Seattle Colleges: Designing a Unified Student Experience



Pillar: Operational Alignment

- Optimize administrative efficiency.
- Standardize core procedures.
- Enhance decision clarity.



Pillar: Financial Sustainability

- Ensure prudent fiscal management.
- Invest in future growth.
- Maximize resource impact.



Pillar: Student Success

- Strengthen holistic student supports.
- Foster diverse community engagement.
- Prepare students for successful outcomes.

The Goal is to achieve:

Operational Alignment

- High-quality and **unified** student experience
- Decision-making clarity
- Consistent implementation and execution (4 Ps)

Financial Sustainability

- Living within our means
- Prudent level of reserves
- Investing in our future

SO THAT…Seattle Colleges prepares each student for success in life and work, fostering a diverse, engaged, and dynamic community.

Academics and Student Experience Structures

Guiding Principles (planning assumptions)

- ★ Align structure conversation around functional units vs. existing organization with
  - Academics/Instruction
  - Student Experience (along five phases of student lifecycle)
    - Recruitment, Application/Admissions, Intake/Onboarding, Retention, Completion/Placement

- ★ Once an overall decision is made concerning the consolidation model, using participatory governance to:
  - Address 4Ps: Policy, Procedures, Processes, Practices
  - Evaluate operational efficiency in accordance to alignment

Why does this matter now?

- Students experience Seattle Colleges as *three separate institutions*
- Administrative duplication increases cost and slows decision-making
- Academic and student services vary widely by campus

Many Community College Systems are experiencing some level of consolidation (Dallas College and Pierce College show consolidation can):

- Improve consistency
- Reduce layers
- Increase spans of control
- Strengthen student outcomes

“Have we centralized work, or have we centralized and duplicated management?”

Summary of System Types

Model	Description	Examples
Federated Campus Model	Campuses retain autonomy; district provides coordination	California CC districts, early Pierce College
College Executive Leadership Model	Presidents lead colleges; district VCs oversee functional areas	Seattle Colleges (current)
Unified Campus Model	One accredited college; campuses become centers	Dallas College (2020), Pierce College (2020)
Functional Enterprise Model	Enterprise-level shared services; campus business partners	Dallas College Shared Services; Maricopa (partial)

Recommended Direction

Adopt a Functional Enterprise Model with Campus Business Partners

- Enterprise Service Centers for transactional work
- Enterprise Centers of Excellence for specialized work
- Campus Business Partners for relationship-based work
- Unified academic schools across campuses
- District-wide student services standards

An Enterprise Model focuses on how work is organized (based on functional areas), not on a system of accreditation (single or separate accreditation) which has not been determined.

Functional Enterprise Model (Organizational Structure)

General Structure

Academics/Instruction

- Enterprise-level academic operations (curriculum, scheduling, assessment)
- Campus-based academic business partners for local needs
- Deans oversee programs across campuses

Student Services

- Shared service centers for:
  - Enrollment
  - Financial Aid
  - Advising
  - Call Center
- Campus-based student affairs partners for student life, conduct, engagement

Governance

- Enterprise leaders for each function
- Campus partners embedded for local responsiveness
- Flattened management structure