

Description of Program Mapper Software Fall 2020 Mapping & Scheduling WG Recommendations

Pioneered through a collaboration between the California Community Colleges and Concentric Sky, [Program Mapper](#) helps students visualize their program options in the context of expected employment outcomes.

Featuring an **interactive, pathway-based visualization** of the traditional course catalog alongside easy-to-understand career data, Program Mapper facilitates a deeper understanding of the potential options a student might have as they explore the programs offered at a college.

[Clarifying the Path to Completion and Transfer: Why and How Program Mapping Drives Progress and Completion \(rpgroup.org\)](#)

Fall 2020 Mapping & Scheduling Workgroup Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Clear, Accessible Program Mapping with Aligned Course Sequences

Description

The SRJC Academic Senate [SRJC-AS] will improve student awareness of their educational opportunities by establishing a college-wide “Oak Tree” program mapping project which makes explicit the many “branches” of educational options available. Some examples to consider:

- A local example of excellence in degree mapping already in place is found in the Kinesiology: Sports Medicine Preparation Major (AA)
<https://sportsmedicine.santarosa.edu/course-offerings>.
- Pasadena City College has a student-forward website that provides clear student resources and choices as it concerns program and course maps. See also;
<https://pasadena.edu/explore-your-career/>
- Bakersfield College also has a clear, user-friendly website that highlights an explicit Program Mapper tool for students. See also;
<https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/academics/program-mapper>

Rationale

Support students’ decision-making processes as it empowers their best, most informed choices in their ongoing educational journeys. For example, we know that students more often than not pivot from one area to another during their studies. Clear, accessible program maps could help students make choices that retain credits by “folding up” or “branching into” other areas of study.

- SRJC’s Office of Institutional Research (OIR) Student Survey 2019 stated, in part, “Another noticeable decline has been with the statement ‘I feel I have been as successful as I could be at SRJC’. While it has a 69.3% agreement level in 2019, this has steadily declined every survey year since 2010 (down 6% from 2010)” (p31, see [SRJC’s Student Survey](#))

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With some students feeling less successful in their educational journeys as indicated here, improvements in mapping might help to reverse this drift.

- Empower departments and programs to regularly review, revise, and update existing course offerings and recommended sequences of courses for certificates, programs, or majors.
- Create greater interconnectivity between disciplines by creating standardized program maps to increase awareness on how program sequences impact course enrollment.
- Draw from the expertise of SRJC Counselors to improve mapping best practices across the college.

Recommendation 2: Dynamic Scheduling Changes that Support Students and the College

Description

- The SRJC Academic Senate [SRJC-AS] will recommend solutions to meet student and faculty needs by improving the scheduling proof process and drawing from real-time, student-driven data already available (OIR, course enrollments, degree completions, student education plans, etc.). SRJC-AS will encourage departments to provide clarity of course availability by offering course consistency and diversity year-to-year as listed in program sequences and major/program maps. In order to establish and sustain the above recommendations, SRJC-AS will also seek interactive scheduling solutions that include, but are not limited to, the existing College Scheduler and SIS resources. Potential strategies for implementation include:
 - SRJC-AS will investigate new, interactive technologies that better estimate student time to degree/program completion, integrate real-time course availability and prerequisites semester-by-semester, provide live feedback to students for available options at time of enrollment, and take into account the negative impact of disrupted sequences.
 - SRJC-AS will encourage departments and programs to prioritize student demand by regularly assessing course and program availability when developing schedules (i.e. days, times, start dates, semesters, pedagogical modality, etc.).
 - SRJC-AS will also encourage departments and programs to consider having more than one track so students have the option to complete the recommended sequence as best suits their availabilities (day, evening, on-ground, online, hybrid, etc.) and enrollment statuses (P/T vs F/T).
 - SRJC-AS will identify and provide solutions regarding bottleneck courses and unmet demand for courses that slow student progress (see also <https://fact-book.santarosa.edu/unmet-demand-courses>).

Rationale

- Effectively respond to students' scheduling needs and preferences as best suits their availabilities (day, evening, on-ground, online, hybrid, etc.) and enrollment statuses (P/T vs. F/T).
- Support students' organization and planning of their schedule in the time frame that works for them using interactive technology tied to the SIS system. The current College Scheduler is helpful but would be better integrated with SIS.

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- Increase the efficiency and accuracy of faculty and staff in the schedule development process. Draw upon pre-existing, Sonoma County voter-approved bond measure funding as we improve and introduce new, interactive web-based tools, programs, hardware/software, etc.
- Enhance clarity of and increase commitment to students' completion of their academic plans. If a course is closed, for example, alternative options for efficient completion of goals would be identified. Progress alerts and/or gateway courses that qualify for multiple majors/certificates could also be provided.
- Resolving unmet demands for courses could potentially improve student enrollment, retention, and completion (see <https://fact-book.santarosa.edu/unmet-demand-courses>).
- From the Fall 2019 OIR Report (p41): “The final section in the student survey every year is a large, open-ended comment box.” While “[a]lmost 25% of the comments were expressions of gratitude or a job well done” the third most mentioned theme was “regarding class schedule and availability (10.8%)” (see <https://research.santarosa.edu/sites/research.santarosa.edu/files/2019%20Student%20Survey%20Report%20FINAL%20v1.pdf>).
- Board Policy 3.14.2 requires “...The District will schedule classes at times and locations that reflect the needs of students...”
(<https://go.boarddocs.com/ca/santarosa/Board.nsf/Public?open=&id=policies#>)