Riverside City College Equity Audit

HOTEP CONSULTANTS

Fall 2021

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

This executive summary is a brief synopsis of the Riverside City College Equity Audit recommendations. All recommendations are categorized within the S.E.T. Framework which provides the philosophical foundation that informs the way in which the Hotep Consultants Team approaches the development of human centered data collection, equity focused data analysis, and intentional and practical reporting of findings and recommendations. The full Equity Audit report that follows the Executive Summary provides more comprehensive details about the Equity Audit including the audit features, process, overall findings including highlights and areas of opportunity, and full set of recommendations.

Findings

Overarching Themes

Clarity and Communication
Within and across stakeholder groups, there are different perceptions about what "equity" means and different levels of understanding which impacts what it looks like to operationalize equity-minded practices in the work.

Intentionality around Anti-Racism
While there is a genuine desire to promote Anti-Racism, traditional approaches and ways of thinking about teaching, learning, and student engagement are still present and embedded in the design, language, and practice of the institution.

Setting Expectations and Providing Support Campus-wide
There is a disconnect between the expectations to embed equity within the work of all campus stakeholders and the necessary support to do so. While there has been an attempt to provide professional learning opportunities to promote equity advancing practices amongst employees, many of these opportunities have been centered around instructional faculty excluding classified professionals and those in business services on the periphery of conversations and engagements around equity within the institution.

Recommendations

Student Ready (Institutional)

A Student-Ready organization creates system-wide impact by consistently examining processes and practices that are hindering learning for all students and actively working towards solutions. The recommendations below are intended to address system-wide approaches to best support a diverse constituency of students.

- Hire a cabinet level equity administrator and provide infrastructure to support the equity centered programming and accountability of equity advancing work.

- Conduct an equity map to catalog all of the equity related efforts on campus.

- Establish common language around key definitions of equity, disproportionate impact, diversity, and inclusion.

- Center equity within all Flex Day activities and campus professional learning experiences.

- Ensure that all campus constituents, including classified professionals and part-time faculty, are able to participate in professional learning experience activities, especially those that are focused on equity, announcing campus wide initiatives, and sharing equity advancing practices.

Recommendations

Equity Minded (Individual)

Equity-Minded higher education professionals intentionally call attention to patterns of inequity in student experiences and outcomes. They also take personal and professional responsibility for the success of their students and critically reassess their own practices. The recommendations below are centered on the development of interpersonal understanding of equity and individual impact on equity advancement within the RCC community.

• Conduct critical dialogue facilitation training with department managers and campus leadership to promote and model effective communication and feedback strategies.

• Embed equity action plans within all employee evaluations to encourage the engagement with equity advancing work on campus (and/or beyond) and highlight areas of opportunity for the campus to meet the professional learning needs of faculty, staff, and administrators.

• Establish a space for ongoing critical reflection, learning, and adaptation of individual practices. This includes learning about issues of equity, structural racism and anti-racism, intentional critical self-reflection of individual practices, and collaboration and thought partnership with colleagues. on equity, announcing campus wide initiatives, and sharing equity advancing practices.

Recommendations

Transformative (Service)

Transformative is the manifestation of practices that address the historical and sociopolitical causes of inequities found in education and engage in data-informed efforts to repair and restore the educational system. The recommendations listed below have been developed to better support the way in which individuals across the campus engage with students in an effort to support their success.

- Conduct Student Support Services bi-annual retreats/planning sessions to share knowledge, onboard/support new employees, address priorities or issues, etc.

- Establish an Equity Innovation Fund/Grant to promote creative thinking of campus constituents. Participants can submit an idea of a pilot project and/or updates to current programs and services to enrich the student's experience.

- Develop accessible training/experiences to support students in acquiring knowledge and develop critical thinking skills to advocate for equity and justice.

- Develop a forms committee to review and evaluate the usefulness of student forms and processes. Specifically identifying changes to be made to allow forms to be more user friendly; clear in instructions, expected next steps, and contact information; and written in student ready language that promotes student advocacy and clarity in process.

- Establish a process to review and revise course syllabi and canvas pages on a regular basis. While syllabi can be viewed as contracts from the student to the instructor, they can, and should, also be viewed as a communication tool and resource between the instructor and the student.

RCC Equity Audit

Background

CCC Systemwide Context

In March 2020, community colleges across California abruptly shifted the way in which they've traditionally offered instruction and support for students as a response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. All aspects of the "campus experience" from instruction, student services, and business services, moved online. Soon after the start of the global health crisis, the nation as a whole witnessed and experienced a racial awakening in response to police brutality and the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and numerous other Black people. The racial awakening and social justice movements that followed resulted in a number of organizations, companies, and institutions reviewing policies, practices, and procedures to dismantle historically racist and racist-sustaining practices.

In June 2020, the Chancellor of the California Community College, Eloy Oakley Ortiz, issued the Chancellor's Call to Action which challenged colleges to investigate current structures, curriculum, and practices, and identify ways in which to combat structural racism embedded within the system. While the Chancellor's Call to Action is not the first time in which the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) has intentionally focused on dismantling systemic racism, it provided direct areas of focus for institutions to begin interrogating current practices. A previous call to address issues of inequity was within the 2017 Vision for Success. The Vision for Success outlined current barriers to student success and highlighted major system-wide goals including the increase of degree completion and reduction of equity gaps among traditionally minoritized students. The Vision for Success, which led to the system-wide implementation of Guided Pathways and Assembly Bill 705 which revamped the way in which college readiness is assessed and acceleration is supported. Both the 2017 Vision for Success and the 2020 Chancellor's Call to Action were rooted in intentionally acknowledging the historically racist structures that persist within the California Community College System, and provide guidance for colleges to interrogate practices and develop plans of action to support anti-racist practices.

Riverside City College Context

Riverside City College is the largest of the three colleges within the Riverside Community College District (RCCD). Serving around 30,000 students annually, Riverside City College (RCC) is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with over 60% of students identifying as Hispanic or Latinx/a/o. With a largely minoritized student population that is projected to grow over the coming years, the desire to engage and invest in equity advancing practices at Riverside City College (RCC) is not new. Since the launch of the 2017 CCCCO Vision for Success, RCC has taken great strides in evaluating internal practices to identify systemic barriers and promote intentional supports to close opportunity gaps. Examples of the great work that has taken thus far are evidenced in the RCC Strategic Planning Report Card - March 2019. For example, the automatic awarding of degrees and certificates in the 2017-2018 academic year increased the number of Hispanic or Latinx/a/o, African-American, and Asian students who were awarded degrees. Additionally, the Student Equity Committee has engaged in, and provided, a number of professional learning experiences for the campus community to participate in to foster an equity-minded campus culture.

While great work has taken place, opportunity gaps still exist. Those identified in the **2020-2025 Riverside City College Strategic Plan** include:

> 2018-2019 Course Success Rates by Race
>> African American and American Indian or Alaska Native students have the lowest course completion rates at 58.9% and 57.1%, respectively. In comparison, Asian and White students have the highest course completion rates for domestic students at 74.5% and 70.2% respectively.
>
> The passing of AB705 provided the opportunity to revise previous assessment measures and allow students the opportunity to accelerate in and through college and transfer level English and Math. While there have been great strides in supporting student access in college level English and Math, opportunity gaps are still present in course completion – especially when disaggregated by race. Please note, any racialized group with fewer than 10 students was removed from the charts and tables below to protect the privacy of students and their anonymity.

Riverside City College Context

Enrollment & Success Rates of English 1A & English 1AH for first time students

African-American students had the lowest completion rates for domestic students in English 1A or English 1AH at 31.40%.

The student group with the highest completion rates for English 1A and English 1AH were students that identified as White with completion rate at 64.80%. Both the highest and the second highest completion groups completed English 1A and English 1AH at twice, or almost twice, the rate as the lowest domestic group. Another way to think about this information is that White, Hispanic, and Asian students were twice as likely to pass English 1A/1AH as African-American students.
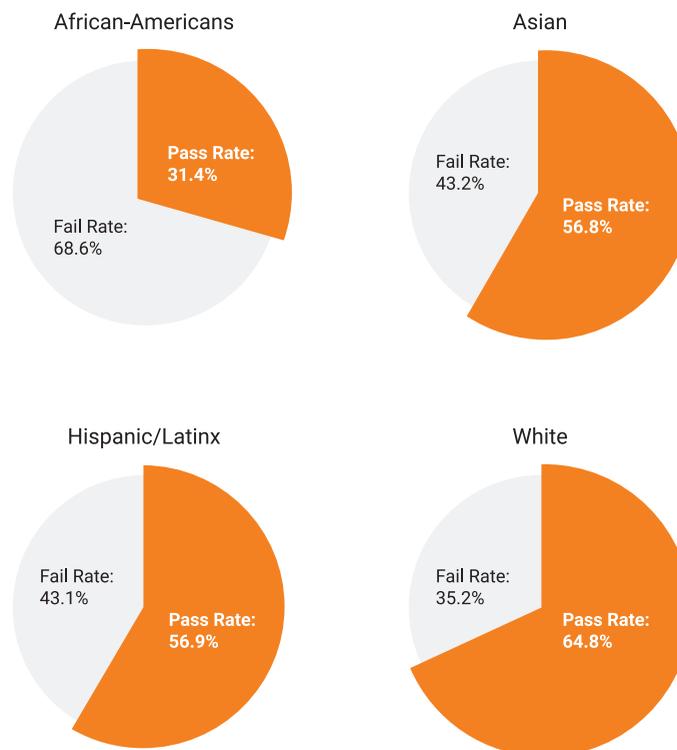
African-Americans

Pass Rate: 31.4%

Fail Rate: 68.6%

Asian

Fail Rate: 43.2%

Pass Rate: 56.8%

Hispanic/Latinx

Fail Rate: 43.1%

Pass Rate: 56.9%

White

Fail Rate: 35.2%

Pass Rate: 64.8%

Please note, any racialized group with fewer than 10 students was removed from the charts and tables below to protect the privacy of students and their anonymity.

Riverside City College Context

Enrollment & Success Rates of Math 5, 10, 11, 12, 12H, 25, 36, 1A for first time students

Similar outcomes reported for the completion of English 1A/H are present in the review of outcomes for the completion of transfer-level math courses in Fall 2018.

African-American students had the lowest course completion rates for transfer level math at 14.30%. Hispanic students, the institution's largest student population, completed transfer level math at around 27%. Almost twice that of African-American students.

The domestic students with the highest level of transfer level Math course completion were White students at 44%, followed by Asian students at 36.9%.

Again, another way to think about this information is that White students were three times as likely to pass transfer-level Math courses at RCC in the Fall of 2018 as African-American students.
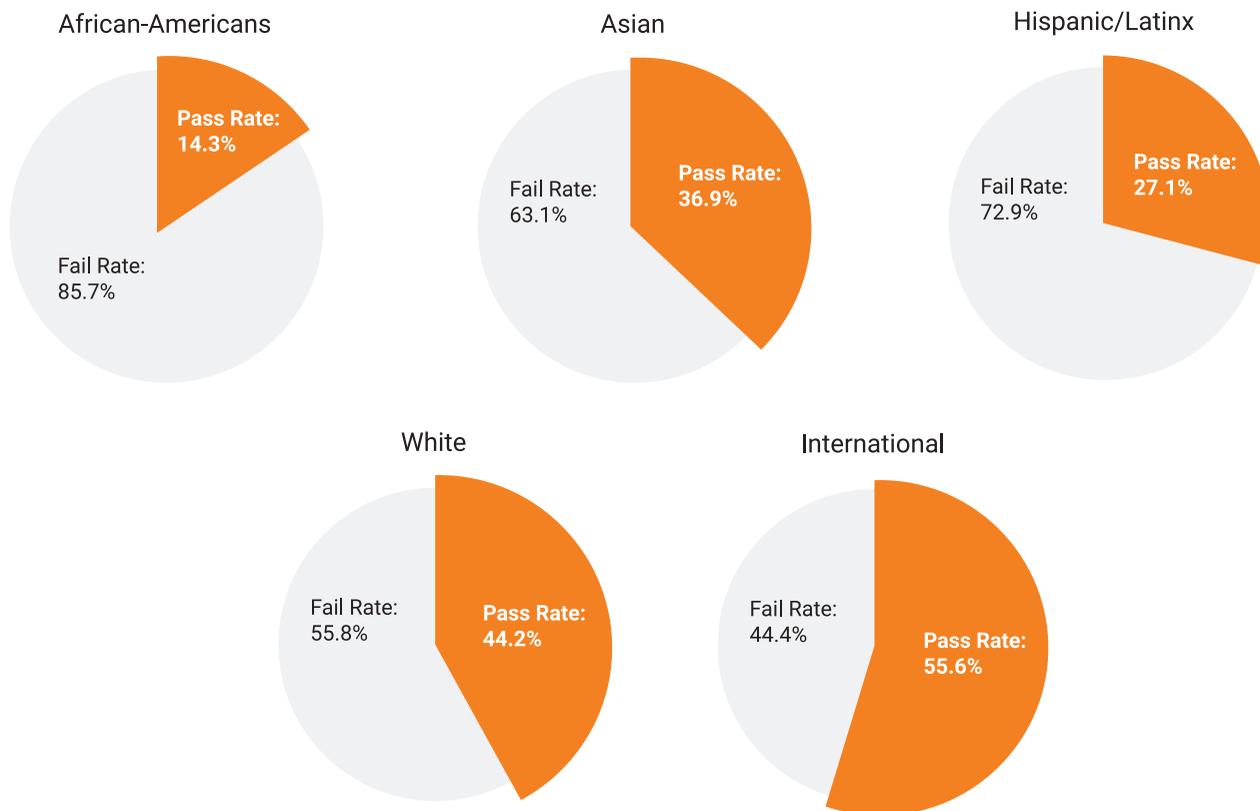
African-Americans

Pass Rate: 14.3%
Fail Rate: 85.7%

Asian

Pass Rate: 36.9%
Fail Rate: 63.1%

Hispanic/Latinx

Pass Rate: 27.1%
Fail Rate: 72.9%

White

Pass Rate: 44.2%
Fail Rate: 55.8%

International

Pass Rate: 55.6%
Fail Rate: 44.4%

Please note, any racialized group with fewer than 10 students was removed from the charts and tables below to protect the privacy of students and their anonymity.

The implementation of Guided Pathways, AB705, and the intentional focus on equity has caused institutions across the state to review data such as those listed above and inquire about the reason behind such opportunity gaps. If the goal is to better support students with the access and completion of fundamental courses such as transfer-level Math and English, and curriculum has been revised and restructured in order to provide timely co-curricular supports, then how might such stark gaps arise when disaggregated by race? While the traditional approach to teaching and learning within higher education has relied heavily on the notion that students either are, or are not, college ready, there has been a shift in acknowledging that as open access institutions we can not simply dismiss a students' intent to learn because of their previous educational experiences. Instead, as student ready institutions we must meet the student where they are and provide timely and culturally affirming supports for students as a way to best engage with the curriculum, services, and community that encompasses the institution.

In response to the CCCCO Call to Action and Vision for Success, and desire to understand the current approaches to equity within the institution, Riverside City College (RCC) invited Hotep Consultants to facilitate an institutional Equity Audit. The purpose of the Equity Audit is to analyze policies, practices, and procedures in an effort to uncover potential barriers to student success – specifically as it relates to the impact on historically minoritized students. The RCC mission states that:

In order to best understand the ways in which RCC's equity-focused mission is operationalized, the equity audit has three main goals:

> 1. Assess current practices at RCC - including existing equity-centered work
> 2. Provide recommendations for continued improvements
> 3. Ensure equity is embedded in all areas of campus: policy, practice, and praxis, including pedagogy/andragogy

This equity audit will highlight both equity advancing practices currently taking place at RCC and areas of improvement. The recommendations included within the audit will, ideally, meet the needs of all constituent groups across the institution in order to have institutional impact. With an intentionality on student success, it is our hope that the information identified within this report will result in a more equitable, inclusive, and welcoming institution where all community members can thrive and succeed.

Riverside City College serves a diverse community of learners by offering certificates, degrees, and transfer programs that help students achieve their educational and career goals. The college strives to improve the social and economic mobility of its students and communities by being ready to meet students where they are, valuing and supporting each student in the successful attainment of their goals and promoting an inclusive, equity-focused environment.

Key Definitions

In an effort to support potential readers of this report, we feel as though it is important to provide definitions of key terminology that will be used throughout this document. Providing these definitions offers readers a baseline common understanding of phrases such as equity, anti-racism, and minoritized students. While we understand that many definitions of these phrases may exist, the definitions below reflect how we, as consultants and researchers, view, discuss, and understand these words and phrases.

Anti-Racism

Scholar and author of How to Be An Antiracist, Ibram X. Kendi defines anti-racism as the intentional focus on policies and practices that produce or sustain racial equity between racial groups. It requires constant assessment and reflection and is focused solely on the outcome of a policy or practice, rather than on the creator of such policy or practice.

Equity

Hotep Consultants defines equity as "developing policies, practices, and assessments within an organization that take into consideration the unique challenges and barriers faced by disproportionately impacted groups."

Similarly, according to the 2020 Guided Pathways Plan, RCC defines equity as "an investment to achieving parity in academic outcomes by removing institutional barriers and creating an inclusive and culturally affirming learning environment. "

Disproportionate Impact

Disproportionate impact is a condition where some students' access to key resources and supports and ultimately their academic success may be hampered by inequitable practices, policies and approaches to student support resulting in inequitable outcomes.

Diversity

The recognition of differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation) without bias or judgement.

Inclusion

Inclusion is the incorporation of members of traditionally marginalized groups into planning, strategizing and decision making processes of an organization.

Locus of Control

A person with an internal locus of control believes that he or she can influence events and their outcomes, while someone with an external locus of control blames outside forces for everything" - Julian Rotter

Locus of control is the degree to which individuals believe that they have control over the outcomes in their lives. Within an educational context, locus of control is connected to the amount of control or influence an educator believes that they have within the outcomes of students, as it relates to their role (ie. faculty within curriculum, staff within the services they provide).

Minoritized Students

"Minoritized" as a phrase is a concept that describes a certain group of people in their relationship to a dominant group within specific settings and moments of time. Utilizing language that acknowledges the minoritization of communities within the institution highlights the various identities and power dynamics that exist.

For example, it is widely understood the California Community Colleges support a racially diverse population of students. Numerically, the number of students of color within the CCC system, and RCC specifically, are greater than that of white students. Yet, due to systemic racism students of color are often not granted the same level of power, authority, or access. As such, their existence within the CCC system is minoritized, even though they are not the numerical minority.

Obligation Gap

According to the authors of Minding the Obligation Gap in Community Colleges and Beyond, the Obligation Gap can be defined as an accountability standard in which the institution is responsible for the academic achievement of minoritized students of color. Unlike opportunity gap or achievement gap, the responsibility of student success does not belong to the student. Instead, the obligation gap "puts the responsibility on educational institutions to be student-centered when designing academic experiences for the communities they serve".

Equity Audit Core Team

Throughout the spring 2021 semester, Hotep Consultants, worked with a small group of RCC stakeholders to engage in thought partnership around stakeholder engagement. Under the leadership of Dean Kristi Di Memmo, this core group of stakeholders was assembled to provide feedback on technical details, insights on stakeholder engagement (including survey distribution and focus group participation), and serve as a sounding board to provide institutional context in alignment with the findings.

While the core team was relatively small, participants represented a variety of stakeholder groups including:

- RCC Leadership Councils
    - Student Access & Support
    - Academic & Career Technical Programs & Instructional Support
    - Institutional Effectiveness
- Student Equity Committee
- Guided Pathways
- Classified Professionals
- Campus Administration

Equity Audit Core Team Member	Title	Role and/or Stakeholder Group Representation Campus Affiliations as per 2020-2021 EPOC Membership Documents
Kristi Di Memmo	Interim VP, Planning & Development	Administration, Educational Planning Oversight Committee Co-Chair Core Team Lead
Monique Green	Associate Professor, Counseling	Full-time Counseling Faculty Guided Pathways Faculty Chair
Cassandra Greene	Instructional Programs Support	Classified Professional Teaching & Learning Staff Joint Chair
Melinda Miles	Administrative Assistant IV	Classified Professional Institutional Effectiveness Committee
Marc Sanchez	Associate Professor, Math	Full-time Instructional Faculty Student Equity Committee Chair
Kristi Woods	Dean of Instruction, Languages, Humanities, & Social Sciences	Administration, Instruction President's Leadership Team

Process

The Riverside City College equity audit was conducted in four key phases. The first phase included collecting and analyzing a series of documents which provided critical insights to historical institutional policy, practice, and assessment. The second phase included a campus-wide survey that was sent to all employees and students at RCC. The survey provided insight into RCC's culture and climate including the extent to which employees feel supported and valued by the institution, the practices they engage in to support students, and some of the issues and challenges with shifting to a student-focused and student-ready approach. The survey was sent to students that were enrolled at RCC between Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 terms. The final phase of the equity audit included a series of focus groups that provided insight around employees' level of understanding, engagement, and feedback around equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts at RCC. After completing all three phases of data collection, Hotep Consultants analyzed the data within the lens of the Student Ready, Equity Minded, and Transformative (S.E.T.) Framework, which will be discussed in the next section. This analysis resulted in the final set of recommendations for next steps to improve equity-advancing practices within RCC.

Phase 1:
Conduct an analysis of key institutional documents focused on policy, practice, and assessment.

April - May   **May - June**   **June - August**

Phase 2:
Collected survey responses from an employee survey and a student survey.

Phase 3:
Facilitated focus groups for students, instructional faculty, student support & services (classified professionals), and administrators.

Phase 4:
Analyze all data elements within the S.E.T. Framework
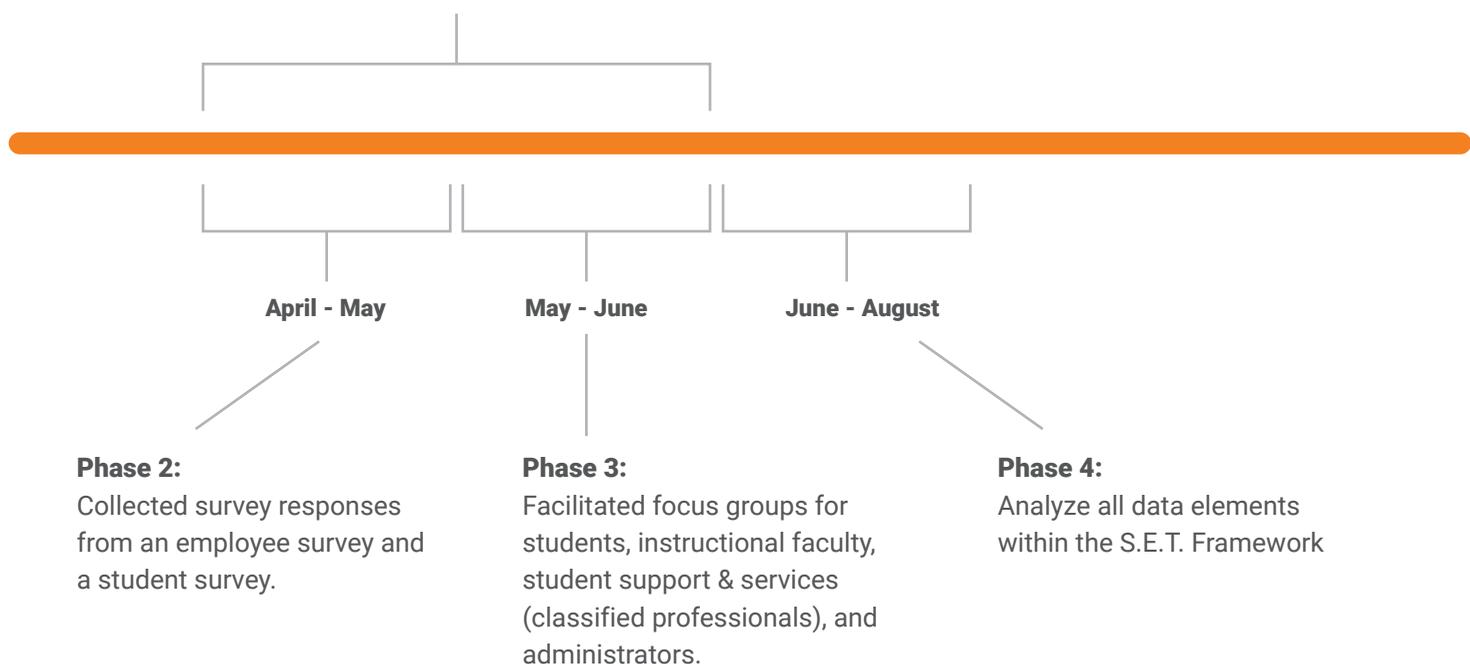
Research Questions

The Equity Audit was guided by five (5) primary research questions. These research questions were initially developed by Hanover Research Brief: Conducting an Equity Audit and adapted by Hotep Consultants to best support equity audits within the community college. The research questions are listed below:

1   To what extent is the environment at Riverside Community College diverse and inclusive?

2   To what extent do Riverside Community College's administrative policies and practices encourage a systemic and collaborative approach to diversity, equity and inclusion?

3   To what extent do RCC's instruction policies and practices help cultivate a learning experience that is engaging and empowering for historically minoritized students?

4   In what ways can Riverside Community College support changes to current policies, practices, and procedures in order to improve the quality of instruction and services for students?

5   To what extent are Riverside Community College's budget and resource practices informed by a student-ready and equity minded lens?

The research questions above serve as specific questions to be answered as a result of analyzing the data provided. In order to answer the research questions, the Hotep Consultants team utilizes a specific framework as a lens through which to analyze the data. This framework is referred to as the S.E.T. Framework and is described more thoroughly in the next section.
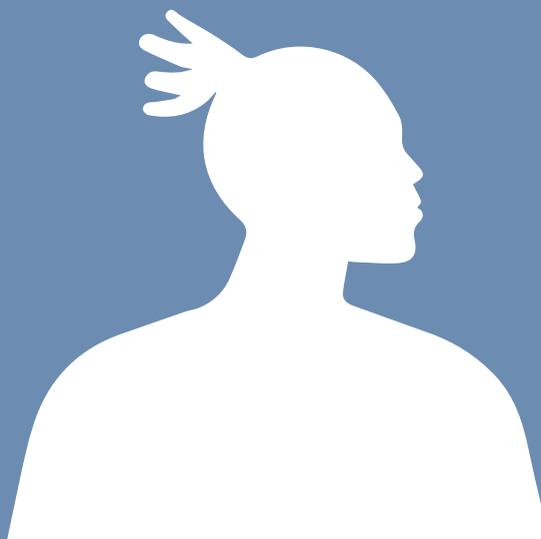
S.E.T. Framework

At Hotep Consultants, we embrace award-winning educator Dr. Lisa Delpit's declaration, "We do not really see through our eyes nor hear through our ears, but through our beliefs." As educational leaders, our beliefs and values are evident in our institution's policies, practices, and procedures. An in-depth analysis of these aspects of our institutions calls for leaders to utilize a practical framework to assess their approaches. **The "S.E.T. Framework" stands for Student-Ready, Equity Minded, and Transformative.** This framework offers individuals and organizations multiple lenses through which they can reflect on their policies, practices, and assessments to identify barriers to equitable student outcomes.

The S.E.T. Framework provides the philosophical foundation that informs the way in which the Hotep Consultants Team approaches the development of human centered data collection, equity focused data analysis, and intentional and practical reporting of findings and recommendations. The S.E.T. framework is comprised of six (6) key components of which we assess the intersections of each.

Student Ready	Equity Minded	Transformative
Institutional	Individual	Service
Policy	**Practices**	**Assessment**
The record of waht we say we do	Doing what we said we would do	The result of doing what we said we would do

Student-Ready

Is an analysis of how the entire organization functions with an intentional, collaborative and holistic approach to facilitate students' continuous advancement towards college completion and valuable outcomes after college. A student ready approach equally values the knowledge, expertise, and leadership that exists across instruction/academics, student services, and business services/operations as well as different constituency groups including students, classified professionals, faculty members, and management/administration , recognizing every employee as an educator within the institution. A Student-Ready organization creates system-wide impact by consistently examining processes and practices that are hindering learning for all students and actively working towards solutions. Developing a student-ready culture is both a journey for individuals but also a broader process of organizational learning.

Equity-Minded

This is an analysis at the individual level and one's consciousness, values, and belief systems about students, oneself, and the process of teaching and learning. Equity-minded higher education professionals intentionally call attention to patterns of inequity in student experiences and outcomes. They also take personal and professional responsibility for the success of their students and critically reassess their own practices. It also requires that practitioners are race conscious and aware of the historical context of exclusionary practices in American Higher Education.

Transformative

Transformative is the manifestation of practices that address the historical and sociopolitical causes of inequities found in education and engage in data-informed efforts to repair and restore the educational system. A transformative educational framework interrogates the system, tools, and strategies of the traditional approach and produces innovative student-centered, anti-racist, and anti-sexists strategies for success.

Policy

Policy refers to the written record of what the institution values and desires to accomplish. Policy is often led by governing agencies (i.e. Chancellor's Office, state legislature), institutional governance (i.e. Board of Trustees, governance committees), or campus leadership (i.e. President's Cabinet). Policies can inform college process and documentation (i.e. student forms), and have a significant impact on the student experience. It is important to note that many institutional policies were created during a time in which access and the right to fail were predominant areas of focus within higher education, resulting in student barriers and poor outcomes for students of color. Transformative institutions view policies not as compliance based opportunities to exclude, but rather as parameters from which transformative student engagement can blossom.

Practice

Practice is most connected to the way in which policies are implemented and actualized within the day to day institutional experiences. There may be times in which practice aligns with policy and there may be times in which it does not. The times in which practice does not align with policy is most often based on individual engagement with said policy either intentionally or unintentionally, and could result in either transformative impact on students or the creation of barriers.

Assessment

Assessment refers to the outcome of both policy and practice. Assessments can be formal such as a campus survey or final research paper within a course. Formal assessments are typically tied to understanding campus or course outcomes, connected to program reviews, or impact resource allocations. Informal assessments may provide opportunity for intentional reflection and engagement within a course, program, or department that most impact students' sense of connection and belonging.

Data Reviewed

Campus-wide survey

Two campus-wide surveys were developed by Hotep Consultants utilizing the Survey Monkey online survey tool. One survey was developed for RCC employees and a separate survey was created for RCC students. In collaboration with the RCC Planning & Development office, Hotep Consultants provided unique survey links and QR codes, for internal distribution and survey collection via the Rivall email listserv and student email accounts. The surveys were open between April 28 - May 19, 2021. In order to increase campus participation in the survey, there was intentional recruitment by classified professionals and faculty leaders to engage employees who typically don't participate in these conversations.

> 321 total employees participated in the employee survey
> 407 students participated in the student survey

Within both surveys there were 6 key sections:

Belief in Students

Campus Equity Eco-System

Being Action Oriented

Sense of Welcoming and Belonging

Racial Literacy

Critical Self Reflection

The survey primarily consisted of likert scale questions in which participants rated their agreeability or level of comfort across a variety of factors. Additionally, each section within the survey included an open ended question to which participants could provide clarity or context around their responses.

The full list of survey participant demographics and redacted survey responses can be found in the appendix.

Focus Group Discussions

After the campus surveys closed, Hotep Consultants conducted a number of focus groups to gain additional insight around employees' level of understanding, engagement, and feedback around equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts at RCC.

We hosted 8 focus group sessions over a period of 12 hours between May 18 - June 8, 2021. The focus groups were held virtually via Zoom. In order to ensure that participants were able to actively engage in the focus group, breakout rooms were used to provide small group conversations facilitated by a consultant from Hotep Consultants. As such, one focus group session could host up to 40 participants with four rooms of 10 participants each.

Each focus group session highlighted a specific stakeholder group to ensure that questions asked within the focus group were most relevant to the role of the participants. We hosted one (1) focus group session for students; two (2) focus group sessions for employees within student services and support departments (including classified professionals, counseling faculty, and library faculty); two (2) focus group sessions for instructional faculty; two (2) focus group sessions for campus managers (in collaboration with the standing Meeting of the Managers); and one (1) focus group with the President's Leadership Team.

- 64 total participants engaged in the 8 focus group sessions

The full list of focus group participant demographics, focus group schedule, and focus group protocol can be found in the appendix.

Document Analysis

In addition to the campus survey and focus group sessions, a document analysis was conducted to gain insights into structures, messages and practices that create barriers to anti-racist efforts. Documents remain a source of information and direction regardless of changes in personnel, mission, or initiative. It is imperative to review and update documentation, especially if any documentation can be directly linked to barriers to student success.

At the onset of the Equity Audit, the Hotep Consultants team provided the RCC Equity Audit Team with a list of key documents to gather for review. The Equity Audit team collected a number of documents from the key documents list and shared them with the Hotep Consultants team via Microsoft Teams. We then uploaded the shared documents to the data visualization tool, Dedoose, where our team reviewed, analyzed, and coded over 200 documents. For documents that were not included within the initial Teams document share, Hotep Consultants worked directly with the Equity Audit Core Team to gather additional documentation, or searched the RCC website for additional materials.

Some items reviewed in the document analysis include:

        RCC Strategic Plan
        RCC 2020 Guided Pathways Plan
        Employee Demographic Data and Job Applicant Demographics
        List of Committees, Committee Purpose, and Committee Participants
        Professional Development Schedules
        Employee Review Process
        Resource Allocation Model
        Program Review Documentation
        Course Outline of Record for High Enrolled courses, and High DFW courses
        Advertisements and Applications for Student Support Programs
        Student Events Calendar

The full list of documents included in the document analysis can be found in the appendix.

Limitations

As with any research, the Equity Audit at RCC was not exempt from a series of limitations that might influence our findings and final recommendations. Such limitations are listed below.

Timing

Much of the data collection, both surveys and focus groups, took place throughout the later part of the spring semester and throughout the summer term. As a result, potential participants may not have had the opportunity to fully participate in either the survey or focus group due to competing schedules (ie. finals) or contract availability. We realize the timing of the data collection limited the number and breadth of responses that we were able to receive within this process and therefore may not paint a complete picture of the campus climate and experience from all constituency groups.

Breadth and depth of voices

As mentioned above, the timing issues with the data collection process limited the number and breadth of responses that we were able to include in the data collection process. Specifically, because the focus groups took place at the start of the summer term, we lacked the opportunity to engage a variety of students and adjunct faculty. While we're grateful for the few students that were able to participate in the student focus group, the number of participants was too few that we won't be able to include those insights within this analysis. For our faculty analysis, we were grateful to have heard from full-time faculty at RCC, however we know that the experiences of adjunct faculty are often vastly different than those of full-time faculty within any community college. Because of the timing of the focus groups, the faculty members that were most available to lend their voices to the conversation were full-time faculty which may not be representative of all faculty experiences.

Access to data

Again, we are extremely grateful for the voices that we heard from within the surveys and focus groups, and the amount of institutional documents that were shared with us as part of this audit. That said, we also acknowledge the reality that we can only review the information we have access to. While we do not believe that there is any malintent to withhold information from our consultants, there may be information or documentation that we were not privy to during this process. Perhaps we did not ask for the right information. Or perhaps there wasn't an awareness of the existence of a specific item or topic that could be of interest and importance to this process amongst those that we engaged with. Again, of no fault to anyone in particular. Additionally, there is such a thing as research bias which exists in spaces where individuals may not feel comfortable or safe in sharing their true thoughts or experiences with researchers out of a fear of stigma or retribution. In this instance, we, as researchers, are only privy to the information shared with us through the survey or focus group presentations based on the level of comfort a participant has in sharing their story. We acknowledge this fact and have taken this into consideration during our analysis of the data.

Pandemic!

Finally, throughout the data collection and engagement process through the analysis and presentations of findings, we find ourselves still deep in the midst of the COVID-19 global health pandemic. This year has been interesting, to say the least. The sudden and drastic requirement to shift the way in which most colleges have offered instruction and services to students has been taxing on both employees and students. The request to fill out yet another survey, or attend another 90 minute zoom session for a focus group, may have exhausted those that are dealing with survey and screen fatigue. Additionally, in light of the racial reckoning around anti-racist and anti-Black systemic policies and practices, there is also fatigue that communities of color face in having to reshare traumas and microaggressions that they encounter on a daily basis. Therefore it is understandable that some may have turned down the request to participate in yet another conversation about equity and racism within the institution. The mental health of community members, especially those of color, has been incredibly taxed over the past two years. That being said, we are grateful for those that had the energy and ability to share their stories with us and we are hopeful that we were able to capture both the individual and collective experiences of the communities that call Riverside City College their place of study or place of work.

Key Findings
& Recommendations
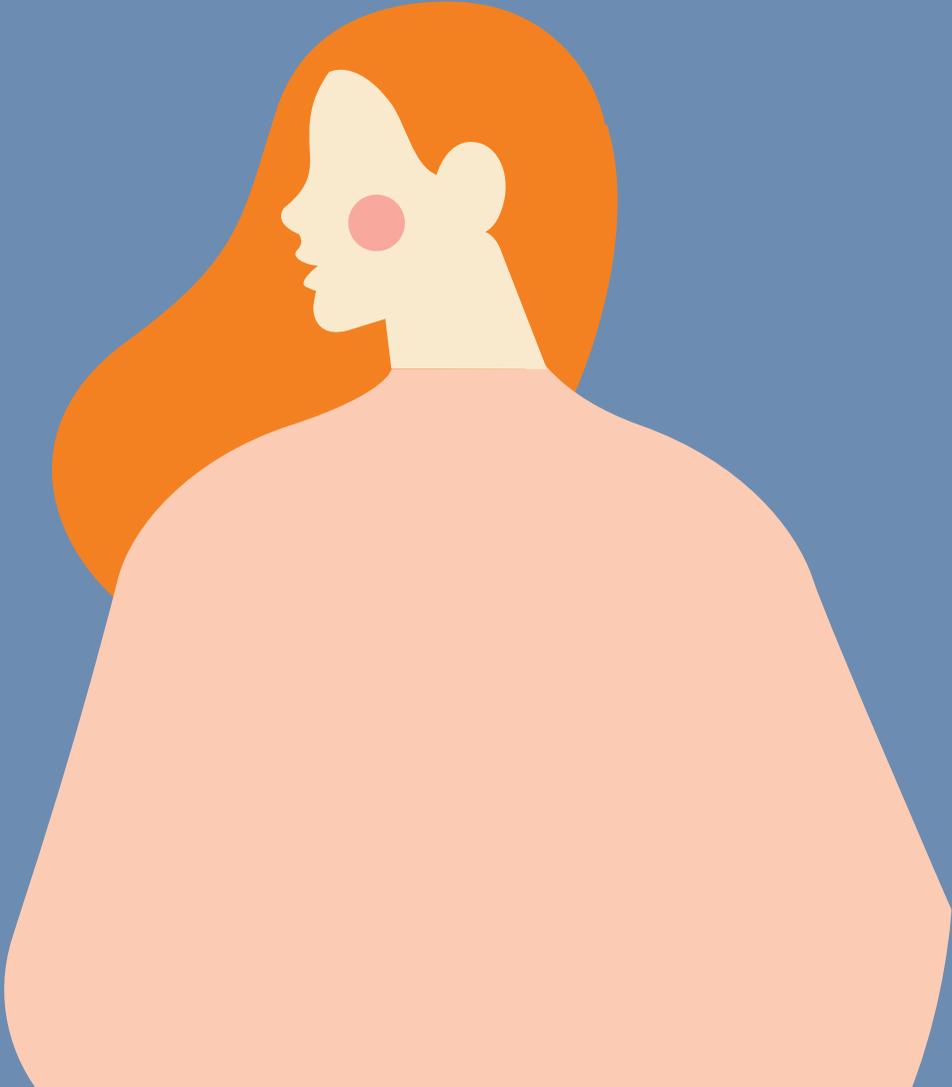
Findings

The Equity Audit findings are a result of the deep and intentional analysis of institutional documents, campus survey, and focus group discussions. The findings are presented in two parts: first a set of overarching themes, followed by a summary of findings within the S.E.T. framework. Following the findings, a full list of recommendations will also be presented within the S.E.T. Framework.

Overarching Themes

Clarity and Communication

Within and across stakeholder groups, there are different perceptions about what "equity" means and different levels of understanding which impacts how it looks to carry out equity-minded practices in their work. This leads to barriers in having critical, constructive, and collegial conversations about practices and policies that prevent equity advancing thought and implementation, especially across sectors, divisions, or departments.

Intentionality around Anti-Racism

While there is a genuine desire to promote Anti-Racism, traditional approaches and ways of thinking about teaching, learning, and student engagement are still present and embedded in the design, language, and practice of the institution. There is an understanding that the structures and systems of higher education were not originally built in a way to support culturally relevant practices or ensure the success of a diverse constituency of students. Some of the barriers within higher education are systemic and related to broader system-wide issues, however it is important to consider what intentional changes might take place within the sphere of influence within RCC. What might it look like to address issues of inequity and racism within an individual's approach to teaching, learning, and student engagement that can impact change on a day-to-day basis?

Setting Expectations and Providing Support Campus-wide

There is a disconnect between the expectations to embed equity within the work of all campus stakeholders and the necessary support to do so. While there has been an attempt to provide professional learning opportunities to promote equity advancing practices amongst employees, many of these opportunities have been centered around instructional faculty excluding classified professionals and those in business services on the periphery of conversations and engagements around equity within the institution. Without intentional inclusion of the greater campus community

S.E.T. Analysis

The findings below are presented in alignment with the S.E.T. framework. The "SET Framework" stands for Student-Ready, Equity Minded, and Transformative. This framework offers individuals and organizations multiple lenses through which they can reflect on their policies, practices, and assessments to identify barriers to equitable student outcomes. We strive to uplift encouraging practices by including highlights and examples of work currently taking place at RCC. We will also include direct examples from the data collected, or questions for consideration to strengthen the areas of growth.

Student Ready (Individual)

A Student-Ready organization creates system-wide impact by consistently examining processes and practices that are hindering learning for all students and actively working towards solutions.

Highlights

Many of the campus documents, especially those developed within the last year, have had explicit mentions of equity, disproportionate impact, and the acknowledgement of the need for the institution to revise practices to better support a diverse constituency of students.
Evidenced in: Guided Pathways Plan 2020-2022; Student Equity Plan 2019-2022; Strategic Plan 2020-2025

There have been steps taken to provide the campus with trainings to better understand the current campus landscape and identify ways forward.
Evidenced in: Development of Data Coaches; Establishment of BFSA; Response to housing insecurity during COVID-19 pandemic

Student Ready (Individual)

Areas of Growth

There's an acknowledgment that the diversity of the faculty are not reflective of the diversity of the student population. African-American students don't see themselves reflected in the faces of the employees on campus. Non-binary students also noted a lack of gender diversity within STEM classes. Both racial and gender diversity can be lacking across departments and divisions which can make it difficult for students to feel seen, valued, and welcomed on campus.

> *I see very very little faculty, staff and administration that I can relate to, being African American. It sometimes can be very discouraging, especially in classes we learn about race.''*
> **- Student Survey Quote**

> *In terms of the computer science department, I seldom interact with female or non-binary students as is, I also don't have much of an interaction with female computer science related professors.''*
> **- Student Survey Quote**

These gaps are not just felt amongst students. RCC employees also expressed a disconnect in feeling valued, seen, and heard on campus. African-American employees report stronger feelings of being undervalued at RCC in comparison to other racialized employee groups on campus. Women also expressed higher feelings of being undervalued in comparison to men. If employees of color are not feeling supported or valued within their work, it becomes more difficult to attract and retain employees of color across the institution, especially within instruction.

> *What policies or practices are in place to uplift employees of color?"*
> **- Employee Focus Group Participant**

In comparison to all other racial groups, African-American employees had higher reports of feeling as though they did not receive credit for their work or ideas, being dismissed by colleagues, and having to work harder than other colleagues in order to be perceived as competent. Similarly, women employees reported stronger feelings of being dismissed by colleagues and having to work harder than other colleagues in order to be perceived as competent.

## I feel as though my contributions are valued by my department

Legend: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

African-American / Black
Latinx / Hispanic
White
Woman
Man

0%   25%   50%   75%
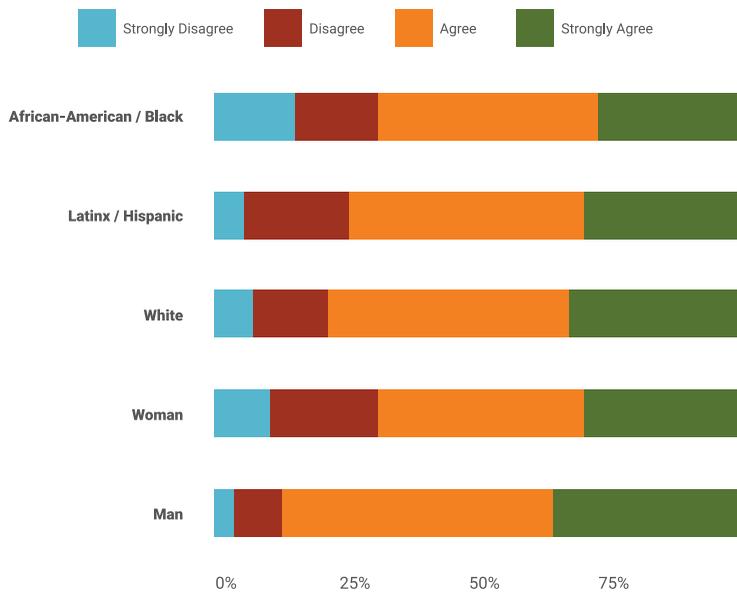
I feel as though I did not receive credit for my ideas or work

Legend: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

African-American / Black
Latinx / Hispanic
White
Woman
Man

0%   25%   50%   75%
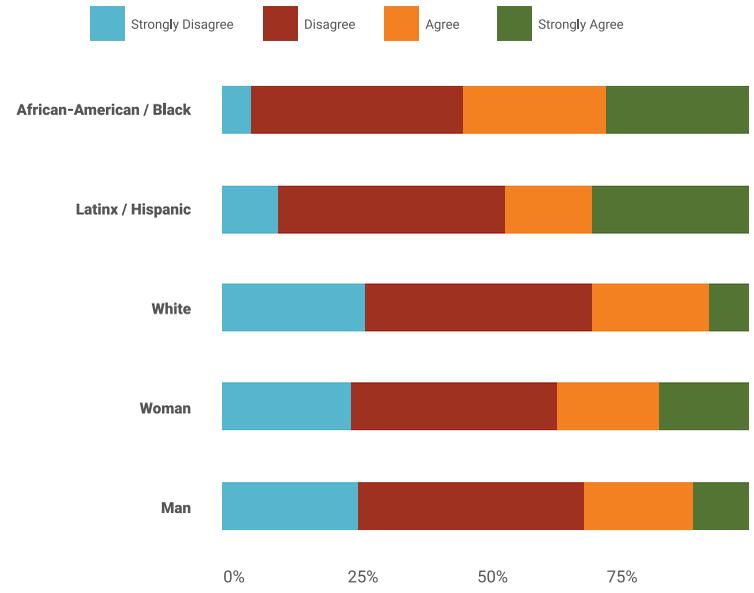
Felt my ideas were dismissed by my colleagues

Legend: Very Often, Often, Sometimes, Never

African-American / Black
Latinx / Hispanic
White
Woman
Man

0%   25%   50%   75%
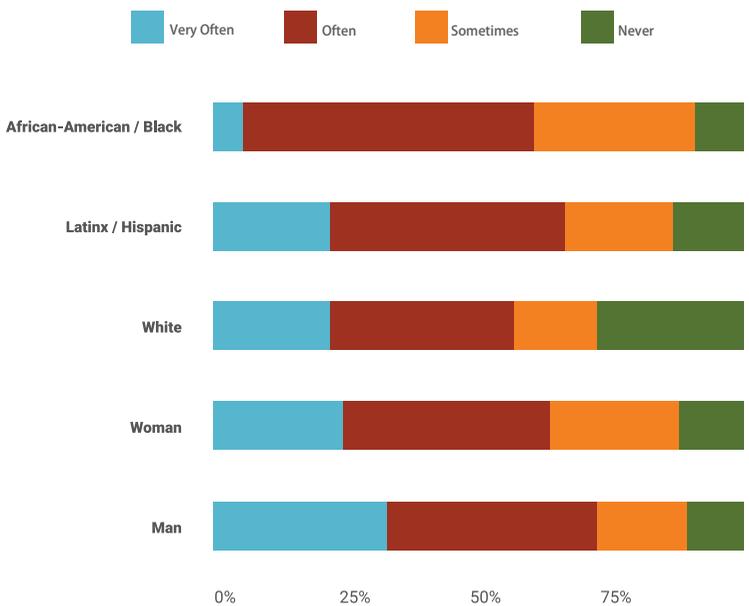
I feel I have to work harder than my colleagues to be perceived as a competent employee.
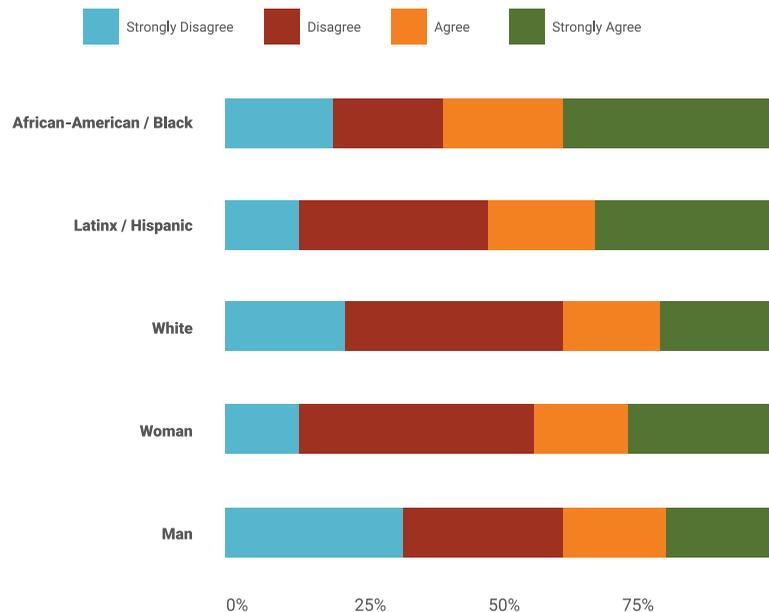
Legend: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

African-American / Black
Latinx / Hispanic
White
Woman
Man

0%   25%   50%   75%

*Asian, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, Native American or Alasan Native, Transgender Woman, and Transgender Man respondent populations were too few to disaggregate without potentially identifying the employees who responded to the survey.

Not all employees are included in conversations around equity or equity advancing practices, as much of the discussions and professional development are focused on instructional faculty. Even so, departments and divisions are siloed in their approaches to daily operations, nevermind equity advancing thought partnership.

> " *I feel like our college overall is understanding and aware of equity and our institutional goals for achieving equity. However, concerted action towards achieving equity is not quite as clear or evenly advanced across the campus. Departments are very siloed - I don't necessarily think we intend or want to be siloed, but rather it is a result of deeply entrenched college processes and procedures, inter- and intra-departmental organization, lack of communication, and other influences."*
> **- Faculty Survey Quote**

While there have been a number of resolutions presented over the last year that uplift anti-racist efforts and intentional focuses on equity across the campus, there wasn't a mention of a statement of solidarity from CSEA - only District leadership, campus leadership, and faculty governance groups. Which further questions the ways in which Classified Professionals are being included in conversations around equity and what the expectations are for Classified Professionals to engage in equity advancement at RCC.

There is a disconnect between the job description requirements for academic managers vs. classified managers. The "Understanding of diverse staff and community" requirement is only a requirement for classified managers as per recent job description postings. Additionally, there is no mention of diversity within adjunct faculty pool postings or student job postings, even though they are posted in the same employment system and will likely engage with the majority of students seeking information and services within the campus.

Additionally, the "Commitment to Diversity" required is listed under "other" than an actual requirement for employment. Reducing what could be a fundamental external statement of the values that the institution has around equity and what it could expect from future employees to an "other" designation removes the expectation that the campus truly centers equity.

The Establishment of the Black Faculty & Staff Association wasn't mentioned in any of the campuswide surveys or focus groups as a resource or support system for Black Faculty or Staff. It can be assumed that there may not be recognition of the organization or adequate resources to ensure the effectiveness of the BFSA.

There's no initial differentiation in WebAdvisor to understand which courses are connected to a learning community vs. which are general subject courses. While there's no search feature on WebAdvisor, which is a challenge within the system, there could be some creativity as it relates to the naming convention of the courses to better identify those connected to cultural learning communities:

Fall 2021	Open		ENG-1A-47641 (47641) English Composition	Riverside City College	08/23/2021-12/16/2021 Lecture Tuesday, Thursday 10:15AM - 12:20PM. Quadrangle, Room 103 08/23/2021-12/16/2021 Lab Days to be Announced, Times to be Announced Martin Luther King TLC, Room 119	M. Reid	10 / 30 / 0	4.00
Fall 2021	Open	Y	ENG-1A-47644 (47644) English Composition	Riverside City College	08/23/2021-12/16/2021 Lecture Monday, Wednesday 10:15AM - 12:20PM. Quadrangle, Room 109 08/23/2021-12/16/2021 Lab Days to be Announced, Times to be Announced Martin Luther King TLC, Room 119	W. Silva	2 / 30 / 0	4.00
Fall 2021	Open		ENG-1A-47680 (47680) English Composition	Riverside City College	08/23/2021-12/16/2021 Lecture Tuesday, Thursday 05:00PM - 07:05PM. Quadrangle, Room 109 08/23/2021-12/16/2021 Lab Days to be Announced, Times to be Announced Martin Luther King TLC, Room 119	M. Mushik	9 / 30 / 0	4.00

Example: The first course (47641) is connected to Umoja; the second course (47644) is connected to Puente; the third course (47680) is a general English course. However, they all appear to be the same course in looking at WebAdvisor.

It may also be helpful to pull out the learning community classes and establish them in a separate section of the catalog in order to make it easier to find. The courses would be listed twice – once in the Learning Communities section, and once in the subject area section of the catalog.

Equity Minded (Individual)

Equity-minded higher education professionals intentionally call attention to patterns of inequity in student experiences and outcomes. They also take personal and professional responsibility for the success of their students and critically reassess their own practices.

Highlights

Both faculty and classified professionals reported strong feelings of comfort when working with diverse groups of students. There is also strong awareness of the social identities that faculty and classified professionals possess, as well as biases and the impact of such biases within their work.

Question: I am aware of the social identities that I possess

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Administrators	0%	0%	31.58%	68.42%
Classified Professionals	1.72%	1.71%	41.03%	52.14%
Instructional Faculty	0%	5.33%	28.00%	62.67%

"

It is important to know who I am and what I believe in. To address my own bias. Without negative or positive evaluations I could not improve on my services I provide to the institution.''
- Student Services Professional Quote

"

As a first generation minority college student I ensure that I do not create any barriers. I am aware of my personal bias and constantly keep this at the forefront. I ensure that I meet the student in a setting that they are most comfortable with.''
- Student Services Professional Quote

The majority of faculty and classified professionals acknowledge that their departments prioritize high quality instruction and/or service for students and provide flexibility and support when students need assistance

Question: My department prioritizes high-quality instruction or services to students

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Administrators	0%	0%	21.05%	78.95%
Classified Professionals	4.17%	5.83%	30.00%	53.33%
Instructional Faculty	1.33%	6.67%	22.67%	68.00%

Areas of Growth

30% of African-American respondents responded that they "disagreed or strongly disagreed"
to the statement: When I enter a classroom, I feel welcomed based on this part of my identity:
race or ethnicity

Question: When I enter a classroom, I feel welcomed based on this part of my identity: race or ethnicity

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
African-American / Black	8.82%	20.59%	35.29%	17.65%
Latinx / Hispanic	4.48%	1.49%	52.99%	23.88%
Asian	9.09%	0%	48.48%	27.27%
White	2.20%	6.59%	46.15%	21.98%

*Asian, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, Native American or Alasan Native, Transgender Woman, and Transgender Man respondent populations were too few to disaggregate without potentially identifying the employees who responded to the survey.

Such sentiments beg the question, how are instructors integrating Anti-Racist practices within their courses? Especially in high enrolled courses – how are the concepts of race, culture, gender and identity, integrated and valued in the course experiences through the focus on strengths rather than deficits?

" *It is not expected and is not part of COR but I add diverse representation to my lectures and discussions ''* **- Faculty survey respondent**

Additional questions include:How are staff, and all employees, trained to support students with disabilities? How are staff, and all employees, trained to support transgender students? How are all employees trained and encouraged to have critical conversations with one another?

While students did not report a change in their experiences of feeling welcomed on campus during remote instruction, questions around the return to campus and the policies and adaptations that were put in palace as a result of the pandemic. For example, how might the flexibilities offered during the remote approach to learning, continue as the campus shifts back to in-person services?

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Transformative (Service)

Transformative is the manifestation of practices that address the historical and sociopolitical causes of inequities found in education and engage in data-informed efforts to repair and restore the educational system.

Highlights

The majority of student respondents (70-80%) stated that they felt valued by faculty, staff, and other students on campus.

The majority of faculty and staff (70-90%) respondents reported being proactive in their approach to supporting students.

75% of faculty reported that course offerings include examples from different cultural contexts.

87% and 84% of classified professionals reported they they ask students how to correctly pronounce their names, and address students with their proper pronouns, respectively
In reviewing syllabi, several included transformative practices such as welcome statements, student first/student ready language, and a balance between humanizing empathy, support, and high expectations.

Each of the data points above indicate a personal intention to create environments and spaces on campus where students can feel respected and valued, and contribute to their sense of belonging and support at RCC.

Areas of Growth

When working with students, what might it look like to communicate in a way that highlights the benefits of the service/task rather than focusing on only the requirements? Shifting the focus between features vs. benefits as it relates to program flyers, assessments, and even guiding campus documents

When thinking about course assessments & SLO's questions to consider may be: how does this course add to what they already have in order to strengthen their skillset and toolbox? How does culture and community impact the ways in which this subject is valued, and how that shows up in education and/or the workplace?

Below is an example of a response from an English 1A assessment which asked how the instructor connects the outcomes to the course with future courses and or the workforce.

{
Giving them a pep talk that goes something like this: "Even if your field is the sciences, writing is a core essential of every field. You will be writing more papers in college. When you get a job, writing is till essential. I am confident that you will be a supervisor or manager in the next 5 to 7 years. There is no question you will be writing emails, reports, presentations and those missing commas, comma splices will be a reflection of your professionalism. The clarity and logical flow of ideas are writing skills required at all levels of employment. The biggest complaint of employers when it comes to skills? The lack of writing skills is at the top. How does 1A fit? IA requires you to be proficient in writing, so taking 1A is a stop in the journey to being a proficient, efficient communicator/professional. The emphasis on argument in 1A helps you learn to agree and disagree with others in ways that are clear, respectful, and logical. Listening first to what others say before you offer your two cents and knowing how to do that are tools that are thankfully translatable from 1A to the workplace."
}

Statements such as the ones above, while very well intentioned, lack a cultural appreciation that assumes that "writing well" is a major key to success in the workforce. While effective communication is certainly important, other factors such as race, level of education, gender, etc. can all surpass writing ability when it comes to being able to land a sustainable wage job/career, which is even more exacerbated when taking into consideration the sector or industry of the workforce.

There is an opportunity here to think about Features vs. Benefits. There's a difference in saying "these are the skills you need to be successful in life" vs. "you already do some of these things when you communicate with others (arguments, persuasion, etc)" How does this course add to what they already have in order to strengthen their skillset and toolbox? How does culture and community impact the ways in which written communication is valued, and how that shows up in education and/or the workplace?

While some syllabi included transformative practices and student-first language, this is not consistent across faculty. There are still syllabi being used that exist as one-way contracts from the faculty placed upon students.

Example: excerpt from a current syllabus in a high enrolled course:
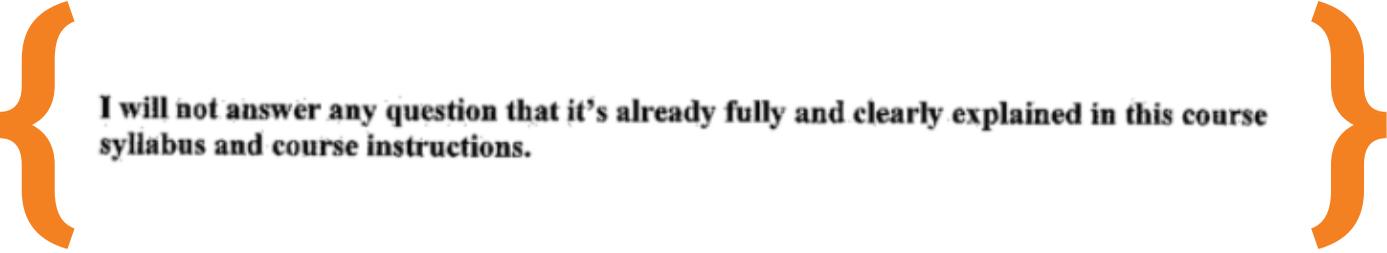
{ **I will not answer any question that it's already fully and clearly explained in this course syllabus and course instructions.** }

Statements such as these don't encourage student advocacy and inquiry. Instead, they place an undeserved expectation upon students that they should already know how to navigate this specific course with this specific professor, which is unrealistic as many students are likely taking a course only once. Humanity is completely removed from the student experience and opportunity to genuinely engage in the course without fear of reprimand just for asking clarifying questions.

Finally, both classified professionals, faculty, and administrators noted the lack of training around working with diverse student populations – many mentioned that they received such support at other institutions (or prior schooling) but not at RCC. More intentional training highlighting different ways in which to effectively work with diverse student populations, that also focus specifically on individual roles on campus, could impact the ways in which faculty assess their impact of the courses they teach, re-evaluate information shared on their syllabi, and offer classified professionals an opportunity to examine equity advancing practices outside of the classroom.

Recommendations

After considering both the highlights and areas of growth identified in the Equity Audit findings, Hotep Consultants offers the following recommendations to promote equity advancing policies, practices, and procedures at Riverside City College. The recommendations are presented in alignment with the S.E.T. Framework in order to provide support for the institution as a whole (Student Ready), interpersonal growth (Equity Minded), and individual service (Transformational).

Student Ready (Institutional)

A Student-Ready organization creates system-wide impact by consistently examining processes and practices that are hindering learning for all students and actively working towards solutions. The recommendations below are intended to address system-wide approaches to best support a diverse constituency of students.

- Hire a managerial level equity administrator and provide infrastructure to support the equity centered programming and accountability of equity advancing work.

- Conduct an equity map to catalog all of the equity related efforts on campus.

- Establish common language around key definitions of equity, disproportionate impact, diversity, and inclusion. Be clear around the purpose of this language and the intentional use of said definitions. Create the capacity to utilize shared definitions and common language when referring to issues of equity and equity advancing work on campus.
Example: CCCCO Definitions

- Center equity within all Flex Day activities and campus professional development.

- Ensure that all campus constituents are able to participate in professional development activities, especially those that are focused on equity, announcing campus wide initiatives, and equity advancing practices. Identify ways in which Flex Day schedules can be more inclusive of stakeholder groups across campus, both in content shared and presenters of key information.

  - ✓ Example: Closing Student Services temporarily to allow for Classified Professionals to participate in Flex Day activities, especially those that focus on major the discussion of major initiatives and expectations for the academic year.

  - ✓ Example: Record Flex Day presentations and workshops to allow for engagement of individuals who aren't able to attend in person due to conflicting work schedules and responsibilities.

  - ✓ Example: Provide pay parity for adjuncts to participate in flex day activities as well

- Evaluate job postings to prioritize the "Commitment to Diversity" expectation of candidates and future employees, including student employees and adjunct faculty.

Student Ready (Institutional)

- Develop hiring practices that support the advancement of diverse pools of candidates, taking into consideration underrepresented members of the workforce.
  - ✓ Example: if there are not enough diverse candidates that pass the initial screening processes (resume and document review), offer the opportunity to either re-review previously passed candidates or re-open the posting to ensure a diverse candidate interview pool.

- Prioritize and center the impact of resource allocations on student groups highlighted in the Student Equity Plans within the Prioritization and Resource Allocation Process.
  - ✓ Specifically, review and evaluate the weight of the Guiding Question "Concrete Action - How many students will the proposed strategy/initiative serve and in what way? What is the anticipated outcome?" as it relates to the number of students served rather than/in addition to the impact of the proposed initiative on student groups focused within the Student Equity Plan.

- Integrate intentional approaches to equity, diversity, and inclusion within the COR.
  - ✓ What would an update to the COR look like to include specific equity advancing efforts within the course materials, methods of instruction, or assessments?

- Increase efforts to retain students and employees from disproportionately impacted backgrounds. Establish intentional in-reach and community building efforts across the campus community.

Guiding Questions and Considerations:

What would your campus look like if it embraced a culture of equity?

How do we think about issues of race within the context of our decision making, relationship building, daily practices and operations?

Which of the highlights and areas of opportunity are most connected to shared governance bodies? Specifically, which might be under the guidance or purview of the Academic Senate? Which would be easy to address, and which might be more difficult? Why?

Who on your campus is most likely to resist equity-centered conversations and discussions? Why do you believe these colleagues are resistant? What steps can you take to bring them into the conversation?

Equity Minded (Individual)

Equity-minded higher education professionals intentionally call attention to patterns of inequity in student experiences and outcomes. They also take personal and professional responsibility for the success of their students and critically reassess their own practices. The recommendations below are centered on the development of interpersonal understanding of equity and individual impact on equity advancement within the RCC community.

- Conduct critical dialogue facilitation training with department managers and campus leadership to promote and model effective communication and feedback strategies.
    Examples include: intercultural dialogue training sessions, the utilization of a critical discussion protocol within meetings, and/or the establishment and adherence to discussion guidelines within meetings.

- Embed equity action plans within all employee evaluations to encourage the engagement with equity advancing work on campus (and/or beyond) and highlight areas of opportunity for the campus to meet the professional development needs of faculty, staff, and administrators.
    From a lens of growth and development. Not connected to employment outcomes, but rather an intentional focus on supporting the needs of the workforce and providing adequate resources and space to deepen knowledge and skillset around equity advancing work within their scope of influence.

- Establish a space for ongoing critical reflection, learning, and adaptation of individual practices. This includes learning about issues of equity, structural racism and anti-racism, intentional critical self-reflection of individual practices, and collaboration and thought partnership with colleagues.
    Examples: Skyline College ETS, Santa Ana College - Coffee with Colleagues

- Encourage programs, initiatives, and services designed to increase success for historically minoritized communities to each develop a bank of questions that guide their process for recruitment and program development.

- Provide cultural awareness and competency training opportunities specifically for students, including those not involved in student leadership. Prioritize the diversity in accessibility (both modality and timing) of when these engagement activities might take place.

Equity Minded (Individual)

Guiding Questions and Considerations:

How do we embed the practice of critical self reflection in communicating with others in a 1-on-1 setting, group setting, and adapt based on various contexts?

Do you think that students' race, ethnicity, culture, and/or gender impact the way that you view their academic potential? If so, what are you doing to change this?

What is your leadership style, and how can you incorporate more equity and social justice focused practices within your leadership philosophy and approach?

How does the campus support the cultural competency professional learning opportunities of all members of the campus community, especially students, adjunct faculty, and classified professionals?

Transformative (Service)

Transformative is the manifestation of practices that address the historical and sociopolitical causes of inequities found in education and engage in data-informed efforts to repair and restore the educational system. The recommendations listed below have been developed to better support the way in which individuals across the campus engage with students in an effort to support their success.

- Conduct Student Support Services bi-annual retreats/planning sessions to share knowledge, onboard/support new employees, address priorities or issues, etc.

- Establish an Equity Innovation Fund/Grant to promote creative thinking of campus constituents. Participants can submit an idea of a pilot project and/or updates to current programs and services to enrich the student's experience.
    Goal is to fund innovative practices that are not usually aligned with the campus' prioritization process.

- Develop accessible training/experiences to be able to better support students in acquiring knowledge and develop critical thinking skills to advocate for equity and justice.

- Develop a forms committee to review and evaluate the usefulness of student forms and processes. Specifically identifying changes to be made to allow forms to be more user friendly; clear in instructions, expected next steps, and contact information; and written in student ready language that promotes student advocacy and clarity in process.
    When reviewing forms, take into consideration what information is absolutely necessary (either based on internal process or legislative guidance), what information is helpful context, and what information may cause barriers for students.

- Review marketing materials, websites, and onboarding materials for student support programs, learning communities, and learning centers to ensure the centering of program benefits rather than technical jargon.

- Review and revise welcome communications for students. Separate emails by student type in order to provide more direct communications and encourage student agency.

- Establish a process to review and revise course syllabi and canvas pages on a regular basis. While syllabi can be viewed as contracts from the student to the instructor, they can, and should, also be viewed as a communication tool and resource between the instructor and the student.

Transformative (Service)

Guiding Questions and Considerations:

What does it mean to use course material as a tool for social justice? What can/does this look like in real life? And how can you encourage, empower, and equip students to utilize their education to improve their lives while positively contributing to a more just society?

How are the concepts of race, culture, gender and identity, integrated and valued in the course experiences through the focus on strengths rather than deficits?

Do you currently create opportunities for students to co-construct meaning in your class? How will you create these kinds of opportunities moving forward?

How do we support student agency in student services? Specifically, how do we meet the students where they are and support their navigation of institutional practices and policies? And if barriers are discovered within this navigation, how are they dismantled in order to better support students' navigational capital in the future?

Next Steps

"

One cannot be equity advancing and risk averse"
- Lasana Hotep, Founder & Lead Consultant, Hotep Consultants

The recommendations presented in this report are not exhaustive and there is no end to equity advancement or critical reflection. In order to be an institution that centers equity and strives to eradicate structural racism, it will be imperative to make time and space for continual inquiry, reflection, and redirection. Each finding and recommendation is intended to impact change at RCC from several different lenses and aspects of the student experience. It will be important for the campus to identify which recommendations might be implemented in the short-term or within individual practice, and which may require additional time and collaboration. It is recommended that the recommendations presented in this report are intentionally included within the campus strategic plan and the program review process in order to ensure that equity is embedded within the policies, practices, and procedures of RCC moving forward. This report should be shared widely with members of the RCC community, including those that set policy, determine prioritization of resources, approve professional development opportunities, guide the student equity plan, and impact hiring decisions. The Strategic Planning Council should work closely with the Student Equity Committee to develop a timeline of implementation and identify milestones to ensure consistent forward movement.

Change doesn't take place overnight. Change to right size systems that have historically thrived in oppression, will undoubtedly take a bit longer. Some of the findings and recommendations included in this report may be difficult to elicit immediate campus-wide buy-in. Anytime we, as humans, are asked to reflect on our practices or are recommended to adjust our practices, there exists a hesitancy because much of why we work in education is connected to our sense of purpose and identity. For many of us in education, the realization that we have possibly been perpetrators of inequities within the educational system solely because of the way in which we were trained within that same system, is a difficult one to reconcile.

However, as the quote at the start of this section states, one cannot be equity advancing and risk averse. We are asking for all members of the campus community to reflect on their current practices and the ways in which they engage with students, directly or indirectly, and the connection of those engagements on student outcomes. We are no longer operating within the "right to fail" model which expects students to enter our institutions with elevated awareness and knowledge of college systems and processes. Instead, we are shifting into a "student ready" model which places the responsibility on higher education institutions to meet students where they are and support their growth and development as they navigate these college landscapes.   It is our hope that the recommendations listed above provide the opportunity to truly become a student ready institution by reflecting upon and revising institutional policies and practices, providing professional development for the interpersonal assessment of practices, and space for individual recommitment to transformative service. Institutions of higher education were not originally developed to serve racially, socioeconomically, or gender diverse students. However, it is an honor to serve diverse communities of learners and impact the communities from which they come. If RCC strives to "improve the social and economic mobility of its students and communities" intentional changes will need to be made in order to center and value the student experience within all policies, practices, and procedures. There is already amazing, equity-advancing work underway at Riverside City College. We are excited for the next chapter in RCC's efforts to remove barriers, close opportunity gaps, and become an "inclusive, equity-focused, environment" committed to student success.

Appendix

Methodology - Data Collection Items

Employee Survey Instrument

Student Survey Instrument

Focus Group Protocol

Key Documents List

Survey Responses (Summary)

Employee Survey Responses (redacted)

Student Survey Responses (redacted)

Informational Materials

Flex Day Presentation Slides

Hotep Consultants

Hotep Consultants is grounded in Antiracist and Antisexist practices and principles. Collaborating with higher education institutions, non-profit organizations, and leading corporations, Hotep Consultants serves as a strategic thought partner, equity advancing executive coach, and transformative consultant to provide insight and practical strategies to identify, address, and resolve issues of equity.

To learn more about our work please visit: hotepconsultants.com