De Anza Guided Pathways Proposal
for the creation of
Villages

SUMMARY

The Guided Pathways Core Team proposes the creation of six villages based on the existing meta-majors: Artistic Expression, Business and Finance, Health and Life Sciences, Language and Communication, Physical Sciences and Technology, and Social Sciences and Humanities. Students will belong to a village based on the meta-major (or major) they select when registering at De Anza.

Within each village, students will not only be provided resources necessary to achieve their educational goals successfully, but they will be provided a community of fellow students and employees to support them. There will be required activities that every village engages in such as general orientations, meta-major specific workshops, and Welcome Day for students, and there will be optional activities such as social days, meet-and-greet brown bag lunches with faculty, village team-building days, and career workshops and presentations. The villages will also have dedicated space (either indoor, outdoor, or both) where students and employees can interact with others in their village.

To the extent possible, various offices across campus will also be organized by villages. For offices that have multiple employees, employee workload can be organized by village so that employees can learn specialization for the village(s) to which they are assigned. This will help students have more consistent contact with the same resources, and it will help employees focus on a smaller population of students, making their work more meaningful and efficient.

To maintain community between villages as well so that the villages are not working in silos, there will be a metaphoric "Town Center." The Town Center will be a coming together of all villages for general meetings, objectives, and so forth. It will also consist of areas of campus who are part of the village center rather than directly in a specific village such as areas that include one-person offices or areas that are part of the infrastructure of campus for which organizing by village is not conducive to the scope of that office's work.

By organizing our campus into villages, we are hoping to provide ways for the entire De Anza campus—students, classified professionals, faculty, and administrators—to engage with each other more consistently and deeply; to help students explore and decide on an area of study; to help all students, but particularly undeserved populations who might not have access to other resources, navigate college more seamlessly; to offer the onboarding process to students in a more proactive and welcoming way through scaffolding by the villages; to increase effective communication between all levels and all work units; and to address the needs of the whole student and whole employee.

CONTEXT

The four pillars of the Guided Pathways initiative at De Anza are

- Clarify the path
- Get on the path
- Stay on the path
- Ensure learning

The campus has made much progress towards clarifying the path for students. As the Guided Pathways Core Team began to focus on the next two pillars of having students get on the path and stay on the path, we realized that while we do a lot of wonderful work on our campus, students don't always access the available resources. Even when they receive communication from our Communication Office, they might not always read the information. However, if they receive communication from their Village Teams, who they will know more intimately, the likelihood that they will read the communication and act on it will be higher.

We further recognized that employees on campus (classified professionals, faculty, and administrators) were also frustrated at times by a couple of challenges in the way we work. One challenge was that the size of our campus prevented us from consistently knowing other areas' initiatives, procedures, and policies. This tendency to work in silos was not a result of the individual personalities of the employees; rather, it was a result of the way in which the campus was organized. A second challenge, due again to the size of our campus, was that many people (students and employees alike) did not necessarily know where to go for different questions. Many, if not all of us, have experienced being interrupted in our work by questions that didn't pertain to our areas.

By working in village teams, we hope to address both issues by building deeper connections between various areas of campus. The more we are informed and educated, the more we can help students and direct them to the necessary resources as well.

Why does working in villages help improve these efforts? As we know, many of De Anza's students are the first generation in their family to attend college or are from schools that are historically underserved, thereby not providing the necessary resources to prepare students to attend college. Many of these students are typically relational learners, and while a classroom setting is more conducive to relational learning, the structure of our campus does not always lend itself for students to have this type of relationship with the campus employees at large nor necessarily with each other. We know that there is an equity gap between our targeted populations on campus—Latinx, African Ancestry, and Filipinx students—with the non-targeted populations on campus. There are a variety of reasons for these gaps such as the ones already mentioned, but another reason for the gap could be linked to their sense of belonging on such a large campus. To a first-generation-to-college student, the size of our campus in terms of square footage, student enrollment, and varying resources can be intimidating.

When the Guided Pathways Core Team reviewed the basic markers that most students need to accomplish while matriculating through their years at De Anza, we identified no fewer than 20 items, and these were just the basics. With this knowledge, one can see how overwhelming it can be to begin and continue with college. Add to that the fact that, with a couple of rare exceptions, community colleges are not residential but commuter colleges, students do not readily have as many

opportunities to meet other students outside the classroom. Although De Anza is known for its panoply of programs, clubs, events, and activities, too many of our students, many of whom have heavy work schedules outside of school, do not necessarily have the capacity to seek out these interactions.

We, as an institution, need to be student-ready. We need to bring the resources to them more proactively. What we know is that students in learning cohorts at De Anza outperform their counterparts outside of these cohorts by a significant margin. Learning cohorts provide a support system for students in which not only do they make connections with each other and their instructors, but many of the services that our campus offers are proactively provided to them as they need them. The answer to bridge the equity gap would be to offer more of these types of programs ; however, realistically, to do so is cost prohibitive. Instead, looking at the effective practices of these programs and implementing such practices that are feasible at a larger campus level is a more realistic option. Thus, finding a way to recreate the type of community, proactive support, engagement, highlighting of students' voices and experiences, and focused learning that these programs provide, and to bring those elements directly to the student rather than the student having to seek them out, is a goal of the villages model. By scaling up these effective practices of successful programs, we hope not only to reduce the equity gap, but all students will benefit from the restructuring. Rather than focusing on division, let's focus on community. The Guided Pathways Villages model will bring to life the well-known aphorism, "It takes a village" to support a student.

DATA

As seen below in Figure 1, De Anza appears to be doing quite well in terms of success rates. For success rates, defined by earning a grade of C or higher in a class, we are averaging 80% and have seen a slight increase over the past five years. But when we look more closely at the data and disaggregate it between targeted and non-targeted populations as can be seen in Figure 2, we are experiencing a large equity gap. Targeted populations are experiencing a rate of 71% whereas non-targeted populations are experiencing a rate of 84%, which is a 13 percentage point difference. The gap has not changed significantly in the past five years, and at times is even worsening.

What this suggests is that any individual efforts we make within different areas on campus such as departments or divisions might perhaps lead to results in our own areas, but they do not necessarily affect our students as a whole. Instead, we need to change the whole infrastructure of our campus. We need a concerted effort to help our students succeed. Some may interpret the consistency of this equity gap as evidence that the gap will always exist and there is little that can be done to address the gap.

Course Success
De Anza College

	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent
Success	141,285	77%	133,046	77%	124,220	77%	119,472	78%	120,861	80%
Non Success	24,393	13%	21,989	13%	19,890	12%	18,566	12%	15,922	10%
Withdrew	18,637	10%	18,219	11%	16,498	10%	15,071	10%	14,917	10%
Total	184,315	100%	173,254	100%	160,608	100%	153,109	100%	151,700	100%

Figure 1 – College-wide success rates, all students (from De Anza's Program Review 2019-2020)

Course Success for African American, Latinx, and Filipinx Students

	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent
Success	45,243	69%	42,944	70%	39,421	70%	36,390	69%	37,493	71%
Non Success	11,835	18%	10,664	17%	9,847	17%	9,251	18%	8,246	16%
Withdrew	8,113	12%	8,056	13%	7,430	13%	6,826	13%	6,791	13%
Total	65,191	100%	61,664	100%	56,698	100%	52,467	100%	52,530	100%

Course Success for Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, White, and Decline to State Students

	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent
Success	96,042	81%	90,102	81%	84,799	82%	83,082	83%	83,368	84%
Non Success	12,558	11%	11,325	10%	10,043	10%	9,315	9%	7,676	8%
Withdrew	10,524	9%	10,163	9%	9,068	9%	8,245	8%	8,126	8%
Total	119,124	100%	111,590	100%	103,910	100%	100,642	100%	99,170	100%

Figure 2 – College-wide success rates, targeted vs. non-targeted students (from De Anza's Program Review 2019-2020)

However, learning communities across the nation and across campus have shown that more proactive interventions can, and indeed do, make a difference. Vince Tinto, one of the leading theorists on learning communities, shows how students in learning communities experience far better results than their non-learning community counterparts. In their work "A Longitudinal Study of Learning Communities at LaGuardia Community College," Tinto and Anne Goodsell Love found that for students in learning communities,

- their perceptions of classes, other students, faculty, counselors, campus climate, and their own involvement were generally more positive
- they earned more credits and had higher grade point averages than traditional students
- they were more likely to express an intention to continue in higher education (88.5% versus 77.9%);

De Anza, too, has experienced similar results. Looking at Figure 3 (data from the First Year Experience program) and Figure 4 (data from the Puente Project), we see that intrusive interventions have proven successful. Data from these two programs were selected because they are two of the most established learning communities directed to targeted populations. Both learning communities have been in existence a minimum of 15 years each. The data shows that students are not only performing higher than their counterparts who are not part of a special program, but they are performing significantly higher than the entire campus population. (In 2019-20, the success rates for both programs dropped significantly because this was the first year of AB705 implementation, in which students were required to take EWRT1A rather than the vital developmental English course that prepared them for EWRT1A. In both cases, though, the programs still saw success rates higher than the general population of students despite AB705.) Both these learning communities have at core their EWRT1A class, which has an evaluation process external to just the program instructor; so the students are not performing at a higher rate because the instructor has deemed it so; instead, they are performing at a higher rate as evaluated by instructors other than their own.

Course Success
De Anza College

	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent
Success	565	87%	596	88%	388	80%	451	86%	356	80%
Non Success	56	9%	67	10%	59	12%	61	12%	51	12%
Withdrew	28	4%	16	2%	38	8%	14	3%	36	8%
Total	649	100%	679	100%	485	100%	526	100%	443	100%

Figure 3 – FYE success rates (from De Anza's Program Review 2019-2020)

Course Success
De Anza College

	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent	Grades	Percent
Success	166	95%	177	96%	140	96%	148	82%
Non Success	6	3%	7	4%	6	4%	10	6%
Withdrew	2	1%	1	1%	0	0%	23	13%
Total	174	100%	185	100%	146	100%	181	100%

**Figure 4 – Puente success rates (from De Anza's Program Review 2019-2020)**

Additional data from the Puente Program (see Figures 5-7 below) shows that students are not only outperforming their peers in success but in other important categories as well. In all four categories – success, retention, persistence, and transfer – students in Puente classes, which are regularly composed of over 95% Latinx students outperform their peers. Programs like Puente and FYE have proven success, and we need to take a serious look at the effective practices that help students achieve their goals.
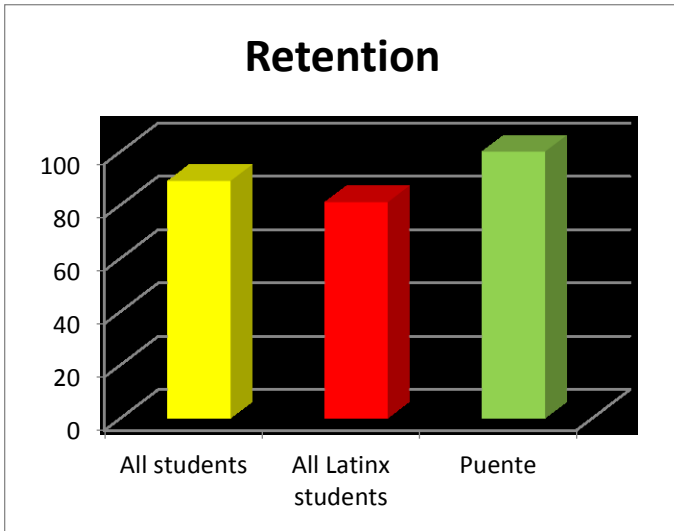
Figure 5 – Puente persistence rates
Source: CCC Chancellor's Office Data Mart for 2017-18
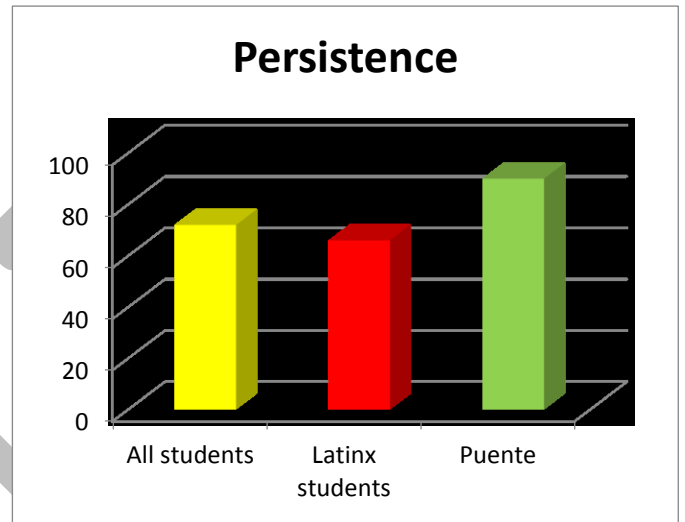
Figure 6 – Puente persistence rates
Source: DAC College-wide Program Review Data for 2010-2013 (most recent data available)
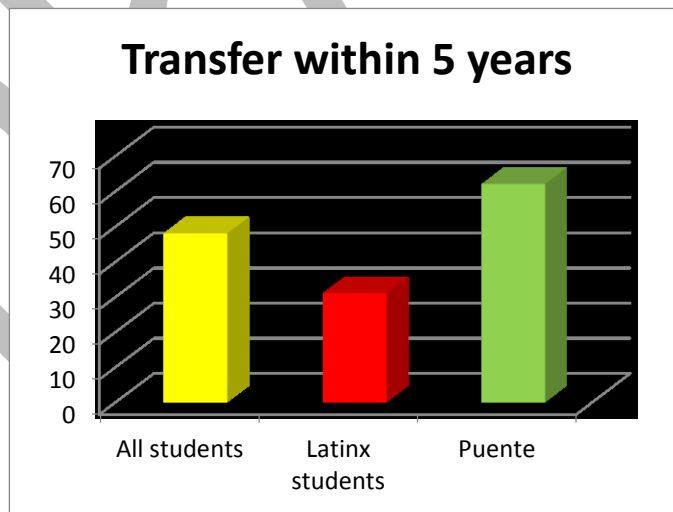
Figure 7 – Puente transfer rates
Source: De Anza Puente Program Review data 2013-2014
Source: CCC Chancellor's Office Data Mart for 2010-2011 (most recent data available)

OBJECTIVES AND METRICS

Objectives

- Provide ways for the entire De Anza campus—students, classified professionals, faculty, and administrators—as well as our larger communities to engage with each other more consistently and deeply.
- Help students explore and decide on an area of study.
- Recognize the value of students' voices and experiences
- Help all students, but particularly underserved populations who might not have access to other resources, navigate college more seamlessly.
- Offer the onboarding process to students in a more proactive and welcoming way through scaffolding by the villages.
- Increase effective communication between all levels and all work units.
- Address the needs of the whole student and whole employee.

Metrics

We will utilize the instructional metrics in De Anza's Educational Master Plan to determine to what extent our implementation of the village structure will have an impact on students' progress.

DESCRIPTION

VILLAGE COMPOSITION:

All students will belong to a village based on their major or meta-major upon applying to De Anza. Upon becoming a part of a village, a student will be provided that village's onboarding materials (e.g. in the form of a village pamphlet or village Canvas page) which will help the student navigate De Anza College more easily. Students who select "Undecided" as a major will still be guided to a village and directed to resources that might assist them in selecting a meta-major. They are not obligated to remain with that meta-major or village, but they will still have resources available to them to assist them in making a decision for their major in the future.

Most employees will be part of a village as well. Sometimes whole programs or departments will belong to certain villages depending on their area of specialization. At other times, certain offices on campus will organize their workloads based on villages. For example, if Office X has three employees, the three employees will divide the villages among them so that each can focus on two of the villages. This does not mean that the employees will be relocated or will change their physical work environment. Instead, it is a way to help employees deepen their knowledge of specific villages, and it is a way for the campus to deepen relationships with more services. Rather than meeting with a different member of Office X each time a person visits that office, that person can have the same contact with every visit.

Some offices or areas on campus will be part of the Town Center. These might include one-person offices or areas on campus that are so vital to the infrastructure of the whole campus that the office truly affects all of the villages and would function more effectively as part of the Town Center rather than through specialization of villages.

VILLAGE TEAMS:

Each village will have a leadership team composed of at least one counselor, one teaching faculty member, an administrator, a student, and key support service classified professionals from various areas on campus. The village team will be responsible for planning and organizing the village communication, events, and activities. The village team will have regular team meetings to ensure the running of the village and to build relationships within the village. Village teams will also meet periodically with other village teams and Guided Pathways leaders to ensure a coordinated campus effort rather than working in silos. Village teams will be provided additional compensation for their work and time.

REQUIRED EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES:

There will be some quarterly and annual events and activities that are required by each village. In addition to Town Halls, when all villages and Town Center areas can meet and interact, there will be other events and activities such as student orientation sessions, major and career workshops, equity planning and events, distribution of information, College Welcome Day, Financial Aid workshops, support services workshops, and the like. Many of the activities will heavily involve students including peer mentors and student interns in order to increase the student-to-student interaction and to build a peer support system.

Infrastructure will be provided for these endeavors so that the village teams do not have to plan the larger event individually. Instead, the model will be like a conference in which there will be conference organizers (led by Guided Pathways leaders) who coordinate the administrative aspects of the conference and the villages will be like presenters who offer the content of the conference. Currently, many areas on campus might like to offer various workshops but do not have sufficient staffing to do so. By coordinating such endeavors at an infrastructure level, villages will be free to focus on the content rather than having to be concerned with the administrative aspect of it.

OPTIONAL EVENTS:

In addition to required activities and events, villages have the opportunity to participate in a variety of optional events and activities such as socials, brown bag meet-and-greet sessions with village faculty and with village employees at large, cohort classes in which the curriculum for certain sections are taught through the lens of that specific village, mentor and peer mentor opportunities, student clubs, student study groups, and so forth. Administrative infrastructure for some of these events will be provided by Guided Pathways leaders while other smaller events will be organized directly by the Village Team(s).

SPACES:

In alignment with the Campus Facilities Masterplan, certain areas across campus (either indoor, outdoor, or a combination of both) will be designated for each village, six spaces total. Having such year-round spaces will allow students and employees of that village to congregate and to meet each other while building stronger relationships with other village members. By seeing familiar faces, not only will students feel more comfortable in their classes, but they will feel more comfortable accessing the resources they need.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT:

As mentioned earlier, all villages will be given infrastructure support for required activities and for some optional activities as well. In this way, the village teams can focus on the content for such endeavors rather than having to overextend their attentions to the administrative coordination of the endeavors.

In order to provide this infrastructure support, the campus agrees to fund a Villages Coordinator (and possibly other Guided Pathways positions) either through Guided Pathways funding, external grant funding, or other funding sources such as General Fund monies.