Perception of Cultural Assets

Woodland Community College

RSSC

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RSSC
SHOW UP.
DIFFERENTLY.

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Introduction

Faculty and staff perception of student potential and student cultural assets impacts the ways in which they influence the college to serve the educational needs of a diverse student community. Understanding the framework or lens through which the students and community are seen provides an opportunity to deconstruct and interrogate underlying assumptions of strengths and deficits. In doing so, the faculty, staff can illuminate those strengths. They are then poised to develop programs, services, culturally relevant pedagogy, policies, and practices that draw on those strengths and change common student outcomes and experiences that can be predicted by race.

The faculty and staff participated in focus groups and individual interviews that were designed to learn about the following factors:

Cultural Assets

Learn the faculty and staff perception of the cultural assets and potential of the students served by Woodland Community College.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Learn how the faculty and staff envision providing culturally relevant pedagogy, instruction, and services to students at Woodland Community College.

Outcomes Disparity

Learn what faculty and staff think contributes to the student outcomes and experience gaps at Woodland Community College

Gap in Service

Learn the faculty and staff perception of what part of the community is not being served by Woodland Community College.

Woodland Community College (WCC) is developing the Three-Year Educational Master Plan and revising its mission, vision, and values statements. This process served as an important backdrop to the conversations that the RSSC team had as we worked with members of your campus community. A common narrative emerging from the surveys and town halls about the students revealed a particular framework of defining students that is commonly framed as a "deficit based" perspective of students and their capacity for success. The prevalence of this perspective is a signal of the challenges the institution may have in trying to equitably serve the community. At the same time, it is clear that WCC faculty and staff care about and are invested in the success of their students. Recognizing the adverse impacts of deficit-based thinking and creating opportunities to address this mode of thinking will enable the faculty and staff to co-create powerful and inclusive change and transformation.

Though often accompanied by caring and dedication, deficit-thinking leads to the failure to recognize the cultural wealth and assets of the students and the community the college serves. It is important to recognize the adverse impact that a deficit-based perspective can have on the Educational Master Plan. Operating in a deficit-based model will lead to developing incorrect and ineffective strategies in the Educational Master Plan and other college efforts. However, when colleges learn to recognize and reject deficit-based perspectives, the Education Master Plans and other efforts are focused on equity-based frameworks that can be truly transformational which, in turn, lead to better outcomes for the students, the college, and its stakeholder communities.

As co-creators of the equity-based frameworks WCC faculty and staff are well-positioned for change. Equity-based solutions will grow out of recognizing how to move beyond deficit-based thinking and its negative impacts. In short, colleges fail by focusing on fixing the deficiencies of the students coupled with the failure to recognize the deficiencies of the institution. The result is colleges continually failing to create the solutions that can make a difference for students. As importantly, irrespective of student "deficiencies," institutional practices, processes, policies, procedures, and pedagogy

create disparity in outcomes and experiences for students of color that can be predicted by race. Because of the lack of focus on what causes and perpetuates the outcomes that can routinely be predicated by race, programs and services aimed at student preparation, counseling, supplemental instruction, textbook assistance, financial aid, etc. cannot address the issues. Programs created from deficit-minded perspective can only fail. These programs will not address problems of certificate and degree structure and sequencing. These programs will not mitigate the harm caused by policies that relegate students of color to long sequences of basic skills as institutions try to figure out how to "work around" the legal requirements designed to mitigate exclusion to these open access institutions. It is imperative that a college focused on equity-base outcomes recognizes that its inability to successfully connect with and teach students of color resides with the college and its practices, not with the students of color that they serve.

Increasingly, faculty, staff and administrators are focusing on student success in addition to access. As noted previously, at WCC – as is true of many other community colleges in the state -- there is a disparity in student outcomes and experiences that can be predicted by race. The traditional approach to addressing or attempting to "close the gap" has been to focus on the students' challenges, issues or needs and address them; they may range from insufficient preparation, inadequate resources, lack of motivation and ability, and/or sophisticated ability to navigate higher education. However, with increased consciousness of the fact that outcomes are predictable by race, educators are looking inward to consider how practices, processes, pedagogy, and policies are impacting students' ability to get in, get through their programs, and graduate/complete on time. This new focus on the institutional deficiencies instead of the student deficiencies is part of the approach in shifting the narrative from students being "college ready" to colleges being "student ready".

Additionally, the notion of accountability is being reconceptualized based on important questions from the internal college community and external stakeholder communities that colleges serve. Since WCC is in the process of actively questioning how to be accountable to its students and it's stakeholder community, it is important to consider some critical questions that can lead to better outcomes at every college and university.These questions are necessarily difficult because they are aimed at disrupting the continuous reproduction of inequality and address systemic issues in a different way. Can a college with these outcomes continue with business as usual? Is the disparity in the success rates that is predictable by race so normalized that it does not signal the need for further interventions? Is the acceptance of these success rates a consequence of inaction, misunderstanding, or the lingering impact of racism? For decades the lack of success has existed and there has been little to no accountability focused on transforming the educational experience or challenging the racism of the status quo. Educators, of all constituencies, are either unaware of the data, unalarmed by the data, discouraged by the data, or unwilling to use the data to make informed decisions. When the president of the National Education Association, Lily Eskelsen

Garcia, tweeted "We need to be disruptors of institutional racism in our schools (2020), she was actively calling on colleges engage in this kind of critical reflection to create equity-based institutions. The qualitative and quantitative data the RSSC team reviewed in reference to WCC suggests that the college is well-positioned to answer these questions and to make the critical changes that these answers will engender.

Methodology

RSSC conducted three (3), one-hour focus groups and 14 individual interviews, both on campus and virtually. The interviews were designed to explore faculty and staff perspectives on student outcomes and experience disparities that can be predicted by race – and the necessary strategies that will close such gaps.

Participants

The study sample included administrators, faculty, and staff from both Lake County and Woodland campuses, who voluntarily participated in either a focus group or individual interview. This combined, intersectional approach was designed to enable the widest participation in the process and to assure that the RSSC team could gather detailed information from both focus group and interview participants. Specific information about each activity follows:

- Focus groups were used to collect valuable data from multiple and collective voices. Participation in the focus groups was voluntary. Focus group participants were notified about the purpose of the focus groups, the dates, and the location by Woodland Community College leadership. The participants did not receive the questions in advance; 27 faculty, staff, and administrators participated in the focus groups.

- Some participants requested interviews in lieu of participating in the focus groups. Such interviews proved to be a valuable way to obtain information that is important to the participant. Woodland faculty, staff, and administrators were given the opportunity to schedule an appointment for an individual interview with the RSSC team. Like participation in the focus groups, participation in in-person, onsite interview was voluntary; 9 faculty, staff, and administrators participated in in-person, onsite interviews.

- Additional participants were invited to participate in an interview. The interviews were conducted with specific administrators and faculty recommended for the process by the WCC leadership. Invited interviewees were interviewed using remote technology such as zoom or phone depending upon the preference of the interviewer. Nine faculty, staff, and administrators participated in the invited interviews.

Each of these approaches enabled the RSSC team to gather relevant qualitative data.

Data Collection

Focus groups were conducted by three members of the RSSC team. The purpose of WCC Focus Group sessions was to learn how faculty and staff conceptualize students' cultural strengths, assets and deficiencies brought to their educational journey at WCC. Please see Appendix 1 to access the discussion questions posed to focus group participants. Note that prompts were used during the focus groups to facilitate discussion. The questions were specifically designed to be open-ended and to provide participants with the opportunity to discuss each question. The RSSC team took detailed notes during the focus group sessions.

In-person, onsite interviews were conducted with an individual member of the RSSC team. Participants had the choice to respond to the questions presented to the focus group participants or to respond to a set of DEI Brainstorming Questions. Please see Appendix 2 to access this question set. The RSSC team took detailed notes during the in-person, onsite interviews. The RSSC team took detailed notes during the invited interviews. The interviews conducted by zoom were also recorded to facilitate notetaking after the interview was concluded.

Data Analysis

Focus group and interview data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Notes and transcripts were organized based on their content. Themes were extracted from these notes. Themes were identified across the focus groups, on-site interviews, and individual interviews. A short description of these themes follows:

Perception of Students' Cultural Assets

Overwhelmingly grounded in deficit-based resilience ideology

Factors in Racial Disparity (Gaps) in Outcomes

- Connected to student needs and deficiency

- Minimal connection to institutional barriers

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Well-intended but not widely available to the community

Equity Efforts at WCC

- Limited few efforts through Hispanic Serving Institute STEM grant and Guided Pathways as an equity strategy

- Non-existent in workforce diversification

FINDINGS

We were easily able to determine that WCC is quite committed to student success. The findings reported here are intended to position the college to continue this commitment, learn from the process and modify their approach as is indicated, and address the deficit-minded perspectives that currently impact the college. The findings are presented with the full understanding that the college is working relentlessly to get it right. None of the findings are intended to cast aspersions upon the college or any particular constituency of the college. In fact, the RSSC team was impressed by the dynamic engagement of the participants and the commitment they demonstrated during the process.

It is clear that WCC is interested in investing in an equity strategy that supports the success of its students. The college recently received state-wide recognition by the Campaign for College Opportunity as an "Equity Champion." The majority of the students (54%) identify as Hispanic/Latino/a/x, Chicano/a, Mexican American. The faculty and staff have been relentlessly working to close the disparity in student outcomes data. As we listened intently, we also gained greater insights into what the faculty and staff know about, understand, and appreciate the strengths, cultural capital, and assets of the students. Our findings are based on the focus groups, individual interviews, and the RSSC review of student focus groups, the quantitative data provided by WCC, and the specific diversity, equity, and inclusion opportunities available for WCC.

Perception of Students' Cultural Assets

Overwhelmingly, the responses were grounded in what is characterized in the literature as deficit-based thinking – a perspective positions students and their circumstances as problems, barriers, or conditions that create the disparate and negative outcomes seen in institutions of higher education. Davis and Museus (2019, p. 2) describe deficit-based thinking as "…rooted in a *blame the victim* orientation that suggests that the people are responsible for their predicament and fails to acknowledge that they live withing coercive systems that cause harm with no accountability."

> *"They bring strengths and resilience. [They] have been through everything under the sun. They go through fires, power outages . . ."*

Based on the ways in which respondents framed their responses, their perspective portrays a deep level of empathy, sympathy and understanding the faculty and staff have for the students. In doing so, respondents focused on student survival of racism, classism, and other measures of difference. They described the students' hardships which included:

- family responsibilities
- multiple job/work responsibilities
- living in poverty
- insufficient resources (basic needs, transportation, technolo.gy)
- lack of access to knowledge about higher education

> *They show up after working* many hours a day after working 2 and 3 jobs…
> "So many that it makes for interesting conversations. A lot about sexual identity and socioeconomic. Here is an impoverished area."
>
> (We are not serving) "So many individuals out there where life has just beat them down that they don't want to attempt *it.*"

The most common response was grounded in the concept of student resilience and grit. Despite the deficiencies the students may have, their determination and motivation, their persistence and stamina are the reasons they may or may not succeed.

> *"Students are parents, working, etc. They bring work ethic, resilience, commitment, and responsibility beyond themselves but out to the community and extended family."*
>
> *"Patience and perseverance"*
>
> *"Work-ethic"*
>
> *So, we might think we know who our students are, but then when we get a chance to talk to them…and learn they have [things] happening in their life…separate from being a college student…they are supporting their family or they're the oldest sibling and they actually drop off their siblings in the morning… there is so much beyond what kind of needs that I got you."*
>
> *"Eighty-five percent are first generation students. So, they don't have family who went to colleges. Only in the last couple of years are Native American students comfortable."*

Still, this empathetic and well-meaning perspective situates the reason for the lack of success with the hardships of the students' lives rather than on the institutional policies, processes, structures. Grit and resilience concepts mask deficit-based thinking because the respondent is describing the exceptionalism of the student. It highlights the ability to

beat the odds and overcome their deficiencies. That celebratory perspective comes from a well-meaning orientation. Yet, it masks the centrality of the white normative dominant framework that is central to the academy. It fails to acknowledge or interrogate the structures and policies that create the inequity nor the absence of accountability for successfully serving the communities of color. Despite the disparity by race, institutions either try to "fix the students" with greater support services or continue with business as usual. The racial disparity in student success data is normalized as related to the deficiency and problem of the students (by race) as opposed to a deficiency and problem with the institution and its structures.

Yosso's (2005) Cultural Wealth Model includes six forms of cultural capital: 1) aspirational, 2) linguistic, 3) familial, 4) social, 5) navigational, and 6) resistance. In considering cultural capital, respondents aligned the deficiency with the structure of the academy instead of with the students were also offered.

> *"…having two jobs and having to get to an ESOL class at 6 in the morning and struggling to enroll contributes to the gap.*
>
> *"There should be more recognition of the other cultures where everyone is included in the campus community."*
>
> *"You know, even the ones that are struggling in class, the fact that they are doing it right, they're like the second COVID, the world's falling apart, And you know, these students are having a class with me."*
>
> *"They blow me away. I think they are capable of everything. If, if we can get the obstacles out of the way, that's what we've got to do. You know?*
>
> *"They blow me away. You know, even the ones that are struggling in class, the fact that they're doing it right? They're like surviving COVID, the world's falling apart. And you know, these students are working, they're raising families and they're like logging into Zoom and having a class with me. They blow me away. I think they're capable of everything. If, if we can get the obstacles out of the way, that's what we got to do. You know?"*
>
> *"We could serve more homeless individuals if we had a shower room…for example."*

It was clear that respondents knew and appreciated that students came to the college with cultural assets; however, faculty, faculty, staff, and administrators often had difficulty naming and defining students' cultural assets.

> "We have six recognized tribes in the area. [There are]. . . . cultural assets that they bring to the college."

> "They bring their personal life experiences."

When cultural assets were named, respondents described two types of cultural capital the students bring: language and familial. Respondents spoke about students' familial capital in terms of their connection to community and being family oriented. The assumption of familial cultural capital was surrounded by the deficiency of lack of college experience.

> *" Many of these students are the first in their family to go to college."*

> *"What don't they bring? Every student brings experiences and perceptions to the classroom… I mean, a lot of my students are first gen. I have a lot of Latino, Latina, Latinx students…So they bring a perspective that is less individualistic…"*

> *"85% are first generation students. So, they don't have family who went to college. Only in the last couple of years, Native Americans are comfortable"*

> *"They bring lots of assets…they are families of migrant farm workers…they bring their value of education…the importance of education, with them."*

Despite the recognition of the family/community as a resource for students to draw upon their wisdom, values and stories, the prevailing idea is that strong family and community connection serves to support the students' resilience and grit.

Yosso (2005) also describes linguistic capital as the language and communication skills students bring with them to the college environment. Many of the students have language and communication habits that are known to strengthen cognitive abilities, creativity, flexibility, and adaptation. Bi-lingual or multi-lingual students come with strengths that most of the people in positions of power in the academy do not have. Consequently, conceptualizing such abilities as strengths strains the dominant framework to appreciate something generally not possessed by the power structure as an asset. For example, to learn that a student speaks Spanish in the home instead of English is often seen by educational institutions as a problem that needs to be fixed. A few of the respondents acknowledged this type of cultural capital.

> *"Linguistic capital that they bring – bring the Spanish language – an incredible tool to utilize for business and education and need to capitalize and bring."*

> *"It looks like "materials in own language…videos and papers."*

Aspirational cultural capital may be manifested in the students' articulation of their hopes and dreams. Despite navigating educational systems that continue to produce barriers and inequities, students and their family believe in the notion of what bell hooks (1998) might call education as a practice of freedom. Many of the references to WCC students' aspirational cultural capital that respondents articulated are often grounded in the language of resilience. As respondents spoke of resilience, they spoke of it in reference to students' determination to finish their education.

> *"…so just that kind of go get it attitude, nothing is, is kind of given in life. It's earned type of determination. Yeah. Yeah. So definitely kind of put in action into, into goals. You know, the realization that in order to get ahead, you kind of have to make it happen."*

> *"Students worry that faculty don't have high enough standards. So, they worry when they get to the four-year that they won't be able to do the work. And I have heard from faculty that they don't feel they can hold students to high standards. So, I think that what the students are feeling is real. There is a lot of implicit bias at the source of that.. . . We need a lot more education [for our faculty]."*

And in one case, a respondent defined food as a cultural asset.

> *"I have two students from the Philippines, and they will bring in food or share what they do at home. We start the class with celebrations."*

Factors in Racial Disparity (Gaps) in Outcomes

Racial "achievement gaps" have become so normalized in education that it is seldom alarming. To illuminate this idea, consider an alternate scenario. Imagine that across the nation, schools have data that shows a gap where White students are performing significantly below their Black and Brown peers across all outcomes indicators (completion, graduation, retention, persistence, graduation, transfer). The academy, the system might be so alarmed that there would be a nationwide state of emergency. No business as usual would take place until we addressed this issue. And resources would be prioritized to mitigate whatever is creating the disparity because this scenario would not be normal and would not be tolerated. It illuminates how Black and Brown student failure is normalized, expected, and even unchangeable. The lack of response to the seeming "normality" of the racial achievement gap connects directly to the unspoken, debunked, but widely held belief of white supremacy.

Making progress in viewing the racial disparity gap through an equity lens requires, as Sarah Amed (2012) asserts, that we "break through the seal of whiteness" by critiquing the processes that keep "whiteness in place." Embracing the inevitability of racial

disparity gaps for BIPOC students is a seal that equitable colleges must break through. We must be as concerned about Black and Brown student success as we would be if white students were subjected to processes that resulted in persistent, normalized outcomes gaps.

Academic outcomes stratifications that are predictable by race play a role in perpetuating the pseudoscientific social construction and hierarchization of race. Variously positioned in the scheme of white supremacy, this perpetuation of the concept of eugenics has long been replicated in American post-secondary education, educational policies, and educational access. Now rejected by most scholars, race as a biological construct hierarchizes white people as the ideal and Black people as the lowest of the low, thereby providing an explanation for educational outcomes gaps based on the genetic intellectual inferiority of Black people and, by extension, the inferiority of Brown and Indigenous peoples, as well.

Today, culture (a much more politically acceptable explanation) has replaced race as the justification for the disparity (Noguera, 2007). Hence, the disparity in educators' ability to educate white students verses students of color, is normalized to the point of validation of the superior abilities of white students and the inferior abilities of students of color.

WCC is no different than most institutions of higher education – It has outcomes data that is stratified and predictable by race. If the way a problem is perceived influences the ways in which it can be addressed, gaining an understanding of what the faculty and staff believe contributes to the gap in student outcomes data can inform the approach to addressing the gap. Where Woodland has an advantage, however, is in the equity awareness of its leadership, the willingness of faculty and staff to address these outcomes gaps, and the calls from its students to do better. In fact, many of the participants offered deeply reflective critiques of their understanding of how to reduce the impact of their lack of knowledge about how to counter the impact of systemic racism, white privilege, and the history of exclusion in the area and region.

Respondents were asked what they thought contributes to the gap, what could the do to close it, what the college could do to close it, how diversity of the workforce impacts the gap and what students of color need to close the gap. Most of the responses centered on what the students need (counselling, technology, mentors, mental health services, homework support, role models). Few of the responses went beyond addressing the students' deficiencies. The responses about what the college could do, focused on addressing student deficiencies. Some of responses highlighted approaches that might examine the college practices and policies that produce and maintain inequity.

"Life trauma becomes a barrier – need mental health services."

"I think we need to look beyond the onboarding process and beyond the last semester of a student and kind of look at what is happening between those two milestones…"

"We need more student friendly language."

"We need to be open-minded. It takes courage to have a critical lens."

"We need to have courage and recommend change- to continue to look at systems of inequality. Why don't we have a Spanish version on the website?"

Participants had difficulty identifying WCC initiatives in response to student needs as they responded to this line of questioning. Outside of the questioning, in individual conversations, many of the WCC faculty and staff spoke of the work they were doing related to equity, such as Guided Pathways and Hispanic Serving Institution Grant Initiative.

This line of questioning evoked emotional responses. At one point in the questioning, four of six white faculty and staff were moved to tears as they articulated how hard they were trying to serve students and support student success. They spoke of the environment in which they lived and worked being filled with narratives that were racially hostile and politically extreme.

"I need help! I mean what do you do when there's 200 of them in a room saying awful things… yelling at you?" It's like I need talking points because I don't know what to say."

"We need help to work with community through multiple layers to get to the point to where we can address the systemic racism."

Multiple respondents requested assistance, additional information, and guidance about how to resolve the racial disparities and related service gaps that they identified on campus. Respondents sought to identify ways the college could support students as a strategy for addressing the student deficiencies that they perceive to be the cause of the gaps along racial lines.

"They need homework support – a big place to go to study. We don't do enough of that."

"Academic wrap-around services"

"Students need high-speed internet"

"We lose students when they walk in the door, and no one helps them complete the application process."

"In order to do the equity work, we need to be reaching all of the students who might be interested. And so, there is an identity shift that needs to happen around outreach."

"Well, we have to get our s—t together with guided pathways, for sure. I mean I made (program name) map three years ago and I want students to see it...we need to get it together and do better onboarding, better guidance, counselling about career paths. I think we are already making strides…in supporting basic needs but…we don't stop that…we need to keep doing that and the technology gap for sure."

Respondents were also asked how students have enhanced their own educational experience. This question sought to have respondents consider the question of students' cultural assets from a different point of view. In all of the groups and individual interviews, this question was met with the most with silence, yet several responses included the reward and validation of seeing students succeed.

"seeing students succeed ….validates what we are trying to do."

"In many ways….I feel fortunate to be in my current role. I am very passionate about student development…. I love to see students learn and grow beyond their comfort zone."

"I believe that students are the experts on what they need….I encourage them to own their ideas and have a voice. Students help me expand my views and learn."

"I have always learned from students…challenges come up with timelines and completion of assignments….I learn about their challenges and help them adapt…They caused me to rethink my assignment and courses."

"We [collaborate] with our students to use their guidance to determine what resources to offer."

"I learned that they didn't have a device or internet or a quiet space during the pandemic. Learning this [from students] made me adapt and be more flexible…"

Further, respondents mentioned the high capacity and capability of students, signaling high expectations of and for them.

"They can blow your mind with what they are capable of….I learn as much from students as they learn from me….gain insight into their world and am better able to provide support and resources to students who are struggling."

"While some voiced concerns about standards and the role low expectations play in meeting the standards."

"I think our students are capable – there are no limitations of what our students can accomplish. Capable of being the people who break down generational traumas. They can become their full authentic selves while reaching their academic goals. Knowing their true selves. Knowing what they stand for and joining us in their fight to close the achievement gap. Everything. The exposure is their celling, and we have to crack that ceiling for them."

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Schools and colleges across the nation are pursuing pedagogical strategies that have proven to make a difference in the student outcomes data disparities along racial lines. Ladson-Billings (2009) as "…a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, social, emotionally, and politically." In an interview conducted by Weschenfelder (2019), Dr. Ladson-Billings cited three core principles of culturally relevant pedagogy:

1) There is a focus on student learning,
2) Teachers have cultural competence and recognize that students come in with culture, history, language, and traditions, and
3) Teachers add on a broader social, political, and critical consciousness about what is going on in the lives of the students and the outside of school.

In response to questions related to culturally relevant pedagogy, the respondents revealed some ongoing struggles with connecting to or "reaching" their students. They acknowledged the need to know more about other culture and that students may not relate to their teaching and/or materials. There wasn't great evidence of WCC presence in the communities served to the extent required to get to know the community and the socio-political realities of the students' lives. Though WCC enjoys community partnerships such as connections with the local secondary educational institutions 11 respondents did not go beyond the K-12 partnerships. We did not do an assessment of pedagogy or a syllabus equity audit. Thus, we are not able to indicate to what extent culturally relevant pedagogy is used at WCC. The nature of the responses to this line of questioning revealed a conception of culturally relevant pedagogy that is different than Gloria Ladson-Billings articulates.

"I realized that my students didn't relate to my syllabus. So, I revised it with their needs in mind. Then, when we went to virtual instruction, I found it easier to grade without bias, but I had to make my expectations clear in my syllabus first. We don't do enough revising syllabi with students in mind"

"Higher ed institutions were not created with Latinx and Black students in mind. They are white centric and even with the support programs, there's an implication that Black and brown students need this support. Walking the walk-how are we prepared to serve and meet student where they are. This preparedness might look different depending on the student. What are our values/what is the message? Cultural competence needs to be part of it."

"The Curriculum Chairs are really great . . They can use their whiteness to say a lot of this stuff but if it were a person of color, they would not be able to."

"It takes courage to have a critical lens, have courage and recommend change – continue to look at systems of inequalities . . . . Why don't we have a Spanish version in website. Why don't we have adv in Spanish?"

"I think having a curriculum that accurately reflects their experiences and contextualizes knowledge and the, the basically the systemic racism that's been, you know, the colonization of our education system and society at large."

"We explain the policies to students, and you can see that they literally walk away with like a blank stare because they pretend that they understand what we just tell them, and they walk away because they're not comfortable asking more questions . . . we're just letting these students walk away without having built in support."

"But I can't get the younger males, especially Black and Latino males --I don't know how to reach them. So, I mean, I'm learning from all of my students, but I'm also learning that whatever I'm doing isn't working as well for some students than others. And they're telling me that . . . I just am not sure how to understand exactly what they're telling me. Yet they're telling me something by not telling me, you know."

Respondents spoke of WCC's connection to the community or the lack thereof. They expressed concern that they were not reaching the communities that need to be served. The reasons ranged from the lack of capacity (understaffed) to the lack of branding of the college.

"I have Black students in my classes every semester. It's not a large percentage, but you know, I think we are probably not serving as many Black students as we could in our area. . . All of our campuses are near and near tribes, right? So why don't we have more Native American students? They're not being served."

"We have a very non-diverse way of approaching how the college is run. The administration team replicates the same personality type. It is not inclusive or supportive of diverse personalities."

"When we talk about equity, there isn't a lot of recognitions that we serve struggling communities that are in poverty, in trauma – a lot of educational trauma. We don't look at the needs of the community. We set up a hierarchical template here."

"We are understaffed and unable to connect with the community. Most of us branch out, but every day, we get people who don't know there is a college here."

"The non-English speakers that are underserved who come from other countries . . . are not validated here."

"The faculty and staff are mostly white. We have lost people. The full-time faculty are all white. If you look at local demographics, the number of bachelor's degrees is quite limited. Higher Ed isn't easily accessible from here. We need to increase the number of applicants. This county has a reputation for being racist and backward. There is a lot of racism and homophobia. I want to be here to make a change."

Two factors our team observed may have an impact on whether culturally relevant pedagogy is broadly used or used at all at WCC – 1) the lack of diversity in the faculty and 2) insufficient cultural and racial literacy among the WCC faculty and staff.

While more than seventy percent of the students served come from predominantly minoritized communities, less than fifteen percent of the faculty are people of color. At one site, one hundred percent of the fulltime tenured faculty are white. There is no evidence of flags being raised, questions being asked, or processes being examined with the glaring lack of diversity on the faculty. Respondents rationalized the lack of diversity in the pools and results with a common narrative that people of color don't want to live there and don't apply. Yet, no evidence is available that the information is collected and loss points in the process are ascertained to inform future processes.

"They don't want to live out here."

"We have issue finding people to apply. I can guarantee that there are issues with the pool of applicants."

"Institutions of Higher education are very white centric. . . . Not created with students of color in mind. Because of the institutional racism – because they were set up for white male, they were created with that in mindset. It goes back to not just talking the talk but walking the walk."

"[a diverse workforce] goes beyond our Black and Latinx students identifying self with gap. People may think we need it for these students. It creates a rich environment for everyone."

"We have more diversity in the upper administration in the last three years. We have more diverse administrators. The faculty side needs more diversity. We are not close to where we would like to be. We need targeted recruitment efforts , including in job announcements –   we need equity job announcement templates."

 "We aren't diverse outside of having a strong Latinx population. We have more mature and disabled students. What do we do to make it open for them? Our LGBTQAI –   do we reflect those groups? We don't have a concerted ongoing effort. We are weak outside of Latinx diversity. Representation is down in terms of faculty and staff."

It is important for the college community to appreciate how diversity of the workforce is directly connected to the student success results the college is seeking and working so diligently toward. As Robert Snowden (2015) notes having "a faculty more reflective of our student demographics can reduce anxiety for many students as they are the first in their families to attend college, and it can also generate a sense of connectedness to the institution that is impossible to fabricate."

Research demonstrates the positive impact a diverse faculty can have on all student success. A study conducted at DeAnza College, included 30,000 students and 21,000 classes (Fall 2002 – Spring 2007) found
- "African-American, Latino and other underrepresented students have substantially lower retention rates, are less likely to obtain a degree from community college and are less likely to transfer to a 4-year college. (Fairlie, Hoffman, 2014)

- "We find that the performance gap in terms of class dropout rates, pass rates, and grade performance between white and underrepresented minority students falls by 20% to 50% when taught by an underrepresented minority instructor. We also find these interactions affect longer term outcomes such as subsequent course selection, retention, and degree completion." (Fairlie, Hoffman, 2014)

- "Underrepresented minority [sic] students are 1.2-2.8 percentage points more likely to pass classes, 2.0-2.9 percent less likely to drop out of classes, and 2.4-

3.2 percentage points more likely to get a grade of B or higher in classes with underrepresented instructors." (Fairlie, Hoffman, 2014)

Respondents emphasized the need to diversify the workforce and the challenges the college faces in doing so:

"It goes beyond our black and brown students; a diverse workforce creates a rich environment for everyone. Students related to people who look like them…it's easier to relate and see themselves."

"We need more diversity when hiring instructors."

"Get a person of color as part of the administration here. Right now, we need more diversity of people out in front, for example."

"We need formal supports for faculty of color who join WCC. This also applies to queer and non-binary faculty. Faculty get tired of being the only one to speak up and others need to give space."

"We have people who want to have the conversation are sometimes labelled as "pushy." When passion goes wrong, and people see themselves as spokespeople. We are comfortable in our own groups. It is getting better to have these conversations across divisions."

"We need targeted recruitment efforts , including in job announcements – we need equity job announcement templates."

"Giving them(students) a diverse perspective and mentor, empowers students."

"…It is easier when they see themselves, right or wrong, you know. …I think it is not the only way to be able to have empathy and to understand where students are coming from. You don't…have to be just like them to understand it but it does help, right?"

"Look, we know race is a social construct. We know it shouldn't have to be that way… they can't see themselves in me, some of them can, you know ones that are mothers, or you know?. . . that part makes me sad because I don't know what I personally, you know, I don't know what I personally can do to help with that pain, you know, and we can all bring something to the table for sure and help create that diverse workforce."

"I keep going back and forth with that one, it is nice to see. They will be exposed to what I bring to the class. I think what is the most helpful is connection. If not consistent, their guard will be up…It's obvious when connection happens and didn't, so if we could have something with instructional faculty as far as working with students

with diverse backgrounds, I don't know how much of that is happening."

Well intentioned white faculty who are dedicated to serving the students, but may not have sufficient cultural and racial literacy, can easily fall into the "white savior" mindset. This mindset situates a white teacher dedicated to saving all of their typically poor, black, and brown students. Dudley-Marling (2015) labels it as the "teacher as savior" describing a concept that positions students as victims who require the benevolence of white saviors to rescue them from their circumstances of family, community, and culture. A limited recognition of the cultural strengths of students outside of those connected to problematized origins—such as seeing resilience without referencing or noticing brilliance, creativity, the value of collective responsibility and community, or false meritocracy—can serve to reinforce the notion of white saviorism.

Colleges are not alone in being impacted by the white savior model. White saviorism is also reinforced by media. Movies such as *Dangerous Minds*, *Freedom Riders*, *The Blind Side, The Help*, *Twelve Years A Slave, Hard Ball*, *The Soloist*, *Avatar*, *Finding Forrester*, *The Ron Clark Story*, *The Principal*, *Gran Torino*, *Django Unchained*, *Lincoln*, *The Air up There*, *Wildcats*, and *District 9*, to name a few. In each of these films, the story revolves around a benevolent white person who help people of other races, told from a white point of view. The actual accomplishment of the person of color (winning the battle, playing music, writing, playing sports, winning a race, writing poetry, etc.) is framed as a result of the interventions of the white person instead of the talent and abilities of the person of color. The views espoused in these films reinforce racism through the white savior complex in ways that are reproduced at every level of the educational process. However, the data gathered in this process suggests that there is a willingness at WCC to interrogate these issues in order to create better student outcomes and contribute to their success and the success of the communities that WCC serves.

Equity at Woodland Community College

We explored the diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging at WCC by hosting a brainstorming session. The participants were asked to name the current DEI initiatives and/or efforts at WCC and identify the person, group or committee working on it, identify how various initiatives may be connected and recommend ways to connect them if they should be connected.

Participants identified efforts (with commentary on their quality) in six of the eight categories provided in the prompt (hiring, communications, curriculum, guided pathways, transfer, and events).

Hiring

Respondents indicated that everyone who participates in the hiring process receives Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) provided by the district human resources office.

> *"…EEO training is horrible…it is mostly about what you can't do and say…They need to train the administration."*

> *"We all go through the training to serve on hiring committees…There is a focus on cultural diversity, but our bilingual students can work elsewhere for much more than minimum wage."*

Job descriptions for open faculty positions were examined for the presence of inviting and welcoming information and for preferred or required qualifications (beyond the state required minimum qualifications) that may have an exclusionary impact. We found that the fulltime faculty positions contain requirements or preferred qualifications beyond the state required minimum. An example of exclusionary requirements is illustrated below:

> Document three years clinical experience in the professional discipline (diagnostic radiologic technology).

This is not the only description with exclusionary requirements; it is one example of many. Institutions should consider what is the difference between a candidate who has two 2.8 years (2 years and 2 years and 10 months) and a candidate with three years of experience. The idea is that the number of years of experience required is typically an arbitrary number that is not based on legal requirements or research that illuminates experience points where candidates are likely to be better qualified to hold the positions. Viewed through an equity lens, it raises telling question: What, then, are the years of experience a proxy for? Whatever it is, that qualification could be the required qualification, not years of experience.

Requiring one year of experience as an instructor in a JRCERT accredited program fortifies the exclusionary nature of requirements posted for open positions: *Document one year of experience as an instructor in a JRCERT accredited program*

This requirement effectively eliminated a large number of applicants in the talent pool. A candidate could have ten years of experience in the profession but because they have not been an instructor for a year, they don't meet the minimum qualifications. Given that the overwhelming majority of the faculty in Yuba Community College District and the California Community Colleges (entire system) are white, the requirement serves to exclude people of color very effectively and systematically. Despite millions of dollars and decades of intentional efforts to diversify the faculty

of the California Community Colleges, the diversity of the faculty in the system has actually decreased by 2% over the past two decades.

When candidates visit the website that advertises the positions, they are met with graphic images of white people. And if the potential candidate clicks on the first link to explore, they are presented with more all-white images.

The district's commitment to equity is not illuminated in the description to signal to candidates that the district values and prioritizes equity and strives to create an environment and culture that is welcoming and inclusive, and that is aimed at not only attracting a diverse workforce, but at retaining a diverse workforce to serve the community and meet the mission of the institution.

Below is an example of the way a district makes their interest and commitment to a diverse workforce:

> *The San Mateo County Community College District is committed to achieving educational equity for all students. As outlined in the District's Strategic Plan, "success, equity, and social justice for our students are longstanding goals." The District's "Students First" Strategic Plan is focused on "Student Success, Equity and Social Justice." We provide students with a rich and dynamic learning experience that embraces differences — emphasizing collaboration and engaging students in and out of the classroom, encouraging them to realize their goals, and to become global citizens and socially responsible leaders. When you join our team at San Mateo County Community College District, you can expect to be part of an inclusive, innovative, and equity-focused community that approaches higher education as a matter of social justice that requires broad collaboration among faculty, classified staff, administration, students, and community partners.*

This statement announces to potential candidates that, if they are committed to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, your values are consistent with ours. It also announces clearly that if you do not share values, this may not be the place for you.

Communications and Outreach

Respondents indicated that WCC is in the process of revamping the marketing strategies to be Latinx centered.

> *"It used to be monolingual…Now we are doing a better job."*

> *"(revamping the marketing)…has fallen on student services but we are approaching a model where instruction is part of it"*

> *"Art started guiding where marketing is done."*

"Marketing is done by outside consulting."

"We don't have a marketing focus."

Curriculum

Curriculum initiatives identified as equity initiatives include 1) the HIS-STEM Faculty initiative, 2) Guided Pathways, and 3) Biological Science and Engineering Pathways.

> *"We are kicking off pathways fully in the fall. We have biological science and engineering pathways and now we're developing pr-pre-med and financial (literacy? Technology?)."*
>
> *"We haven't done a transfer class yet, but we will be doing it in the Fall….the goal is to have a transfer for each of the pathway pillars.*
>
> *"we have …with Davis… [a] one million dollars to give students paid internship opportunities so for 400 hours a student gets $10,000. They pay them, tell them they are and Aggie and tell them that people are here waiting for you."*

Climate and Culture

Woodland has an overall culture of caring and service for the students and community it serves, presenting a strong foundation for strengthening that culture with more diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Respondents in the focus groups and interviews indicated the existence of diversity events, some general awareness about the work of the DEI Committee, and – most importantly -- a sense of WCC being a caring campus. RSSC developed a Scale of Equity Engagement (See Appendix III) as a framework to visualize progress in an institution's commitment to continuous equity growth. The RSSC Scale of Equity Engagement (SEE) is not meant to focus on linear progress in equity work and engagement. Neither is it intended to suggest that a college's overall diversity efforts should focus on progressing along a scale. In fact, it is possible for a college's equity engagement to be demonstrated on multiple levels simultaneously. With these caveats in mind, it would be beneficial for WCC to consider the SEE to benchmark progress in equity growth and to lay the groundwork to set aspirational goals in its ongoing equity work.

As noted above, the Scale of Equity Engagement (SEE) provides a visual guide to define where a college is on specific aspects of its equity journey. The SEE is comprised of five levels to define equity progress as well as opportunities to benchmark strategic improvement. The first level of the RSSC Scale of Equity Engagement is Silence. The Silence division on the SEE refers to an institutional status in which equity efforts are "neutral." At this level, equity is not explicitly considered. Diversity and equity are often not visibly valued. Or they are suppressed in the name of equality or color-blind ideology. In this state, there is an emphasis on sameness and stasis. In general, there is an a-historical, a-political emphasis on the unchanging same. The white dominant framework is central to the academy and is maintained as the state of

neutrality. The institution does not believe there is structural racism and the outcomes that can be predicted by race are related to the deficiencies and needs of the students. Administrators, faculty, and staff have no conceptualization that the institution is failing nor is there any evidence of accountability to the workforce for failing to successfully teach and serve people of color. For the most part, this is the stage WCC predominantly, but not, exclusively occupies.

> *"The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion group meets twice a week. It has representation across all three sites…It is the choir."*

> *"We have a caring campus…students are helped in the next step…staff member performs a warm handoff, so students don't have to tell their story over and over again."*

The next stage is Symbolic-Celebratory Equity. In this stage, institutions have cultural celebrations that we term, "Fun-Food-Fashion & Fair." At this stage on the SEE scale, celebrations of diversity abound with exposure to cultural food, music, dance, and fashion. Meetings and events may be opened with land acknowledgements and other cultural rituals (moment of silence for victims of police brutality, etc.). Commitment and support statements may be available on the website, passed as resolutions by the board and academic senate and/or published by the college leadership, student organization, classified organization, and/or faculty organizations. The mission, vision, values, and goals may reflect a commitment to equity. The institution and surrounding community may have addressed issues of building and road names, mascots, or other racially charged monuments and legacies. Yet, a real sense of equity progress is missing. WCC also can be placed at this level of equity engagement.

> *"We have events that come out of the multicultural engagement center…there are multiple things going on…there is no theme year."*

The next level of engagement is *Equity Awareness and Consciousness.* At this level, there are multiple equity projects and initiatives. The professional development activities tend to be "one-off" activities and outside of a comprehensive DEI framework. The institution may have affinity groups for both students and the workforce. Equity is applied as an additive approach – the white dominant framework is central to the academy and equity initiatives, curriculum content, is added on. It may come in the form of adding writers of color to a literature class.

Of the data gathered, it is difficult to place WCC at this level – though it is acknowledged that the college is interested in and beginning to build awareness and consciousness. Right now, there is just awareness that equity is not a prominent part of the way the college engages.

> *"We are infusing equity in student services…has a little instructional touch. Faculty need to be trained…"*

At the *Transformational Equity* stage, processes are changed and the way the college goes about its operations is infused with equity minded practices. Examples include the changing of hiring processes, equity infused curriculum design, content, pedagogy, and processes. The institution has audited and changed policies and practices that result in disparities in outcomes and experiences that can be predicted by race. The power structure changes to allow voice and agency of people and communities of color. Decision-making is based on disaggregated data and practices and processes are evaluated through a lens of interrogating and understanding how racial dynamics are at play. WCC has not reached this stage of equity engagement.

At the last stage, *Systemic Equity Action and Accountability,* a college works through a comprehensive DEI framework. Daryl Smith describes a comprehensive diversity framework as a strategic framework that interrogates and disrupts inequity through multiple domains. Such domains include hiring, curriculum, outreach, communications, representation, services, pedagogy and much more. In this stage, equity is thoroughly integrated in the operations and processes so much so that it is evident and part of the identity of the institution—it is glaringly visible. The institution continuously considers what role race plays in an issue or practice. Reflection and evaluation are ongoing and is based on community voice and interests. We did not find evidence of WCC at this level.

Qualitative data gathered reveals that there is an awareness that the experiences of both existing and prospective students are adversely impacted by the current equity landscape at WCC. In reference to existing students, both the quantitative and qualitative data suggests that student success is shaped by the relationship or lack of relationship they are able to build with faculty or staff. For prospective students, the qualitative data reveals that students do not enroll when they are encounter these issues when they attempt to enroll.

A significant strength of WCC is its leadership and its support for inclusive excellence. As importantly, there is a belief in the capabilities of the students overall, as is captured in the following comments from participants:

> *"We are going in the right direction. Have seen a real focus on creating equitable and inclusive spaces. Look at speakers who call us out. "*

> *"Admin is all on the same page with the same goal to work toward it and they are putting their money there. Need to ensure vision and goal is understood campuswide."*

Recommendations

This assessment can be a vital aspect of the process of creating organizational practices that support the inclusive excellence goals of WCC. We see the following recommendations to address inequity and support the forward-movement of WCC's process of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

1

Culture and Climate

1. Develop a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging framework, exploring multiple domains facilitate the achievement of student equity and that interrupts systems and sources of inequity.

2. Assess the institutional racial climate for students and employees, build institutional capacity to address equity, and build a culture and climate of inclusion and belonging for students, faculty, and staff.

3. Assess the scale of engagement to gather information about the college's equity efforts and initiatives. Examples of engagement include race and equity neutrality (color blind and color mute approach), celebratory (fun, fashion, food, and festivals), consciousness (adopted statements and land acknowledgements), systemic (policies impacted), transformational (systematized and institutionalized to the point of becoming the identity of the college).

4. Create a culture of affirmation and validation so students and community do not have to opt to leave their communities and cultural identity behind to become educated at WCC.

5. Collaborate with the diverse communities in the WCC service area to build strong community cultural partnerships and gain knowledge of socio-political context of students' lives.

2

Equity Education and Skills

6. Create a comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusion professional development program providing opportunities for faculty and staff to strengthen their ability to recognize, respond to and interrupt

inequities that produce outcomes and experiences that can be predicted by race.

7. <u>Develop and execute a strategic plan for diversifying</u> the faculty and staff including auditing and correcting the screening and selection processes and improving the quality of the EEO training provided to committee members.

8. <u>Ensure trauma informed work</u> where indicated - reflect on the generational trauma that have impacted communities of color and assure that your work is trauma-informed

9. <u>Ensure culturally relevant pedagogy</u> using existing and new processes ranging from completing cultural curriculum audits to implementing strategies for decolonizing the classroom, curriculum, and grading methodologies. Ensure that faculty have an opportunity to engage in a syllabus equity audit aimed at equipping them to revise courses and ways to demonstrate student mastery of the material that is informed by an equity lens.

10. <u>Create ongoing professional development programs</u> focused on how racism adversely impacts minoritized students and white students. These events should also involve community stakeholders who can be ideal partners in creating equity at the college and for the communities you serve.

11. <u>Create a safe environment and culture that supports the explicit discussions</u> and exploration of race, gender, and intersecting identity dynamics in order to affect change and succeed as a college.

12. <u>Collect, share, and access equity</u> resources that connect with the communities you serve individually and collectively, from curriculum to culture.

13. <u>Review syllabi and assignments to assure that every classroom reflects the equity goals of WCC.</u>

14. <u>Access and evaluate and hold yourselves accountable for success</u> so that inclusive excellence is ongoing and responsive.
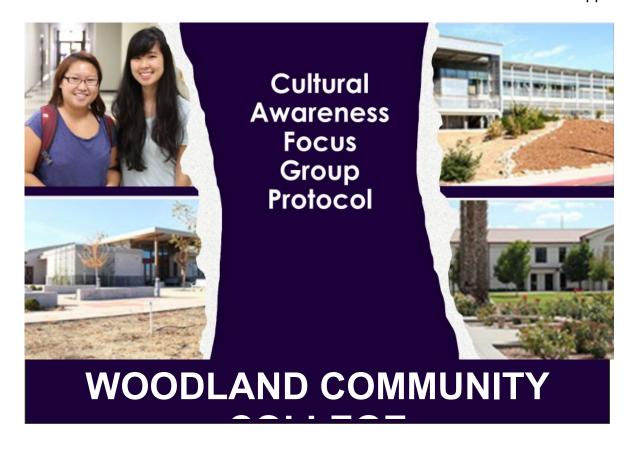
3

Grounding Strategies

15. <u>Modify the WCC Mission, Vision, and Values</u> to reflect a clear and strong commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

16. Develop common diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging language to serve as a foundation for equity related work across the college.

17. Incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion in the various accountability systems such as board evaluation processes, employee evaluation processes, program review, and institutional effectiveness dashboard indicators and outcomes.

18. Acquire an equity minded board by calling for a strong and clear commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

19. Co-create guiding principles for equity-minded practices at the college and across the district.

20. Create an asset map based on the cultural gifts of the students and the stakeholder communities.

21. Create supportive protocols to enable prospective students to feel welcomed when on campus, especially in reference to applying for admission.

22. Conduct a thorough application and admissions process analysis to address the multiple challenges and barriers – many that are well known to the college but have not been successfully addressed.

Appendices

Cultural Awareness Focus Group Protocol

WOODLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to talk with us today. I would first like permission to record this session to help us with our notetaking. We don't want to miss any of your comments. We may also want to use it in professional development exercises confidentially, without attributing any comments you make to your real name, so the faculty, staff and administrators can hear your voices and learn from you.

Do I have your permission?

I would like to start with introducing ourselves and setting a little context for our discussion today. We are here from RSSC – a small woman and minority-owned LLC that has been contracted to support WCC in its equity literacy and support journey. One part of that journey includes reflecting on the ways in which the college can provide culturally relevant instruction and services to the students and surrounding community.

We hope to learn more about your perceptions about the students, their assets, capabilities, and potential. We are interested in what you think about the ability of the college faculty, staff, and administration to meet community needs and realize the mission of the college.

We want to know what barriers you think exists to get in the way of students of color success at WCC. And finally, we hope to learn how you think we can best work together to be student centered and mission focused.

We thank Dr. Pimentel for giving us the opportunity to contribute to this process.

We are aware that many factors impact a student's ability to get in, get through and get out of our educational institutions successfully. No doubt, you have ideas about what factors exist at WCC. students face barriers created by institutional and structural racism and inequity throughout colleges across the nation.

We are here today to learn from you. We want you to know that we think everything you have to say is important, and we want to learn from you and your experiences here at WCC. We would like to hear from everyone, whether your experiences are similar to or different from others.

I would like to reiterate that participation in this focus group is entirely voluntary. The information gathered will be used to inform the development of the Educational Master Plan and other college processes focused on serving the community.

We are going to use the term culturally relevant (pedagogy, services, instruction) and would like to share what they mean in this forum

- Culturally relevant pedagogy –a framework developed by Gloria Ladson-Billings that has three pillars - academic achievement as primary teacher responsibility, cultural competence of the teacher in understanding the students' culture and socio-political consciousness where teachers actively educate themselves on what is impacting student lives.

- Cultural competency/fluency is loosely defined by the American Psychological Association as the ability to understand, appreciate and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own

Goal of the Focus Group
1. To learn the faculty and staff perception of the culture of the students served by WCC.
2. To learn the faculty and staff perception of the assets and potential of the students served by WCC.
3. Learn how the faculty and staff envision providing culturally relevant pedagogy, instruction, and services to students at WCC.
4. To understand what faculty and staff think contributes to the student outcomes and experience gaps at WCC

5. To learn the faculty and staff perception of what parts of the community is WCC not serving and why not.

Focus group questions

1. **Introductions – ice breaker**
   a. Please introduce yourself by telling us:
      i. How do you racially identify?
      ii. What is your role here at Woodland Community College?
      iii. How long have you worked here?

Name	How do you racially identify?	Role	How long have you worked here	Notes

2. **Perception of the cultural assets**
   a. What cultural assets do students bring to the college, your classroom, or your service area?
   b. What does it look like when faculty, staff, and administrators understand and appreciate the culture of the students being served?
   c. How do the students you serve enhance your educational experience?

3. **Gap/disparity in outcomes data**
   a. What do you think contributes to the gap in student outcomes data at WCC?
   b. What can/should you do in your role to increase student success and close the gap?
   c. What do you think students of color need to be successful?
   d. Tell us about students you serve and what you think they are capable of.
   e. What do you think the college should do to enhance student completion and graduation?
   f. What impact do you think a diverse workforce has on student success?

4. **Culturally relevant pedagogy, service, and instruction**
   a. How would you rate your own cultural competence/fluency?
   b. How familiar are you with the culture students you serve? What do you do to understand the cultural background of the students you serve?

      c. How do you inform yourself of cultures that are different than your own?

      d. How do students see their culture reflected in what they study and experience at WCC?

5.   **Community Service Gap**

      a. Who is not being served?

      b. What programs and services that would increase access and opportunity for the community are missing at WCC?

6.   **Closing**

      a. Now, we are close to the end. We have talked about a lot of things. Let's take a moment to consider whether you would advise other people in your community to come to WCC. Why or Why not?

      b. What advice would you give new students of color at WCC?

      c. Is there anything else you would like to talk about that I didn't ask?

Next Steps

The information we learn from you today will be summarized in a report to the president for distribution as is appropriate to inform college planning processes.

DEI Landscape Individual Interview Alternate Questions

Instructions: Name all the current DEI initiatives/efforts at Woodland College.
- Identify the person, group or committee working on it
- Indicated if it is related to a different initiative
- Recommend ways to connect it to other work that it should be connected to.

Name	DEI Initiative	Lead/Committee	Related Initiative	What gets in the way?	Integration or synergy building recommendation
	Hiring				
	Communication				
	Curriculum				
	Outreach				
	Completion				
	Guided Pathways				
	Transfer				
	Climate – Inclusion & Belonging				
	Fill in your category here				

Scale of Equity Engagement ©

Silence Equity Neutral	Symbolic Celebratory Equity	Increasing Awareness (IA) Conscious	Transformational Equity	Systemic Equity in Action
• Not explicitly considered • Suppresses diversity • Emphasizes sameness • A-historical, a-political • Subscribes to equality philosophy • Not Aware of Any Existing Structural Racism • Maintains dominant framework as neutral	• Cultural celebrations (Fun, Fashion, Food, Entertainment) • Commitment statements by board and exec leadership, constituent groups • Reflected in Mission, Vision, Values • Open with land Acknowledgements and other rituals • Attention to mascots, building names or other symbols	• Equity projects and initiatives • Professional development activities – typically one-offs • Affinity groups • Equity additive approach • Centrality and normativity of white culture and dominant framework maintained	• Changed hiring processes • Changed curriculum design, content, pedagogy, and processes • Audited and changed policies and practices that result in race gaps • Changed power holders • Decision-making based on disaggregated data by race	• Comprehensive Diversity Framework • Thoroughly integrated in operations and processes • Accountability measures in place for equitable Outcomes and experiences • It is part of the essence and identity of the institution • Glaringly visible • Continuously asks, "What role does hierarchization of race, class, gender, ability race play in this issue?"

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SHOW UP.
DIFFERENTLY.

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