

# MARIA CEJA, Ed. D



## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Strategic and results-driven higher education leader with over 15 years of progressive experience in enrollment management, admissions, and student services. Proven track record in overseeing large-scale operations, implementing technology solutions, and fostering cross-departmental collaboration to enhance student success. Expertise in managing multi-million-dollar budgets, leading diverse teams, and ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations. Committed to driving continuous improvement and aligning enrollment strategies with institutional goals.

## CORE COMPETENCIES

Strategic Enrollment Management • Cross-Functional Leadership & Collaboration • Policy Development & Compliance • Operational & Fiscal Oversight • Equity-Driven Student Services

## EDUCATION

### **Doctorate in Educational Leadership**

California State University, Sacramento

### **Master of Arts in Mexican American Studies**

San José State University

### **Bachelor of Arts in Human Communication**

California State University, Monterey Bay

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Dean of Student Affairs – Enrollment Services**

Hartnell College, Salinas, CA | October 2019 – February 2025

- Directed operations for Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, Veterans Services, and International Programs across four campus locations, enhancing integrated service delivery.
- Led a cross-functional team to implement student-centered enrollment strategies, contributing to annual enrollment growth and improved retention outcomes.
- Oversaw a \$2.5M operational budget and managed the disbursement of \$14M+ in financial aid annually, ensuring alignment with federal, state, and institutional regulations.
- Championed equity-driven student success initiatives that increased access for underserved and nontraditional student populations.

- Served as primary compliance officer for Title IV, the Higher Education Act, and veteran benefits, ensuring successful audits and zero findings annually.
- Spearheaded the redesign of admissions and registration workflows, improving process efficiency and decreasing student processing time by 30%.
- Collaborated with IT and institutional research teams to implement SIS and portal enhancements, streamlining reporting and improving the student experience.
- Authored and submitted annual apportionment and apprenticeship reports (CCFS-320 & 321) in compliance with CCCCO data requirements.
- Member of the enrollment planning and policy committees including Enrollment Management, Academic Standards, and College Redesign, aligning strategic goals with operational execution.
- Developed and assessed KPIs for enrollment performance, using Colleague SIS, Cognos, and FlexIt analytics to support continuous improvement.
- Initiated campus-wide campaigns in collaboration with marketing and student services to increase application completion and yield rates.
- Led cross-departmental crisis response teams to ensure service continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic, transitioning enrollment services to fully remote formats within weeks.
- Designed and facilitated staff training programs focused on compliance, customer service, and culturally competent practices.

### **Associate Director of Admissions and Recruitment**

California State University, Monterey Bay | June 2013 – September 2019

- Managed the full recruitment cycle and admissions processing for freshman, transfer, and international students, increasing overall enrollment five consecutive years.
- Developed and implemented strategic recruitment plans aligned with university-wide enrollment targets, resulting in improved yield across all student segments.
- Directed the campus tour and outreach program, increasing campus visits to over 17,000 guests annually.
- Led CRM (Hobsons Connect) communications strategy to increase student engagement and conversion from prospect to enrolled status.
- Partnered with academic departments and student support programs (EOP, CAMP, Student Housing) to ensure a seamless onboarding and advising process for incoming students.
- Managed a \$150K recruitment budget and developed multilingual marketing materials to enhance outreach to underrepresented communities.
- Led large-scale recruitment events such as Open Houses, CSU Counselor Conferences, and Admitted Student Receptions, with attendance up to 3,000.

### **Admissions Counselor**

California State University, Monterey Bay | July 2008 – May 2013

- Evaluated undergraduate applications for freshman and transfer students, including IGETC, TAG, and ADT pathways.

- Designed and led bilingual workshops and presentations on the admissions process, financial aid, and campus resources for students and families.
- Increased regional enrollment by 15% annually by developing territory-specific recruitment plans and fostering relationships with school counselors.
- Created targeted outreach campaigns for Spanish-speaking families and organized Día de los Padres events, expanding from one to four per year.
- Developed and led training for bilingual campus tour guides, ensuring culturally responsive and linguistically accessible experiences for Spanish-speaking visitors.
- Translated admissions materials to expand access for Latinx families.

#### **TECHNICAL & SYSTEMS EXPERTISE**

PeopleSoft Campus Solutions (CMS), Ellucian Colleague, CCCApply, Cognos, Hobsons Connect, WebAdMIT, Hyperion, Assist.org, Singularity (OnBase), FlexIT, Google Suite, Microsoft Office Suite, MacOS, Windows

#### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Member, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)  
 Member, Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA)  
 Member, CSU Monterey Bay Alumni Board (2012–2017)  
 President, CSU Monterey Bay Alumni (2015–2016)