

JOB TITLE: Support Specialist

PAY GRADE: CL 20

LAST REVISED: August 2022

*Job Descriptions/Class Specifications are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in the job and are **not** intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.*

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Sierra College has committed to foundationally re-engineer its programs and services using Guided Pathways to increase student achievement, ensure student equity, and effect timely goal completion. Under the direction of an assigned administrator, the Support Specialist assists with development, implementation and evaluation of activities designed to increase student equity, retention, persistence and completion through a complex model of caseload and cohort management. The position also provides guidance and support for Sierra College students who need assistance staying on track for degree/certificate completion. The Support Specialist enhances student equity and success with a variety of programs and services that include coaching, on-going support and follow-up, degree/certificate progress check-in, and proactive connection and referrals to on-and off-campus resources and services.

Sierra College has a strong commitment to the achievement of equity and inclusion among its faculty, staff, and students, and values the rich diverse backgrounds that make up the campus community. The Support Specialist must demonstrate an understanding of and experience with successfully supporting individuals with varying backgrounds, including persons with disabilities, various gender identities and sexual orientations, individuals from historically underrepresented communities, and other groups. The Support Specialist will effectively ensure the District develops and provides strategies for student success, as well as student-centered practices and policies committed to eliminating equity gaps.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES - *The following duties are typical for this job classification. Incumbents may not perform all of the listed duties and/or may be required to perform additional or different duties from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.*

1. Develops, coordinates, and implements complex multi-level case management strategies to provide increasing levels of equitable support for diverse students identified as needing low, moderate, and high-level support based on data points, reports, and institutional success and equity metrics.
2. Generates, receives and responds to referrals through the District's Early Alert system.
3. Acts as a proactive resource specialist to: provide information; guide and help students with complex needs using a "one-stop," case management philosophy to orchestrate equity and success; and, make referrals regarding campus resources, policies and procedures, enrollment, registration, financial aid, educational pathways/programs, support services, academic supports, and on-campus employment.
4. Provides support services to implement retention and completion efforts within the assigned area; fosters student success and academic development such as critical thinking, problem solving, and self-advocacy skills; coaches students to use specific student success skills (e.g., time management, calendaring, organization, and communication).

5. Plans, coordinates, and delivers equitable retention activities for disproportionately impacted students, using case management methods based on data reporting and best practices for students in these groups (including trauma-informed and culturally responsive methods).
6. Maintains documentation/case notes of all student interactions, generating regular performance reports summarizing student progress; updates the District's Student Information Systems and other related databases as necessary; ensures accurate reporting of data related to students served; and assists with providing data for reports related to the District's Student Success and Equity Plans as requested.
7. Utilizes student data and case management software to conduct coordinated, high volume email, call and text campaigns, in an effort to assess and address student retention, persistence and completion.
8. Researches and makes recommendations regarding best practices, models, and methods for successfully providing services to students using statistics, principles and objectives; attends appropriate conferences, workshops, trainings, and ongoing professional development.
9. Provides individualized appointments with students in-person, by phone or online to assess student needs.
10. Collaborates with instructional, counseling, and coaching faculty, Success Network Team, and other student services personnel to proactively provide cross-functional, holistic support designed for each student based on individual needs, data and analytics, and institutional student journey momentum points.
11. Reviews student records to ensure progress towards academic and career goals using various student information systems; conducts and analyzes student needs assessments.
12. Monitors, tracks, and maintains institutional accountability for student progress in caseload; proactively communicates and connects with students to help ensure they meet defined momentum points, including access to services and supports, along their educational journey (e.g., completing financial aid documents, accessing counseling appointments and services, attending workshops, receiving basic aid, utilizing academic supports, attending student engagement events, and more.)
13. Collaborates with Success Network Team, as well as other student services and instructional departments, to plan, coordinate, and deliver proactive and intrusive support for caseloads; connects students with counselors for educational, career, and transfer planning, as well as personal and crisis counseling appointments as needed; provides individual assistance and follow up services for students as needed.
14. Provides assistance to students in major and career exploration, including online computer-aided searches to identify opportunities and resources; makes referrals to counseling and Career and Transfer Connections as needed.
15. Networks with divisions, departments, and staff to ensure smooth implementation of case management and communications strategies to students in Interest Areas, Athletics and specific programs; researches and tests new communication systems and methods for continued effectiveness and process improvement.
16. Aids in planning and development of department objectives and initiatives; develops and implements procedures and policies to address problems and to meet new needs as they arise; ensures departmental materials and training materials are up-to-date and available for use.
17. Plans, coordinates, implements and evaluates support specialist related events, such as tabling,

workshops, activities, and presentations; provides necessary coordination and planning, including but not limited to staffing, logistics, supplies, catering, etc. for assigned activities and events.

18. Oversees one or more assigned college support and service initiatives, including (but not limited to) orientation activities to connect students to college programs and services.
19. Partners with other departments to develop, coordinate, and conduct transition workshops and activities for incoming students, including students coming directly from high school, returning students, and more.
20. Connects students with opportunities for campus engagement and student clubs based upon students' career, personal, and educational interests and goals.
21. Maintains and provides departmental information, announcements, resource materials, and other forms of communication regarding Success Center events, activities, programs, and initiatives for dissemination to college personnel and students.
22. Assists supervisor with hiring, training, scheduling, and supervision of student employees; trains and coaches new Support Specialists and temporary employees as assigned; assists with the development and presentation of professional development activities for student employees and department staff.
23. Works independently on complex tasks and as a member of a diverse team; establishes and maintains effective working relationships; works in a dynamic, fast paced, and high demand environment.
24. Maintains understanding of and sensitivity to the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural, linguistic, ethnic backgrounds, and disabilities of community college students and personnel.
25. Communicates professionally; exercises tact and diplomacy in dealing with sensitive and complex issues and situations.
26. Provides departmental administrative support, including composing correspondence and scheduling meetings, appointments, and room reservations.
27. Maintains knowledge of departmental procedures, methods, and equipment including computers, internet research, database, and Microsoft Suite applications.
28. Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS - *The following generally describes the knowledge and abilities required to enter the job and/or to be learned within a short period of time in order to successfully perform the assigned duties.*

Knowledge of:

- California higher education policies and procedures.
- Culturally inclusive/equity-minded practices/strategies.
- The needs of historically underrepresented and disproportionately impacted students in higher education.
- Basic interpersonal skills, including empathy, effective listening skills, interviewing skills, building trust, sensitivity to student needs, sincere desire to help others.

- General office technology and software including word processing programs, spreadsheets, database management, and student management systems.
- Effective written and oral communication skills.
- Database management, student information systems, data interpretation, and the application of technology to success, retention, and completion programs.
- Collaborative problem solving and conflict resolution techniques.

Ability to:

- Cultivate and sustain ongoing collaborative relationships with community college students, faculty, staff and management, as well as community members.
- Provide complex case management services to individuals from varying backgrounds, including individuals from historically underrepresented communities, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, gender identities, sexual orientations, and other underrepresented groups.
- Maintain accurate and timely written case management records.
- Effectively interact with people from diverse backgrounds in person, virtually, and in groups.
- Function well under pressure; plan and organize workload to meet changing priorities and deadlines
- Process large amounts of information and disseminate information accurately and clearly; synthesize information to develop an appropriate plan of action.
- Maintain honesty, reliability, cooperation and integrity.
- Become proficient in the use of email, office applications, and basic calendaring software.
- Ability to apply rules and regulations established by NCAA and California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA) for initial and continuing eligibility rules and the ability to apply them in the certification process for student-athlete participation in intercollegiate athletics.
- Follow oral and written directions.
- Identify and solve problems.
- Adhere to critical deadlines while working with frequent interruptions.
- Adapt to changing technologies and learn functionality of new equipment and systems.
- Remain proficient and relevant through attending professional development courses and attending training and/or courses as needed and/or recommended.
- Exercise sensitivity to and understanding of the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ethnic backgrounds of community college students, faculty, and staff.

Education and Experience Guidelines: *Any combination of education and experience that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:*

Education/Training:

Required: An Associate Degree or the equivalent in coursework (60 semester units) from an accredited college or university.

Experience:

Required: Two years of related experience providing comparable services to students or diverse community members.

Preferred: Similar experience in Student Services/Affairs at a university, college or high school campus.

Licenses or Certificate: Possession of, or ability to obtain, a driver's license may be required.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT - *The conditions herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential job functions.*

Environment: Work is performed primarily in a standard office setting.

Physical: Primary functions require sufficient physical ability and mobility to work in an office setting; to stand or sit for prolonged periods of time; to occasionally walk, stoop, bend, kneel, crouch, reach, and twist; to lift, carry, push, and/or pull light to moderate amounts of weight; to operate office equipment requiring repetitive hand movement and fine coordination including use of a computer keyboard; and to verbally communicate to exchange information.

Vision: See in the normal visual range with or without correction; vision sufficient to read computer screens and printed documents; and to operate assigned equipment.

Hearing: Hear in the normal audio range with or without correction.