

Building the Baseline for Equity: 2021-2024 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan

Foreword

by President Dr. William P. Mullaney



As a young English faculty member in Arizona, I would often settle in at a local coffee shop for a few hours to grade papers. I was always amazed about how honest and candid students were in their essays. They would often share in detail (sometimes too much detail) the challenges they faced in their lives. Many of their essays touched on issues of identity as they grappled with questions related to race, class, gender, religion and sexuality, among others. It was perhaps the most powerful “diversity training” that I could have received and guides my actions to this day.

As the president of SUNY Corning Community College, I am proud of our firm commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, the murder of George Floyd in May of 2020 served as an important wake-up call that demanded an honest assessment of our current policies, practice, and culture. During campus conversations, students, faculty, and staff shared some painful experiences at the College and in the community. Taking a hard look at our data through the lens of equity also revealed a number of areas where we need to do better. “Building the Baseline for Equity,” the College’s 2021 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan, is a major step in that direction.

Following a Lunch and Learn session in early 2021, where members of the College community were invited to review disaggregated data related to student enrollment and student outcomes, many people stepped up to be part of the team that created the plan. The plan is as strong as it is because so many people at the College are invested in taking clear action to become a more open, welcoming, and equitable institution. I am proud of all of the work that has been already done and am excited about the steps we will take toward that goal.

Introduction

SUNY CCC’s mission and dedication to providing access to high quality, affordable educational opportunities; student support (academic, financial, and social); a learning environment that fosters diversity, empowerment, leadership, and teamwork for student success; and economic and social sustainability strongly aligns with the College’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Diversity: We are committed to recognizing, respecting, and embracing diversity, including socioeconomic status, age, gender and gender identity, veteran status, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and culture.

Equity: We are committed to identifying inequities by disaggregating data and addressing inequities by optimizing policies, processes, pedagogy, and practices that promote student success for

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underrepresented groups. The equity mindset recognizes that each person has different circumstances and seeks to allocate the resources and opportunities each needs to succeed.

Inclusion: We are committed to creating and nurturing a learning environment that promotes constructive sharing of diverse perspectives, a sense of belonging, and personal connection. At the same time, we work to create awareness of and address unconscious bias.

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Building Momentum

SUNY CCC has a history of increasing attention to DEI. The Creating an Inclusive Culture project in 2007-2008 addressed issues of diversity, exploring and identifying steps the College could take to become more inclusive. In 2010 the College formed a Diversity Council to “promote and support campus wide diversity awareness; plan and implement diversity activities; recommend and promote policies, programs and other initiatives that will attract and retain a diverse mix of faculty, staff and students; and examine formal and informal College processes and recommend changes that foster greater inclusion.” The College’s first Diversity Plan was developed in 2012 at the request of the Regional Board of Trustees to address three main areas of concern: staffing, curriculum, and campus climate. In 2012 the Mission revised to include creating a “...learning environment [that] fosters diversity...” The

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College's 2013 Diversity Plan sought to further promote a climate supporting individual rights and respecting diverse cultures, backgrounds, and ideas, and in spring of 2013, the College opened the CCC Center for Diversity and Inclusion. Also in 2013, the Diversity Council, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, and Human Resources facilitated study circles for students, faculty, and staff entitled "Facing Racism in a Diverse Nation," sponsored by Everyday Democracy, and designed to help participants engage in meaningful dialogue about racism, examine gaps among racial and ethnic groups, and create institutional and policy changes. The 2014-2017 Diversity Plan continued to provide direction for addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion. In 2017 the College hired its first Chief Diversity Officer, and in 2020, a full-time Coordinator for the Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The DEI Center, the Diversity Council, and the CDO, along with many other departments, groups, and individuals across campus, collaborate on DEI.

Meeting the Moment

The murder of George Floyd, a black man brutally killed by Minneapolis law enforcement officers in Minneapolis in May 2020, sparked the largest racial justice protests in the United States since the Civil Rights Movement. Black Lives Matter protests occurred across the globe. SUNY CCC, along with the rest of the nation, grappled with the continuing violence and oppression of systemic racism which affects our communities. The College remains focused on efforts to progress social justice on our campus and in our region. DEI is fundamental and core to our College mission. Social justice is a necessary component of social sustainability. SUNY Corning Community College as our region's pathway for affordable, quality higher education, will be a leader and regional partner in creating equity and positively transforming lives.

SUNY's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As the largest public comprehensive system of higher education, SUNY boldly commits to be the most inclusive university system in the country. At SUNY, we respect, encourage, and promote all aspects of human difference. Diversity enriches lives and the educational experience. By capitalizing on diversity, SUNY campuses invigorate conversations, awaken curiosity, foster civic engagement, and widen perspectives. Beyond being a pathway to culturally competent employment, SUNY campuses are also the training grounds for many future corporate and community leaders. We recognize that the path to leadership should be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every background in order to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry. The SUNY student body is sewn from the threads of our nation's diverse quilt, where the views of all students across the educational spectrum are sought out and given voice.

SUNY CCC Regional Board of Trustees

The RBOT re-emphasized its commitment to DEI in the following statement issued in 2020. Subsequent to this statement, the RBOT revamped its committees' measurable standards to create accountability.

As the governing body of an institution dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion, the Regional Board of Trustees of SUNY Corning Community College reaffirms the College's mission to provide access to a high-quality education for all individuals in a safe and open environment.

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Accordingly, in light of recent events that serve a painful reminder of the role that systemic racism plays in our country, the College is strongly committed to standing up for the oppressed and the marginalized and to constantly improving our practices, policies and programs so that they are deeply rooted in guiding principles of social justice and reform. Recognizing the gravity of the situation, the Regional Board of Trustees supports the President's recently announced actions:

- Create town hall sessions and educational series on social justice, anti-racism, and equity for all students, faculty and staff at our college
- Enhance cultural competency training for all who lead our institution and deliver our courses, programs, and services
- Evaluate data to address disproportionate outcomes and identify issues of inequity and disparate treatment.

SUNY CCC's Inclusive Planning Group

DEI is not just what, it is how. In building this plan, the President invited the College campus to offer input and help develop the next DEI plan. The College acknowledges and appreciates the contributions of the following participants and particularly the leaders of the focus topics: Student Recruitment (Led by: Christian Kull and Babatunde Ayanfodun), Student Retention and Success (Led by: Maarit Clay), Recruitment of Faculty and Staff (Led by: Connie Park), Racial Equity in the Curriculum (Led by: Christine Atkins), Inclusive Culture (Led by: Hannah Jones), Equity Measures (Led by: Paul Andrews). Thank you to participating members: Laura Clark, Shalena Clary, Stacy Johnson, Deb Joseph, Robert Koble, Rebecca Laughlin, Jeff Macharyas, Claude Oliver, Dave Pindel, Jennifer Sellers, Matt Skerritt, Keith Ward. Special recognition for student participation includes: Rhilea Chabot, Jesus Escalante, Jessica Smith

SMARTIE Goals

This Plan establishes SMARTIE (Specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, timely, with inclusion and equity) goals and general goals that reflect best practices in community colleges but are yet to be feasibly defined at SUNY CCC. During the next few years, one of the primary goals will be to build the baseline – to find meaningful data points and create the internal momentum and capacity such that we can together build SMARTIE goals for the future.

- Increasing equity in student enrollment, success, completion, and post-enrollment outcomes
- Increasing equity in faculty and staff representation, success, development, and promotion
- Increasing equity in curriculum and program and service access, content, and delivery as well as in representation in decision making and advisory groups

Measuring Success

The 2021-2024 DEI Plan focuses on measuring our impact and honing our understanding of strategies and actions most impacting equity outcomes. We seek to better utilize resources for increased progress.

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Institutional data will be shared with the College community. Common data definitions will be utilized in order for the College to benchmark against similar institutions and compare to national community college outcomes. Historical institutional data will also provide a valuable perspective.

Operational Goals

- Identify equity measures important to student success, the College Mission, and the community.
- Collect data, track, and report on quantitative and qualitative measures
- Assess policy and process improvements
- Assess interventions to determine which ones most improve student success
- Establish routine reports to the College and Regional Board of Trustees

Strategic Goals

1. Equitable Access

Overall Objectives: Increase equity in recruitment to registered-first-day-of-class (not including students who have ACE credit). Increase equity in the graduating seniors with ACE credits earned to campus registered-first-day-of-class.

Populations

- underrepresented groups overall and as programmatically defined by Perkins
- first-generation
- veterans
- LGBTQ+
- students with disabilities

Initial Focus

- All high schools 6 year applicant to registered rate disaggregated by race indicates:
 - Cumulative average: 52% (overall)
 - Highest number racial group rate: 54% (white)
 - Lowest racial group rate: 30% (American Indian)
- In our service area, Elmira High School (EHS) offers the most opportunity in numbers of minority students for recruiting.
- EHS 6 year applicant to registered rate disaggregated by race indicates:
 - Cumulative average: 62% (overall)
 - Highest number racial group rate: 63% (white)
 - Next highest number racial group rate: 58% (African American) (105 app. & 61 reg.)
 - All other than white rate: 58% (196 app. & 111 reg.)
- Among our regional school districts, 14% of the student population is living with a disability and at SUNY CCC 0.6% of our student body (headcount) are registered as having a disability.

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SMARTIE Goal 1: Increase percent of graduating minority students from EHS who apply to SUNY CCC by 5% for Fall 2024. Baseline, Fall 2020: 27% (EHS minority grads. 111 of 447 & 30 students applied)

SMARTIE Goal 2: Increase the yield (applicant to registration) rate for minority applicants from EHS by 5% for Fall 2024. Baseline: Fall 2020: 50% (30 app. & 15 reg.)

Current EHS Data and Information

- Average class of 423, <https://data.nysed.gov/profile.php?instid=800000054148>
- Average % of seniors applying to SUNY CCC: 31%
- Student body: 66% economically disadvantaged; 13% African American, 14% students w/ Disabilities

Actions Include

- Increasing relationship building from Recruitment with a dedicated recruiter – increase presence, programming, and partnerships at EHS.
- Creating targeted marketing strategy and dedicated marketing/communication for distinct EHS community needs and interests including, first generation students, accessibility services, and underrepresented minorities.
- Providing financial aid and FAFSA workshops to the community
- Partnering to create events at EHS such as “College Days” to be sponsored by the College
- Collaborating between Enrollment Operations, the DEI Center, and SUNY CCC clubs (including PRIDE) on College preparation, student exchange activities, and College registration days

Goal 3: Increase collaborations with Bath VA to enhance SUNY CCC opportunities for prospective students and provide support for current veterans.

- Using the pilot Co-Advisor model in the DEI Center, collaborate with Bath VA staff as co-advisors to serve and support current SUNY CCC students.
- Provide financial aid workshops to VA education programming (~once per month).
- Track current credits for military service and identify ways to increase over time.

Goal 4: By Fall 2024, identify and utilize baseline measures for increasing access for underrepresented groups overall and as programmatically defined by Perkins, first generation, veterans, LGBTQ+, and students with disabilities.

- Track information during application and registration: Report out on % of students identifying first generation status, women in STEM, requesting Accessibility Services accommodations and services, and identifying veteran status.
- Track steps between application and registration and identify potential measures that describe the current pipeline toward enrollment.
- Track ACE registrations by race and ethnicity and identify potential measures that describe the current pipeline towards enrollment.

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- Track prospective applications from athletic recruiting and identify potential measures that describe the current pipeline towards enrollment.
- Track non-credit open enrollment demographics.

2. Student Success and Outcomes

Overall Objectives: Increase equity in the persistence, retention, and graduation rates of underrepresented groups overall and as programmatically defined by Perkins, first-generation, veteran, LGBTQ+, and students with disabilities.

Initial Focus

- Fall 2017 cohort, 150% time graduation rates disaggregated by race and Pell eligibility:
 - Average for all students: 32.5% (overall)
 - Highest: 53.3% (Asian)
 - Lowest: 7.7% (Multirace)
 - Non Pell eligible: 40%
 - Pell eligible: 24.7%
- Fall 2019 cohort, retention rates for first-time, full-time disaggregated by race and Pell eligibility:
 - Average for all students: 60% (overall)
 - Highest: 100% (American Indian, Asian)
 - Lowest: 36.4% (African American)
 - Non Pell eligible: 62%
 - Pell eligible: 57.8%

Goal 1: By Fall 2024, identify and utilize baseline measures for increasing student success for underrepresented groups overall and as programmatically defined by Perkins, first generation, veterans, LGBTQ+, and students with disabilities.

Initial measures to be tracked and disaggregated by race/Pell-eligible status will include:

- Student performance in gateway math and English courses
- Participation in tutoring at the Learning Commons
- Financial assistance (FAFSA and TAP application completion)
- Federal loan debt and outstanding balance owed to the College upon exiting the College
- Student requests for accommodations from Accessibility Services
- Student Activities/Club budgets and expenses
- Student athlete status and its effect on persistence, retention, and transfer and/or graduation

Goal 2: Identify measures of co-curricular engagement that correlate to equity in student success

3. Recruiting and Retaining Faculty and Staff

Overall Goal: Increase recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and staff.

Initial Focus

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- Workforce demographics (June 2021): 91% white, 5% Black/African American, 3% Asian/PI, and 0.4% Latinx
- Full-time faculty: Black/African American and Asian/PI represent 14% of the total

Goal 1: Invest in community recruitment partnerships that target underrepresented communities, veterans, and people living with disabilities.

Goal 2: Establish a diversity employment pipeline for current SUNY CCC students to SUNY CCC employment.

Goal 3: Establish compensation reviews that ensure equity across gender and race every three years.

Goal 4: By Fall 2024, identify and utilize baseline metrics in relation to employee recruitment, applicant pool demographics, professional development and leadership opportunities for under-represented minorities, veterans, and employees with disabilities.

4. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Curriculum

Overall Objectives: Increase professional development opportunities and participation of faculty and staff. Implement SUNY's General Education knowledge and skill requirement of Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice.

Initial Focus

SUNY's General Education framework has been revised to include Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice as Knowledge and Skill area for every student who earns a bachelor's degree at a SUNY Institution. An engaged faculty and instructional staff are key in helping implement this requirement. The Diversity Council will identify measures of what, when, and how we engage faculty and staff in DEI topics.

SMARTIE Goal 1: Increase participation in professional development of faculty with SUNY Center for Professional Development (i.e. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Teaching and Learning Certificate Program), SUNY SAIL Institute, and SUNY Workplace, by 25% for full time faculty.

Goal 2: Increase participation in professional development of faculty with SUNY CCC Center for Teaching Innovation and Excellence and SUNY CCC Diversity Council (i.e. "Introduction to Teaching for Inclusive Excellence").

Goal 3: Establish an annual review process to assess program advisory board membership to track the diverse perspectives on the boards as well as demographics.

Goal 4: Track attendance at SUNY and other external trainings, conferences, workshops, meetings in relation to DEI topics (i.e. SUNY CPD workshops, SUNY SAIL, SUNY Annual Diversity Conference, SUNY Spectrum, discipline conferences, etc.)

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Goal 5: By Fall 2024, identify & utilize baseline metrics in relation to increasing faculty engagement on DEI initiatives.

5. Creating Inclusive Culture

Overall Objective: Create campus wide initiatives, programs, procedures, and facilities that support inclusion as a lived experience for students, faculty, and staff.

Goal 1: Develop unified inclusivity programming in onboarding students to establish belonging and a sense of community.

Goal 2: Celebrate diversity on campus through programming, communications, profiles, media announcements, and leadership messaging.

Goal 3: Increase representation of different identities and services in common spaces, virtually and around campus.

- Create an LGBTQ+ dedicated section on the website by Fall 2022.
- By June 2024, implement NYS GENDA for non-discriminatory compliance and establish data systems that accommodate non-binary gender categories for student and employees.

Goal 4: Determine how to analyze student conduct and complaint cases (including Title IX) for concerns related to DEI.

Goal 4: By Fall 2024, assess various student and employee experience surveys to identify data to be tracked in relation to DEI.