First-time program exceeds enrollment expectations

Environmental science instructor Renee Owens lectures about ecosystems Wednesday at Imperial Valley College. (JOSELITO VILLERO PHOTO / September 5, 2012)

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This is the first cohort class for the program, which is a partnership between Imperial Valley College and San Diego State University-Imperial Valley campus.

The program offers Imperial Valley students joint admission to IVC and SDSU-IV and guaranteed access to classes.

“That’s what I like about the program,” said IVUP freshman Joyce Alvarez. “It’s kind of like high school in a way. We all take classes together and on the same days.”

IVUP allows a seamless transition between the first two years of their undergraduate education and the final two-year path toward a bachelor’s degree, according to a SDSU-IV press release.

“On Mondays and Wednesdays we take classes at IVC, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays we’re in Calexico,” said Alvarez, an 18-year-old El Centro resident studying criminal justice. “That’s one of the reasons I chose it. I felt like it was the best opportunity for me to go to both schools and meet new people.”

Alvarez is one of 102 students in the cohort class, which exceeded all enrollment expectations.
“We weren’t even expecting to reach 100,” said Monica Cortez, SDSU-IV Office of Advancement development coordinator. “There was a limit of 100 students and we exceeded it by two. We really didn’t expect this many students.”

A total of 175 Imperial Valley students submitted applications, which were evaluated on an eligibility index.

“A student’s grade-point average is one of the factors,” said Miriam Castañon, assistant director for partnership programs at SDSU-IV. “SAT or ACT scores along with GPA make the eligibility index and that’s how the students are screened. Some students didn’t meet the criteria, so they were turned down.”

The partnership’s main goal is to see 100 percent of the class graduate.

“This year for this cohort, the goal is retention,” Castañon said. “The goal is for them to take the classes they need so they can complete their degree in four years. They need to stay enrolled in the classes in order to do that.

To help students complete their degrees in four years, they have guaranteed access to classes.

“It’s a little different than priority registration,” Castañon said. “We are the ones who register them.”

It is this part of the program that Alberto Gallo likes the most.

“I like that they pretty much do everything for us,” Gallo, a 19-year-old criminal justice major, said. “They enroll us for the classes we need to make sure we finish in four years.”

Fellow freshman Clarissa Burrola said she also liked having her classes chosen for her among other things.

“I like that everything is done online,” Burrola, a 17-year-old psychology major, said. “Also, the classes aren’t too big and the teachers are cool too.”

IVUP students can choose from three majors, which include criminal justice, liberal studies and psychology.

Applications for the 2013 cohort will begin on Oct. 1.

For more information visit www.ivup.org

By the numbers

Gender
76 — Female
26 — Male

Major
42 — Criminal justice
21 — Liberal studies
39 — Psychology

Institution of origin
8 — Brawley Union High School
35 — Calexico High School
5 — Calipatria High School
13 — Central Union High School
16 — Holtville High School
6 — Imperial High School
19 — Southwest High School

— Numbers courtesy of San Diego State University-Imperial Valley campus media release

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