

A photograph of a modern, multi-story college building with large windows and a central courtyard. The building is surrounded by trees and a clear blue sky. Overlaid on the image is the text 'NORCO COLLEGE' in a large, dark red, sans-serif font. To the right of 'COLLEGE' is the word 'HOTEP' in a similar font, but with a circular logo containing a stylized figure inside the letter 'O'.

NORCO COLLEGE HOTEP

Equity Audit (EA) Findings

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Lauren Ford, Ed.D.
Katrina Pantig

The Team



Lasana O. Hotep

Founder & Lead Consultant

Director of Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion & Belonging,
UC Berkeley

lasana@hotepconsultants.com



Lauren Ford, Ed.D.

Strategic Consultant

Director Strategic Initiatives &
Planning, San Mateo CCD

lauren@hotepconsultants.com



Katrina Pantig

Strategic Consultant

Learning and Development Strategist
for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and
Belonging @ UC Berkeley

katrina@hotepconsultants.com

Today's Agenda

Equity Audit Overview

Key Findings

A Way Forward

Next Steps

Discussion



Background

Context

Norco College invited Hotep Consultants to facilitate an Equity Audit of practices, policies and procedures to uncover potential barriers to student success -- specifically as it relates to the impact on historically minoritized students.

- Assess current practices at Norco College - including existing equity-centered work
- Provide recommendations for continued improvements
- Ensure equity is embedded in all areas of campus: policy, practice, and praxis

Timeline

October - November

Collected survey responses from an employee survey and a student survey.

November-December

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

January

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

Key Definition: Equity

Hotep Consultants:

Equity is developing policies, practices, and assessments within an organization that take into consideration the unique challenges and barriers faced by disproportionately impacted groups.

Norco College:

- Engineering and sustaining an environment where student success is realized by all groups with proportionate outcomes (EMP, 2019)
- The quality of being fair and impartial (SPGM, 2019)

Key Definition: Anti-Racism

- Intentionally focusing on policies and practices that produce or sustain racial equity between racial groups
- Requires constant assessment and reflection
- Is less about the creator – is solely about the outcome



Ijeoma Oluo 
@IjeomaOluo

The beauty of anti-racism is that you don't have to pretend to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it's the only way forward.

Guiding Research Questions

1. To what extent is the environment at Norco College **diverse and inclusive**?
2. To what extent do Norco College's administrative policies and practices encourage a **systemic and collaborative approach** to diversity, equity and inclusion?
3. To what extent do Norco College's **instructional policies and practices** help cultivate a learning experience that is engaging and empowering for historically minoritized students?
4. In what ways can Norco 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 Norco College's **budget and resource practices** informed by a student-ready and equity minded lens?



Key Competencies

Critical Reflection

The practice of assessing an organization's culture, policies, and practices and identifying ways to change, adapt, and grow to improve outcomes for students.

Demonstrating Belief in Students

This is the authentic and unwavering belief that students (in particular, students of color, first generation, and/or low income) have the capacity to learn and be successful.

Racial Literacy

Understanding what race is, its relationship to inequity, and how to respond to racial tension, discrimination, and inequitable outcomes with an anti-racist lens.

Action Oriented

Being action-oriented requires intentional steps and efforts towards dismantling inequitable practices and policies within the institution.

Sense of Welcome & Belonging

Students feel welcomed and a sense of belonging when an institution values students' cultural/racial differences, connects them to opportunities and resources, and creates community for students.

Utilizing a Campus Equity Ecosystem

Creating change requires the organization function as an equity-minded community meaning that all individuals, constituent groups, departments, and services understand what their role is in student success and leverage resources to advance equity and student success in alignment with student equity plan, strategic plan, and vision for becoming an anti-racist campus.

S.E.T. Framework

Student Ready

Institutional



Equity Minded

Individual



Transformative

Service



Policy

The record of what we say we do

Practices

Doing what we said we would do

Assessment

The result of doing what we said we would do

EA Approach: Data Reviewed

1. Campus-wide survey

- a. Employee responses: 169 Student Responses: 133
- b. Gained insight into Norco College'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.
- c. Participation encouraged at cabinet level and division/departmental level
- d. Reminders were distributed to classified professionals and faculty.

2. Focus Group Discussions

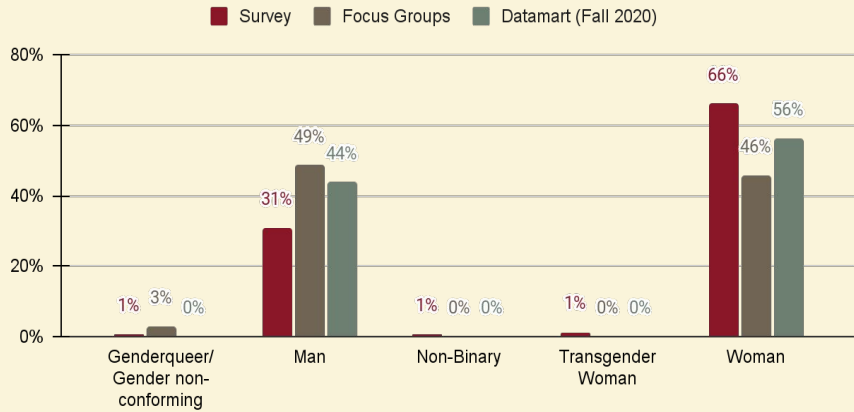
- a. Total # of hours: 10.5
- b. [32] participants engaged in [7] sessions. Participants represent the following stakeholder groups: (1) students, (3) student services & support, (2) instructional faculty, and (1) the meeting of the managers.
- c. Gained insight around employees' level of understanding, engagement, and feedback around equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts at Norco College.

3. Document Analysis

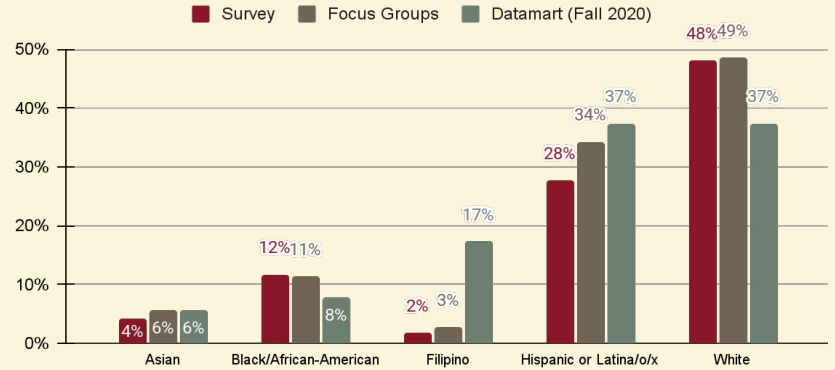
- a. Total # of documents: 107
- b. Types of documents: Policies, practices, and assessments
 - i. Job descriptions/postings, student forms, advertisements about professional development opportunities, assessments, syllabi and surveys.
- c. Gained insight into structures, messages and practices that create barriers to anti-racist efforts

Participant Demographics - Employees

Gender Identity, Employees



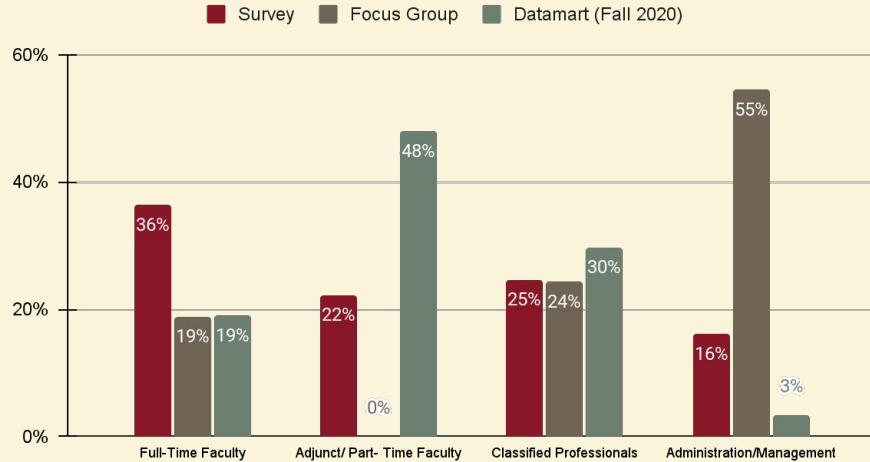
Race/Ethnicity of Employees



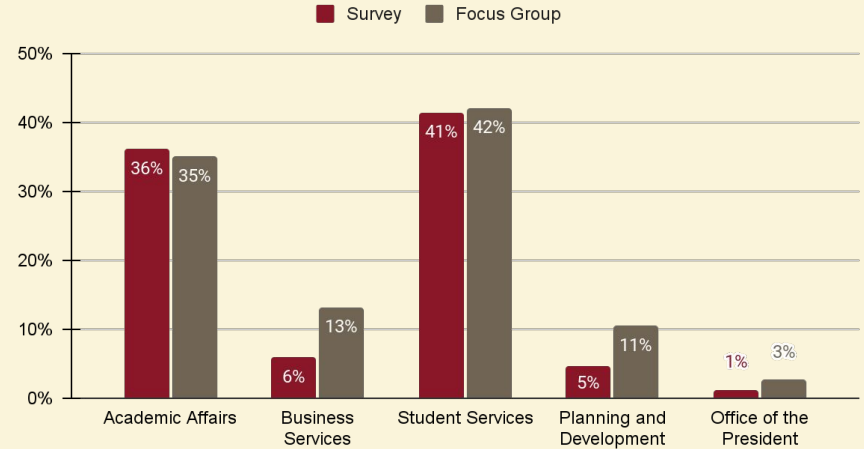
English^{British} Italian^{Scottish} German
 Mexican-American Mexican European Irish
 African American American^{White} French

Participant Demographics - Employees

Employee Group

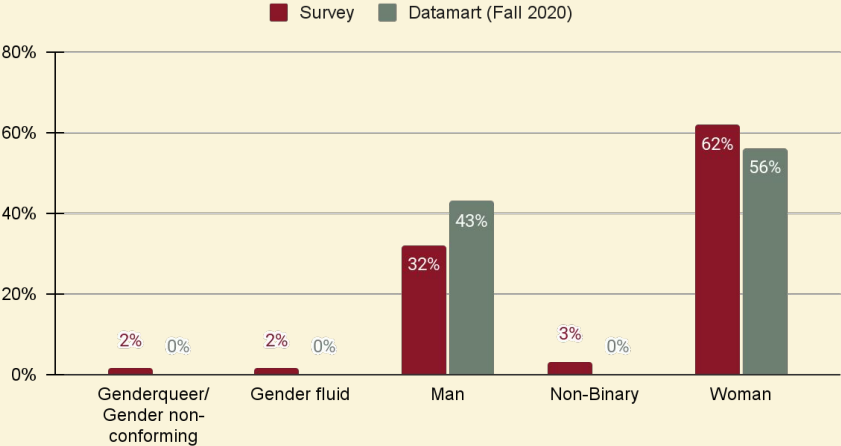


Department/Division Affiliation

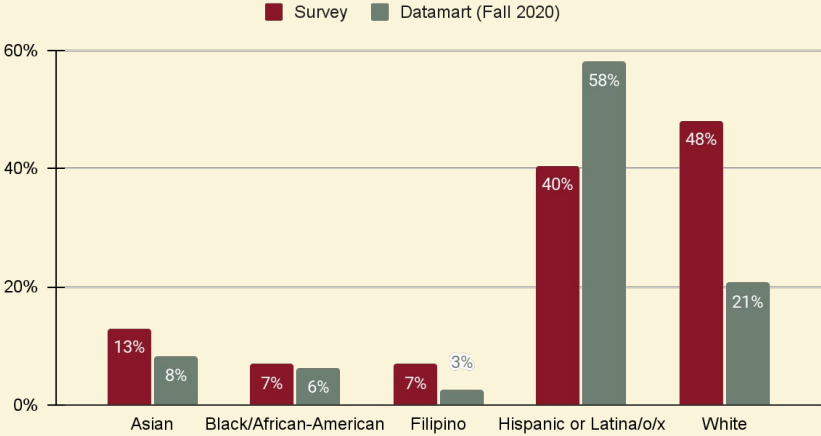


Participant Demographics - Student

Gender Identity - Students



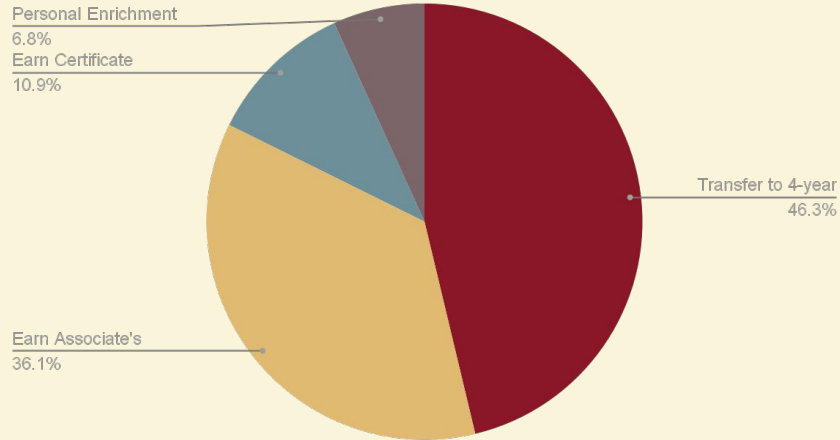
Race/Ethnicity - Students



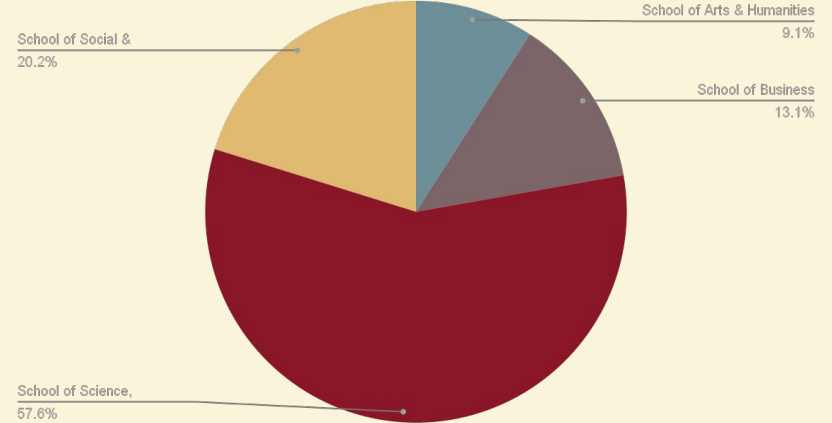
German Chinese Vietnamese Irish
 Mexican Palestinian English American

Participant Demographics - Student

Educational Goal



School Affiliation



Limitations

- **Timing**
 - There were several competing priorities that may have impacted the ability for community members to participate: Districtwide surveys & focus groups, fall breaks, timing of focus groups with finals, etc.
- **Breadth and depth of voices**
 - Wish we had more participation from students and part-time/adjunct faculty in both the survey and the focus groups; We also wish we had more focus group participation, overall.
- **Access and information**
 - We can only review the information we have access to - including speaking with individuals who were able and willing to share their stories.
- **Pandemic!**
 - We are still straddling a virtual environment for the majority of community members and adjusting and re-adjusting to constant shifts and changes within our work.

Key Findings

Overarching Themes

Significant Focus on Equity and Social Justice

Norco College has a clear commitment to improving outcomes for historically minoritized students. However, there are traditional norms and practices that create barriers to opportunities for systemic change in policy and practice.

Leveraging Employee Agency and Locus of Control

Bureaucratic challenges can be discouraging and demoralizing for employees who have put in tremendous work towards advancing equity at the institution. Employees should be encouraged to consistently reflect on their locus of control and recognize their power to find creative ways to impact students regardless of the current conditions.

Improving Student Community and Connection

A multitude of programs and initiatives at Norco are focused on providing academic, social, and personal support for communities who have been disproportionately impacted. However, a sense of community and connection is lacking for students outside of the context of being enrolled in a special program. There is a need for the campus to have a holistic understanding of what is meaningful and necessary to communicate to diverse students that they are part of the Norco community.

Key Findings - Student Ready (*Institutional*)



Highlights

- The STEM department includes additional language to explicitly identify the expectations of faculty within the biological sciences department to participate in equity advancing practices. Below is an *example for a STEM Faculty position*:
 - *The successful candidate will join the Science & Kinesiology Department, dedicated to the use of curriculum through a lens of equity. These efforts include participation of department faculty in campus-wide programs, such as the Completion Initiative, Teaching Men of Color at the Community College, and training on Microaggressions. This department values the use of equity-minded andragogical techniques, while maintaining academic rigor in the biological sciences.*
- Commitment to racial equity demonstrated through the development of a Racial Justice Task Force, comprehensive response to the CA State Chancellor's Call to Action.
- Strategic approach to professional development in terms of content/topics to guide faculty on equity-minded practices.
 - *Leading from the Middle Professional Development Plan in Support of Guided Pathways.*

Areas of Growth/Opportunity

- Relationship dynamics and institutional culture can create barriers to meaningful collaboration across stakeholder groups and different areas of campus.
 - 32% of employees disagreed with the statement, "There is a culture of collaboration between instruction, student services, and business services at Norco."
 - *"Instruction, student services and business services look like they are working together, but they don't. Each department is only interested in what serves them, they don't often have common ground."* (Classified Professional Quote, Survey)
- Reflect on underlying norms and beliefs within institutional documents to ensure they are truly promoting equity. It's important to question the rationale, the assumptions, and ideas expressed through language.
 - In the EMP, connecting the first goal of *Student Transformation to upward mobility* in the US is an idea that does not take into consideration the racialized and gendered realities in which our students live.
 - 17% of employees disagreed with the statement, "My colleagues at Norco have a shared understanding of what "equity means"

Key Findings - Equity Minded (*Individual*)

Highlights

- Majority of employees (85%) agree that their departments prioritize high-quality service and instruction to students.
- Staff and faculty have self-awareness about who they are and how that can impact their relationships with students.
 - 97% of employees report that they are aware of the social identities they possess
 - 91% of employees report they are aware of how their beliefs can create bias towards specific groups of people.
- The Introduction to Hidden Values, as part of the *Equity Workshop Series #1*, provided great examples of ways in which faculty can be welcoming, supportive, and validating for students while also maintaining high expectations.

Areas of Growth/Opportunity

- There are challenges with engaging in dialogue and addressing behavior that is not aligned with the college's commitment to equity and student success.
 - 22% of employees reported not feeling comfortable addressing colleagues who make racially insensitive comments about students and/or about other colleagues.
 - *"Colleagues, both faculty and Classified Professionals, are not as willing to receive correction or guidance when being confronted about insensitive comments."* (Classified Professional Quote, Survey)
- Deficit-minded assumptions about diverse students (Black students, students with disabilities, women, and older students) send a message to students that they do not belong in college.
 - *"One of the councilors is very judgmental. Instead of encouraging your goals and the career path that you choose, he will persuade you to pursue an "easier" or more realistic job choice based on his judgment. He also has no sympathy or lack of if you're going through a hard time"*
(Student Survey Quote - Latinx, Woman, DRC participant)

Key Findings - Transformative (Service)

Highlights

- Equity minded workshop series - Unwritten Rules series of workshops for students
- Special programs (learning communities/ categorial/ affinity groups) create a sense of community and belonging for students and implement culturally sustaining teaching practices & supports.
 - Umoja closed gap for transfer level math in GP cohorts for AA/Black students.
 - Puente course success rate of 82.8% is higher than general student population 71.3%
 - CalWorks- High rate of comprehensive ed planning at 59% compared to college rate 12.7%

[Evidenced in: Executive Leadership Roundtable 2021 Presentation]

Areas of Growth/Opportunity

- Communication to Students:
 - Advertisements about programs and services can be more enticing & engaging for students by focusing on the benefit of a program versus listing services.
 - Completing forms can also be a stressful experience for students based on the language and process.
 - 20.34% of employees disagreed with the statement “*There are multiple opportunities for students to correct errors when they are completing required processes (i.e., filling out forms, completing online onboarding)*”
- Students experience challenges with a college class schedule that does not accommodate those who have responsibilities outside of school.
 - 24% of students disagreed with the statement, “*I am able to register for the classes I need with few conflicts.*”
 - “*I have conflicts with scheduling classes that work for me. Due to me being a mom and having to pick up and drop of my kids at school as well as having to work. By the time I am able to register for a class there are not many options because I am unable to join any club and I get added to registering towards the end dates of registration.*” (Student Survey Quote - Latinx, Woman).

A Way Forward

A Way Forward - Student Ready (Institutional)

Recommendation	EMP Goal	Strategic Body
<p>Develop an internal process and guide on inclusive and equitable hiring practices that become the base for how to prepare, chair, and participate on a committee through an equity-minded lens.</p>		<p>Academic Senate; College Council</p>
<p>Evaluate job postings across <i>all</i> Discipline and Job Type to explicitly state the expectation of candidates and future employees, including student employees and adjunct faculty to engage in equity advancing initiatives and practices within the institution.</p>		<p>College Council; RJTF: Institution Commitment, Classroom & Campus Experience</p>
<p>Ensure that all campus constituents, especially classified professionals and part-time faculty, are able to participate in professional learning experiences, 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.</p>	<p>4.1; 4.2</p>	<p>Institutional Governance & Effectiveness Council; Faculty Professional Development Committee; Classified Professional Development Committee; Professional Development Coordinating Network</p>
<p>Invest in regular zoom community-building events centered on keeping Norco College stakeholders connected during the pandemic. Solicit feedback from the Associated Students of Norco College (ASNC), Classified Senate, and the Academic Senate on ways the College can support campus-community connection in person.</p>	<p>9.2</p>	<p>Institutional Effectiveness & Governance Council</p>

A Way Forward - Student Ready (Institutional)

Recommendation	EMP Goal	Strategic Body
<p>Update the Resource Allocation Rubric to 1) explicitly uplift the specific ways in which the additional resource will/can contribute to the equity advancing goals of the institution; and 2) include how many times items or positions have been requested.</p>	9.1	Resource Council
<p>Revise the Resource Allocation Report to be more encompassing of the overall budget report. There should be an analysis of the # of items and positions that were requested, the total amount of the requested items, what was funded (items/positions), and the total amount of requests funded (dollars).</p>	9.1	Resources Council
<p>Develop an Equity Policy Guide to support decision-making, planning, and practices amongst staff, faculty and administrators. This is not intended to be a checklist but a process for critical self-reflection and examples of concrete actions that can be taken to advance equity.</p>	8	Institutional Governance & Effectiveness Council; Academic Senate
<p>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.</p> <p>Example: <u>CCCCO Definitions</u></p>	3	College Council; Academic Senate; RJTF: Institution Commitment, Classroom & Campus Experience; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee; ASNC

A Way Forward - Student Ready (Institutional)

Recommendation	EMP Goal	Strategic Body
Review Student Discipline Process Including 1) an update to the new faculty handbook regarding how and why one might submit a complaint or engage College Police; and 2) consistency in outcomes by race and gender, based on incident in order to establish more consistent norms in outcome expectations.		Academic Council; Student Support Council
Recruit an Ombudsperson to educate students on their rights and assist students so they can make informed decisions about how to manage major issues they experience with college employees.	8.3	College Council
Implement a campus-wide bias incident reporting system with support for victims and transparent methods for addressing all reports effectively. Provide this information widely across campus including throughout campus websites, within Canvas shells, and on syllabi. Ensure that data on incidents are disseminated for analysis, policy improvements, and prevention.	9	Student Support Council; Institutional Governance & Effectiveness Council (reporting & analysis)
College themed “days” or “weeks” to create a sense of community for students who are not part of a special program or club. Deciding on themes can be a collaborative process with student leaders and the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee (DEIC).		Student Support Council; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee
Conduct an Equity-Minded Web-Scan for all department pages and special programs to help ensure that students who are in need of services are invited and informed about how to access them.	6.5	Student Support Council; Marketing Committee; Department area deans/chair

A Way Forward - Equity Minded (Individual)

Recommendation	EMP Goal	Strategic Body
<p>Develop a “<i>Commitment to Equity</i>” Statement or Pledge and “<i>Guide to Equity at Norco</i>” for new employees to review. The purpose of these materials is to have a clear and concise narrative of the expectations of an equity-minded employee and the campus’ key programs and initiatives they should become familiar with.</p>	8.3	Academic Senate; College Council
<p>Managers reflect on how to utilize one-on-one meeting spaces, department meetings, and committee spaces to empower and guide classified professionals and faculty members in utilizing equity-minded practices.</p>	4; 9.2	College Council - Department Deans & Chairs & Managers
<p>Develop training modules/workshops for students leaders & employees so they are prepared to create a welcoming environment for their peers.</p>	9.2	Institutional Effectiveness & Governance Council
<p>Develop student programming around community, identity, and social justice related issues outside of the context of established learning communities welcomes students who are not as engaged or connected but would like to be.</p>		Student Support Council; Associated Students of Norco College; Student Life

A Way Forward - Transformative (Service)

Recommendation	EMP Goal	Strategic Body
Utilize time within Department/Division meetings to facilitate dialogue with staff, faculty, and admin about how to implement culturally sustaining practices within their work.		Department Deans & Chairs
Establish frequent opportunities for feedback on the development and continuous use of equitable teach tools and methodology: syllabi; course materials; assessments; & grading	9; 4	Academic Senate; Academic Council; Faculty Professional Development Committee
Departments facilitate a rebranding of their area to be more aligned with values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.		Marketing Committee; Department Deans & Chairs
Establish a forms committee to review the effectiveness of required forms, update language, and evaluate the submission and review process on a regular basis (annually)		Marketing Committee; Department Deans & Chairs
Departments provide “Student Spotlights” where every semester, there are 2-3 students whose interests, academic successes, and narrative are shared with other students. This is an opportunity to intentionally connect with each and every student within a discipline.		Student Support Council
Scale up efforts for Developing Communities of Practice		Student Support Council; Academic Council; Professional Development Committees

“You can’t be equity
advancing and risk
averse.”

Lasana Hotep
Summer Learning Institute 2021 Keynote Address

Next Steps

- Identifying the recommendations that are most meaningful for your campus as it comes to addressing potential equity gaps
- Sharing the findings and recommendations with campus constituents and receiving feedback
- Incorporating the recommendations into the strategic planning process
- Establishing a system of accountability with recommended next steps

