at their institutions.

Appendix A: Methodology

Informational Interviews

The research team first conducted informational interviews with members of the general public on their experiences with the region's community college websites. To prepare for those interviews, the research team examined four major sections of the colleges' websites, specifically the 1) student support services landing page, 2) academic counseling pages, 3) career center pages, and 4) student health services pages. This assessment provided the research team with an overview of the student support services offered across the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges. Using this preliminary research, the research team developed an interview guide (Appendix B) and completed 30 surveys. Exhibit 12 represents an overview of the participants' demographics.

Exhibit 12: Participant Demographic Information

Name (Pseudonym)	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Industry Sector
Jessenia	Female	40	Hispanic	Education
Lea	Female	27	White	Business
Kristina	Female	30	Asian	Education
Amber	Female	36	Asian	Health
Robbie	Male	32	White	Health
Nicole	Female	24	African American	Education
Caroline	Female	45	White	Education
Simone	Female	28	Hispanic	Education
Jessica	Female	30	Hispanic	Business
Ramona	Female	38	Hispanic	Business
Sandra	Female	32	African American	Education
Sophie	Female	41	White	Education
Kimberly	Female	22	White	Business
Johnny	Male	27	White	Health
Jeanene	Female	38	Hispanic	Education
Nancy	Female	25	Hispanic	Education

Julia	Female	37	Hispanic	Health
Ron	Male	45	White	Health
Susan	Female	34	African American	Education
Ellen	Female	24	Hispanic	Manufacturing
Karen	Female	48	White	Business
Laura	Female	34	White	Education
Toni	Female	34	African American	Education
Rebecca	Female	33	Hispanic	Health
Jane	Female	42	Asian	Education
Monica	Female	37	Hispanic	Education
Kimberly	Female	40	N/A	Education
Jessica	Female	22	Hispanic	Business
Andy	Male	35	White	Education
Francine	Female	28	Hispanic	Education

Website Experience Survey

The research team developed a website experience survey using qualitative data from informational interviews. The survey questions and topline survey responses are provided in Appendix C. The objective of the survey was to elicit feedback from members of the general public on their experiences accessing student support services online at the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges. The research team emailed individuals in their network and recruited 30 participants for the survey through a snowball sampling process (i.e. participant referrals). Each participant was assigned a community college website to review. Each received instructions on completing the survey (Appendix E). Three participants were assigned to each of the 10 San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges—three per college. The participants shared their experiences locating the student support services main page for each campus and accessing information regarding the academic counseling, career center, and student health services pages. The survey asked participants about their experiences locating information about student support services and their experiences with using the website's virtual chatbot feature (wherever available). The survey took approximately 15 to 20 minutes, and participants received $20 gift cards for their time.

Appendix B: Interview Guide

The research team met with a user experience (UX) designer and three former community college students to review the survey instructions (Appendix E) and the interview questions below before administering the web experience survey to 30 participants.

Student Support Services Main Page

1. What college were you assigned?
   a. Grossmont College
   b. Cuyamaca College
   c. San Diego Mesa College
   d. San Diego City College
   e. San Diego Miramar College
   f. Southwestern College
   g. Imperial Valley College
   h. MiraCosta College
   i. Palomar College
   j. San Diego College of Continuing Education

2. How easy or difficult is it to find the student support services main page?
   a. Very easy
   b. Easy
   c. Neither easy nor difficult
   d. Difficult
   e. Very difficult

3. Is there a comprehensive list of all student support services offered by the college?
   a. Yes
   b. No

4. Is there a detailed description of the types of student support services offered?
   a. Yes
   b. No

5. Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see. (Open-ended)

6. Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the student support services webpage. (Open-ended)

Academic Counseling Center's Page

7. How easy or difficult is it to find the academic counseling center's page?
   a. Very easy
   b. Easy
   c. Neither easy nor difficult
   d. Difficult
   e. Very difficult

8. Is there a detailed description of the types of academic counseling services offered?
   a. Yes
   b. No

9. Which of the following information is included on the webpage? Select all that apply.
     a. Contact information (e.g., email, phone number)
     b. Hours of operation
     c. How to schedule an appointment
     d. None of the above

10. Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see. (Open-ended)

11. Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the academic counseling center's webpage.

Career Center's Page

12. How easy or difficult is it to find the career center's page?
     a. Very easy
     b. Easy
     c. Neither easy nor difficult
     d. Difficult
     e. Very difficult

13. Is there a detailed description of the types of career center services offered?
     a. Yes
     b. No

14. Which of the following information is included on the webpage? Select all that apply.
     a. Contact information (e.g., email, phone number)
     b. Hours of operation
     c. How to schedule an appointment
     d. None of the above

15. Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see.

16. Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the career center's website.

Student Health Center's Page

17. How easy or difficult is it to find the student health center's page?
     a. Very easy
     b. Easy
     c. Neither easy nor difficult
     d. Difficult
     e. Very difficult

18. Is there a detailed description of the types of student health services offered?
     a. Yes
     b. No

19. Which of the following information is included on the webpage? Select all that apply.
     a. Contact information (e.g., email, phone number)
     b. Hours of operation
     c. How to schedule an appointment
     d. None of the above

20. Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see. (Open-ended)

21. Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the student health center's webpage. (Open-ended)

Virtual Chatbot Questions

22. Does the college's website have a virtual chatbot that answers your questions?
      a. Yes
      b. No

23. Are you able to find academic counseling services, career center services, or student health services with the virtual chatbot?

      a. Academic Counseling Services
            i. Yes
            ii. No
      b. Career Center Services
            i. Yes
            ii. No
      c. Student Health Services
            i. Yes
            ii. No

24. Based on your experience with this feature, how helpful was the virtual chatbot in finding information on the website?
      a. Very helpful
      b. Helpful
      c. Neither helpful nor unhelpful
      d. Unhelpful
      e. Very unhelpful

25. Do you have any other information you would like to share regarding the virtual chatbot? (Open-ended)

26. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience in navigating the student support services webpages?
      a. Very satisfied
      b. Satisfied
      c. Somewhat satisfied
      d. Not at all satisfied

Appendix C: Topline Survey Reponses

This section includes the responses from a survey with 30 residents from San Diego and Imperial Counties regarding their experience with the region's community college websites, specifically with the student support services pages.

Q1. What college were you assigned?

College	Count
Grossmont College	3
Cuyamaca College	3
San Diego Mesa College	3
San Diego City College	3
San Diego Miramar College	3
Southwestern College	3
Imperial Valley College	3
MiraCosta College	3
Palomar College	3
San Diego College of Continuing Education	3
	n = 30

Q2. How easy or difficult is it to find the student support services main page?

Selection	Count
Very easy	18
Easy	9
Neither easy nor difficult	2
Difficult	1
Very difficult	0
	n = 30

Q3. Is there a comprehensive list of all student support services offered by the college?

Selection	Count
Yes	28
No	2
Total	n = 30

Q4. Is there a detailed description of the types of student support services offered?

Selection	Count
Yes	25
No	5
n =	30

Q5. Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see.

Yes.
Contained info I expected to see.
Yes, it's easy to maneuver.
The webpage provides an assortment of information that someone visiting would be expected to see.
The website contains everything I would expect to see, from health to advising services, with clear descriptions. In addition, following the center links provides additional services specific to the centers, which is helpful.
This page contains all the resources I would expect like financial aid, admissions, etc. There is also information about summer programs.
The comprehensive list only appears when you hover over student support services, but if you click the "student service" link, it takes you to a page with no detailed descriptions and a lot of large images you must scroll down for a while to see all information.
I would expect to see a short description/intro of each section, and not needing to click into each area to figure out what that means.
Yes, all of information I would expect to see is on the webpage.
Yes and No. Yes, because I see the support services that most college and universities have such as career services, veterans services, disability support, counseling, EOPS, financial aid, scholarships, etc. No, because I am pleased to see the range of support services for students. For example, first year services, etc. and when I clicked on Umoja, I learned more about that community program. I was also pleased to see they have lactation room on their student support services page.
I like that there is a list of all services a student may be curious about. For instance, some colleges have certain services under instruction not student services or another department, but the list is all there. For instance, I like that the lactation is listed under a tab and not something to hunt for through a bunch of different tabs.
Yes, this is what I would expect to see.
Services are separated into categories, but a detailed description is not provided, not all at once at least.
Yes, everything is detailed and organized.

The student support services are listed when you hover over the Student Support tab, and you have to click into each one separately to read about it. I would have liked/expected the Student Support front page to have a list of links associated with those on the dropdown menu. Right now, the front page seems disjointed from the rest of the items listed on the dropdown; and they have seemingly no association with the rest of the student services.
The page has a list of services with links to each one. The descriptions are clear and navigating to each one is easy.
The webpage contains detailed information about different services.
It does contain information I expect to see. It might not be organized in a way that makes the most sense to me but if you keep scrolling you can find all of the services.
Too many words and hard to find things.
Looks comprehensive and easy to navigate.
Includes important elements of student support services provided.
While it does have the info I expected to see, I thought student services was a designated office/department and as such expected a more welcoming page instead of a text-heavy directory.
No, I see a list of services, but it would be easier if I can click those services to lead somewhere.
Yes, has basic information needed to answer questions. and has option to speak with staff if questions haven't been answered.
Yes, the webpage contains detailed information of what you'd expect to see when searching for student support services.

Q6. Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the student support services webpage.

Sections seem disjointed—at top of page, set of 3 service groups, then student health banner, then 3 more service groups, then list of other services, then *another* separate list of additional resources.
Put upcoming events in a side bar/quick view calendar or newsfeed. I would expect location/hours/contact us to be located at the bottom of the page. The let's get started banner/picture seems like it would make more sense on the admissions page. I'd like to see a banner/picture like that as the first thing I see at the top of the page vs. seeing a bunch of words/an alert. A picture is a lot more inviting than words/alert.
The page itself wasn't easy to find. I found it using the search bar, which was pretty easy but only assuming you know what you are searching for. Then I was able to find it by scrolling to the bottom of the website. I would suggest maybe including it as part of the dropdown menu on the student services tab. Another improvement could be to divide the resources into categories instead. For example, you can have categories could be: billing, programs (summer programs), incoming students.
I would recommend spelling out Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act, rather than listing it as DREAM Act. While most are familiar with this acronym, I believe the acronym should be used after the title of the Act.

Less wordy, I wasn't even reading all the information there, I just glazed over it. For each of the section (ex: Assessment & Testing, Evaluations, etc.) it would be nice to provide a brief sentence or two describing what each of those areas are about. This will help students to navigate what types of services and support are even available, at a glance.
In the "Additional Support and Assistance Program" section, it might make sense to eliminate the ones that are already featured towards the top of the page to avoid redundancy.
I believe that the website is well designed, and things are easy to find. The only factor I was uncertain about was the understanding of where to go for mental health concerns such as stress and anxiety. Even though the Health and Wellness sections speak about personal counseling vs. general or educational counseling, I am unclear if all students would understand this. I would be concerned that the terms counseling for both could create some confusion. The terms may get reduced to just counseling by the advisors, which could create further confusion. However, this will become clearer as students visit the site and confirm their understanding of the terminology.
There is some outdated info on the webpage about Student Virtual Forums from April 2020. This could be removed or more recent webinars could be added.
Implement a site map showing all these services [and] a description for what each does.
Less words and more pictures. Stop having the chat pop up.
Maybe find a way to incorporate [more] colloquial language. For instance, a student may qualify but not know what EOPS is by the name. Maybe have some subtabs, but the descriptions are good.
While it's amazing to see a list of services, it looks overwhelming and I wouldn't know where to begin. Especially being a first-generation college student myself, I would appreciate if each service had a brief description rather than having to click on each page.
Perhaps add more visually appealing thumbnails for each of the services instead of just the links and the descriptions.
I think the Important Dates sections can be displayed differently and/or moved. It takes up a lot of real estate at the top of the page but the information is in small font and does not utilize a lot of space. It would be nice to have the labels/service offerings grouped in alphabetical order.
Within ASB, I feel like there should be links or a section for student cultural/success centers or student organizations.
While there is a comprehensive list of all of the services offered, it would be helpful if there was a short description of the service under each hyperlink. It would also be beneficial if the services were organized based on topic (i.e., academic, health, professional development, etc.).
Make all listed services clickable so that it leads to a page which shows how to use each service.

Q7. How easy or difficult is it to find the academic counseling center page?

Selection	Count
Very easy	14
Easy	8
Neither easy nor difficult	7
Difficult	1
Very difficult	0
	n = 30

Q8. Is there a detailed description of the types of academic counseling services offered?

Selection	Count
Yes	23
No	7
	n = 30

Q9. Which of the following information is included on the webpage? Select all that apply.

Selection	Count
Contact information (e.g., email, phone number)	26
Hours of operation	23
How to schedule an appointment	22
None of the above	4
	n = 30

Q10. Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see.

It explained all the information needed to access and connect with the counseling service.
No, does not have contact info or specific counseling services.
Are there separate virtual hours vs. in-person hours?
Lots of different resources for all sorts of needs.
This page contains what I expected, information about how to contact someone regarding academic advising. It was also nice that it included other information such as new student checklist and personal growth classes.
No, I expected to see mental health counseling resources.
Page was blank.
Yes, it does contain the info I expect to see.
Webpage contains the expected information.

Yes, but couldn't find how to make an appt.
I like the summary of academic, transfer, career, and personal counseling. It would be nice to have some step-by-step examples of why a student may go into the office. I think it assumes a student has knowledge of college.
I think because I have friends who work at community colleges, I know that the counseling center usually encompasses academic, career, transfer, and personal counseling needs. Otherwise, I would be confused on where to go for my academics since counseling sounds like only personal counseling.
In general, I'm getting the sentiment that the college has a very text heavy website. It has the necessary info, but it's not visually appealing.
Page looks comprehensive, clear instructions, simple to navigate, and the blue tabs to schedule appt. or live chat are helpful.
I expect to see the "How to schedule an appointment" as the first thing or as a hyperlink embedded within each service/special program listed. I expect to see a way to add the appointment to my calendar via Google, Outlook etc.
There are no direct contact links to the counseling office or directions for scheduling appointments (or at least none that I saw).
Yes, contact information is very clear.
I could not find how to schedule an appointment.
The webpage is missing an "Additional Resource" section where students can check out articles/videos/charts with information to peruse through if they don't feel up to scheduling an appointment.
This page contains all necessary features.

Q11. Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the academic counseling center's webpage.

Had to click 3 links to get to a page with address, hours of operation, and contact info. This should be on the landing page for academic services.
This page is written well and has tons of resources! Would like to see more pictures though.
The only reason I did not say it was very easy to find is because my initial thought was to look for it under the academics tab. When looking under the student services tab I was initially looking for academic counseling not just counseling.
I would recommend that instead of listing this section as "Counseling" list it as something along the lines of "Academic Counseling." There is a message at the top of the page that states mental health counseling is listed under health services, but this is in small font and would be easy to miss.
I couldn't find it and had to enter academic counseling in the search box. The current path to get there is through Home>Student Food & Housing Program>Student Service>Academic Counseling. Update path so it's more accessible.

Cluster the services together, layout can be improved to be more like drawers; it's difficult to read all the different sections because the subsections aren't obvious. It's like you have to follow the indents to know which section you're in.
Perhaps having the appointment scheduling links/contact info towards the top might be helpful (i.e., switching it with the "other resource" section).
I would consider including an email under the contact information on the landing page. In addition, I would also include a summary of appointment options on the landing page since I assume this will be frequently requested and something I would be most interested in knowing immediately, especially if a question is urgent.
There is very limited information when you click on academic counseling tab other than the heading. More information needs to be added overall.
Consolidate all services to one page for an "at a glance" feel.
It's great.
Possibly adding more to the counseling services, such as those stated above (hours of operation, scheduling an appointment).
There should be a one-sentence description that the counseling page covers academic, career, transfer, and personal counseling needs.
The page says "Last modified on March 18, 2019" which would make me feel like the hours listed and other info (such as scheduling an appointment) aren't up to date since the pandemic changed everything.
You have to scroll pretty far down to see the "How to Make an Appointment." The way it is listed makes it easy to miss.
There needs to be an email or phone number that directly connects you to the counseling office. I don't want to call student services and go through multiple options to get to CS.
There is a broken link on the FAQ page.
I suggest adding an "Additional Resources" section, as well as more information on the different ways academic counseling could benefit the student.

Q12. How easy or difficult is it to find the career center's page?

Selection	Count
Very easy	15
Easy	8
Neither easy nor difficult	3
Difficult	4
Very difficult	0
	n = 30

Q13. Is there a detailed description of the types of career center services offered?

Selection	Count
Yes	25
No	5
n =	30

Q14. Which of the following information is included on the webpage? Select all that apply.

Selection	Count
Contact information (e.g., email, phone number)	28
Hours of operation	20
How to schedule an appointment	23
None of the above	1
n =	30

Q15. Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see.

The Career Center page included all the necessary information.
It contains what I would expect.
The career spots video feeds look spammy/unprofessional.
Yes, couldn't find hours of operation. Different resources for career building available.
Yes, this page contains the information I would expect to see.
Yes, easy to navigate and has contact information and lists services offered.
I would like to see overview of services they offer, at a glance.
Webpage contains expected information.
The Career Center page has succinct descriptions of their services, as well as a helpful video.
The services expected are provided.
Overall, yes.
Only a simple, bulleted list of services offered was found, must chat or email to schedule an appointment.
Information is easy to find.
It only has extension numbers.
I was not able to find the hours of operation.
Broken link to schedule an appointment.
No. I expect to see more resources on resume, interviewing, LinkedIn, etc.
The search function turned up two links for the career center that could have been the correct landing page—one said "Career Center Services" and the other was "Welcome to the Career Center," which of course seems like would be the home page so [I] started there. However, the landing page that that link

takes you to [is] a page that has the menu options (where you can find the Career Center Services page) and then the center's vision/mission/values. The two links in the search feel somewhat redundant, and I would rather the landing page be the one that has the info. that [someone] most likely is searching for, which is all on the center's services page.

Page looks comprehensive and simple to navigate.

I expected to see a list of services, but it took me three times before I saw the list because the list is off to the right side in the corner.

It does but there are no hours of operation or directions for booking an appointment.

Yes, helpful videos.

Unclear if "Join on Zoom" or "Request Services" are the same as scheduling an appointment. Do not see anything that explicitly states "Schedule appointment."

The webpage is missing hours of operation and their contact information.

This webpage contains all the necessary information.

Q16. Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the career center's webpage.

Confusing to find it going from the main student support services webpage—several links had to be clicked.

I'd like to see a picture of the team at the top, or maybe a "Meet the team" section? It was difficult to find this page; initially did Student Support>More Services>Career Center.

Including a list of services provided.

This page was difficult to locate, as it is listed. This does not make sense since many students are looking for employment on or off campus while enrolled. I would recommend listing 'Career Services' under the 'Support for Student' tab at the top for easy access.

The "Start Here" PDF is a good idea, but maybe make it less cluttered, it's a little overwhelming. Also, please include a list of services that Career Services offer.

Suggest having the "About the Career Center" section and specific services dropdown on top of the webpage rather than on the bottom.

I would recommend consistency over the websites. Hours of operations are missing, and even though an email is provided, no phone number is listed. It is excellent that upcoming events are listed at the top, but I would recommend easy access to events on the landing page, like a calendar. In addition, some of the layout is confusing, there is the sidebar, and then it seems additional links under descriptions of services. I recommend [embedding] some of the links in the text to avoid duplicated listings. Personally, I find the descriptions a little too long and wordy for the landing page, which should provide clear navigation. In addition, the bottom buttons are confusing since events and counseling is related to student services and as mentioned prior, the term counseling is applied to three different areas: student affairs, career, and personal. The events are also not related to career events but to student affairs.

I would suggest moving the different sections with resources higher up on the webpage and moving the contact info to the bottom.
Show a detailed list of all services offered and the ability to schedule online.
Have emails and actual phone numbers.
Including the hours of operation would be helpful. Adding more visuals or making the site a little more visually pleasing would help as well.
Technical and word heavy. Maybe include pictures and the info students need; not as much background.
Include more resources.
I would suggest making the Career Center Services page the home page and retiring what is currently the homepage as there isn't really anything imperative there and it just adds another step to finding the info that you want.
Make the list of services obvious. However, I like the staff photos, I like the appointment icon. This page did a good job of listing out contact info, plus their mission and vision statements.
The hours of operation for each individual need to be listed with a general overview of what is needed to make [an appointment] and [prepare] for an appointment.
The contact information and hours of operations are a bit small on the page and can be easy to miss if scrolling fast. Suggest bringing more prominence to that information.
Suggest reformatting the page and making the "You need a career counseling appointment" and "How to make a career counseling appointment" one of the first sections on the page. Most students who navigate to this page will already know they want an appointment, and many students may not scroll all the way to the bottom which might prevent them from scheduling an appointment.

Q17. How easy or difficult is it to find the student health center's page?

Selection	Count
Very easy	17
Easy	5
Neither easy nor difficult	4
Difficult	3
Very difficult	1
	n = 30

Q18. Is there a detailed description of the types of student health services offered?

Selection	Count
Yes	25
No	5
	n = 30

Q19. Which of the following information is included on the webpage? Select all that apply.

Selection	Count
Contact information (e.g., email, phone number)	26
Hours of operation	26
How to schedule an appointment	20
None of the above	3
n =	30

Q20. Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see.

Very detailed regarding what to expect from the student health services. Though when scrolling the front page, I didn't realize there was a separate link to contact, hours, & appointments page.
I don't see a "How to schedule an appointment" section. I'm assuming it's the "Enter Health Services & Personal Wellness Lobby"?
Couldn't find it fast enough.
Yes, this page contains the information I would expect to see.
This was listed under student support dropdown menu and I don't think it's intuitive that it would be located there.
The services [are] not on this main page, I had to click into "Services" on the left to go to a different page to see what services they offer.
Webpage contains information as expected.
The student health services page indeed has all the information needed.
Even though services are offered it is surprisingly unclear on how to schedule an appointment.
The information looks comprehensive and it's nice to see some of it in both English and Spanish.
Services provided are under the "Department Pages" section which could be confusing to some.
Scheduling an appointment appears to be implied that you call.
I could not find the student health center page.
It has a lot of information already, not sure what else would be missing.
I like the breakdown and quick explanation of the student health clinic and the video.
I would expect to see a list of services provided by the center on their home page, but it's nowhere to be found. When you click on the telehealth appointments option under Appointments, there is a list of services offered on the infographic, and that is what I would expect to see on the homepage.
Page is comprehensive and simple to navigate.
This page has a lot of red and it's hard to focus to find the information you are looking for. It does have a lot of info on COVID but other than that I don't see anything else health related.

I could not locate a link to the student health services page.
Yes, detailed services and eligibility requirements.
No, in order to find the link to schedule an appointment you need to navigate to another page.
No way to set in-person appointment (COVID-related).

Q21. Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the student health center's webpage.

From student support services page, when clicking on student health I was taken to the health services page, and then had to click on student health center. Consider making student health center the landing and then providing links to the other health services for less clicks.
There's a lot on this page. I think it could benefit from a health services home page for general info, and then links to sub-pages about health services details.
Couldn't find it fast enough.
Where is the "how to schedule an appointment?"
No recommendations.
I would suggest making this its own dropdown title listed as health.
Too much verbiage. Provide hours of operation/appointment information in bullet points to be easy to read.
The page is too long, maybe separate out the COVID-19 items to another page. Information is disjointed on the main webpage.
The instructions for making an appointment could be missed, as it seems to just be stated in the text under "COVID Announcement." Having a highlighted box or a title on "How to Schedule an Appointment" might make this information easier to find.
The services are not all clear such as the contemplation room or how to make an appointment besides for personal counseling. The flyer and covid information could be smaller to avoid scrolling down to contact information and hours of services which would be helpful to have included in the sidebar as pages have done. It is also unclear how I would make an appointment and who I would contact or email, outside of covid concerns.
Under sections—the plus tabs take time to navigate since you have to click on each one to see all the information.
Add a feature to allow online appointment scheduling.
Have hours and outside resources.
Including a student health center page or, if there already is one, make it easier to find.
None. I like how they have a video describing who they are and what services they offer.
Make the list of services offered clearer/add to the homepage.

Less red font. Keep all the fonts the same, even in graphics. In the top paragraph where it mentions appointments there should be instructions or a direct link to schedule those appointments.
I didn't see this page on the list of student services, so it probably should be included there.
I suggest adding links to schedule appointments on the main webpage.
It looks like in-person meetings require a call to schedule an appointment. No way to set it online, telehealth appointments can still be set online.

Q22. Does the college's website have a virtual chatbot that answers your questions?

Selection	Count
Yes	12
No	18
	n = 30

Q23. Are you able to find academic counseling services, career center services, or student health services with the virtual chatbot?

Selection	Yes	No
Academic Counseling Services	9	3
Career Center Services	11	1
Student Health Center Services	11	1
	n =	30

Q24. Based on your experience with this feature, how helpful was the virtual chatbot in finding information on the website?

Selection	Count
Very helpful	1
Helpful	4
Neither helpful or unhelpful	7
Unhelpful	0
Very unhelpful	0
	n = 12

Q25. Do you have any other information you would like to share regarding the virtual chat box?

It might be helpful to have a chat box on the Student Resources page in addition to the specific pages.
Needs to better distinguish when user is seeking more information on resource vs. making an appointment with that resource.
Virtual chat hours?

No, overall seems like a nice experience.
I would have liked to try the live feature, but it wasn't available right now.
The questions asked by the virtual chat box are dependent on the section of the website you're already on (if you're in the counseling section of the website, the chat box only provides questions pertaining to counseling).
Box pops up too much.
None.
Chatbot seems friendly but when I typed "Where can I find the academic counseling services?" it resulted in a list of services/areas and that was overwhelming. When I looked for the Student Health Services it asked for my name and [that] gave me pause. I wasn't sure why it wanted my name.
There was a website error and the chatbot was inaccessible.

Q26. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience in navigating the student support services webpages?

Selection	Count
Very satisfied	8
Satisfied	14
Somewhat satisfied	8
Not satisfied	0
n =	30

Appendix D: Themes & Quotes

The survey responses elucidated a variety of experiences. The research team grouped the responses into the following themes:

- Improve navigation between landing page and student support services pages
- Provide a comprehensive list of various services and organize that information into groups
- Include concise descriptions of available services
- Make contact and appointment information easy to find
- Use professionally made materials and visually appealing layouts

The table below includes quotes from the participants that relate to each of the five themes.

Theme	Participants' Experience with Student Support Services Pages (Quotes)
Improve navigation between landing page and student support services pages	• "The page itself wasn't easy to find. I found it using the search bar, which was pretty easy but only assuming you know what you are searching for. Then I was able to find it by scrolling to the bottom of the website. I would suggest maybe including it as part of the dropdown menu on the student services tab." • "The front page seems disjointed from the rest of the items listed on the dropdown; and they have seemingly no association with the rest of the student services." • "If you click the 'student services' link, it takes you to a page with no detailed descriptions and a lot of large images you must scroll down for a while to see all the information." • "Career service information not listed on student services main page as a hyperlink but is listed in the dropdown menu in the taskbar." • "The search function turned up two links for the career center that could have been the correct landing page; one said 'Career Center Services,' and the other was 'Welcome to the Career Center,' which of course seems like it would be the home page, so I started there. The two links in the search feel somewhat redundant, and I would rather the landing page be the one that has the info that [someone] most likely is searching for, which is all on the center's services page."

	• "Suggest having the 'About the Career Center' section and specific services dropdown on top of the webpage rather than on the bottom."
Provide a comprehensive list of various services and organize that information into groups	• "It doesn't include a list of services provided, at least none that I can easily find." • "It would also be beneficial if the services were organized based on topic (i.e., academic, health, professional development, etc.)." • "Another improvement could be to divide the resources into categories instead. For example, [the] categories could be: billing, programs (summer programs), incoming students." • "Cluster the services together, layout can be improved to be more like drawers; it's difficult to read all the different sections because the subsections aren't obvious. It's like you have to follow the indents to know which section you're in." • "I would expect to see a list of services provided by the center on their home page, but it's nowhere to be found. When you click on the telehealth appointments option under appointments, there is a list of services offered on the infographic, and that is what I would expect to see on the homepage."
Include concise descriptions of available services	• "While there is a comprehensive list of all of the services offered, it would be helpful if there was a short description of the service under each hyperlink." • "Less wordy, I wasn't even reading all the information there, I just glazed over it. For each of the sections (ex: Assessment & Testing, Evaluations, etc.), it would be nice to provide a brief sentence or two describing what each of those areas are about. This will help students to navigate what types of services and support are even available, at a glance." • "Too much verbiage. Provide … information in bullet points to be easy to read."
Make contact and appointment information easy to find	• "I would expect location/hours/contact us to be located at the bottom of the page." • "I expect to see the 'Schedule an appointment' as the first thing or as a hyperlink embedded within each service/special program listed. I expect to see a way to add the appointment to my calendar via Google, Outlook, etc."

	• "Was not able to find the hours of operation nor how to schedule an appointment. It only stated the general contact information of the campuses and to contact them for more details." • "Had to click 3 links to get to a page with address, hours of operation, and contact info. This should be on [the] landing page for academic services." • "The hours of operation for each individual need to be listed with a general overview of what is needed to make an appointment." • "The contact information and hours of operations are a bit small on the page, and can be easy to miss if scrolling fast. Suggest bringing more prominence to that information." • "The instructions for making an appointment could be missed, as it seems to just be stated in the text under 'Covid Announcement.' Having a highlighted box or a title on 'How to Schedule an Appointment' might make this information easier to find." • "Details regarding what to expect from the student health services. Though when scrolling the front page, I didn't realize there was a separate link to contact, hours, and appointments page."
Use professionally made materials and visually appealing layouts	• "The career spots video feeds look spammy/unprofessional." • "I like the breakdown and quick explanation of the student health clinic and the video." • "This page has a lot of red and it's hard to focus to find the information you are looking for. It does have a lot of info on Covid but other than that I don't see anything else health related."

Appendix E: Instructions for Survey Participants

Survey participants were given instructions that were broken into five sections, four of which asked them to navigate a different webpage: 1) main landing page for student services, 2) counseling center, 3) career center, 4) health center. The final section asked them to use the virtual chatbot to locate specific information.

Section I: Student Support Services
Step 1: Arrive at the student support services page for the college. This page should have a list of all student support services offered by the college.
Step 2: Review the student support services page and attempt to locate the information listed below: • A comprehensive list of all student support services offered by the college; and • A detailed description of the types of student support services offered.
Step 3: Complete section I of survey: student support services main page.

Section II: Counseling Center's Services
Step 4: Arrive at the counseling center's page.
Step 5: Review the counseling center's page and attempt to locate the information listed below: • A detailed description of the types of counseling services offered; • Contact information (e.g., phone, email); • Hours of operation; and • How to schedule an appointment.
Step 6: Complete section II of survey.

Section III: Career Center's Services
Step 7: Arrive at the career center's page.
Step 8: Review the career center's page and attempt to locate the information listed below: • A detailed description of the types of career center services offered; • Contact information (e.g., phone, email); • Hours of operation; and • How to schedule an appointment.
Step 9: Complete section III of survey.

Section IV: Student Health Center's Page
Step 10: Arrive at the student health center's page.

Step 11: Review the student health center's page and attempt to locate the information listed below:

- A detailed description of the types of student health services offered;

- Contact information (e.g., phone, email);

- Hours of operation; and

- How to schedule an appointment.

Step 12: Complete section IV of survey.

Section V: Attempt to Find a Virtual Chatbot on the Website

Step 13: If available, use the virtual chatbot feature to locate the information below.

- Whether or not the website has a virtual chatbot feature; and

- Whether or not academic counseling services, career center services, or student health services can be located using the virtual chatbot.

Acknowledgments

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMERS AND LIMITATIONS

All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. This study examines the most recent data available at the time of the analysis; however, data sets are updated regularly and may not be consistent with previous reports. The findings and recommendations in this report are limited due to the small sample size. The data only represents the experiences of some people who visit the college's website. The colleges should use the information provided in this report to understand individuals' experiences accessing the information on their websites. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the report findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE), COE host district, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for the applications or decisions made by individuals and/or organizations based on this study or its recommendations.