1. Faculty position being proposed
Counselor (Student Success and Services Program (SSSP))

2. Proposal Being Made by (List Name(s) and Title(s))
Susan Myers (Counselor), Jennifer Harper (Co-Chair, SSSP Committee)

3. Summary description of the position

POSITION AND DUTIES
Under the direction of the Division Dean of Counseling, this position may be assigned to any of the following areas of Student Services: individual and group counseling; instruction of personal development courses; orientation of new students; recruitment and liaison with district high schools and high schools and the Fremont/Newark Community as a whole. The position may require assignment in the evenings, on weekends and/or at off-campus locations.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
1. Responsible for guidance and counseling functions. Guides and assists students with career exploration and program selection, and addressing issues that affect student’s adjustment to college and personal development.
2. Helps students to develop their education plans: both initial plans before their first semester, and their comprehensive plans once they have selected their educational goals.
3. Provide orientations to new students that include information about procedures for enrollment, assessment of English and math skills, and strategies to be successful in their first semester at Ohlone College.
4. Provide follow-up counseling support for students, particularly students in these at-risk groups who are enrolled in basic skills courses or on probation.
5. Teach Personal Development courses, including career planning and college success courses.
6. Represent the College at appropriate workshops and conferences and report back to the Counseling and Student Services staff.
7. Work successfully in a team environment.
8. Perform other related duties as assigned.
9. Committee participation.

4. Rationale for filling this position: include examples of how this position impacts students, program needs, and college goals

New State legislation went into effect Fall 2014. The intent of this legislation is to reinforce and expand student services by requiring assessment, orientation, an initial and (subsequent) comprehensive Education Plan for ALL students and follow-up services for at-risk students. Students earn priority registration if they utilize the mandated services, and the college receives additional funding based on the number of students who use services. These new requirements demand significant changes in General Counseling, including an increased workload to meet the needs of students who want to be placed in the priority registration group. A new full-time counseling position is critical, so that the counseling program can comply with the new state mandates.

5. Are there any externally imposed requirements such as a specialized program accreditation that would put this program in jeopardy if a full time position is not filled? If so, please explain.

The State provides funding to the College that is dependent on the number of students that access the services we provide. With more counselors to provide core services, more students can be served and register earlier, and the larger our annual allocation will be. This position can be fully funded by SSSP funds, rather than by the general fund (Fund 10). The State funding guidelines protect against colleges using SSSP funds to back fill, subsidize, or supplant existing positions by requiring that funds may only be used for new positions and/or the provision of additional services. This request fulfills that part of the law, and because it’s a categorically funded position, it will not impact the 50/50 law.
6. Any other rationale to support the position proposal:

Counseling requires a massive amount of college-specific information to best help students navigate through. While the skills and abilities of a full-time and part-time counselor may be comparable, the additional time a full-time counselor has on campus—interacting with instructional faculty, immersing in the Ohlone culture, learning specifics about classes, sequences, programs, and campus processes and policies—significantly impacts the assistance received by the student. Because of this need for college-specific knowledge and understanding, adjunct positions do not provide an equivalent substitute.

The remaining questions to be completed by Deans

7. A statement by the Dean of the division housing this position, which includes data, evidence, and analysis.

The new Student Success Act takes activities that were formerly voluntary for students who wanted them and makes them mandatory for ALL students. Our current staffing level is based on historical evidence of students’ response (or lack thereof) to voluntary extra activities, and does not provide for the influx that will occur now that services are mandatory. In 2012-13, counseling recorded over 16000 student contacts in appointments and drop-in visits, with an additional 2000 contacts on-line. 1200 additional contacts were made via workshops in areas such as transfer or probation.

With the mandates, outreach and orientation have already met the 2000 contacts typical for previous full years, and an additional 1500 students are expected to complete an orientation for the Spring term. Because we recognize that students’ first contact with us and their experience in the first semester are critical to retention and success, we have focused more assignment time than ever before on these activities even though this takes away from available hours for counseling, education plans, and follow up services. The new mandates require all students who complete 15 degree applicable units or 3 semesters to meet with a counselor and complete a comprehensive Education Plan. This is a semester-by-semester mapping of the classes the student will take to complete his/her stated educational goal. Currently there are over 4600 students who meet the threshold but do not have a comprehensive education plan on file. We expect this number to increase by almost 1200 following the Fall 2014 semester. These students will need to complete a plan this year to get a priority registration appointment. It takes at least 30 minutes to complete a comprehensive plan, however many students aren’t prepared to declare a major or educational goal in their first counseling visit and others change their minds about classes or major at least once during their college career and have to return for a second appointment. Estimating an average of 2 visits for each student to complete/modify a required plan, we have a conservative anticipated need for nearly 6000 contact hours for this aspect of the mandate alone.

Counseling currently has 15.5 FTE (12 full time and 7 part time) not including counseling staff who support and are funded by DSPS and EOPS. This translates into a counselor:student ratio of 1:709 (see Chancellor’s Office: Student Success Scorecard). This ratio is very misleading, however. Not all counselors are available to serve the general population. 4 FTE counselors are embedded in programs that serve special populations of far fewer than 700 students each. Counselors are also assigned to teach Personal Development classes, provide coordination and outreach for various critical programs (like Basic Skills outreach, the Transfer Center, Peer Mentoring), and other core services such as orientation, assessment, and identification/follow-up for students on probation additionally require time for coordination and planning. When considering these commitments as well as service on college-wide committees (Curriculum, Faculty Senate, College Council, negotiations), the FTE available for general population counseling is reduced by over 50% (see Counseling Program review, 2012-13) and the counselor:student ratio for service to the general population climbs to over 1:1000.

We have a multi-faceted approach for bridging the gap between available counselor hours and the mandated work needed.

1) We are enhancing our technology so that students and counselors have more access to better information. This will enable counseling time to be more effective. If students know what they need, they are more likely to be fully served in one appointment (rather than needing to return).

2) We are providing group services when we can—for example assessment and orientation are well-served in a group environment and can be fulfilled with a counselor:student ratio of 1:40. We are also experimenting with providing education planning to groups of students but this may end up non-
productive as the quality of the plan decreases sharply if it is not able to be individualized to the specific
student’s needs and abilities and even in groups the counselor:student ration is fairly low (1:5).
3) We are expanding our classified staff to take on non-counseling aspects of running these
programs (like scheduling, communication, and follow-up reporting). This frees up counselors to focus
more of their time on counseling and Education Planning.
4) The addition of a full time general counselor to focus primarily on mandated services. Our
current guaranteed SSSP allotment for the next 3-4 years is more than adequate to cover this
position. We are working with HR to determine how this tenure-track position can be linked
specifically to the categorical funding so that, even if all funding evaporated, the general fund
would not be required to maintain the position if the college chose not to.

This multi-pronged approach allows us to meet State and student needs, while positioning ourselves to
collect the maximum funding possible with a minimum of additional full time faculty positions.

DATA SUMMARY:

8. What is the department FTES?
See above

9. What is the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty in the department?
See above

10. What is the ratio of full-time faculty to department FTES?
See above

11. What is the current WSCH/FTEF in the department?
See above

12. What is the number of sections taught by full-time faculty and number taught by part-time faculty?
See above

13. Does the position address an area of growth? If yes, include a three year trend line for FTES.
See above