"Supporting student access, success, and retention through robust online counseling services"

Spring 2022 Sabbatical Leave Report

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The Purpose

- Students receive the same level of counseling services whether it be in-person or online, streamlining the student experience.
- Students enrolled with only online courses should also have access to fully online student support services.
- A permanent, robust online counseling services delivery model beyond a pandemic environment will employ best practices, function intentionally to serve students, and utilize data.
- This is a significant step towards equity, as we work to ensure that all of our students have access to support services.
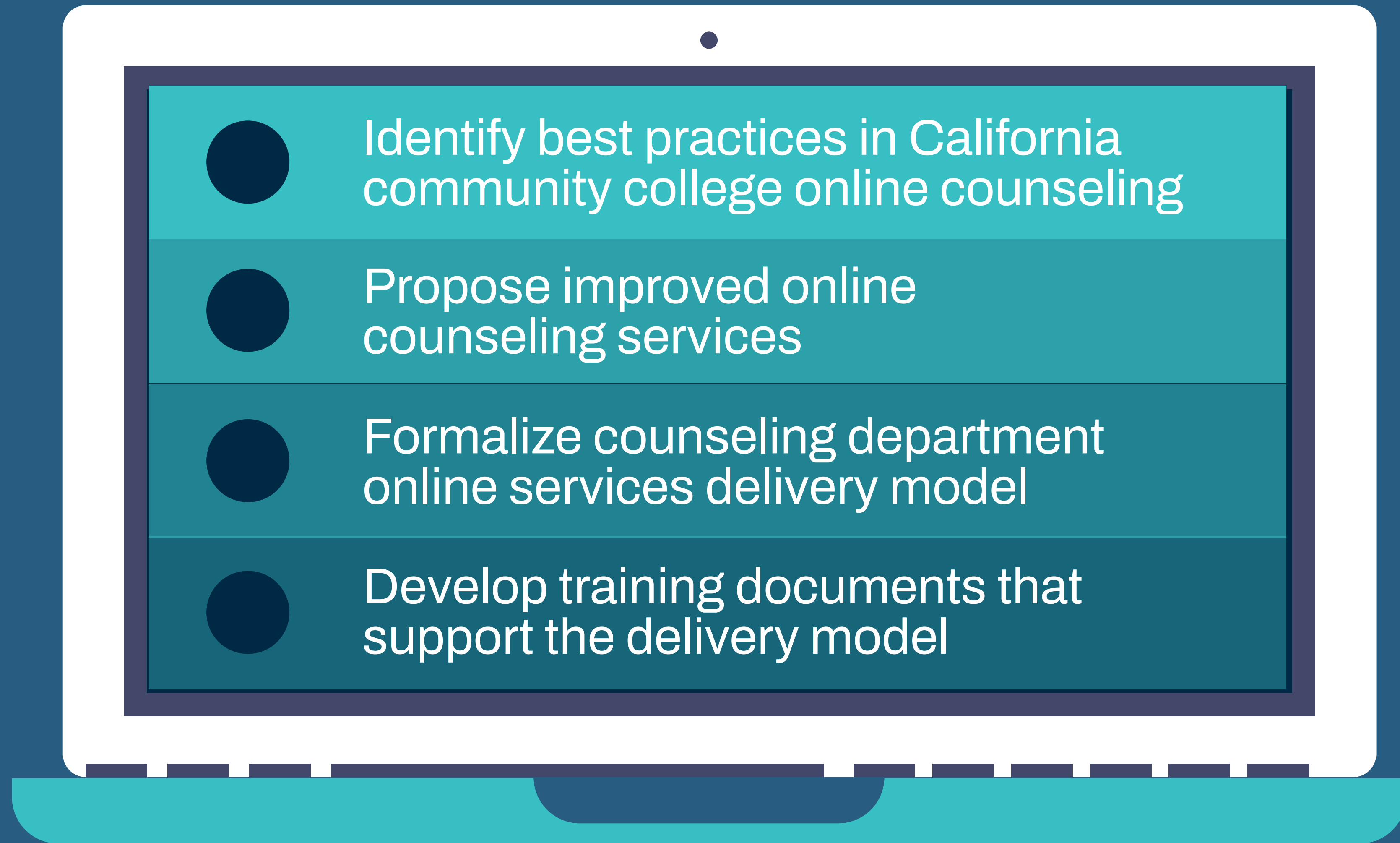
- Identify best practices in California community college online counseling
- Propose improved online counseling services
- Formalize counseling department online services delivery model
- Develop training documents that support the delivery model

INTENDED OBJECTIVES
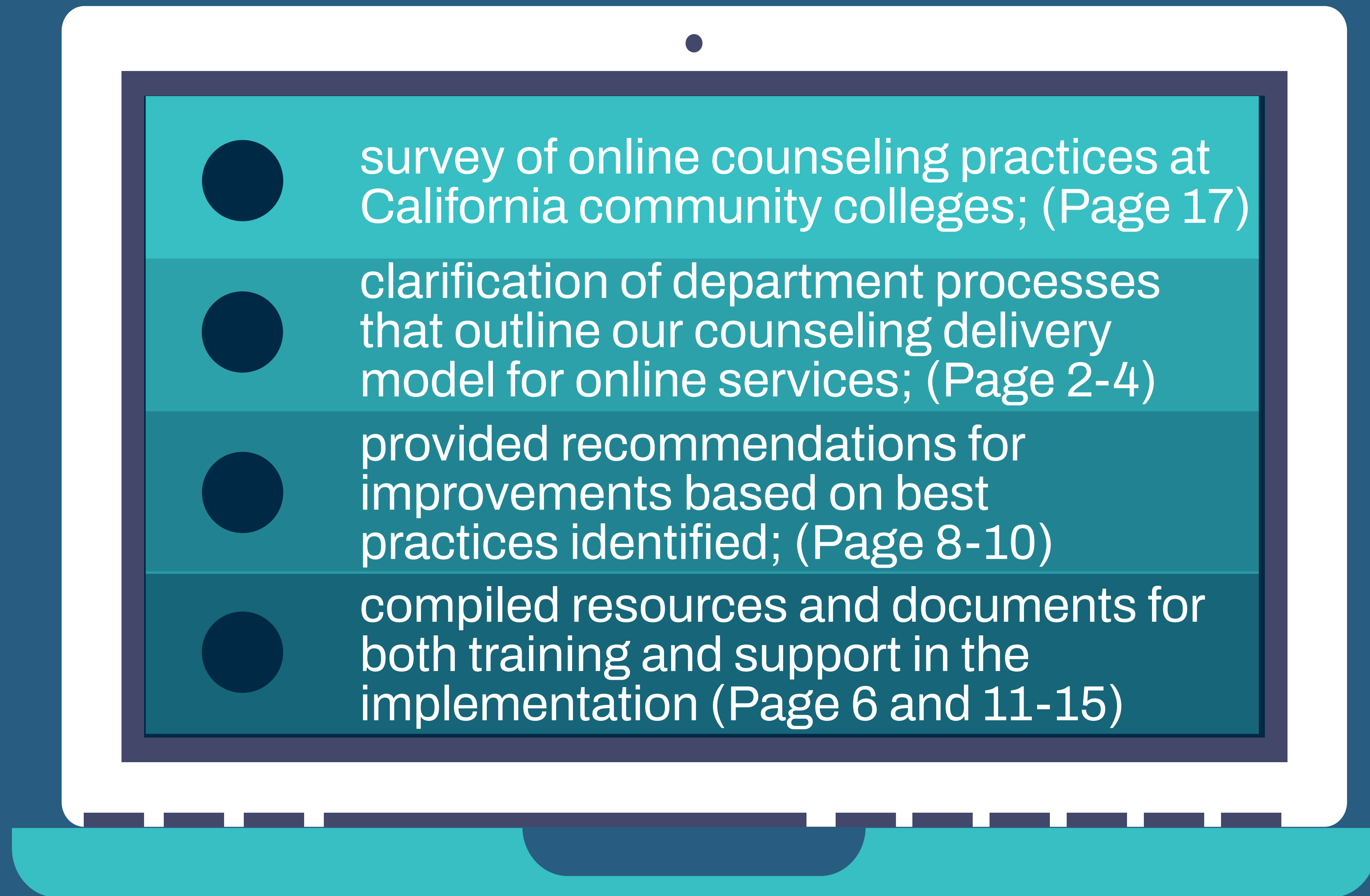
- survey of online counseling practices at California community colleges; (Page 17)

- clarification of department processes that outline our counseling delivery model for online services; (Page 2-4)

- provided recommendations for improvements based on best practices identified; (Page 8-10)

- compiled resources and documents for both training and support in the implementation (Page 6 and 11-15)

Cuyamaca Counseling Online Services Delivery Model & Resources Guide

ACCOMPLISHED DELIVERABLES

EXTRA: comparative analysis of all 115 California community college counseling department web pages to review service offerings and best practice examples; (Page 17)

Comparative Analysis Feb. 2-27, 2022

The comparative analysis was purely the review of department web pages as reflected on the internet during that time frame and individual colleges were not contacted for clarification as a part of this process. It is important to note the analysis only reviewed information available on the web pages and some colleges required student portal log-in thus limiting the scope of general access. Based on this comparative analysis, out of the total 115 California community college Counseling Department web pages visited (Calbright College not included), the following was clearly observed:
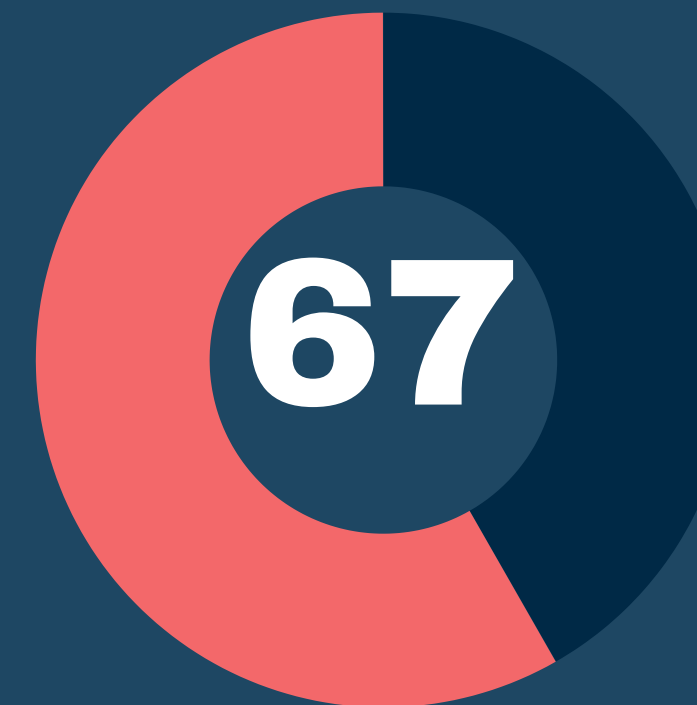
67 using Zoom as the method for video conferencing
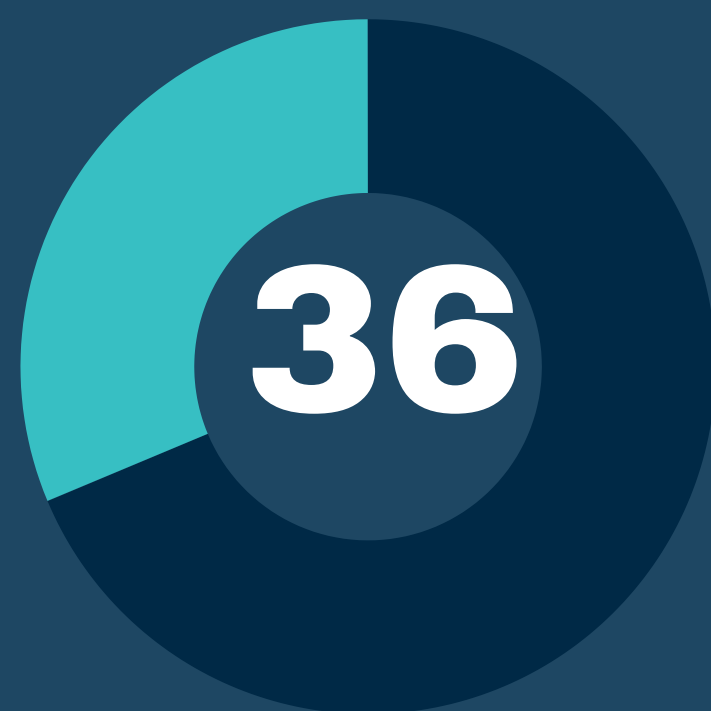
36 using Cranium as the method for video conferencing
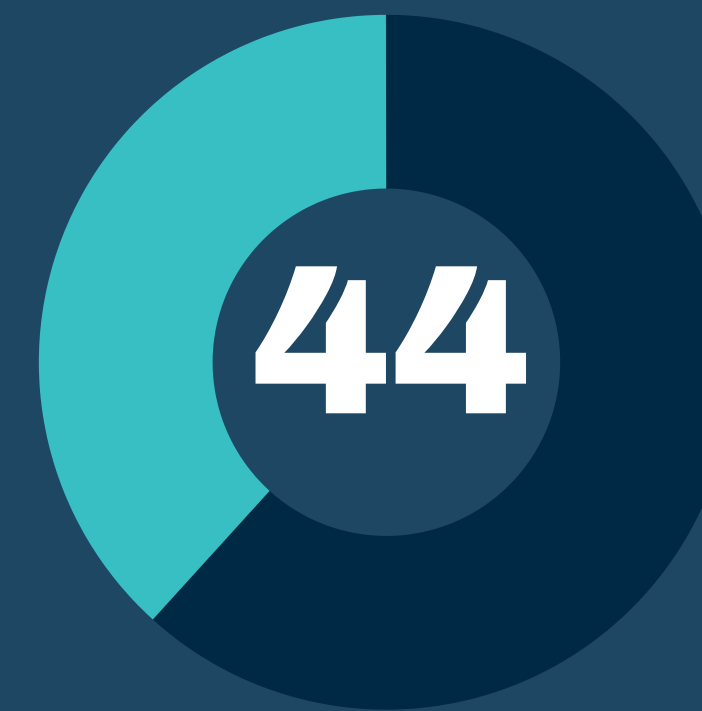
44 using ESARS as a method for scheduling

Additional observations included:
- 28 colleges are using Cranium as the method for scheduling
- 21 colleges are using other tools such as Starfish and EAB Navigate for scheduling
- 97 colleges clearly offer some form of same day, first come, first served Drop-in service
- 53 colleges clearly offer some form of email option for counselor-level questions
- 22 colleges listed business hours that extended for remote only services or identified specific in-person time frames within listed business hours
- 21 colleges listed business hours that had specific full "remote only" days
- 6 colleges had regular weekend services being offered

WHAT ARE OTHERS WILLING TO TELL US?

A survey conducted to examine the best practices in online counseling services at our California community colleges. The survey focused largely on service modality (such as platforms and tech tools) and processes (such as scheduling and handling queues). Surveys were individually emailed to either the Department Chair, Dean, or VPSS of each 115 California Community College (Calbright College not included).

50.43%

Administered between 3/8/22–4/7/22

115* California Community Colleges

58 Colleges responded

32 Dept/Div Chair
15 Dept/Div Dean
07 Counselor
04 Former/Incoming Chair

*Calbright College not included

Region Representation

- North/Far North
- San Francisco Bay Ar...
- Central Valley and M...
- South Central Coast
- Los Angeles
- Orange County
- Inland Empire Desert
- San Diego/Imperial

0   10   20   30   40

■ Participation ■ Total in Region

Image: https://www.ecusector.com/regions-save.html
Region Breakdown: https://cccaoe.org/our-institutions/
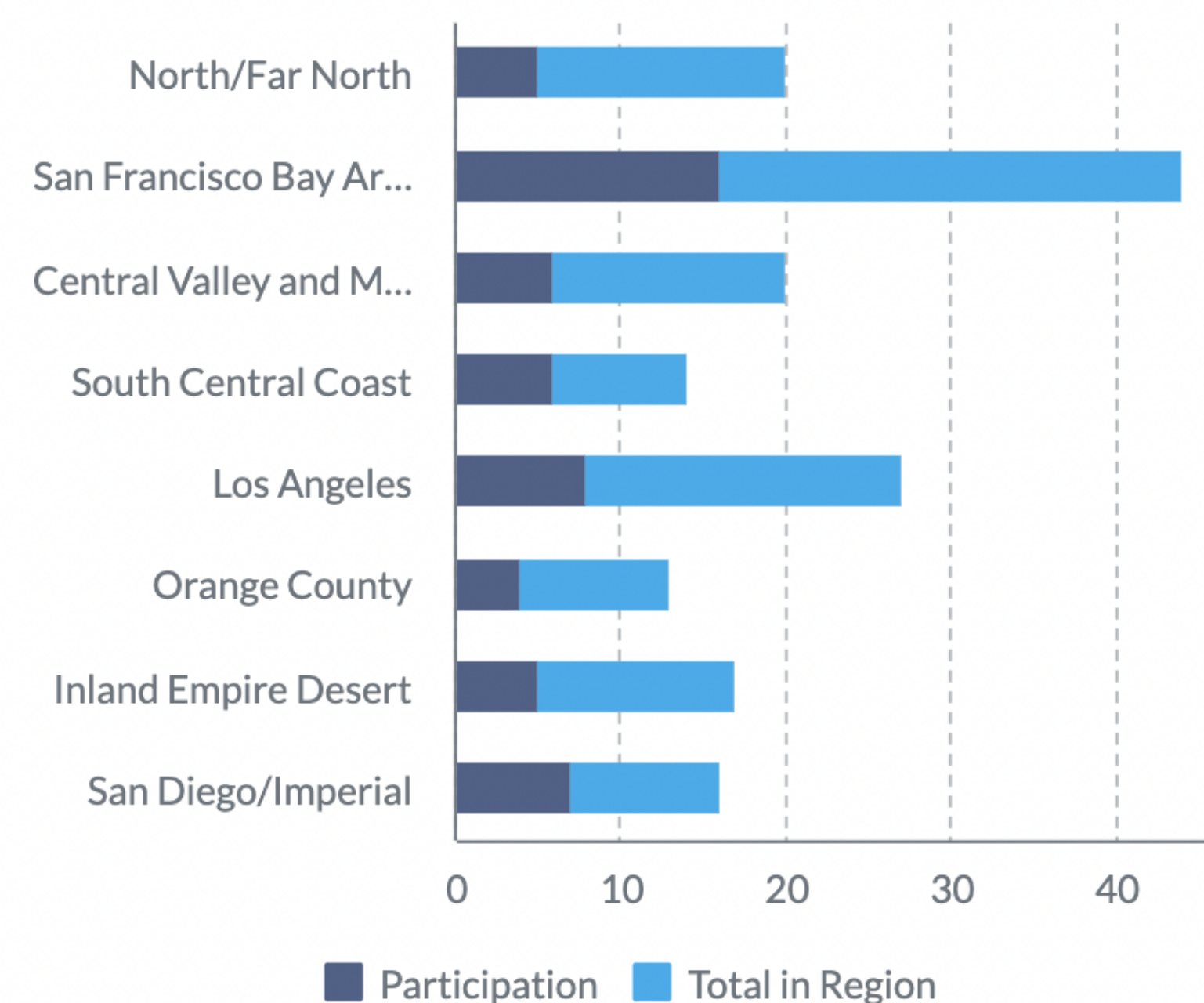
Pre-Covid (prior to March 2020), what online counseling services were already provided?

N = 57

■ Check all that apply
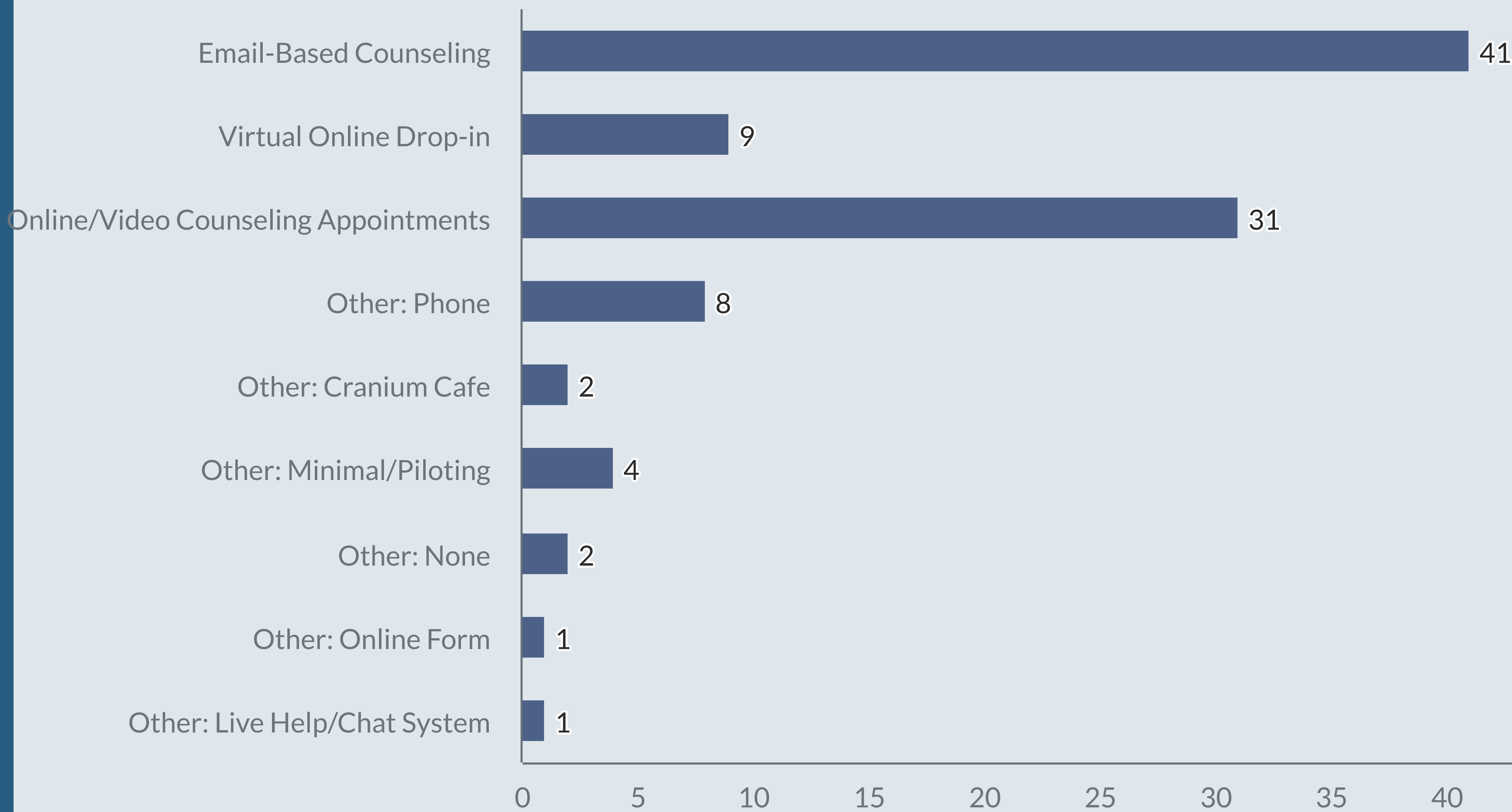
Category	Value
Email-Based Counseling	41
Virtual Online Drop-in	9
Online/Video Counseling Appointments	31
Other: Phone	8
Other: Cranium Cafe	2
Other: Minimal/Piloting	4
Other: None	2
Other: Online Form	1
Other: Live Help/Chat System	1

0   5   10   15   20   25   30   35   40

"Please share
the successes
your counseling
services
department has
experienced,
lessons learned
and/or best
practices you
would
recommend."

"Please share the successes your counseling services department has experienced, lessons learned and/or best practices you would recommend."

"We have increased our overall **satisfaction** rate with counseling services by 8% since offering most services online."

"...it has allowed for **counselor's time to be utilized more efficiently** and make our presence more 'visible' on campus..."

"The success stems from excellent **collaboration**, communication, training and **equipping our counselors with the appropriate tools** ..."

"We need to keep online services going as it is better for many of our students and allows us to do just in time staffing as well as **flex our hours of operation.**"

"We are in a new era of college and need to embrace this and **meet the students where they are** at but still provide the old school mentality of in person counseling services."

"Students generally appreciate online counseling services because of **flexibility** and **access.**"

""We learned that students **prefer online services.**"

"**We have been able to serve more non traditional students** through our virtual appointments than before and in general have **increase our student contact.**"

"**...we have lower 'no show' rates for online appointments.**"

"More of our satellite and commuter students, working adults, parents, disabled students, etc were able to receive counseling services than before."

"**...adding time in the counselor's schedule to reach/prepare for student appointment...**"

"I believe our biggest success is being available to students outside of nontraditional counseling hours. An effective practice is to make sure there is ample training for front staff, and counseling faculty. In addition, we made efforts regularly to update our department website and social media for students."

"...online services provided equity and accessibility to students."

"Some best practices would be to match online student services with percentage of online classes, if not more. If students are taking a majority of their classes online then they should have the services to match."

"**Many counselors are now open and accepting to the idea of online counseling** where as in the past, before Covid, only 4 of us provided the service. ...Lessons learned are that we need to provide continuous PD/training to help

"What have been the issues/roadblocks with successful implementation of online counseling services?"

"...**training** and **retraining** is necessary due to the constant changes."

"Forms had to be transitioned online, **equipment needed to be purchased**..."

"...**connection issues.** When our system goes down, it takes a while to get back up."

"**Moving forward how to balance the two in-person and online modalities.**"

"...**students not having access to technology** or reliable technology that is compatible with our online services."

"**We need to purchase better technology to be more efficient in scheduling appointments and cancelling/changing based off student need.**"

"Having a hybrid schedule creates scheduling/staffing barriers because we are essentially staffing two offices (virtual and in-person)..."

"**Some counselors are not as tech savvy.**"

"...no consistency among the different counseling departments."

"...**issues with their technology with glitches**, data reports, no show, history of entries, etc."

"**We also had to ensure that students could access our services so we spent quite a lot of time advertising to students and proactively reaching out to students to make sure they knew how to make an appointment with a counselor.**"

"Definitely a lot of student contact went unrecorded."

"**Staffing was a concern...**"

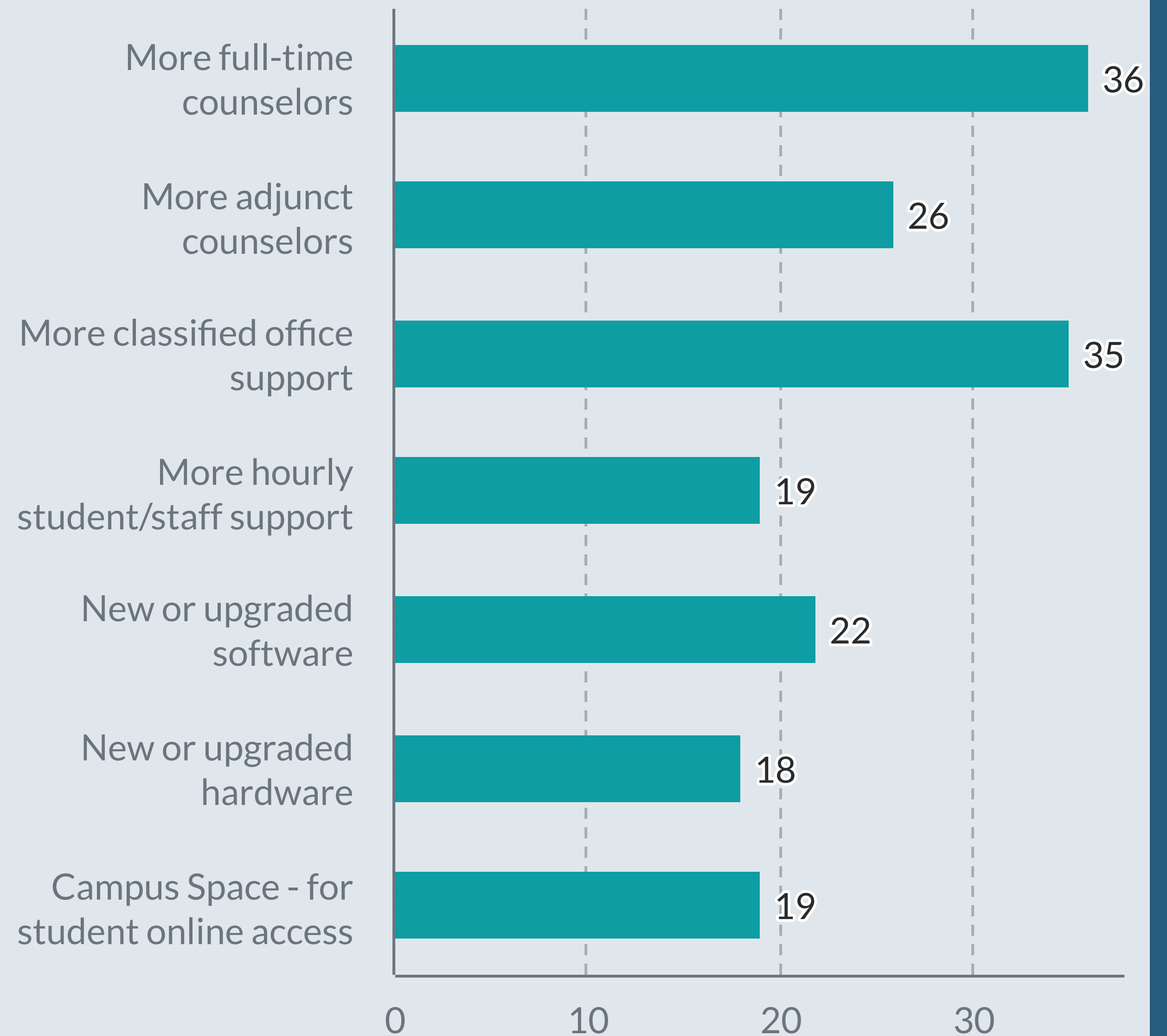"...too much time is spent of defending the importance of counseling and student access.""

"A current roadblock is **administration** believing that people are not working when appointments are virtual, not listening to student feedback/surveys stating the students prefer online services."

"What additional resources would your counseling department need in order to provide what you consider a robust online counseling services model at your college?"
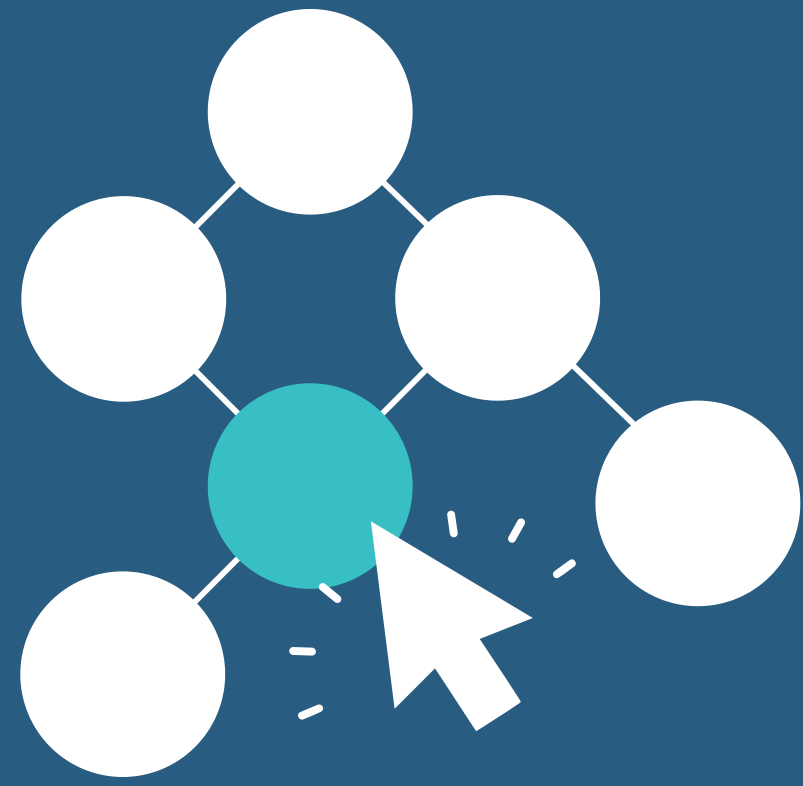
N = 57

Other:
- Data on student needs
- Institutional Support
- eSARS improvements (differentiated appt types)
- Designated IT Support (2)
- Maintain 1 hour appt and 3-day drop-in
- Reliable Internet for students
- Telecommuting policy

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Training

Required: All department provided trainings & in-services

Recommended:

CVC @ONE Course: Online College Counseling
This is a free 4-week course designed for general counselors interested in learning more about providing counseling services in the online environment. In this course, experienced counselors will learn ethical standards and guidelines as well as skills and strategies for fostering successful online counseling sessions. The course covers technology-assisted techniques and opportunities for counselors to assist students with meeting their educational, career, and personal goals. Counselors will also gain an understanding of the key components for maintaining a successful online counseling program.
https://onlinenetworkofeducators.org/course-cards/online-college-counseling/

CCC TechConnect Zoom: Live Online Training
CCC TechConnect is a grant-funded project from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO). Daily live trainings are available at no cost.
https://www.ccctechconnect.org/

CCC TechConnect Zoom: Self-Training
TechConnect Zoom Self-Training shows many of the most popular features in the Zoom platform and provides instructions on how to use them. The self-training guides include videos and articles that review various topics, providing instructions on settings, features, and best use scenarios when using your Zoom account.
https://ccctechconnect.instructure.com/courses/182

Recommendations
(for improvements based on evaluation of best practices and resources examined)

Student Authentication & Informed Consent -
Security and Authentication features are important to create privacy and security for users and maintain the integrity of our profession. (CVC-OEI Webinar, 4/22/22)
Consider various options:

- Students authenticate through their log in when they make the appointment or submit a question to eCounseling and agree to an informed consent statement. We should more clearly have an informed consent statement on the student ESARS scheduling page (similar to the standard one seen on Cranium Cafe prior to scheduling? Or link to an external statement?). **How would this be handled for Drop-in?**
- **Zoom Custom Disclaimer** Admins can show a custom disclaimer when users start or join a meeting or webinar, or sign in to their account through the web portal, desktop client, and mobile app. Users must agree to the disclaimer, otherwise, if they click Cancel in the disclaimer, they will not join or start the session, or sign in.
- Link to external Informed Consent Document - **Sample Mesa College**
- **For direct counselor emails:** Expand email signatures to include such issues as confidentiality, security, privacy, intended user, and unauthorized access. Inform students about the inherent limits of confidentiality when using technology.

Evaluation -
- Evaluate the effectiveness of online counseling services:
  - Point-of-service survey User Satisfaction
  - Increased number of appointments
  - Data on No-Show rate
- Consider Usage Patterns and Patterns for specific demographics
- Canvas "New Analytics" provides analytics of Student Support Hub usage
"Analysis of data including call volume and student traffic patterns relative to the number of services provided by employees will help ensure a collaborative and student-focused culture is created" (Hardy & Meyer-Griffith, 2012, pg.1?)

District Aligned SARS Coding -
SARS Coding has been an area that is in
The district recently utilized an IT consult
colleges consider having an aligned sys
collection and analysis.

Training -
Consider whether or not the departm
4-week @ONE Online College Cou

Counselor Support Documents

- Internal Office Procedures
  - SARS Code Sheet (Updated for 2022)
  - No Show Procedures
  - FERPA Guidelines (March 2020 - developed by A&R and VPSS)
  - Opt-in Settings for Manually Scheduled Student Appointments
- Self-Service as a Tool for Counseling
  - Student Planning in Self-Service - How to AEP
- Troubleshooting Procedures
  - ConferZoom Support
  - Zoom Troubleshooting Support
  - Cuyamaca: Zoom for Students page
  - Zoom Software Update
  - Prevent Disruptive Behavior in Zoom Meetings
- Zoom Tips, Tricks, and Guidelines
  - Cuyamaca Zoom Safety Guidelines (December 2020)
  - TechConnect Zoom Support
    - Zoom FERPA Compliance
  - Zoom Tips and Tricks
  - Zoom Help Center
  - Zoom Accessibility
  - Fullerton College Sample Instructions
- SARS Counselor Resources
  - SARS Drop-in
    - SARS Drop-in Instructions
    - Side-by-Side Video (LBCC Counseling)
    - How to access SARS when SARS is down (LBCC Counseling)
- Splashtop
  - Remote Access Guide
  - Splashtop SOS Download
- LBCC Counseling additional Zoom and SARS Video Tutorials
- Campus Wifi Hotspots: Cuyamaca and Grossmont

Resources:

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC). The Role of Counselin Faculty and Delivery of Counseling Services in the California Community Colleges (Spring 2012) - Technological Tools and Online Counseling (Spring 2012); page 11
https://www.asccc.org/papers/role-counseling-faculty-and-delivery-counseling-services-cali-community-colleges

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education - Standard IIB: Student Su Services (June 2013); page 16
https://www.honolulu.hawaii.edu/sites/www.honolulu.hawaii.edu/files/accreditation-accjc-ev-ng-de-ce.pdf

American Counseling Association (ACA). Code of Ethics - Section H: Distance Counseling, Technology and Social Media (2014); page 17
https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2014-code-of-ethics-finalad
dressc97d33f16116603abcacff0000bee5e7.pdf

Bouchey, B., Gratz, E., & Kurland, S. (2021). Remote student support during COVID-19: Perspectives of chief online officers in higher education. Online Learning, 25(1), 28-40.
https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v25i1.2481
https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1287148.pdf

Bradley, L. J., Hendricks, B., & Kabell, D. R. (2011). E-mail communication with clients: Some ethical concerns. Retrieved from http://counselingoutfitters.com/ vistas/vistas11/Article_62.pdf

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO): Distance Education Report 2017)
https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/About-Us/Reports/Files/2017-DE-Report-Final-.pdf

APPENDIX I: STUDENT SERVICES AVAILABLE

Student Services Available Via the Internet, Telephone or on Campus

Service	Not offered	Service or program is offered only on campus	On campus service described on static web pages	Some of this service is provided via interactive web pages (no records kept)	Some of this service is offered via phone or live chat	Some of this service is offered using video conferencing (workshops, appointments or drop-ins)	Some of this service allows students to complete transaction without coming to campus	An online record of this service is saved by the institution and can be accessed by students	An online record of this services is saved and can be edited by students
Academic Advising and Counseling	0%	17%	57%	39%	68%	42%	57%	22%	5%

Communications

Cuyamaca Canvas Student Support Hub

the department. sister

Counseling

Counselors help you identify your educational goals, create plans, and stay on track to completion.

e-Counseling Portal
Submit your simple questions to our e-Counseling portal for a response within 3 days.

Counselor Appointment
Schedule an online appointment or submit a question via e-Counseling.

Transfer Appointment
Looking to transfer to a 4-year university or college? Schedule an online transfer appointment.

Veterans Appointment
Veterans staff can help you identify your educational goals and connect with resources.

See our Additional Support page for information about special programs that include counseling like DSPS, EOPS, CARE, NextUP/UP!, RISE, and Pathway Academy.

- Social Media Platforms: Counseling Department Instagram
- Print Materials
  - How to Schedule an Appointment
  - How to Join Virtual Drop-ins
- How-To Videos
  - How to use Zoom (in Arabic)
  - Cuyamaca College YouTube Channel (Registration Playlists in English, Spanish, and Arabic)

WHERE WERE WE THEN?

- Students schedule via in-person, phone or email (limited to business hours)
- The primary modality of services was in-person, with phone by request (*unadvertised pilot of online/Zoom appointments were just being started)
- eCounseling was our primary "online-based" service
- Drop-in services only serviced in-person or when requested by phone
- Forms and process were not yet developed for electronic submissions

WHERE ARE WE NOW?
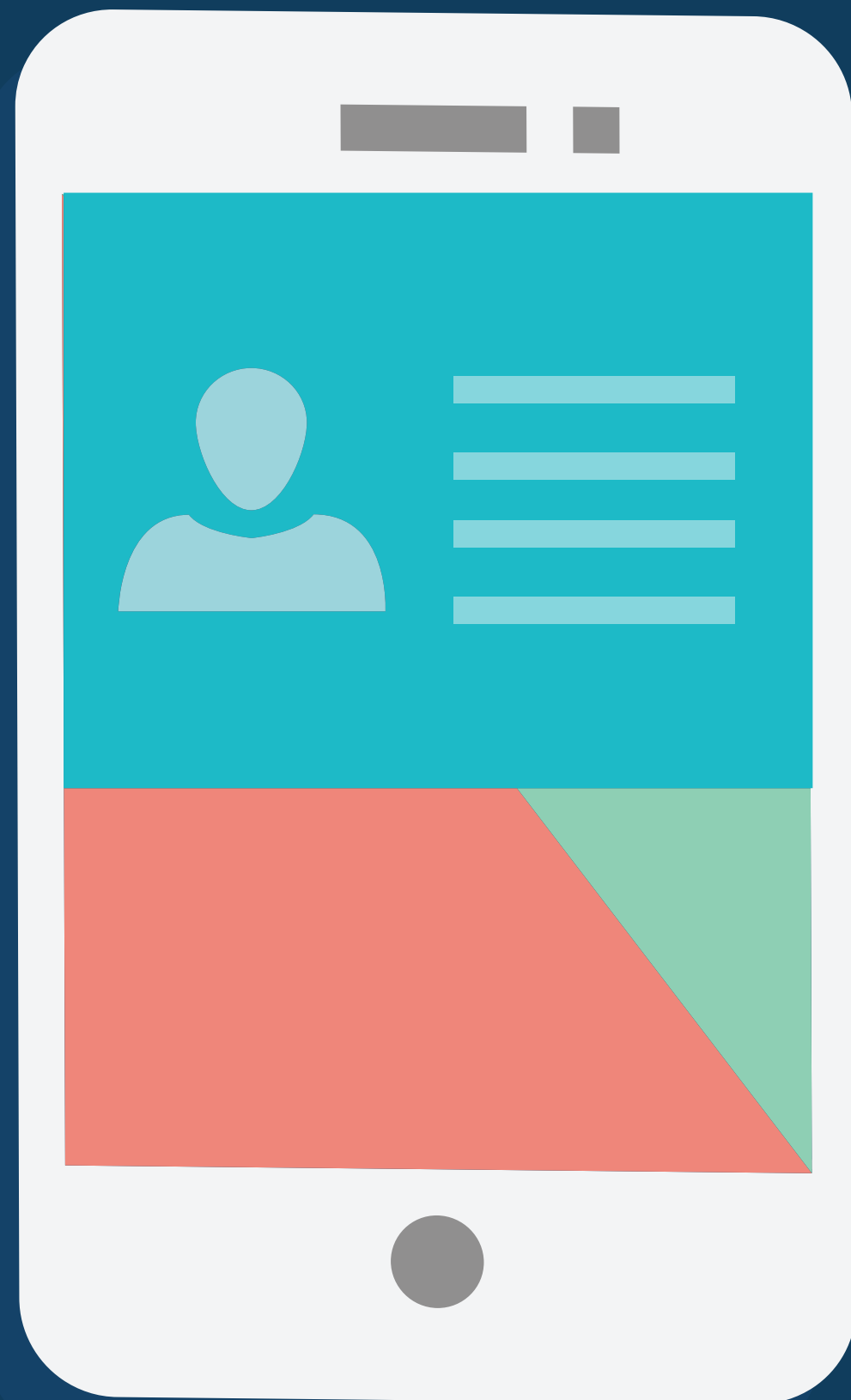
- Students schedule via ESARS (available at all hours), in-person, phone or email
- Students get to CHOOSE the modality of their appointment (online or in-person)
- Drop-in services combine both in-person and online in a single queue

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

- Identify barriers keeping students from accessing services
  - If we have the services to offer, how do we get to all the students?
- Develop more support documents and videos on how to use our services
- Continue to utilize data to inform our services
- Review the recommendations of best practices to adopt

DATA-DRIVEN

FALL 2019

1550 Appointments

2 of which was online

100% of our appointments were in-person and at this time we had just initiated a pilot to start offering online appointments. It was an unadvertised option to only offer working students who were unable to come on-campus during business hours and only three counselors had been identified to offer this type of service.

FALL 2022

2221 Appointments

1448 of which was online

70% of our appointments allow for the student to CHOOSE their modality

30% of our appointments are preset for online

773 students scheduled appointments on-campus. Even with the option to choose to come on campus or online they overwhelmingly chose to take online appointments instead.

*Note this is only in reference to FULL appointments and does not take into account students serviced through Drop-in and eCounseling

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

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