To all new students, welcome to our ELAC family! To continuing students, it’s good to have you back!

As usual, there is a lot of construction going on around you. Feel free to look up and admire the buildings going up, as I do, but remember to watch your step. Construction barriers and direction signs are there for our protection as we continue to improve our campus.

I’d like to talk a bit about the range of services we have for you. I know going to college can be a little intimidating, especially for those of you who have been out of school a while. Even if you’re coming straight from high school, college life presents you with a different way of being a student – you’ll find that all the decision-making power lies on you, not on your school guidance counselor or your parents. That said, it’s extremely important that you make use of our Counseling Department. The trained professionals there know what classes you can take to lead you to fulfillment of your goals, whether that includes a skills certificate, an AA or AS degree, transfer to a four-year university, or all of these things. Your counselor will help you develop an Educational Plan, which will be your road map through your college years. If you missed New Student Orientation in early April, you can still catch up with a counselor during the fall semester.

The Associated Student Union (ASU) is your student government. Joining is optional, but the $7 cost opens many doors for you. You get access to preferred ASU parking, as well as the opportunity to rent textbooks for a fraction of their selling price. Also, there are dozens of student clubs you may join. Clubs bring together students of similar interests, whether academic or recreational. Faculty advisors will work with you to help you make the most of your club experience. For those seeking leadership opportunities, run for ASU offices! Your college experience can be much richer when you look for ways to get involved in campus life outside the classroom.

Above all, if you’re not sure what you should be doing, ask someone! Counselors, professors, even more-seasoned students are ready to help you.

Have a great semester, and Go Huskies!

Marvin Martinez
President, East Los Angeles College