



Norco College Equity Audit

HOTEP CONSULTANTS

Spring 2022

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary



Executive Summary

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

Findings

Overarching Themes

Significant Focus on Equity and Social Justice

Norco College has a clear commitment to improving outcomes for historically minoritized students as evidenced in the Completion Initiative & Guided Pathways efforts and the Leading from the Middle: Professional Development Plan in Support of Guided Pathways. However, there are still traditional norms and practices (i.e. deficit-minded thinking, focusing on content/process versus student impact, and racial and cultural biases) that create barriers to opportunities for systemic change in policy and practice.

Leveraging Employee Agency & Locus of Control

Bureaucratic challenges (i.e. feeling overworked, lack of staffing, slow administrative processes) 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 & Connection

A multitude of programs and initiatives (i.e. Umoja, Puente, Unity Zone, Men of Color Initiative) at Norco are focused towards 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 – students are very aware of the difference between what they experience in a learning community course versus a non-learning community course. Additionally, 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 Recommendations

Student Ready (Institutional)

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

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Review the 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) provide consistency in outcomes by race and gender, based on incident type in order to establish more consistent norms in outcome expectations.



Equity Minded (Individual)

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

- Develop a “Commitment to Equity” Statement or Pledge and “Guide to Equity at Norco” 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.
- 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.
- Develop training modules/workshops for students leaders & student employees so they are prepared to create a welcoming environment for their peers.
- Develop student programming around community, identity, and social justice related issues outside of the context of established learning communities to welcome students who are not as engaged or connected but would like to be, especially students taking classes online or in the evening.



Transformative (Service)

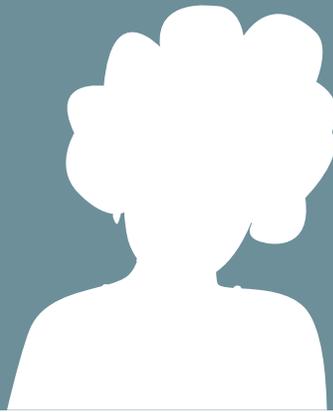
Transformative is the manifestation of practices that address the historical and sociopolitical causes of inequities found in education and engage in data-informed efforts to repair and restore the educational system. The recommendations listed below have been developed to better support the way in which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

- Utilize time within Department/Division meetings to facilitate dialogue with staff, faculty, and administrators about how to implement culturally sustaining practices within their work.
- Establish frequent opportunities for feedback on the development and continuous use of equitable teaching tools and methodology: syllabi; course materials; assessments; & grading.
- Facilitate departmental rebranding of each area to be more aligned with values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- 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).
- Establish “Student Spotlights” where every semester, departments highlight 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.



Norco College Equity Audit Full Report





Background

CCC System-wide Context

The California Community College system, comprising 116 colleges, serves 1.8 million students, annually. About 70% of students enrolled identify as racial/ethnic minorities. In the 1970's, as the demand for higher education expanded, community colleges were identified as key institutions for increasing access to opportunities. In 2017, the California Vision for Success created a plan for addressing long standing issues and barriers to student success and emphasized this belief that colleges should provide clear, simple, and accessible pathways to educational goals for students. It was also important to provide the support needed for students to stay on the pathway until completion.

During March 2020, in an effort to be responsive to the global Covid-19 pandemic, community colleges throughout the system shifted the way in which they have traditionally offered instruction, support services, and resources. This major shift became an opportunity to transition all components and aspects of the "campus experience," from instruction, student services, and business services, to an online modality. Additionally, amidst a global health crisis, the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and a number of other Black people at the hands of police ignited civil and social unrest locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

In June 2020, the Chancellor of the California Community College, Eloy Oakley Ortiz, issued the Call to Action which challenged colleges to investigate current structures, curriculum, and practices, and identify ways to dismantle and repair structural racism embedded within the system of schooling. Conversations around issues of race are not new to the California Community Colleges. The 2017 Vision for Success: Strengthening the California Community Colleges to Meet California's Needs, mapped out goals to address long standing barriers, within the system, to retention and completion including decreasing the average number of units accumulated by students and reducing equity gaps for traditionally underrepresented student groups. This Vision served as a framework for colleges in shaping their goals for improving instruction and services to students.

Norco College Context

Established as a campus within Riverside Community College District (RCCCD) in 1991, Norco College is the most recently established college in the District. Serving around 15,000 students annually, Norco College is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with over 55% of students identifying as Hispanic or Latinx/a/o. Some of the key initiatives developed to support student access, equity, and success include the Completion Initiative/Guided Pathways, College reorganization based on schools, and new programs such as Dual Enrollment, the Veterans Resource Center, and the Prison Education Community Program.

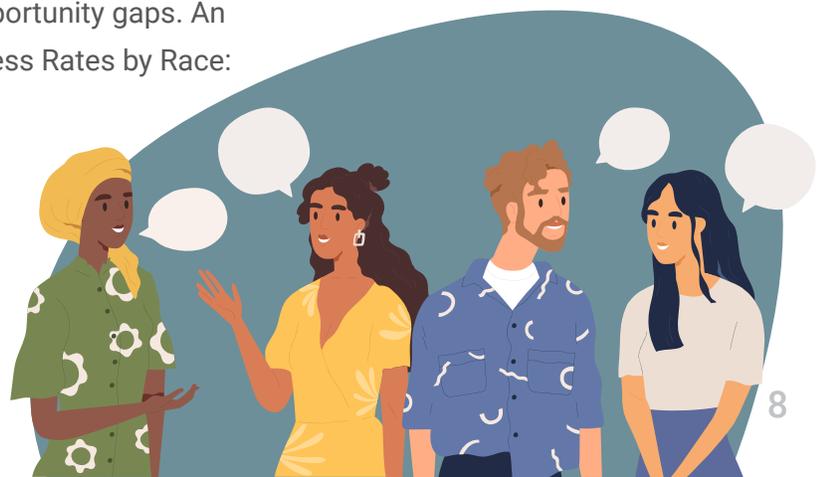
In 2015, Norco College conducted a study on student success rates at the institution and learned that 243 out of 2,474, or 9.5%, of students completed their certificate or degree within four years. Of the 2,231 students who did not meet their academic goals, African American, Hispanic, Men of Color, LGBTQIA+ identified students, and students who experienced foster care, were significantly overrepresented in comparison to the general population. “The ‘9.8’ percent’ became a galvanizing rally call for Norco College to embrace significant cultural, procedural, and systemic change for our students” (2030 Education Master Plan). The organizational response to learning about this data resulted in the Completion Initiative, a campus-wide effort led by faculty, resulting in developed strategies for transformation: creation of meta majors, clear and directed pathways for students, the implementation of faculty advisors, establishing models of student care, and linking college to careers.

Since the 2017 California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) Vision for Success was put into motion, Norco College has made significant progress in examining traditional approaches, hearing students’ perspectives and voices, and creating institutional capacity to address systemic barriers to student success. Examples of the great work that has taken place are evidenced in:

- The Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF) Charter for Institutional Commitment Project Team (ICPT) which was established between the ICPT and the Student Support Council to implement an action plan informed by recommendations developed by the RJTF workgroup.
- Development of an Equity-Focused Community of Practice for English that created themed courses to support disproportionately impacted student groups (2019-2022 Student Equity Plan).

While improvements have been made, there are still opportunity gaps. An example of this is evident in the Fall 2021 Course Success Rates by Race:

African American students and Pacific Islander students have the lowest course completion rates at 57.43% and 62.22%, respectively. In comparison, to Asian and White students who have the highest course completion rates at 79.99% and 72.57%, respectively. [Source: CCCCCO Data Mart]





NORCO COLLEGE

Norco College's Mission is to:

“Inspire a diverse student body by an inclusive innovative approach to learning through its pathways to transfer, professional, career and technical education, certificates, and degrees. Norco is proud to be a pivotal hub for scholarship, arts and culture, dynamic technologies, and partnerships. Norco College encourages self-empowerment and is dedicated to transforming the lives of our students, employees, and community.”

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

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

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



Key Definitions

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

Anti-Racism

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

Equity

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

According to the 2019 Education Master Plan, Norco College defines equity as “engineering and sustaining an environment where student success is realized by all groups with proportionate outcomes.”

Disproportionate Impact

Disproportionate impact is a condition where some students’ access to key resources and supports and ultimately their academic success may be hampered by inequitable practices, policies and approaches to student support resulting in inequitable outcomes. This information is most often presented in terms of race but could include a multitude of identities including: gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability, and English fluency.

Diversity

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

Inclusion

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

Locus of Control

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

- Julian Rotter

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

Minoritized Students

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

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

Obligation Gap

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



Equity Audit Core Team

Throughout the Fall 2021 semester, Hotep Consultants worked with a small group of Norco College stakeholders to engage in thought partnership around Norco community engagement. Under the leadership of Dr. Tenisha James, this core group was assembled to provide feedback on technical details, insights on stakeholder engagement (including survey distribution and focus group participation), and serve as a sounding board to provide institutional context in alignment with the findings.

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

- NC Leadership Councils
 - ▷ Academic Senate
 - ▷ Guided Pathways and Equity Leadership Advisory Workgroup
- Student Equity Committee
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
- Campus Administration
- District Racial Justice Task Force



The Equity Audit Core Team included:

Equity Audit Core Team Member	Title	Role and Stakeholder Group Representation
Dr. Greg Aycock	Dean of Institutional Effectiveness	Administration Institutional Effectiveness & Governance Council; Assessment Committee
Dr. Dominique Hitchcock	Professor of Spanish & French	Faculty Student Support Council; Assessment Committee; Guided Pathways & Equity Leadership Advisory Workgroup
Dr. Tenisha James	Dean of Student Services	Administration College Council; Student Support Council; Guided Pathways & Equity Leadership Advisory Workgroup
Dr. Gustavo Ocegüera	Dean of Grants and Student Equity	Administration Resource Council;



Equity Audit Process



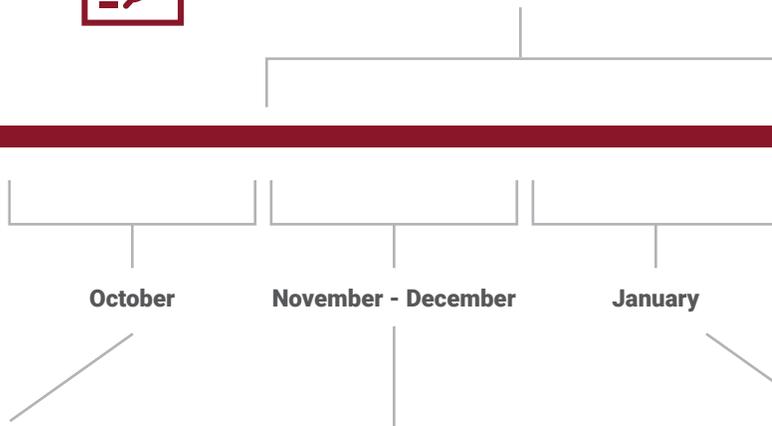
Equity Audit Process

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



Phase 1:

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



October

November - December

January

Phase 2:

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



Phase 3:

Facilitated focus groups for students, instructional faculty, student support & services professionals, administrators, and employees within facilities and operations.



Phase 4:

Analyze all data elements within the S.E.T Framework



Research Questions

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

- 1 To what extent is the environment at Norco College diverse and inclusive?
- 2 To what extent do Norco's administrative policies and practices encourage a systemic and collaborative approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- 3 To what extent do Norco'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 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's budget and resource practices informed by a student-ready and equity minded lens?

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



S.E.T. Framework

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

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

<p>Student-Ready Institutional</p> 	<p>Equity Minded Individual</p> 	<p>Transformative Service</p> 
<p>Policy The record of what we say we do</p>	<p>Practices Doing what we said we would do</p>	<p>Assessment The result of doing what we said we would do</p>

Student-Ready

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

Equity-Minded

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

Transformative

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

Policy

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

Practice

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

Assessment

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

Data Reviewed

Campus-wide survey

Two campus-wide surveys were developed by Hotep Consultants utilizing the Survey Monkey online survey tool. One survey was developed for Norco College employees and a separate survey was created for Norco College students. In collaboration with the Norco College Planning & Development office, Hotep Consultants provided unique survey links and QR codes, for internal distribution and survey collection via the NorAll email listserv and student email accounts. The employee surveys were open between October 19 - November 16, 2021; student surveys were open between November 8 - December 6, 2021. In order to increase campus participation in the survey, there was intentional recruitment by classified professionals and faculty leaders to engage employees who typically don't participate in these conversations.

- 169 total employees participated in the employee survey
 - ▷ Employees who work at Norco College during Fall 2021 were invited to participate in the survey. There may have been some employees on the NorAll list that are also employed at other colleges in the District, however the questions listed in the survey were specific to Norco College. The survey was sent to 1,278 employees with a response rate of 13.2%.
- 133 students participated in the student survey
 - ▷ Students that were enrolled in classes at Norco College during Spring, Summer, and/or Fall 2021 were invited to participate in the survey, with the exception of students enrolled in Dual Enrollment or the CRC program as their experiences with Norco College may differ from students taking classes “on” campus (including remote courses). The survey was sent to 10,648 students with a response rate of 1.2%.

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

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

Survey- Six Key Sections



1 **Being Action Oriented**

Being action-oriented requires intentional steps and efforts towards dismantling inequitable practices and policies within the institution. Individuals and groups within the organization use their locus of control to make an impact for students consistently to be in alignment with the college's values.



2 **Belief in Students**

Belief in students refers to the authentic and unwavering belief that students (in particular, students of color, first-generation, and/or low income students) have the capacity to learn and be successful. Educators who believe in students communicate this through high expectations and providing high levels of support.



3 **Campus Equity Eco-System**

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.



4 **Critical Self 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. This practice requires thinking about how one's social location (race, gender, SES, etc) impacts beliefs about teaching and learning, the practices that are acted out, and impact on students.



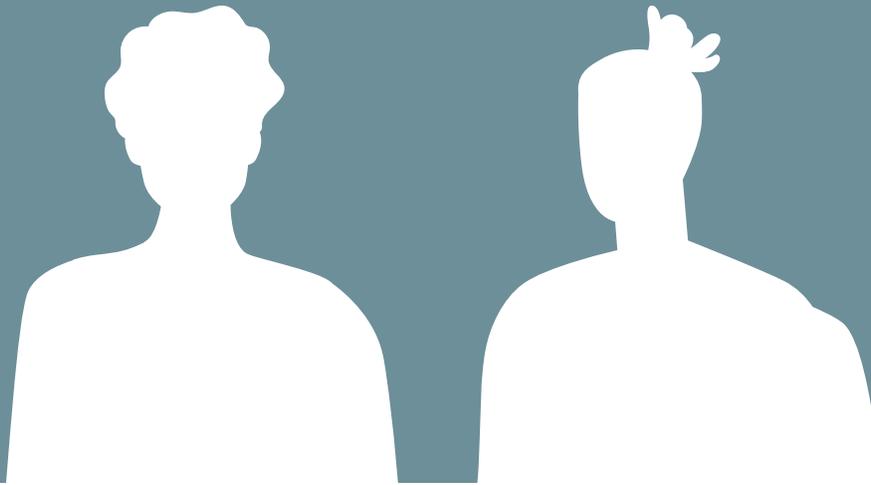
5 **Racial Literacy**

Racial Literacy is the understanding of what "race" is, its relationship to inequity, and how to respond to racial tension, discrimination, and inequitable outcomes with an anti-racist lens.



6 **Sense of Welcoming and Belonging**

Students feel welcomed and a sense of belonging when an institution intentionally designs the educational experiences that affirm students' cultural/racial differences, connects them to opportunities and resources, and creates community for students.



Focus Group Discussions

After the employee survey closed, Hotep Consultants conducted a number of focus groups to gain additional insight around employees' level of understanding, engagement, and feedback around equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts at Norco College. Student focus groups were conducted in parallel to the student survey, with the intention to learn more about the overall student experience at Norco College including students' sense of welcome and belonging, racialized and/or gendered experiences, and awareness of impactful practices within the campus.

We hosted 7 focus group sessions over a period of 10.5 hours between November 10 - December 3, 2021. The focus groups were held virtually via Zoom. In order to ensure that participants were able to actively engage in the focus group, breakout rooms were used to provide small group conversations facilitated by a consultant from Hotep Consultants. As such, one focus group session could host up to 40 participants with four rooms of 10 participants each.

Each focus group session highlighted a specific stakeholder group to ensure that questions asked within the focus group were most relevant to the role of the participants. We hosted one (1) focus group for students, three (3) for employees within student services & support departments, two (2) for instructional faculty, and one (1) focus group was held during the meeting of the managers.

- 32 total participants engaged in the 7 focus group sessions

While we are grateful for the students that participated in the focus groups, due to the low overall attendance at the student focus groups, we will not be including the insights shared to protect the privacy and anonymity of student participants. The full list of focus group participant demographics, focus group schedule, and focus group protocol can be found in the appendix.

Document Analysis

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

At the onset of the Equity Audit, the Hotep Consultants team provided the Norco College Equity Audit Core Team with a list of key documents to gather for review. The Equity Audit Core Team collected a number of documents from the key documents list and shared them with the Hotep Consultants team via Microsoft SharePoint. We then uploaded the shared documents to the data visualization tool, Dedoose, where our team reviewed, analyzed, and coded over 107 documents. For documents that were not included within the initial SharePoint document folder, Hotep Consultants worked directly with the Equity Audit Core Team to gather additional documentation, or searched the Norco College website for additional materials.

Some items reviewed in the document analysis include:

- Norco College Educational Master Plan
- Norco College Strategic Planning & Governance Manual
- Employee Demographic Data and Job Applicant Demographics
- List of Committees, Committee Purpose, and Committee Participants
- Professional Development Schedules
- Employee Review Process
- Resource Allocation Model
- Program Review Documentation
- Course Syllabi for High Enrolled courses, and High DFW courses
- Course Outline of Record for High Enrolled courses, and High DFW courses
- Advertisements and Applications for Student Support Programs
- Student Events Calendar

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



Limitations

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

Timing

Much of the data collection, both surveys and focus groups, took place throughout Fall semester. As a result, potential participants may not have had the opportunity to fully participate in either the survey or focus group due to competing schedules (ie. finals, scheduled breaks) or priorities (i.e. district-wide surveys and focus groups also being conducted). We realize the timing of the data collection limited the number and breadth of responses that we were able to receive within this process and therefore may not paint a complete picture of the campus climate and experience from all constituency groups.

Breadth and depth of voices

As mentioned above, the timing challenges with the data collection process limited the number and breadth of responses that we were able to include in the data collection process. Specifically, because the focus groups took place in November, we lacked the opportunity to engage students and adjunct faculty as many were navigating breaks and midterms. While we're grateful for the students and classified professionals that participated in focus groups, the number of participants was too few that we won't be able to include those specific insights within this analysis. For our faculty analysis, we were grateful to have heard from full-time faculty at Norco, however we know that the experiences of adjunct faculty are often vastly different than those of full-time faculty within most community colleges. Because of the timing of the focus groups, the faculty members that were most available to lend their voices to the conversation were full-time faculty which may not be representative of all faculty experiences.

Access to data

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

Pandemic!

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





Findings



Findings

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

Overarching Themes

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. This commitment is evident in the Completion Initiative & Guided Pathways efforts, the multitude of opportunities for Faculty Professional Development and learning about issues of equity, identity, and culturally relevant teaching practices. However, some of the traditional norms and practices that still exist come from traditional frameworks and approaches to education, teaching and learning. The focus tends to be on content and information being conveyed based on tradition versus centering what is most effective and impactful for students without awareness of racial and cultural biases in our language and communication.

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 within the institution. The challenges include lack of staffing, slow administrative processes and also a sense of feeling overworked from employees. Yet, there remains a strong commitment and desire to serve students and the Norco community. Therefore, 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. In thinking about "locus of control," this is where employees really think about what they have control over and recognize that the impact an educator can have isn't limited by one's title (i.e. you don't have to be the dean/VP, wait for a policy to change, wait until certain resources come) to make a difference for students.

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. Programs such as Umoja, Puente, EOPS/Care/Calworks, Affinity Groups, and Access to Basic Needs Resources and Technology make a huge impact on student retention and completion. However, a sense of community and connection is lacking for students that are not directly 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. How can students who are not in these programs experience a sense of welcome, belonging, connection, and support through intentionally scaled efforts across the institution?

S.E.T. Analysis

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

<p>Student-Ready Institutional</p> 	<p>Equity Minded Individual</p> 	<p>Transformative Service</p> 
<p>Policy The record of what we say we do</p>	<p>Practices Doing what we said we would do</p>	<p>Assessment The result of doing what we said we would do</p>



Student Ready

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

Overview

The findings that follow focus on institutional highlights - practices and reflections that could positively support equity advancement on campus - and areas of growth - practices and reflections that could represent barriers within the institution. The information is organized in alignment with the overarching themes.

Highlights

Significant Focus on Equity & Social Justice

There was a comprehensive response to the California Community Colleges Chancellors' Office and the Riverside County Community College District Chancellor's Call to Action for Anti-Racism. As an intentional and comprehensive response, Norco College's commitment to Racial Equity was demonstrated through the development of a Racial Justice Task Force. The RJTC is chaired by President Monica Green and brings together a representation of campus leaders to focus on addressing Anti-Blackness through four project teams:

Black Student Care

Celebrating Black and African American Culture

Classroom and Class Experience

Institutional Commitment

In the 2030 Education Master Plan, there is a specific focus on diversifying the workforce at Norco College

"As Norco College adds to its workforce, one of our goals is to reach balanced diversity. NC is committed to recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce that not only closely reflects our student demographics, but also possesses equity-minded skills. A workforce who understands and is sensitive to diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds of historically underserved community college students increases their likelihood of academic success. Norco is a great place to work because of the people. The students, classified, faculty, and managers strive to bring a family atmosphere to the college. We work hard, communicate openly, dream big, and enjoy being with each other. All of this is done with the intention of transforming our students' lives, transforming our region, and transforming the college itself. Norco College is not a place, it's a community."

Many of the posted job descriptions include the college's commitment to diversity by including the racial demographics of the student community. However, the STEM department includes additional language to explicitly identify the expectations of faculty within the biological sciences department to participate in equity advancing practices. Such is evidenced in the screenshot below.

BASIC FUNCTION:
 Norco College is seeking an Assistant Professor, Anatomy & Physiology. The successful candidate will have primary responsibility for lecture and/or laboratory instruction in anatomy and physiology courses. The candidate may be expected to teach evening, as well as weekday offerings. A successful candidate should demonstrate subject specific expertise in anatomy and physiology and the ability to communicate challenging concepts to community college level students in a clear and engaging manner.

The ideal candidate will share Norco College's commitment to educating its racially and socioeconomically diverse student population. We currently serve approximately 13,000 students annually, the majority of whom are from historically underserved populations, 56% Latinx, 9% Asian American, 6% African American, and 24% white. Norco College is designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, reflecting the great responsibility that the college has to the educational attainment and economic well-being of the surrounding community. 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.

The successful candidate will join a campus that exhibits its equity minded values through intentional practice. We are a Hispanic and Minority serving institution with established programs for Puente, Umoja, Allies, Veterans, and Foster Youth. Norco College is a leader in pathways for student completion, dual enrollment with our local high schools and strong workforce preparation. We are proud of our dedication to all our students and their families, and through a variety of means provide robust offerings of culturally responsive events, speakers and opportunities for professional training in equity practices.

Basic Function:

Leveraging Employee Agency and Locus of Control

There is a strategic approach to professional development in order to provide employees with access to equity minded practices and learning experiences. This commitment to equity is evidenced in the:

- Leading from the Middle Professional Development Plan in Support of Guided Pathways, which is intentionality connected to strategic professional development goals.
- Recognizing the importance of cultivating an Equity-Mindset and disaggregating data for racial disparities.
- Establishment of a Professional Development Day for Classified Professionals.

Improving Student Community and Connection

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 the gap for transfer level math in Guided Pathway cohorts for African American/Black students.
- Puente course success rate of 82.8% is higher than general student population 71.3%
- CalWORKS maintains a high rate of comprehensive education plan completion at 59% compared to college rate 12.7%

Many of these programs have embedded supports that provide students with tools and resources necessary to achieve these goals. Additionally, there may be program requirements that students must achieve in order to continue their participation in the program, such as CalWORKS requiring the completion of an education plan in order to receive benefits. How might such a practice be scaled to ensure that all students are engaging with a counselor at least twice in order to complete a comprehensive education plan and receive advice on graduation petition or transfer admissions?

There is a great sense of community and collegiality amongst employees at Norco College. Within the focus groups, employee survey, and the documentation received, namely the Great Place To Work Surveys, the sense of pride in Norco College and the work being done to support students shined through.



That we take the “it takes a village...” approach here at Norco College. We all have the opportunity and are encouraged to actively participate in many campus-wide initiatives that shape the direction of the institution. We approach the work like a large family unit, all committed to our specific part of the process. Norco College is my home away from home, and my second family.

ModernThink - Great Place to Work 2018 & 2019 Survey, Classified Professional

Areas of Growth

Significant Focus on Equity & Social Justice

The Education Master Plan is really comprehensive and well thought out. From an equity focused perspective – Connecting the first goal of Student Transformation to upward mobility in the US is disconnected to the racialized and gendered realities in which our students live.

We will change the trajectory of our students' lives...

The community college mission is central to the overarching mission of higher education and central to the core ideal of upward mobility in American society. Upward mobility is the idea that working hard in the U.S. will lead to opportunity and realization of the American Dream. For more than two centuries this idea has been a central theme in the American experiment, motivating millions of immigrants and natural born citizens alike. As the 20th century matured in the U.S., higher education became a critical part of the upward mobility ideal, with many national leaders suggesting that the hard work individuals need to do, should include the pursuit of a college degree. The promise for a hundred years and counting in the U.S. has been that a college degree will lead to the American Dream. If you want to be successful in the U.S. go to college.

The image reads: The community College mission is central to the overarching mission of higher education and central to the core ideal of upward mobility in American society. Upward mobility is the idea that working hard in the U.S. will lead to opportunity and realization of the American Dream. For more than two centuries this idea has been a central theme in the American experience, motivating millions of immigrants and natural born citizens alike. As the 30th century matured in the U.S., higher education became a critical part of the upward mobility ideal, with many national leaders suggesting the hard work individuals need to do, should include the pursuit of a college degree. The promise for a hundred years and counting in the U.S. has been that a college degree will lead to the American Dream. If you want to be successful in the U.S. go to college.

Education has been a space of great harm. This statement is incredibly race neutral and could inadvertently produce harm to students who are eager to achieve their goals. It is also based on the goals that communities of color have been legally excluded from (homeownership, employment, education etc). If the goals are set based on the foregone ideals of the White elite, how do we bring in the cultural capital of the diverse community that Norco College serves?



Leveraging Employee Agency and Locus of Control

The Education Master Plan is really comprehensive and well thought out. From an equity focused perspective – Connecting the first goal of Student Transformation to upward mobility in the US is disconnected to the racialized and gendered realities in which our students live.

Communication & Collaboration

Creating system-wide change and impact necessitates expertise and perspective from Instruction, Student Services, and Business Services. Campus politics and dynamics create barriers to meaningful collaboration.

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, Survey Quote

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.

17% of employees disagreed with the statement,

“My colleagues at Norco have a shared understanding of what “equity means”



More transparency from our senior leadership and a decision making process that prioritizes student success, instead of the current priorities of our leadership that makes decisions based on increasing our revenue and FTES

ModernThink - Great Place to Work 2018 & 2019 Survey, Classified Professional

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-Classified Professional, Survey Quote

Equity needs to be embedded within processes so employees understand their roles, responsibilities, and there is accountability for when work behaviors are not aligned with institutional values

Examining and embedding equity-minded practices are optional within the Improvement of Instruction (IOI), tenure process, and Program Review.



“... equity is still not there... it’s all over the place, but it remains an option. As long as we don’t have a different contract, or a different tenure process... it’s not going to be done because it’s easier not to do it.”

-Faculty, Focus Group Quote

If there is no expectation to include diverse course or department materials, rethink traditional assessment methods, or the need to evaluate course outcomes by race and gender, then there will be no institutional approach to addressing the existing gaps. With the requirement of the Student Equity Plan, and its attachment to state funding, the desire to increase equity advancing practices across institutions within California has relied heavily on buy-in. However, buy-in means these efforts are optional, and as such, often the same 15-20 equity champions on campus are the only individuals who are actively attempting to redesign institutional practices. This can only go so far. Without requiring the intentional address of equity within IOI, course outlines of record, or program review, there will likely not be institutional advancement in this area - instead we will continue to rely on the same 15-20 people to change the outcomes of an entire institution, even though hundreds more are engaging and interacting with students every day.



I believe that issues of DEI should not be optional but mandatory for every faculty, staff, and admin that comes into contact with students and the public. We must all sing the same song to continue to change the culture and climate of our beloved college. We will get there by working together and working intentionally -- which means there is no choice to opt out or not incorporate anti-racist policies/actions.

Employee Survey Respondent

Very limited Professional Development opportunities exist for Classified Professionals and Administrators. While it was encouraging to see the establishment of a Classified Professionals Newsletter which featured some professional development opportunities, it was unclear how often these learning opportunities occur. On the Employee Professional Development website, the only professional development information for Classified Professionals and Administrations is a series of external webinar recordings. In comparison, the Faculty site includes information about tracking professional development activities, a link to a Faculty PD specific site with additional resources such as Flex Day recordings, and more. The differences in messaging around, and access to, Professional Learning Opportunities based on employee classification can directly connect to a disconnect in how each individual is able to engage in campus initiatives, reflect on current practices, and have space to engage in thought partnership with colleagues to advance equitable practices that result in student success: educational goal and/or career attainment.

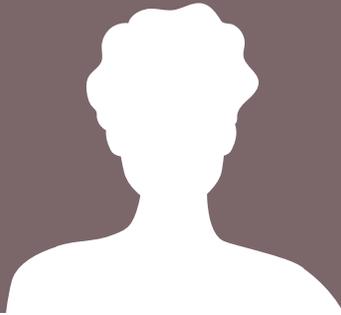
Improving Student Community and Connection

While there aren't any glaring trends across race between Fall 2015-Fall 2020 regarding Student Conduct & CARE referrals, there are some inconsistencies. For example:

Incident: Disrupting Behavior & Habitual Profanity

	Student 1	Student 2	
	Fall 2019 White, Male, age 55 Resolution: Written Warning & Apology Letter to Professor Police Involvement: No CARE Involvement: Yes	Fall 2020 Black, Male, age 34 Resolution: Short-Term Suspension Police Involvement: Yes CARE Involvement: Yes	

For the same incident infraction, two very different resolutions were met. While we don't know the circumstances of the incidents, nor do we know if there were any prior incidents from either student, the differentiating factor in how the incident was resolved was race and age. Black males, especially younger Black males, have historically been viewed as more dangerous and threatening even in non-threatening situations. Therefore, the police are involved in far more incidents that include Black persons and results in Black persons receiving harsher punishments in comparison to their non-Black counterparts for the same infraction.



While there aren't any glaring trends across race between Fall 2015-Fall 2020 regarding Student Conduct & CARE referrals, there are some inconsistencies. For example:

Incident: Seizures

Student 1	Student 2
Fall 2019 Asian, Male, age 18 Resolution: Referral to Health Services & DRC Police Involvement: No CARE Involvement: Yes	Spring 2020 White, Female, Age 27 Resolution: DRC & Health Services Referral Police Involvement: Yes CARE Involvement: No

Again, we have limited information to provide context as to what occurred with either incident regarding seizures. The resolutions, in this instance, were the same, however the support provided at the time of the incident were different. For the Asian Male, no police were called after having a seizure. While for the White, Female student the police were called. If a student is having a medical emergency in class, what is the proper protocol to support that student? Should the campus police be called? Probably, as they often have a direct connection to medical emergency professionals to determine the next course of action. There's actually no information in the Fall 2021 Faculty Guide regarding what to do in the case of medical emergencies. Instead, within the "Classroom Management" section of the faculty guide there is a direct mention to call College Police if the Faculty feels threatened or unsafe:

“If the student is being threatening or you fear for your safety, immediately contact College Police at (951) 222-8171. If there is an emergency, contact 911.”

As this particular incident is related to a medical emergency it is important to note that there are widespread racial disparities within health care and how people of color are treated within healthcare systems. This has stemmed from decades of misinformation shared throughout professional healthcare communities that previously taught medical students that different racial groups have different pain tolerances. The notion that Black women can tolerate pain at much higher levels than White women has led to the incredibly high Black maternal deaths and infant mortality rates within the Black community, in comparison to all other ethnic groups. When we encounter a student, especially a student of color, experiencing a medical emergency we should ensure that they are getting the timely and appropriate medical support and attention needed. If the campus doesn't currently cover any medical emergencies for students on campus, it could consider doing so during the next opportunity to renegotiate college insurance.





Equity Minded

Equity-Minded higher education professionals intentionally call attention to patterns of inequity in student experiences and outcomes. They also take personal and professional responsibility for the success of their students and critically reassess their own practices. To be an Equity-Minded educator, one must be aware of the social context and consequences of racial, gender, and cultural differences in society and how that plays out within an educational institution.

Overview

The findings that follow focus on highlights at the individual level including practices and reflections that could positively support equity advancement on campus as well as areas of growth in practices and reflections that could represent barriers within the institution. The information is organized in alignment with the overarching themes.



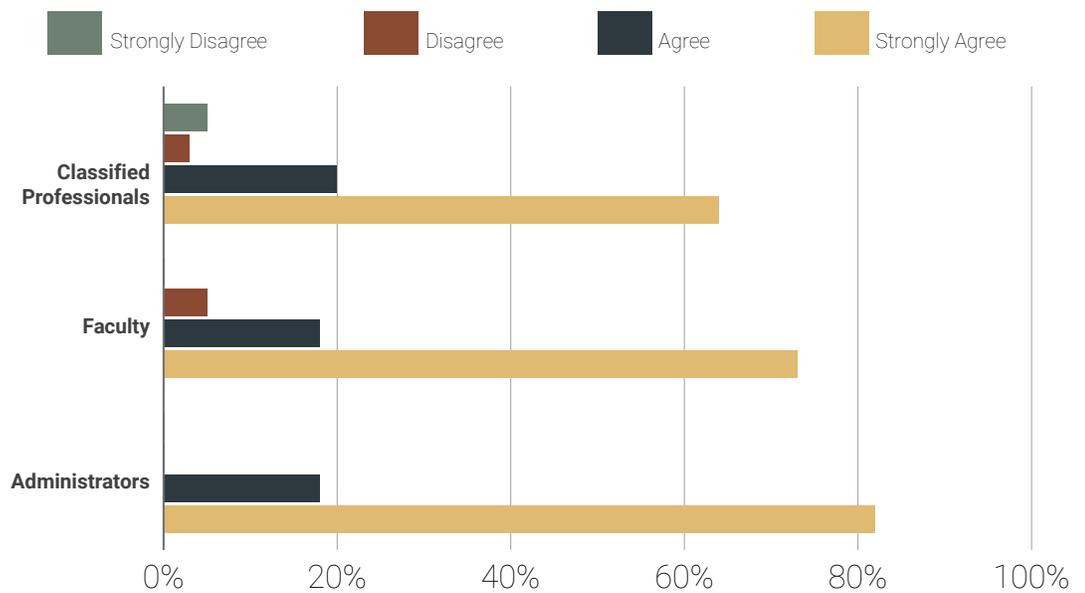
Significant Focus on Equity and Social Justice

Highlights

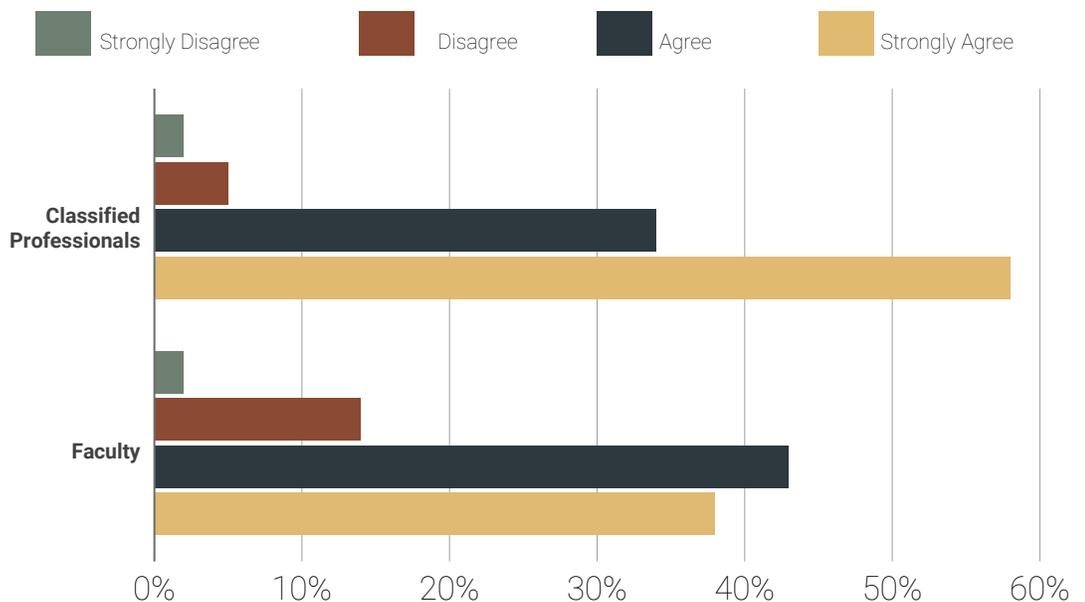
A majority of employees reported that their departments prioritize high-quality service and instruction to students and that students are treated with dignity and respect regardless of their race, gender/gender expression, and/or cultural identity.

This is important because by design, traditional educational approaches have not yielded success for the diverse communities of students enrolled at community colleges. For employees to share that their departments provide a particular quality of support for all students helps create an environment that is welcoming and supportive.

My department prioritizes high-quality service and instruction of students



My colleagues treat students with dignity and respect regardless of the student's race, gender/gender expression, and/or cultural identity



Employees are aware and attuned to Norco’s mission, values, and efforts around equity, diversity, and social justice. This quote shared by an instructional faculty member speaks to how the notion of equity has evolved and influenced the campus.

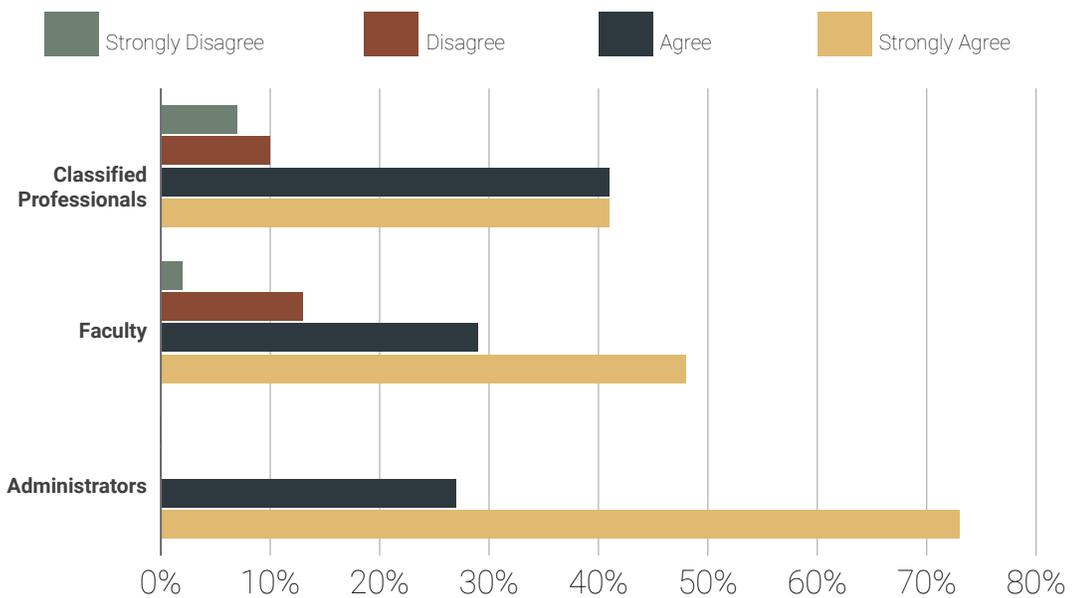


“...If I look back at all the years I’ve been in the district, the word “equity” has become more and more visible. But traditionally, it was some specific people’s business, not everybody’s business. So what I’m seeing now and what I’m pushing for is that it’s really everybody’s business...”

-Instructional Faculty, Focus Group Quote

A majority of employees reported in the survey that participating in equity training is a priority within their department. This shows an understanding that expertise and devoting time for professional learning will be necessary for improving practices and outcomes

Participating in equity training is a priority in my department as shared in the chart below.



This quote shared by a counseling faculty member is an example of training opportunities and knowledge being valued. There’s a recognition of how these opportunities are connected to student retention and success.



“I am always learning and attending training, reaching out to expert faculty on understanding identity and addressing students how they want to be addressed. I am always learning and applying strategies to support identity and retain students in college to increase their academic success...”

-Counseling Faculty, Survey Quote

Improving Student Community and Connection

The ideas and topics addressed in professional development experiences create a safe space to engage in self-reflection, gain and share knowledge, and apply this information by implementing equity-minded practices within their teaching.

The Introduction to Hidden Values Workshop, as part of the Equity Workshop Series from Fall 2019, is an example of how educators can reflect on how the college experience, including discipline specific knowledge, students should be privy to, expectations that are typically unnamed and in that respect, “hidden” norms on how to be academically specific. The workshop showcased ways in which faculty can be welcoming and supportive of students while maintaining high expectations.

Consequences & Impact of Not Knowing the Rules

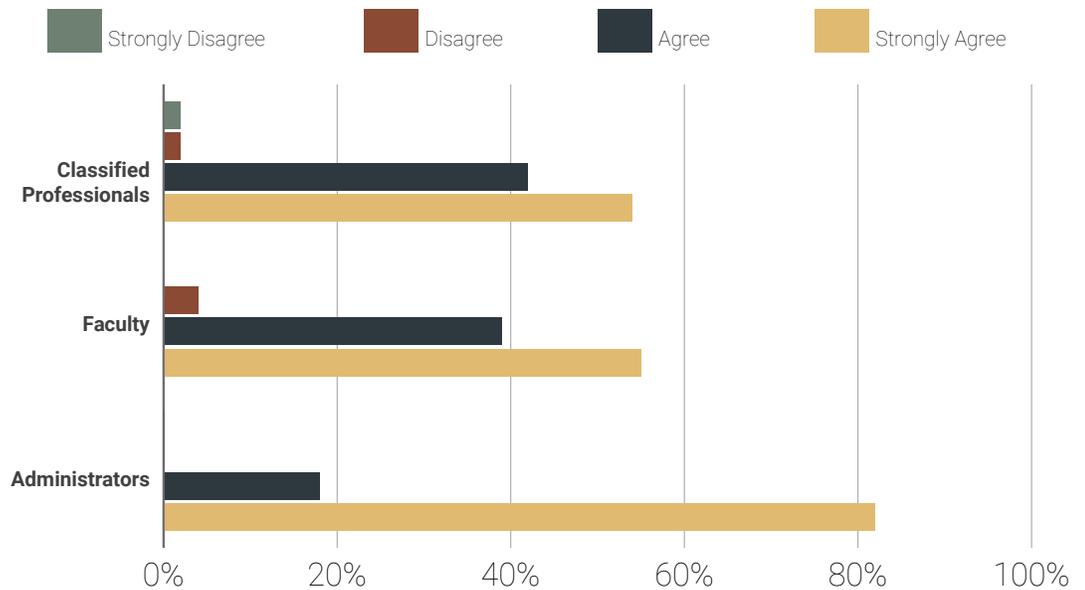
- Student success is often in part based on student's abilities to follow the hidden rules.
- When these rules are hidden, students may...
 - Want to drop out of the class once they hit an obstacle or difficulty
 - Feel fearful or unable to ask for help.
 - Struggle to understand why strategies used successfully in one class are not effective in another class.
 - Become confused at class expectations.
- Students who have already been exposed to the hidden rules often have a higher likelihood of success .



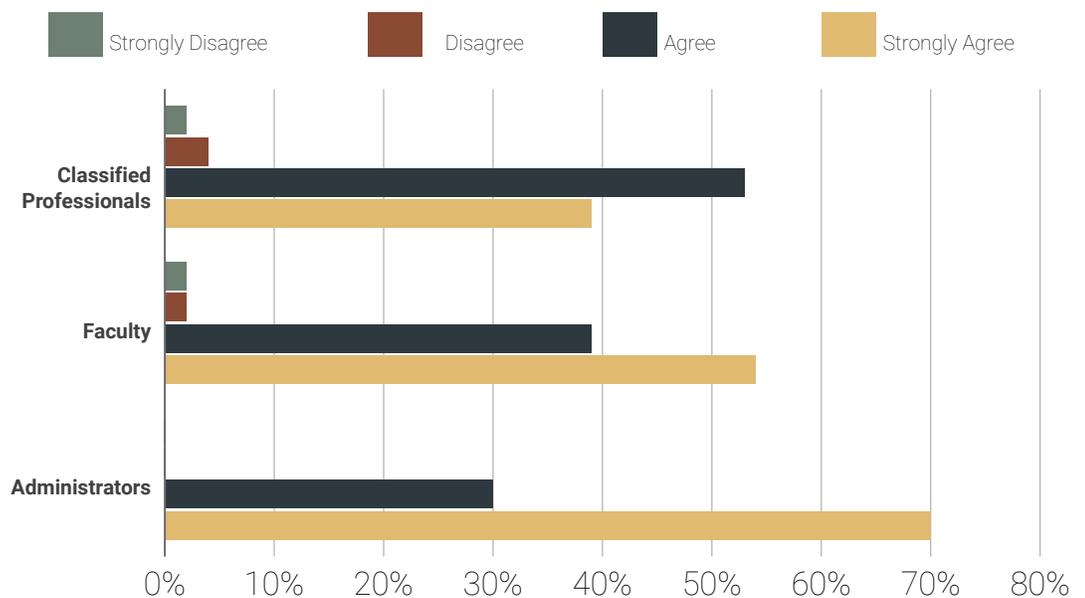
Employees are self-aware about how their behaviors and actions can negatively impact students. A vast majority (96.50%) of employees reported that they are aware of the social identities they possess and are aware of how bias can impact their interactions with students as reflected in the charts below.

Practicing equity-mindedness calls for employees to practice self-awareness, especially in terms of interacting with students and employees across social differences.

I am aware of the social identities I possess (i.e. race/ethnicity, religion, class)

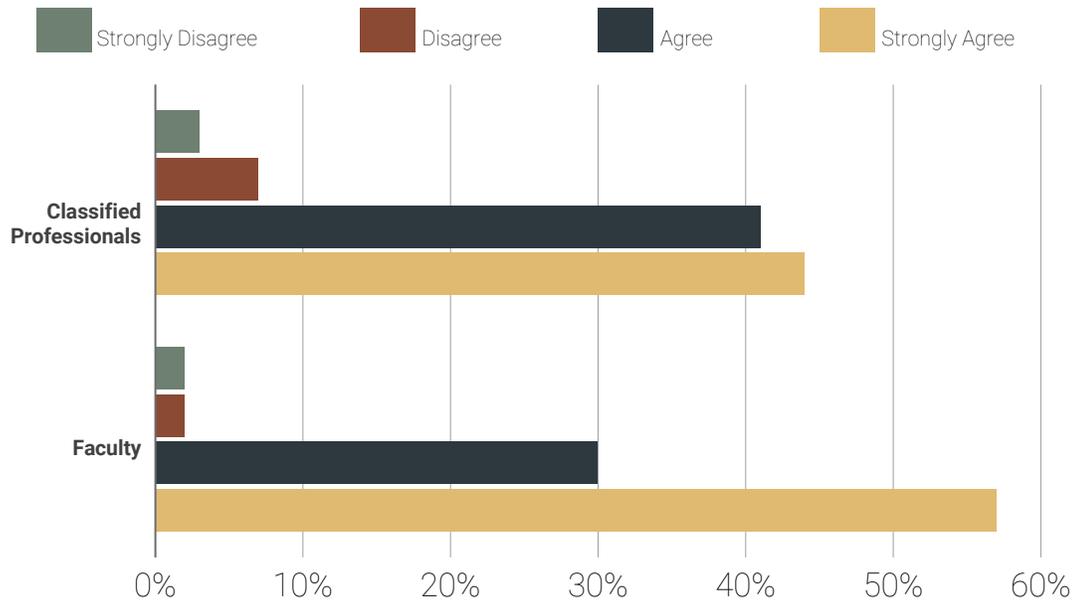


I am aware of how my beliefs can create bias towards specific groups of people



Classified professionals and faculty use inclusive practices to create a welcoming environment for students including using pronouns students identify with. When students recognize these practices, they are more likely to develop trust and a positive relationship with employees.

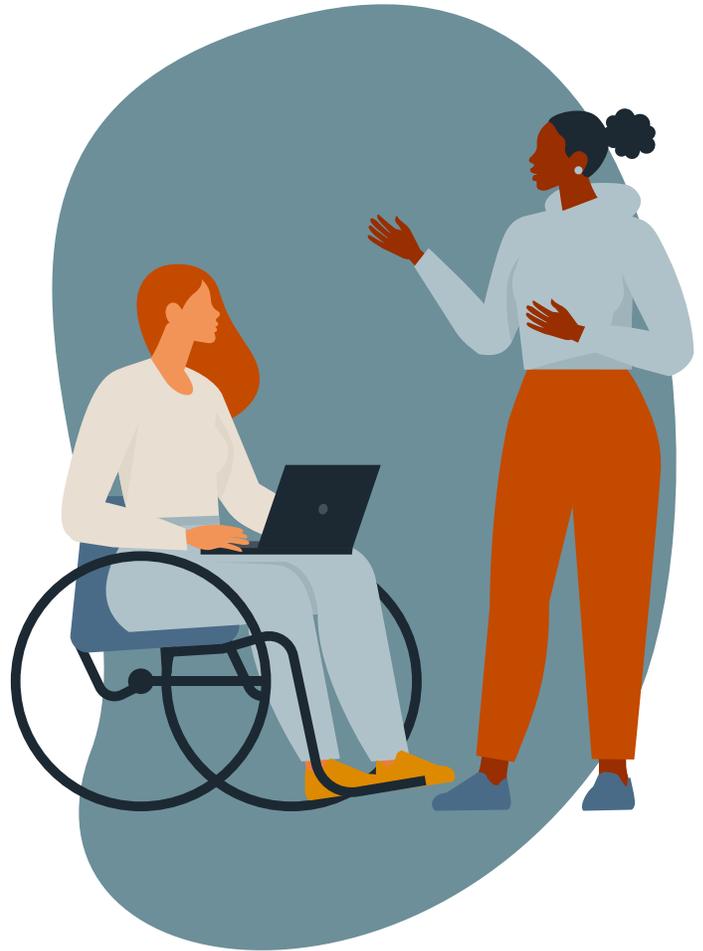
Within the past semester, I have addressed students using the pronouns they identify with



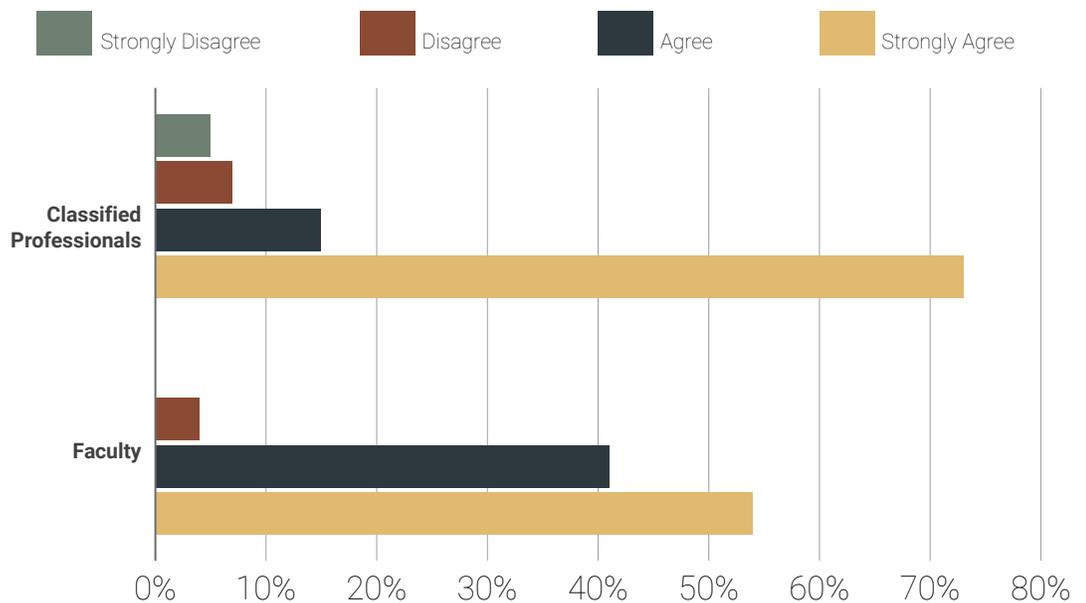
Leveraging Employee Agency and Locus of Control

Employees demonstrated being action oriented and student focused by the level of thoughtfulness, effort, and advocacy within their daily work through practices such as being open to receiving feedback from students and facilitating the problem solving needed so students can accomplish their tasks and goals.

- A majority of classified professional employees and faculty agreed with the statement, “When students have a complaint or issue about how I’ve treated them, I am open to their feedback and changing my practice”
- A majority of classified professional employees and faculty agreed with the statement, “If I am not equipped to provide assistance to students, I can locate resources to advise students appropriately.”



“If I am not equipped to provide assistance to students, I can locate resources to advise students appropriately.”



Faculty recognize the value of out-of-the-box thinking about what students need to be successful in the classroom and the importance of allowing yourself to learn by making mistakes. Becoming more equity-minded takes time, reflection, as well as practice. Even when being as thoughtful or mindful as one can be, mistakes and errors will happen and that is part of the process of becoming more skilled.



“ I think instructors need to be brave enough to throw out the canon...I think one of the things that we need is to be brave and again, talk about that space to fail or having that space to experiment... to be able to do things that are not necessarily how you experienced them in your undergrad or grad school....if we do things the way that we were taught, we’re really just perpetuating, you know, these same outcomes...”

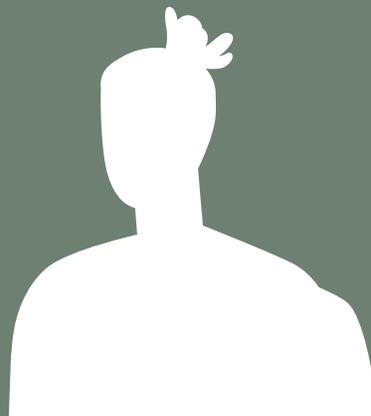
- Instructional Faculty, Focus Group Quote

Employees also expressed a sense of responsibility and agency as it comes to supporting students and helping the institution move forward. The quote below is an example of a faculty member who recognized that although challenges exist, they have influence in their position to transform “the way things have always been done.”



“...One thing that I’d like us to remember as faculty, is that we do have a lot of power. People that don’t have tenure, or even part time faculty, feel like they don’t have the power to say or do things... we really do have a lot of influence. I think that sometimes the bureaucracy gets in the way of it. It’s really hard sometimes to navigate that.”

- Instructional Faculty, Focus Group Quote



Areas of Growth

As students enter college trying to navigate new environments, helpful and affirming interactions with college personnel, peers, and campus departments can remove barriers to student success. While we come with the assumption that all employees intend to do no harm to students, there are consistent behaviors and actions that take place which are inconsistent with the institution’s values.

Significant Focus on Equity and Social Justice

We found that there were differences in perceptions regarding how the institution is doing in its efforts to diversify the college workforce. Black and Latinx employees reported having higher rates of dissatisfaction with the diversity of faculty and administrators than Non-Hispanic White employees.

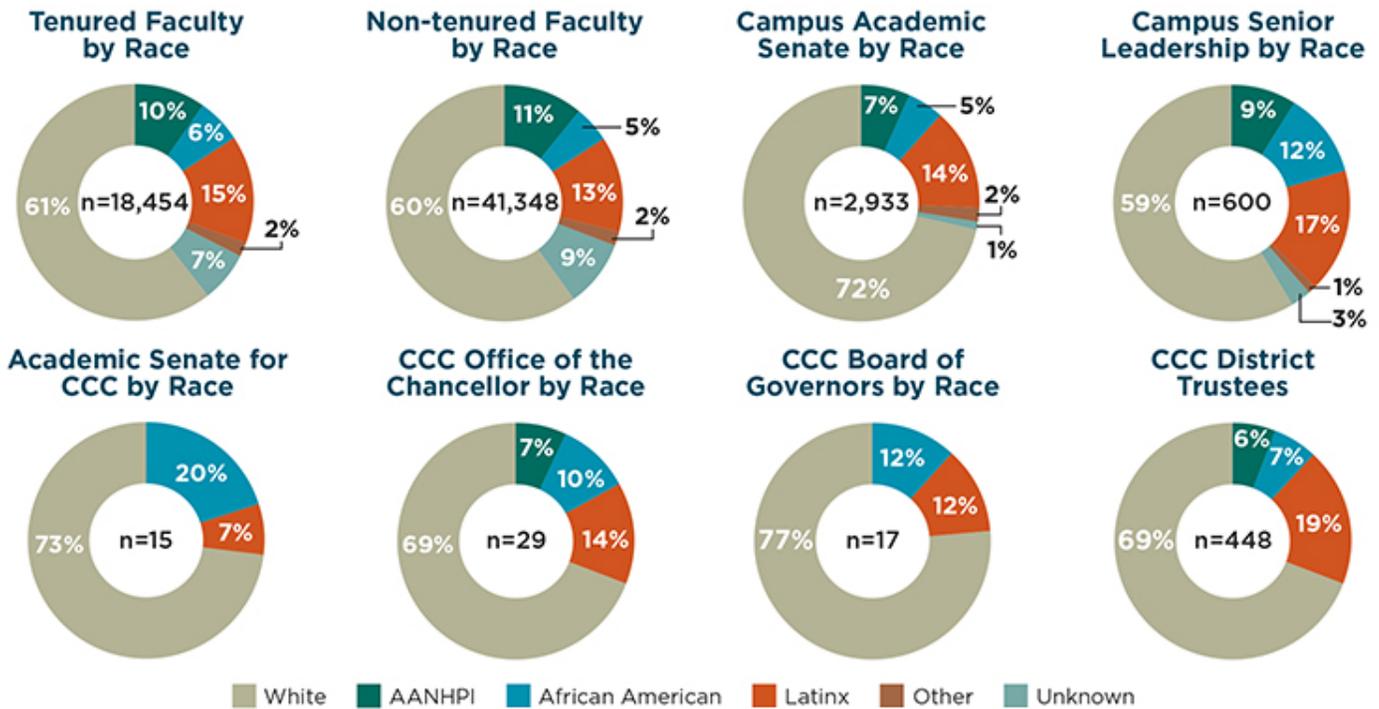
Satisfaction of Faculty Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Group	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
All Respondents	7%	23%	28%	24%	14%
African American	0%	42%	17%	25%	17%
Asian	13%	0%	25%	25%	25%
Hispanic/Latinx	18%	24%	32%	12%	12%
Non-Hispanic White	0%	24%	27%	32%	13%

Satisfaction of Administration Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Group	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
All Respondents	7%	15%	25%	30%	20%
African American	0%	33%	8%	42%	17%
Asian	0%	13%	38%	13%	25%
Hispanic/Latinx	15%	18%	32%	21%	15%
Non-Hispanic White	5%	10%	23%	40%	23%

Diversity among leaders, faculty at California community colleges



Following the trend amongst most of the California Community Colleges, there are improvements to be made in terms of diversifying employees and in particular, full time faculty.

[Source]: The Campaign for College Opportunity, "Left Out: How Exclusion in California's Colleges and Universities Hurts Our Values, Our Students, and Our Economy," March 2018.

The quote below speaks to the frustration around the lack of institutional accountability for the rate of progress as it comes to the diversity of full time faculty. It also speaks to the implications for the lack of diversity when it comes to decision making and power.



The racial/ethnic diversity of full time faculty members is embarrassing. Data is shared but it is never authentically discussed and nothing seems to be planned to address it. We had a flex speaker who shared very real data and insight on this but nothing was done to follow up on it. Another issue is the lack of diversity of the faculty who are decision makers (senate/counsels) -this is also something that is not discussed. I wouldn't be surprised if when you look at faculty representation on senate/counsels it would show an over representation of white male/white female.

Counseling Faculty, Survey Quote

Employees also experience challenges when it comes to feeling valued, supported, and a sense of belonging at the institution which can create barriers to efforts for student success. Mistrust, being overworked and underappreciated and/or unacknowledged, and fear of negative outcomes/consequences, are examples of workplace issues that can undermine and derail the college’s focus on equity and student success.

I have felt I did not receive the due credit for my ideas or work

Group	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
All Respondents	18%	49%	13%	10%
African American	25%	50%	17%	8%
Asian	0%	43%	14%	0%
Hispanic/Latinx	21%	41%	9%	15%
Non-Hispanic White	18%	53%	13%	10%

I feel I have to work harder than my colleagues to be perceived as a competent employee

Group	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
All Respondents	18%	43%	18%	13%
African American	33%	8%	25%	33%
Asian	14%	43%	29%	0%
Hispanic/Latinx	12%	45%	18%	15%
Non-Hispanic White	21%	45%	16%	11%

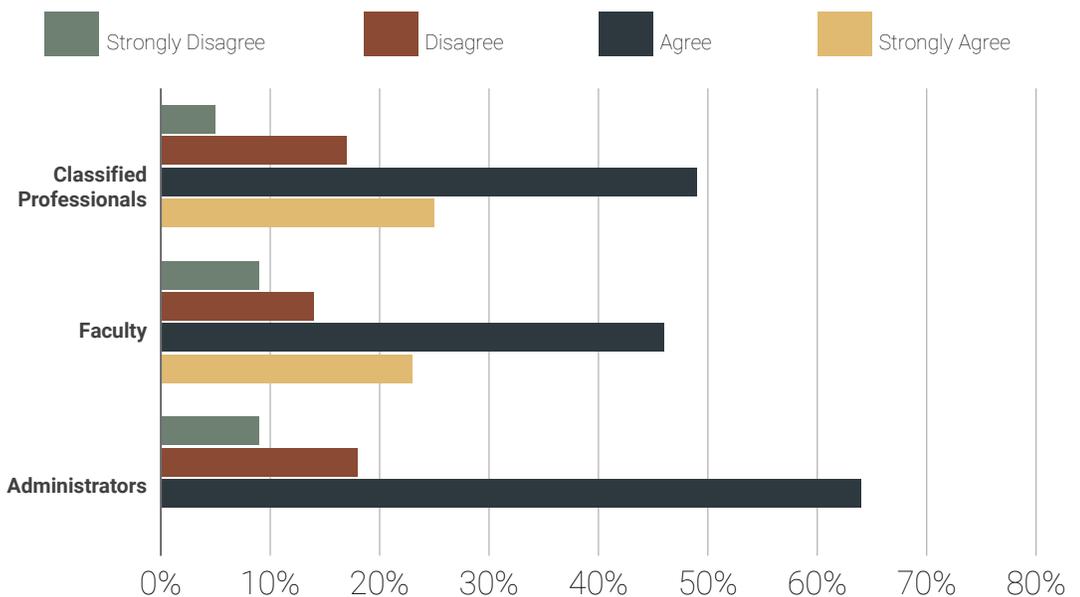




Leveraging Employee Agency and Locus of Control

Employees experience challenges with addressing problematic and insensitive comments that are made about people of color. About a quarter of employees overall disagreed with the statement, “I am comfortable addressing colleagues who make racially insensitive comments about students and/or about other colleagues.”

I am comfortable addressing colleagues who make racially insensitive comments about students and/or about other colleagues



The comment shared by a classified professional speaks to a lack of critical self-reflection. This is a barrier to creating a sense of psychological safety for students and for colleagues because any defense of sentiments that cause harm to students, particularly those who have been disproportionately impacted, counter our equity efforts.

“Colleagues, both faculty and Classified Professionals, are not as willing to receive correction or guidance when being confronted about insensitive comments”

- Classified Professional, Survey Quote

There was also an incident shared by a faculty member regarding a lack of respect shown to those who courageously shared about experiences of racial insensitivity and was met with backlash.

“When approaching my colleagues with racially insensitive comments made to myself, I was faced with gas-lighting, aggression, opposition, and ostracization”

- Instructional Faculty, Survey Quote

There is space and opportunity for employees to incorporate more inclusive practices into their daily interactions with students. The quote below describes a situation where a student was continuously misgendered, which is demeaning to a student who has clearly expressed how they would like to be addressed.



I have a professor who after almost a whole semester still finds it hard to remember my pronouns even though they asked at the beginning of the semester. Also there are only like 8 people in this class, so it gets to be a little hurtful at this point. Like I could see her trying, but she still hasn't completely fixed it yet. I use they/them, and I still get called a girl all the time. Like I don't think she actively means to, but by this point in the semester it's getting to me.

- Student Survey Quote, White and Latinx, Genderfluid

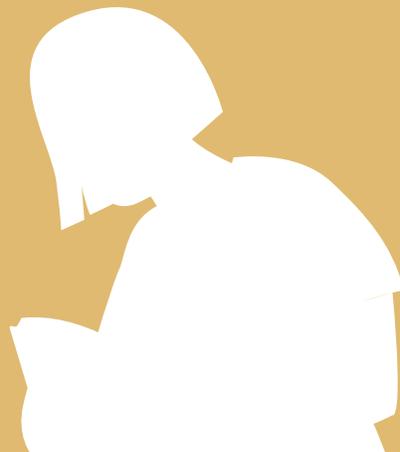
Improving Student Community and Connection

Deficit-minded thinking about black and brown students can lead to behaviors that make students feel like they do not belong in college. The quote below shares a perspective from an employee who shares the negative impact these perceptions have on student outcomes.



It's clear to me that some people have preconceived notions about particular races and they do not hesitate to voice their feelings. That's not good for our students and could be very damaging both to their self esteem and their educational performance...

- Classified Professional, Survey Quote



Students receive messages, directly and indirectly, about how they are perceived. The experience shared by a student is an example of a student being self-aware when an educator does not believe in them.



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



I’ve heard many comments from students regarding professors... including an inaccurate portrayal of the history of racism and slavery in the U.S. like “slaves weren’t treated that badly” and “the Irish were treated just as badly.” I’ve also had a colleague refer to one of my former students (a Black woman) as “illiterate” and “couldn’t write a sentence

- Instructional Faculty, Survey Quote



Transformative

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

Overview

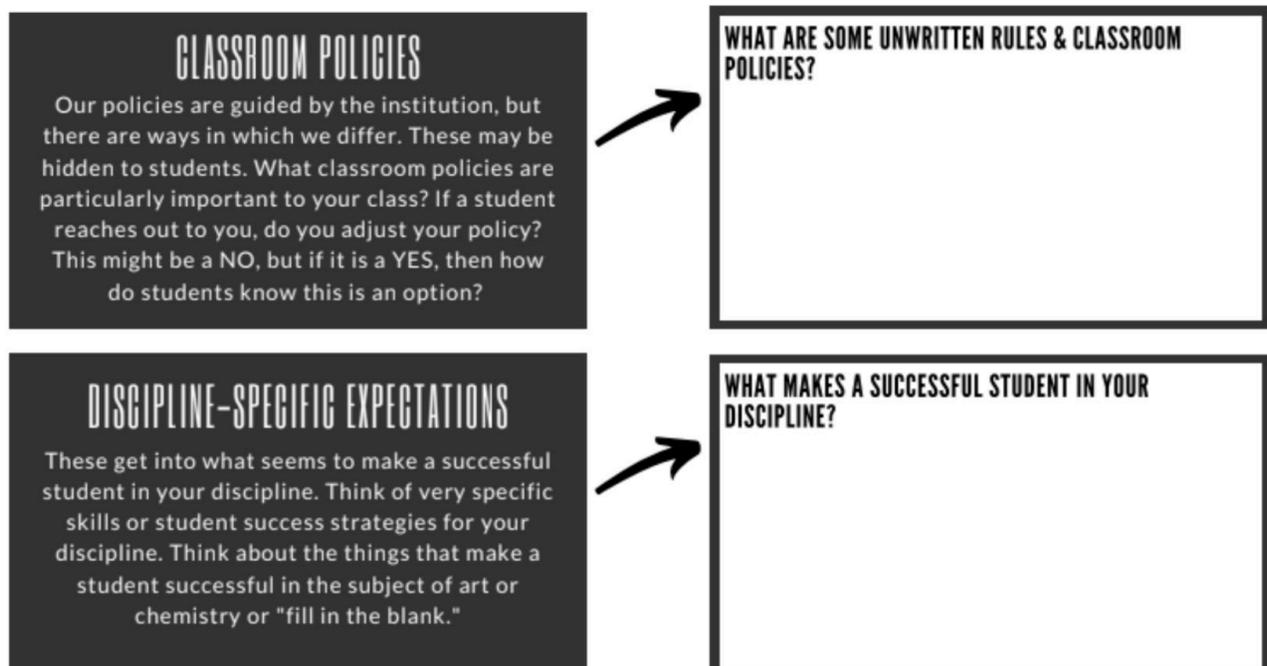
Norco College has invested human, fiscal, and other institution resources to create opportunities for students to explore a robust offering of academic pathways, engage in culturally affirming learning experiences, and receive access to resources and services including basic needs and resources for students' success.

Highlights

Students experience a sense of welcoming and belonging at Norco College and there is awareness about the institution's commitment to equity and opportunities for student engagement.

Significant Focus on Equity and Social Justice

The Unwritten Rules Handout from the Equity-Minded Workshop Series provides examples of how to re-frame classroom norms and expectations so that it's clear to students what their responsibilities are for success and provides that context for why that is important as it relates to the course and discipline.



Leveraging Employee Agency and Locus of Control

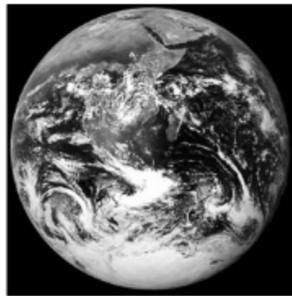
Several syllabi that we reviewed included personalized welcome messages for students, an overview of support available within the campus, and reframed the intended outcomes for the course (SLO) to be more student centered and articulate how the skills learned in the course would be of benefit to the student.

Biology 1 Example of SLO revision:

Scientists have determined that life abounds on our planet. Over the next 16 weeks, you will be introduced to some of the major concepts of ecology, the study of the interactions of living organisms.

By the end of the semester, each student is expected to have the ability to describe in their own words each of the major concepts

and processes in ecology. These concepts and processes will be presented to you throughout the se-



Our planet is teeming with life, both on land and in the oceans.

mester in both the lecture and laboratory portions of this course, as well as in the required text books. Once this knowledge is mastered, you will be asked to take that knowledge and apply it to solve new problems on related topics on your examinations, quizzes, reports, and presentations.

Art 22 Basic Design Expectations & Support:

OUR CLASS IS A COMMUNITY

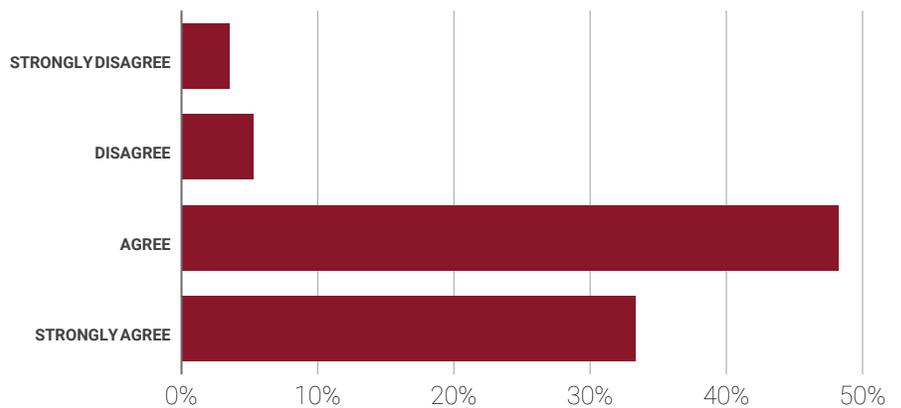
<p>CLASS PARTICIPATION</p> <p>This is a studio (lab) course with a lecture component. Most of your time will be spent completing design assignments, with a smaller portion of time for lectures & demonstrations by me, and discussions with your fellow students. It's important to "be present" in class and engage with what you're doing and what you're being taught.</p> <p>Class Participation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing up to class on time and staying for the whole duration of class, every day. • Maintenance of the studio space—cleaning up after yourself, respecting school property and safety using materials and equipment. • Completing all assignments, on time. • Participating in critiques and discussions. Participating in a critique means talking about your own work, discussing work by classmates and asking questions. 	<p>ABSENCES/DROP</p> <p>I care about you and your success in my class, if you are absent LET ME KNOW ahead of time whenever possible. Also reach out to your peers or group members to see what you missed. If you are absent on a day when an assignment/project is due then you must deliver work to me ahead of time or have a classmate turn in the work on time for credit. If you are concerned about your absence then discuss the matter with me. More than two consecutive absences or four absences total may result in me dropping you. Likewise, three or more missing assignments may cause me to drop you. I do not like dropping students so if there is a problem, first try to talk to me about it. I am very understanding and I realize you may be going through extenuating circumstances so it's worth a conversation.</p>
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drop you. I do not like dropping students so if there is a problem, first try to talk to me about it. I am very understanding and I realize you may be going through extenuating circumstances so it's worth a conversation.

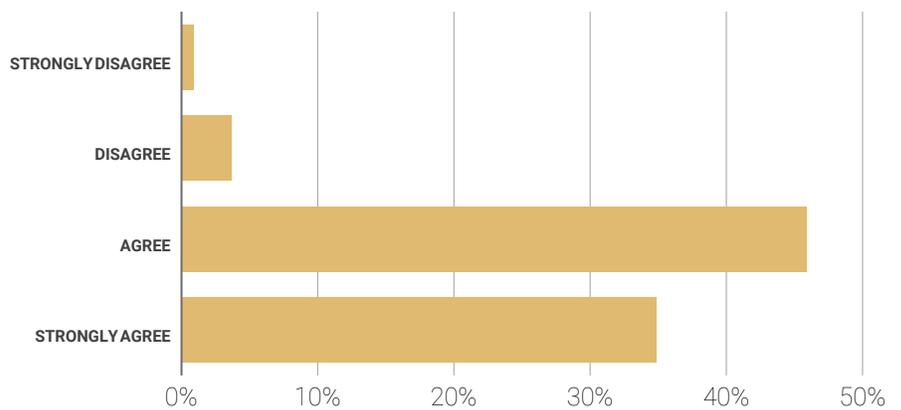
Messages such as these are incredibly validating and can allay fear or nervousness (and disappointment) around the idea of failure (failure to complete the course). Statements such as these ALONG WITH actions in class that mirror and further emphasize the authenticity of such statements is essential in establishing trust and a belief in students.

Overall, students also reported feeling valued and supported by college employees and students. Practices like receiving information about campus resources, receiving help when they are struggling to find a specific department on campus, and receiving assistance when a process or information presented is not clear to the students.

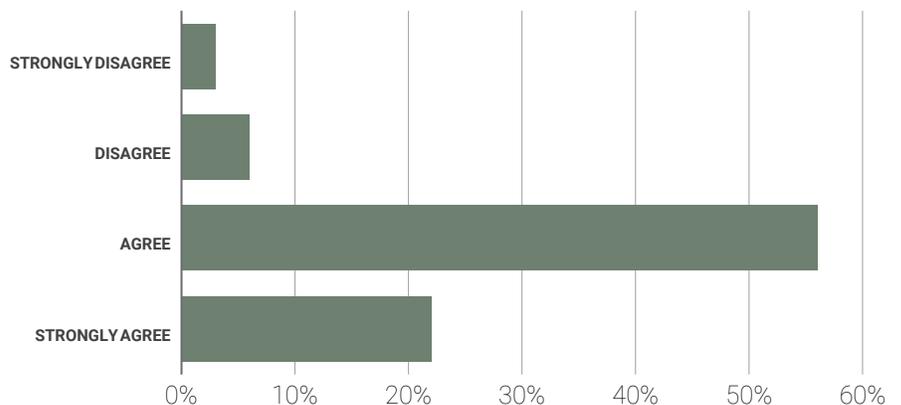
I feel valued by instructors in the classroom



Employees involved in registration for classes are helpful



If I am confused about how to complete a task, I can easily get help from a college employee (e.g. completing a form)



When responding to what allowed students to feel a sense of community and belonging in the past year, students often spoke about positive relationships with employees as well as being connected to affinity groups and special programs on campus.

“*In the times I’ve needed help from professors or staff, they have all been courteous and patient, making me feel safe to talk to them and on campus*
- **Student Survey Quote- Vietnamese Student, Promise Program participant**

“*The ability to reach out to people when it comes to recovering from a burnout or a mental breakdown. This has helped me get back to focusing on myself and my goals once more*
- **Student Survey Quote, Latinx Man**



Improving Student Community and Connection

The impact of Learning Communities (Umoja, Puente) and Student Equity Initiatives including Categorical Programs (Disability Resource Center, EOPS, CARE/CalWORKS) and Identity Based Affinity Groups (Women's Lean in Circle, Men of Color, Unity Zone) play a significant role in creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive of culturally and racially diverse students. The different academic, social and cultural experiences as well as services available to students connect them with a community of peers and culturally relevant educators.

Event and program flyers for special programs are inviting and clearly communicate with students what they can hope to experience by getting connected with this particular community. The Women's Lean In Circle (WLC).

GET CONNECTED!

WOMEN'S LEAN IN CIRCLE

Where Queens Unite!

Questions?
Email: womensleanincircle@gmail.com

NORCO COLLEGE

umoja
norco college

GET CONNECTED TO A UNIQUE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE THAT FOCUSES ON AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE, EXPERIENCE, AND EDUCATION

LEARN ABOUT UMOJA! INFORMATION SESSIONS

- FINANCIAL RESOURCES
- UMOJIFIED CLASSROOM
- CSU/IGETC TRANSFER COURSES
- GENUINE SUPPORT
- EARLY REGISTRATION

VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSIONS EVERY TUESDAY AND THURSDAY 10AM-11AM & 6PM-7PM

Join us on Zoom! **SIGN UP TODAY!** <https://tinyurl.com/umojaNC2021>

Men of Color Scholars

LEARN ABOUT!

GET CONNECTED TO A UNIQUE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE THAT FOCUSES ON MEN OF COLOR IDENTITY, EXPERIENCES, AND EDUCATION

- MOC CLASSROOM
- GENUINE SUPPORT
- PEER MENTORS
- EARLY REGISTRATION
- FINANCIAL RESOURCES

CONTACT THE MOC COUNSELOR TODAY
CALL & TEXT @ 951-523-7308

EMAIL @ DANIEL.GRAJEDA@RCCD.EDU

The image of program highlights below shows the success of these programs as it relates to reducing equity gaps for historically minoritized students and setting an example for how the broader campus community can embed a sense of belonging and competencies of diversity, equity, and inclusion into their roles and work.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Umoja: Closed the Transfer-Level Math in Guided Pathways cohorts for African American/Black students with an 'Umojified' Statistics Course
- TRIO SSS: Higher grade point averages at 3.16 compared to the college average of 2.67
- Puente: Course success rate (82.8%) higher than the general student population (71.3%)
- Men of Color: Launched learning community courses in 2020 in order to serve diverse male students that identify as Latino, Black, Filipino, Chinese, Armenian, Vietnamese, Middle Eastern, and more
- Women's Lean in Circle: Hosted a virtual wellness women's conference during the pandemic for over 75 students.

Students shared reasons why programs, such as affinity groups, were helpful for meaningful for them including having people that could reach out to them to help ensure they were on track.



Men of color has helped me feel better about my belongings and connection. They have mentors who are very helpful and reach out. They keep tabs on us and ask how they can help.

- [Student Survey Quote, Latinx Male, STEM and Honors participant]



The culturally relevant and social justice orientation of learning communities also provide examples of teaching practices that are meaningful for students. The quote shared by an instructional faculty member below speaks to how effective teaching requires thinking beyond covering material and focus on student learning by being space and time for student inquiry to create productive and engaging dialogue.

“

There are a lot of those practices like the ‘live learning’ moments where a student asks a question, and you could easily just shut them down because you think it’s a real simple question. But you don’t realize that one person raises their hand, there’s usually three to five that have the same question. But they’re too timid to ask, and how you respond to the moment dictates if anyone asks any questions ever again. So in that live moment, as one of the Umoja practices, you stop the class and you address their question. And then it gives the students later on the ability to ask more questions, because they’re like, wow, you know, this professor is going to actually respond to something and not demean me in front of the class.

Instructional Faculty, Focus Group Quote

Areas of Growth

There are opportunities at the individual, group/departmental, and institutional level to more effectively provide support to students based on their needs, particularly as it relates to connecting students with resources and services. Efforts within equity initiatives and programs should be scaled broadly across campus so that all employees and areas of campus feel a sense of responsibility to examine and improve current practices to reduce disparities in outcomes for black and brown students, current and former foster youth, justice impacted students, and students with disabilities.



Significant Focus on Equity and Social Justice

In thinking about processes that impact students regularly, an administrator shares feedback to the student complaint policy around the lack of student advocacy that creates barriers to students being able to resolve a goal, issue, or concern.



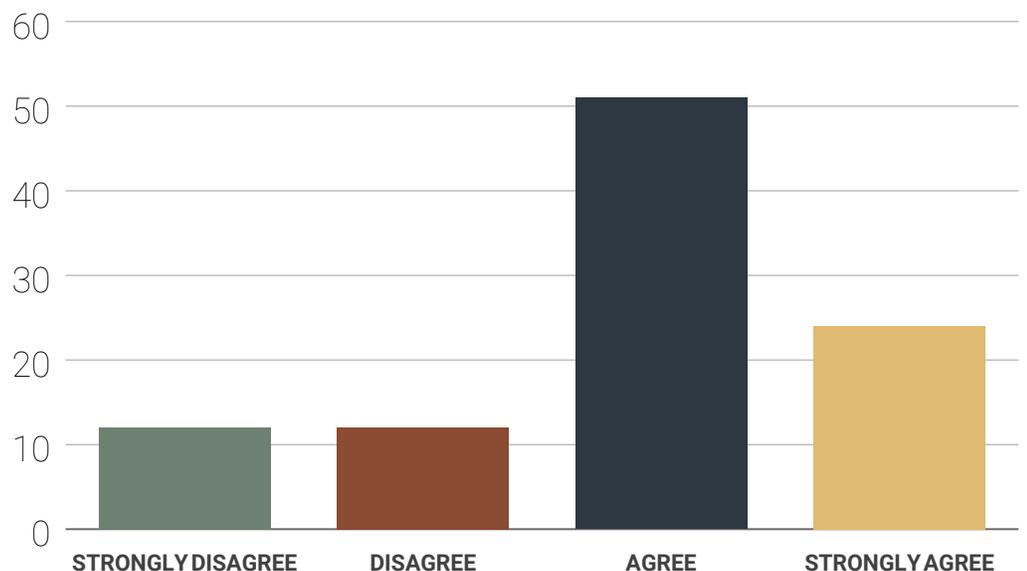
Student Complaint Policy: not only is the policy extremely complicated, but there is no point in which the student has an advocate in the process. they must confront both their faculty member they are complaining about, the faculty members' department chair, and then the dean. The student is at a disadvantage at every step of the process contending with 'representatives from the college', who not only have prior relationships but have a vested interest in protecting the faculty member. true mediation and conflict resolution isn't possible in this scenario.

Administrator Quote, Survey

In terms of accessing courses, there are opportunities to better meet students' needs. The lack of flexibility can create barriers to engaging non-traditional students including returning students and student parents.

24% of students still experience challenges with course offerings that are not accommodating for those who have responsibilities outside of traditional school hours.

I am able to register for the classes I need with few conflicts



The college needs to consider how to create a scheduling process that is accessible. In reflecting on the varying life circumstances and responsibilities students attempt to balance school with. The comment shared by the student below is an example of how the main class schedule does not provide the kind of options needed for students with parenting duties.



I have conflicts with scheduling classes that work for me. Due to me being a mom and having to pick up and drop off 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



We still schedule classes based on faculty/dept/program preferences. We have not done the work to schedule the classes when students need them and in the modality they need them in...

- Administrator Quote, Survey

Moreover, how can the college consider reviewing the protocols so students who attend class in person during the evening have access to basic support. This quote shared by a student is an example of why communication across the departments is important to ensure services, including access to facilities, are accessible.



More faculty during times that students have class would be very beneficial. Also, I don't understand why restrooms are closed at 8PM when I have class until 9PM

- Student Survey Quote - Vietnamese Man

Leveraging Employee Agency and Locus of Control

Employees provided insight on where action is needed to improve a policy or practice in order to remove barriers for students. An instructional faculty member in the quote shares feedback in terms of what can be achieved in order to ensure efforts are effective based on students' needs, the value of assessing current professional development offerings, and closing any gaps for employee engagement in these opportunities.



We don't gather enough data on our students and make it widely available so we know who our students' are and what their diverse needs are... It would be great to see more intentionality in developing anti-racist curriculum, focusing on gathering more data and reaching out to our most vulnerable students, equity based grading and teaching practices, and discussions of how we can tell if our professional development trainings are moving the needle (i.e. are they only offered once to the few who can make it)? Or are they widely accessible and promoted by the college etc.

Instructional Faculty, Survey Quote

There are opportunities to improve communication in order to address pressing student concerns and create a feedback loop for students to work on gaps that exist in terms of quality of service.



Admissions, counseling, evaluations, all these offices did not help me in Any way, in fact they made my transferring process 10x harder than it should have been and did not care if I did or didn't get into other universities

- Student Survey Quote, White & Latinx Woman

There is space for individuals and departments to create space and discuss how to improve the quality of experience students have in their interactions and relationships with classified professionals and faculty.



Had a horrible experience in which my professor disregarded my family and home problems which led to the point of me having to drop my class

- Student Survey Quote, Pakistani Man, CARE/CalWORKS participant

While many syllabi included messages of support and welcome we noticed that the standard syllabus template did not include space for a personalized welcome message. With the syllabus often being the first method of communication between students and faculty, it is important to attempt to establish trust at the onset of the course. If students are receiving a syllabus that is solely packed with rules and policies of what not to do, students can often feel less confident about participating and remaining in the course.

Additionally, the syllabus template includes a list of support programs within the institution, however several that are dedicated to serving disproportionately impacted students are missing. It will be important to update the template to include Umoja, Men of Color, TRiO, and Norco Promise. Faculty should also be encouraged to review, and revise, their syllabi every year in order to ensure that updated support programs and policies are included in their documentation (syllabus, online platforms, etc).



Improving Student Community and Connection

Communications and documents share information and send explicit and implicit messages whether it's informing the student about an opportunity, explaining a policy, or sending reminders about deadlines and assignments. It's important to ensure that information and requests being asked of students are reasonable and are expressed in a manner that is sensitive to what personal issues or challenges students might be experiencing.

Example: Extenuating Circumstances Form

More transparency from our senior leadership and a decision making process that prioritizes student success, instead of the current priorities of our leadership that makes decisions based on increasing our revenue and FTES.

The practice of completing forms and documentation can be a stressful and difficult experience for students because in addition to trying to complete an institutional transaction, the language used can be intimidating, particularly if they are sharing personal or sensitive information, and the process itself can feel unclear. The example below shows how forms read like contracts:

Example: CA Non-Resident Tuition Exempt Request Form

Applicants must submit, as part of this form, official transcripts/attendance records that validate any of the information above as requested by the College, District, or University residence official.

AFFIDAVIT:

By signing this document below, I hereby state that if I am a non-citizen without a current or valid immigration status, I have filed an application to legalize my immigration status or will file an application as soon as I am eligible to do so.

DECLARATION OF TRUE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION:

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury that the information I have provided on this form is true and accurate. I understand that this information will be used to determine my eligibility for the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption. I further understand that if any of the above information is found to be false, I will be liable for payment of all nonresident tuition charges from which I was exempted and may be subject to disciplinary action by the College or University.

FULL NAME	CAMPUS ID NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
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SIGNATURE	DATE
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Advertisements about programs and services are largely written in a manner that would be best understood by educators who are familiar with the services provided. These opportunities can be more enticing & engaging for students by focusing on the benefit of a program versus listing services.

Example: TRiO/SSS/RISE

- Instruction in the registration system (WebAdvisor)
- Advice on general education and major courses
- Strategies for maintaining and improving G.P.A
- Help with study skills
- Crisis counseling
- Financial aid and scholarship assistance
- Student success workshops
- College and University Tours
- Cultural Activities
- Student Educational Plan
- Career counseling and résumé assistance
- Personal growth counseling
- Campus and/or community referrals
- Tutorial Referral
- Transfer counseling

Additionally, to be more intentional in recruiting students who would benefit from special programs designed for their success, program requirements and expectations should be communicated in a manner that is welcoming, inviting, and clear to first-generation college students and not in higher education “legalese.”

Example: Eligibility Requirements for EOPS/CARE/NextUP**Be educationally disadvantaged, which includes one of the following factors:**

- Not qualified at the college of attendance for enrollment into the minimum level English or Mathematics course that is applicable to the associate degree.
- Not have graduated from high school or obtained the General Education Diploma (GED)
- Graduated from high school with a grade point average below 2.50 (transcript needed)
- Been previously enrolled in remedial education
- Is a first-generation college student
- Is a member of an underrepresented group residing in the immediate service area
- The primary language in the home is/was non-English
- Is a current or former foster youth

Stating that a student must be “educationally disadvantaged” is often language that higher education professionals use internally to identify students. However, from a student perspective, they typically do not refer to themselves as “educationally disadvantaged” or “underrepresented” or “at-risk”. In fact, many reports have indicated that the first time students hear themselves referred to in this way until they attend college. This “othering” can have detrimental effects on reaching the intended population as they may not voluntarily connect with the programs that they don’t identify with - because they don’t consider themselves to be “disadvantaged” or they don’t want to be considered “disadvantaged”. Adjusting language to be more student centered, rather than institutionally centered, could provide more opportunities for students to feel eager and excited to join communities of support.

Employees shared reflections about the college website and how the outreach for programs and images could be more intentional.



Although the counseling web page does provide links to various support services for students such as the Disability and EOPS. It neglects any links to more cultural type support programs like Umoja or Puente and shows very little diversity in its imagery. Additionally, none of the materials provided for students through counseling (i.e. transfer general education, vocational programs, etc.) are offered in another language nor do they have any imagery to promote diversity

Counseling Faculty Quote, Survey

The institutional commitment to closing student equity gaps for disproportionately impacted groups requires an analysis and to some extent, an overhaul of the entire apparatus of the system of higher education and culture of the academy. The findings shared within this Equity Audit through the S.E.T. Framework provides some guiding questions, data, and a baseline to make changes in policies, practices, and assessment at the individual, group/departmental, and institutional levels.

In the words of Lasana O. Hotep, “Culture Eats Professional Development for Breakfast.” Until the expectations, requirements, supports, and accountability is in place for all employees to develop and continuously improve equity-minded competencies, it will always be “the choir” championing these efforts, which is not a sustainable approach to change. In the next session, we offer short-term and long-term recommendations, based on the S.E.T Framework, for Norco College to implement at the institution.



Recommendations

After considering both the highlights and areas of growth identified in the Equity Audit findings, Hotep Consultants offers the following recommendations to promote equity advancing policies, practices, and procedures at Norco College. The recommendations are presented in alignment with the S.E.T. Framework in order to provide support for the institution as a whole (Student Ready), interpersonal growth (Equity Minded), and individual service (Transformational). The recommendations are organized to display alignment with the Educational Master Plan and begin to identify the strategic planning bodies that may be integral to the implementation of each recommendation



Student Ready (Institutional)

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

Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
<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: CCCCO Definitions</p>		<p>College Council; Academic Senate; RJTF: Institution Commitment, Classroom & Campus Experience; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee; ASNC</p>
<p>Center equity within all Flex Day activities and campus professional learning experiences.</p>	<p>4.1</p>	<p>Institutional Governance & Effectiveness Council; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee; Faculty Professional Development Committee; Classified Professional Development Committee; Professional Development Coordinating Network</p>
<p>Conduct an equity map to catalog all of the equity related efforts on campus. Additionally, establish a calendar for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) that is organized to bring together all DEI related activities in one place where users can identify/filter to identify events/programs that are student facing, employee facing, and what experiences are open to the community.</p> <p>Example: UC Davis - Diversity and Inclusion Calendar</p>		<p>College Council; Academic Senate; RJTF: Institution Commitment, Classroom & Campus Experience; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee; ASNC</p>

Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
<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>Examples: Closing Student Services temporarily to allow for Classified Professionals to participate in Flex Day activities, especially those that focus on major the discussion of major initiatives and expectations for the academic year.</p> <p>Record Flex Day presentations and workshops to allow for engagement of individuals who aren't able to attend in person due to conflicting work schedules and responsibilities.</p> <p>Provide pay parity for adjuncts to participate in flex day activities as well</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>



Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
<p>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.</p>		<p>Academic Council; Student Support Council; Racial Justice Task Force: Black Student Care; RJTF: Institution Commitment</p>
<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>	<p>9.1</p>	<p>Resource Council</p>
<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> <p>Examples: University of Virginia: Toolkit for Equity-Minded Decisions and Policies Hartnell College: Equity Rubric for Student Success</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Institutional Governance & Effectiveness Council; Academic Senate; Program Review Committee; Assessment Committee; RJTF: Institution Commitment, Classroom & Campus Experience</p>



Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning 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>Examples: Metropolitan State University, Denver: Packet for Equitable Hiring Practices & Resources Cal Poly Pomona: Ensuring Equity & Inclusivity in Faculty Hiring Urban Sustainability Directors Network: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention, University of Washington: Candidate Evaluation Form Tips & Guidelines, DEI Commitment Statement, & Staff Diversity Hiring Toolkit</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>Academic Senate; College Council; RJTF: Institution Commitment, Classroom & Campus Experience</p>
<p>Evaluate job postings across all 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>Example: Norco College STEM Biological Sciences - Faculty Posting</p>	<p>9.1</p>	<p>College Council; RJTF: Institution Commitment, Classroom & Campus Experience</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Examples: Cal Poly Student Ombuds Services Pikes Peak Community College</p>	<p>8.3</p>	<p>College Council; RJTF: Black Student Care; RJTF: Institution Commitment, Classroom & Campus Experience</p>

Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
<p>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.</p> <p>Examples: Presbyterian College- Bias Incident Reporting Whittier College- Bias Incident Reporting</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>Student Support Council; Institutional Governance & Effectiveness Council (reporting & analysis); RJTF: Black Student Care; RJTF: Institution Commitment</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; RJTF: Classroom & Campus Experience</p>
<p>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).</p>		<p>Student Support Council; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee; RJTF: Celebrating Black and African American Culture</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>6.5</p>	<p>Student Support Council; Marketing Committee; Department area deans/chair; RJTF: Institution Commitment</p>

Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
<p>Revise the Resource Allocation Report to be more encompassing of the overall budget report. There should be some 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>	<p>9.1</p>	<p>Resources Council</p>

Guiding Questions and Considerations:

What would it look like for your campus to begin to create the conditions where inequity, racism, and other forms of discrimination can no longer thrive?

How, at various levels of leadership within the organization, are we addressing the learning and supports needed to truly become an Anti-Racist organization?

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

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

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

Equity Minded (Individual)

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

Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
<p>Utilize the <u>Intercultural Development Inventory</u> to assess the college’s baseline as it relates to intercultural competency and fluency.</p>		
<p>Conduct critical dialogue facilitation training with department managers and campus leadership to promote and model effective communication and feedback strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples include: Intercultural dialogue training series, developing a critical discussion protocol for meetings, and/or establishing guidelines for discussion and community within meeting spaces 		
<p>Develop a “Commitment to Equity” Statement or Pledge and “Guide to Equity at Norco” 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> <p>Example: <u>Mt. San Jacinto College 2019 & Pledge Form</u></p>	<p>8.3</p>	<p>Academic Senate; College Council; District Call to Action Climate Recruitment & Retention; Faculty Professional Development Committee (already done)</p>

Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
<p>Embed equity action plans within all employee evaluations to encourage the engagement with equity advancing work on campus (and/or beyond) and highlight areas of opportunity for the campus to meet the professional development needs of faculty, staff, and administrators.</p>		
<p>Establish a space for ongoing critical reflection, learning, and adaptation of individual practices. This includes learning about issues of equity, structural racism and anti-racism, intentional critical self-reflection of individual practices, and collaboration and thought partnership with colleagues.</p>		
<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>	<p>4; 9.2</p>	<p>College Council - Department Deans & Chairs & Managers</p>
<p>Develop training modules/workshops for students leaders & employees so they are prepared to create a welcoming environment for their peers.</p>	<p><u>9.2</u></p>	<p>Institutional Effectiveness & Governance Council; FPDC; District Call to Action Climate Recruitment & Retention; RJTF: Campus & Classroom Experience; Guided Pathways: Racial & Cultural Competency</p>
<p>Developing 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>		<p>Student Support Council; Associated Students of Norco College; Student Life; RJTF: Campus & Classroom Experience</p>

Transformative (Service)

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

Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
<p>Utilize time within Department/Division meetings to facilitate dialogue with staff, faculty, and admin about how to implement culturally sustaining practices within their work.</p> <p>Example: Transitioning department meetings from status updates to professional learning and reflection opportunities.</p>		<p>Department Deans & Chairs; Academic Senate; RJTF: Campus & Classroom Experience</p>
<p>Establish frequent opportunities for feedback on the development and continuous use of equitable teach tools and methodology: syllabi; course materials; assessments; & grading</p>	<p>9; 4</p>	<p>Academic Senate; Academic Council: Faculty Professional Development Committee; Teaching & Learning Committee; RJTF: Campus & Classroom Experience</p>
<p>Departments facilitate a rebranding of their area to be more aligned with values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.</p> <p>Some guiding questions that departments can consider are...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does our department express its role in the college’s vision for equity and student success • How much flexibility is there within department procedures and practices to be more equitable? • How are conversations about disproportionate impact facilitated? 	<p>9.2</p>	<p>Institutional Effectiveness & Governance Council; FPDC; District Call to Action Climate Recruitment & Retention; RJTF: Campus & Classroom Experience; Guided Pathways: Racial & Cultural Competency</p>

Recommendation	Institutional Goal	Strategic Planning Body
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; RJTF: Institution Commitment
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; Associated Students of Norco College; Student Life
Scale up efforts for Developing Communities of Practice		Student Support Council; Academic Council; Professional Development Committees; TLC; RJTF: Campus & Classroom Experience

Guiding Questions and Considerations:

How can we approach designing curriculum and special programs to address social issues and promote social justice through learning engagement with the campus community?

How can you encourage, empower, and equip students to utilize their education to improve their lives while positively contributing to a more just society?

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

How do college communications (i.e. emails, website, flyers, applications etc.) express the benefits of participation in support programs without utilizing institutional language, legalese, or focus on deficits?



Next Steps





Next Steps

The recommendations presented in this report are not exhaustive and there is no end to equity advancement or critical reflection. In order to be an institution that centers equity and strives to eradicate structural racism, it will be imperative to make time and space for continual inquiry, reflection, and redirection. Each finding and recommendation is intended to impact change at Norco College from several different lenses and aspects of the student experience. It will be important for the campus to identify which recommendations might be implemented in the short-term or within individual practice, and which may require additional time and collaboration.

The recommendations presented in this report are intentionally reported in alignment with the campus Educational Master Plan to identify the institutional goals addressed by each recommendation and the governance bodies that might be most connected to the implementation of the recommendations. It will be important to embed any recommendations gleaned from this report into future strategic plans and program review processes in order to ensure that equity is embedded within the policies, practices, and procedures of Norco moving forward. This report should be shared widely with members of the Norco community, including those that set policy, determine prioritization of resources, approve professional learning experiences, guide the student equity plan, and impact hiring decisions. The Racial Justice Task Force, Teaching and Learning Committee, Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging, Guided Pathways Workgroups should work collaboratively to develop a timeline of implementation and identify milestones to ensure consistent forward movement.

It's important that the campus feels empowered and supported in taking practical and actionable steps to keep the work moving forward and avoid the common issue of having another important document "sitting on the shelf," without acting on the findings. A tool such as the "RACI Matrix" can offer helpful considerations regarding how the campus should think about, discuss, and coordinate the implementation of short term and long term recommendations within this report. Answering the questions below can help identify how the work can move forward, ensuring that key campus constituents are included within conversations.

- R RESPONSIBLE**
Who is responsible for carrying out the deliverables of the Equity Audit?
- A ACCOUNTABLE**
Who owns, corrects, and ensures that tasks have been completed thoroughly and accurately.
- C CONSULTED**
Who has expertise and perspective on the best way to approach this thing
- I INFORMED**
Who needs to be kept updated about the progress of deliverables?

We acknowledge that there are other project management tools that we encourage Norco to explore or current tools being used, in addition to the RACI Matrix, that can help move the work forward. The recommendations have been provided in a manner that connects each respective recommendation to an Education Master Plan goal and strategic bodies considering what is within their purview and expertise. Through the inquiry and thought partnership with the Equity Audit core group and what our team has learned through Equity Audit presentations with various consistent groups, there was a clear desire for forward movement and implementation of the recommendations. There were, however, also questions in terms of what the campus can do to put these recommendations in place. In engagement with stakeholders, it was clear that implementation needed to happen in phases, priorities need to be created, and teams and people who can work towards implementation. Additionally, the question of accountability came up as important to ensure that there is no momentum loss with these efforts.

With all of that in mind, we also recognize that change doesn't take place overnight. Change to right size systems that have historically thrived in oppression, will undoubtedly take a bit longer. Some of the findings and recommendations included in this report may be difficult to elicit immediate campus-wide buy-in. Anytime we, as humans, are asked to reflect on our practices or are asked to adjust our practices, there exists a hesitancy because much of why we work in education is connected to our sense of purpose and identity. For many of us in education, the realization that we have possibly been perpetrators of inequities within the educational system solely because of the way in which we were trained within that same system, is a difficult one to reconcile. However, as the quote at the start of this section states, one cannot be equity advancing and risk averse. We are asking for all members of the campus community to reflect on their current practices and the ways in which they engage with students, directly or indirectly, and the connection of those engagements on student outcomes. We are no longer operating within the "right to fail" model which expects students to enter our institutions with elevated awareness and knowledge of college systems and processes.

Instead, we are shifting into a “student ready” model which places the responsibility on higher education institutions to meet students where they are and support their growth and development as they navigate these college landscapes. It is our hope that the recommendations listed above provide the opportunity to truly become a student ready institution by reflecting upon and revising institutional policies and practices, providing professional learning experiences for the interpersonal assessment of practices, and space for individual recommitment to transformative service. Institutions of higher education were not originally developed to serve racially, socioeconomically, or gender diverse students. However, it is an honor to serve diverse communities of learners and impact the communities from which they come. If Norco strives to “inspire a diverse student body by an inclusive innovative approach to learning,” intentional changes will need to be made in order to center and value the student experience within all policies, practices, and procedures. There is already amazing, equity-advancing work underway at Norco College. We are excited for the next chapter in Norco’s efforts to remove barriers, close opportunity gaps, and manifest outcomes that reflect the college’s core mission of transformative the lives of students, employees, and the community.





References & Appendix



References

Framework

Protocol for Assessing Equity-Mindedness in State Policy-CUE

CUE Policy Review prompt- Six indicators that represent key aspects of an equity minded approach (guiding paradigm of philosophy, equity in language, data collection and reporting, disproportionate impact, policy consistency and ubiquity, equity framing why are we doing this?)

We Been Knowin: Toward an Antiracist Language and Literacy Education- Baker-Bell

Taken from the ten framing ideas of Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy- #1: Critically interrogates white linguistic hegemony and anti-black racism, #5 rejects the myth that same language (white mainstream English) and language education have been used to oppressed black students can empower them.

Five Principles for Enacting Equity by Design

The five principles: (1) Clarity in language, goals and measures, (2) “Equity-Mindedness” as a guiding paradigm, (3) equitable practices and policies are designed to accommodate differences in the contexts of students’ learning—not to treat all students the same, (4) Enacting equity requires a continual process of learning, disaggregating data, and questioning assumptions about relevance and effectiveness, (5) Equity much be enacted as a pervasive institution and system-wide principle.

Accountability, Equity and Practitioner Learning and Change- Bensimon, Rueda, Dowd, and Harris

“Equity for all” is a data-based model focused on the idea that challenges institutions have faced are due to the lack of specialized knowledge and expertise and lack of understanding the root causes of inequity. Standardized data practices for accountability often do not lead to institutional change or learning for practitioners because it’s far removed for the direct experiences of teaching, learning and school environments (I.e. a remedial mathematics instructor may find it interesting that the six-year graduation rate for a particular group of students at his college is 48 percent, compared to 50 percent at a peer college. However, it is highly unlikely that this information will have an impact because in itself it will not make him wonder how his teaching practices might improve the graduation rate if, for example, he found a way of increasing student success in remedial mathematics. Graduation rates are so far removed from the mathematics instructor’s classroom that they cannot serve as a guide for action (Argyris and Schon 1996). Practitioner learning/development of institutional actors is key to implementing change.

Appendix

Below are institutional resources that were utilized to conduct the Equity Audit. Feel free to click on any title to view the item in your web browser.

Methodology - Data Collection Items

[Employee Survey Instrument](#)

[Student Survey Instrument](#)

[Focus Group Protocol](#)

[Focus Group Questions](#)

[Focus Group Demographics](#)

Survey Responses

[Employee Survey Responses \(redacted\)](#)

[Student Survey Responses \(redacted\)](#)

Informational Materials

[Flex Day Presentation Slides](#)



Hotep Consultants

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

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