Website Utilization Focus Group Report

Theme Analysis of Constituency Needs & Next Steps

SCHOOL OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, LIBRARY AND TECHNOLOGY

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OVERVIEW

- PRIELT conducted four focus groups with key constituencies to understand their experience using the latest iteration of the San Diego Miramar College website:
  - Classified Professionals (October 25, 2017)
  - Faculty (November 7, 2017)
  - Associated Student Government (November 15, 2017)
  - Managers (January 26, 2018)

- Theme analysis was utilized to identify constituencies' key needs in contributing to collegewide use of the website

- Possible solutions and next steps are proposed

OVERARCHING THEMES

- **Overall, almost all of the focus group participants are excited about the website redesign:** Constituents largely agree that the latest iteration of the San Diego Miramar College website represents a significant improvement upon the old website. Most of the groups make comments that are minor and in the spirit of continuous improvement within the adopted redesign.

- **The website shows students that Miramar College cares:** Most of the participants like the student-centered features of the redesign. In particular, students value the new website. Now that they've seen what it can do, they want more!

- **Most of the participants observed that the new website navigation requires much clicking and scrolling:** Most of the constituencies suggested that navigation of the new website can be improved. However, each constituency varies significantly when it comes to how to improve ease of navigation and information.

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OVERARCHING THEMES

- **Almost all of the constituencies recognized the significant time and effort that PRIELT has dedicated toward engaging constituencies in the website redesign process**: Although, one constituency group felt alienated from / not included in the process; and another requested follow-up.

- **A couple of constituents appear amenable to playing a (limited) role in the maintenance and continuous improvement of the website:** There needs to be clear understanding of the processes in place for participating in the upkeep and continuous improvement of the website, such as reporting broken links and updating program-level information.

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Emerged Issue I: The new website navigation requires much clicking and scrolling:

- **Faculty prefer "one-click" model of website navigation**

- **Classified Professionals prefer to have information easily accessible and fast to access**
  - They requested that access to internal resources be more visible and accessible in a single location.
    - *Solution*: Having both the Employee Resources and Campus Resources tabs on the homepage.

- **Students prefer necessary information to be displayed right away, and do not want to spend time scrolling**
  - They report that they do not like to scroll and would rather have less, but more relevant content, available.
  - Quick and easy registration is a top priority for students. However, this need is not being met by the current website. Students are struggling to find the class schedule, catalog, and the link to the registration page
    - *Solution:* Providing a link to registration, course catalog, and class schedule at the top of the homepage (Need to move information to top of homepage).

- **The 2-year course sequencing are difficult to find and are especially difficult to access on mobile devices**
  - *Solution*: Website department is currently working with VPI and Instructional Deans on a solution to be implemented in fall 2018.

The new website navigation requires much clicking and scrolling:

- **Regarding student information, faculty prefer a return to a more traditional model, menu-based system**
- **Focusing on the student experience, both managers and classified professionals defer to student input**
- **Students want the website to be more interactive (including interactive tools)**
  - One suggestion was to add pop-up dialogue boxes that provide reminders and point students to helpful resources on campus.
  - Students would also like to see updated media content posted to the website on a regular basis.
- **Students want to be able to accomplish more tasks online (through interactive tools)**
  - Students want to be able to utilize the website to submit paperwork for graduation, schedule appointments with counselors and DSPS support personnel, and prepare and submit their education plans for review.
  - Students like to-do/step-by-step lists with links to the relevant information and forms they need to complete a task.
- **Associated Student Government (ASG) desires greater visibility among the student body**
  - ASG would like to have front page real-estate in order to connect current and future students to the campus community.

Emerged Issue II: Some constituencies appear to feel left out of the redesign process or needed follow-up:

- **A constituency group felt left out/ alienated from the redesign process**
  - Faculty do not feel like the design/functionality of the website meets their needs.
    - *Solution*: In Fall 2017, the Academic Senate (AS) sent a comprehensive list to the PRIELT Dean voicing their input on the new college website. Some of the items were related specifically to faculty needs, while others related to collegewide matters. The Dean's office responded actively and timely to the faculty needs list by sending updates to the Academic Senate president on an ongoing basis.
  - Faculty do not feel seen/heard as constituents.
    - *Solution*: To address the collegewide website items as specified in the AS list, the Dean's office conducted a focus-group to further collect the faculty voice on the utilization of the website. Focus-groups were also conducted among managers, classified professionals, and students.

- **Classified Professionals expressed that follow-up from the redesign focus groups was expected and did not occur. They would like to see follow-up from this round of focus groups**

- **Managers and students did not feel left out / alienated from the redesign process**

Emerged Issue III: Constituents' perceived roles in the maintenance and continuous improvement of the website:

- **Constituents require clear outlining of responsibilities for content maintenance and training regarding how to fulfill these responsibilities**
  - Most of the constituents share the understanding that the Web Designer is a technological expert with limited support, lacking content area expertise as well as resources.

  - Faculty recognize that their content expertise is needed, yet believe the physical act of updating the website falls under the purview of the Web Designer.

  - Classified Professionals like the idea of having the convenience of updating content, especially with more customization at their finger tips.

Other Miscellaneous Themes

- **There are some concerns that the mobile version of the website is not performing at the same level as the desktop version**
  - ***Solution***: Updates to the mobile version have been significantly enhanced since these focus groups. It will be continuously improved on an ongoing basis.

- **There is concern that key information has not yet been migrated from the old website**
  - ***Solution***: Migration is an ongoing effort. Most key information has been migrated over.

- **There is desire for greater connectivity with the district, and especially access to necessary data to make the website more functional**
  - ***Solution***: This is part of one of the college's Accreditation Improvement Recommendations which will be addressed over time.

- **Both students and classified professionals expressed interest in expanding the veteran-specific navigational path that connects them to relevant resources (financial aid, GI Bill, BOG, etc.)**
  - ***Solution***: Website department to work collaboratively with relevant departments to flesh out veteran-specific student pathway during 2018-19 academic year.

- **Both students and classified professionals are having trouble finding information on athletics for students**
  - ***Solution***: Website office to work collaboratively with relevant departments to build student athlete pathway during 2018-19 academic year.

Possible Solutions and Next Steps

- **Content migration versus maintenance**
  - Migration will continue to be the purview of the website department
  - 'Report Issues With This Page' is functional throughout entire SDMC website
  - Content maintenance will continue to be the responsibility of the respective divisions, schools, departments/units. Website department can provide training and assistance if a particular department/unit encounters difficulties.
  - Website department will continue to offer content maintenance training to the college and work collaboratively with departments/units on problem-solving

- **Updating current website (Fall 2018-Spring 2020)**
  - Updating and fine-tuning the current website
  - Build and focus on fleshing-out relevant student pathways (i.e., Veterans and Athletics)
  - Continue to enhance the search functionality of the website
  - Give ASG front page real-estate on homepage so they can market to both future and current students in keeping them connected to the campus community during fall 2018

Possible Solutions and Next Steps

- **Moving forward-Future iterations of website redesign (3-year cycle)**
  - Focus on making the next major iteration of the website more interactive given appropriate resources
  - Work with the District in allowing data accessibility which is necessary to feed an interactive website
  - Continue to solicit feedback from students on how to make the website more interactive
  - Continue to involve the voices from managers, faculty, and classified professionals on how to balance the ease of navigation and accessing information for personnel without compromising student-centered redesign
  - Secure funds to build next iteration of website in anticipation of associated activities:
    - Hire a consultant
    - Ongoing professional development of Web Designer and support personnel
    - Hire proper personnel to support major projects