

Alternative Equity and Diversity Commitment Statement Proposed by Physical Science

As the Physical Science Department was discussing concerns over BC's Racial Equity Commitments, it was proposed that we provide an alternative proposal that could be used as a starting point to generate a more open discussion. We recognize that this is a complex and sensitive issue and that further input from other departments and committees is absolutely necessary to arrive at any finalized version.

Equity Commitments

Bakersfield College provides a rigorous and supportive learning environment that promotes equity for its students who come from diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds. Bakersfield College has created this rigorous and supportive learning environment by becoming a Guided Pathways college in which equity is built into how we intentionally design the college experience so that each student receives what they need to be successful. The racial and ethnic group is one component of Bakersfield College's equity work that also includes gender, persons with disabilities, foster youth, veterans, and low-income students.

*** Equity Centered Student Success Agenda**

* As a Guided Pathways college, Bakersfield College re-commits to a sharpened focus on identifying and addressing any institutional barriers that might still exist in access, momentum, and completion. We will continue in our resolve to provide equal opportunity for all students including those of underrepresented minorities (URM) as defined in California Education Code section 78220: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or some other non-White race.

*** Such an Agenda means:**

- * Completion cohorts for African American/Black and Latinx students such as the African American Initiatives and programs for our undocumented students.
- * Identifying and addressing any financial barriers, such as the digital divide, through programs such as the Kern Promise: Finish in 4, California College Promise Grant, Renegade Pantry, the Chromebook/Electronic Equipment Advance Application, and other similar programs.
- * Identifying and addressing policies or procedures that unintentionally but preferentially block URM students from being able to attempt transfer level classes.
- * Disaggregating all data by race and ethnicity and calculating the Proportionality Index and the 80-Percent Index for student success metrics that include transfer, degree/ certification awards, 15-unit and 30-unit milestones, transfer-level Math and English completion within the first year. Research is done to identify the barriers that are producing any disproportionate impact for particular student groups and then allocating resources to remove barriers of our own making or mitigating external barriers.
- * Accountability measures of regular reporting to the California Community College Chancellor's Office of our Student Equity Plan and incentive extra funding to colleges for students who achieve the student success metrics and are on the California Promise, Pell Grant, or have AB 540 status as given by the Student Centered Funding Formula.

* **Improved Professional Development**

* As a Guided Pathways college, Bakersfield College re-commits to identifying and addressing any policies or procedures that affect the institution's ability to provide equal opportunity for all students, including URMs. Since the factors, such as cultural influences, behind how our systems were structured can be difficult to explicitly identify, Bakersfield College also commits to an intentional, deliberate re-examination of our learning environment through collegial dialogue in order to promote an inclusive learning environment while also maintaining the ability instill critical thinking by fostering viewpoint diversity.

* **Improved Professional Development means:**

- * Hosting equity-minded professional development opportunities such as the President Virtual Seminars or Flex workshops designed to
 - foster open an honest discussion on these complex topics
 - to improve the competence of faculty and student support staff
 - to allocate financial resources to enable faculty and staff to attend professional development workshops elsewhere.
- * Curation of broad and ideologically diverse resources on race, ethnicity, and cultural competence developed through wide faculty consultation in the future. These will provide multi-faceted views on the complexities underlying these issues and invite intellectual and collegiate discussions.
- * Hosting opportunities for Bakersfield College faculty, staff, and administration to engage in dialogue with the community on social structures and behaviors inside and outside the college that can impact (positively or negatively) particular racial and ethnic groups in achieving their momentum and completion milestones. Current examples include “#RealTalk on Race in America” broadcasts on Facebook in collaboration with Danny Morrison Media, the President's breakfasts/luncheons with African-American community leaders and Latino community leaders, webinars on our Rural Initiatives that include community leaders, the HEAL collaborative, and the Student Government Association's Distinguished Speakers Series.
- * Assessment of the college climate and a commitment to use only statistically representative results.

* **Faculty and Staff Diversification Efforts**

* As a Guided Pathways college, Bakersfield College re-commits to creating a supportive learning environment with mentor faculty who provide examples of academic success to students. Diversifying our faculty will also enable richer cross-racial/ethnic conversations among faculty so that all faculty will be better able to reach the diverse population of students in our classrooms, regardless of the background of the faculty.

* **Faculty and Staff Diversification means:**

- * Development of the Faculty Diversification Fellowship (see <https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/employees/professional-development/faculty-diversification-fellowship>) and the EODAC Educator Mentorship Project.
- * Broadening our advertising of faculty positions in publications, forums, and social media catering to underrepresented minority graduate student job searches.
- * Connecting new hires with Bakersfield College service area community groups, so they can develop support networks among people of shared lived experiences, interests, and/or values. New hires who build connections with the communities of Bakersfield College service area are more likely to stay and help transform the lives of students from those communities through high-quality education.

- * Continuously improving the quality of the training of search committee members.
- * Ensuring a concerted effort to increase the number of URM students in the transfer pipeline who will then acquire the graduate degrees needed to become faculty and staff at Bakersfield College or other higher education institutions.