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Developing a Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card:
Bridging Multiple Worlds within a California Community College
Hispanic-Serving Institution Framework

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Education

by

Henry Luis Covarrubias

Committee in charge:

Professor Richard P. Durán, Chair

Professor Sharon Conley

Professor Rebeca Mireles-Rios

June 2018

The dissertation of Henry Luis Covarrubias is approved:

Rebeca Mireles-Rios, Ph.D.

Sharon Conley, Ph.D.

Richard P. Durán, Ph.D., Committee Chair

April 2018

Developing a Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card:
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Hispanic-Serving Institution Framework

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by

Henry Luis Covarrubias

DEDICATION

I dedicate this doctoral manuscript to my family in California and Texas. Your love and support throughout this process kept me motivated and true to my passion for knowledge and the ability to pay it forward for future higher education leaders like those who helped shape my career trajectory.

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VITA OF HENRY LUIS COVARRUBIAS
April 2018

EDUCATION

Ph.D.	University of California, Santa Barbara Cultural Perspectives and Comparative Education Dissertation: <i>“Developing a Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card: Bridging Multiple Worlds within a California Community College Hispanic-Serving Institution Framework”</i>	2018
M.A.	University of California, Santa Barbara Cultural Perspectives and Comparative Education Thesis: <i>“Exploring the Academic Integration Experiences of UCSB Latina/o STEM Graduate Students”</i>	2017
M.Ed.	University of Southern California Higher Education Administration and Student Affairs	2001
B.A.	University of California, Los Angeles History	1997

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Evaluation Consultant	Aspire Evaluation Group, Bakersfield, CA/Austin, TX	2017-Present
Director of Special Grants – Title V	West Hills College, Lemoore, CA	2016-2017
Program Manager, Equity and Inclusion	Bakersfield College, Bakersfield, CA	2015-2016
Director, Upward Bound	UC Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA	2011-2015
Director, McNair Scholars Program	UC Davis, Davis, CA	2007-2011
Director, McNair Scholars Program	CSU Bakersfield, Bakersfield, CA	2004-2007
Director, Academic Advising	Woodbury University, Burbank, CA	2002-2004

Academic Advisor II
CSU Bakersfield, Bakersfield, CA

1999-2002

AWARDS

Carlos J. Vallejo Research Fellowship 2013
Multicultural/Multiethnic Education (MME) Special Interest Group
American Educational Research Association
San Francisco, CA

PRESENTATIONS

Covarrubias, H., & Reynoso, M. (2017). *“Engage with Equity: Equity Framework and Equity Implications Inside and Outside the Classroom.”* WHCCD Innovate Faculty Summer Institute: Lemoore, CA.

Covarrubias, H., & Pereschica, P. (2016). *“Academic and Professional Aspirations of Latina/o Undergraduate and Graduate Students in a Research Intensive Hispanic-Serving Institution.”* American Educational Research Association: Washington, DC.

Covarrubias, H., & Durán, R. (2015). *“Exploring the Academic Socialization of Latina/o University of California, Santa Barbara STEM Graduate Students.”* American Educational Research Association: Chicago, IL.

Covarrubias, H., & Durán, R. (2014). *“Research Intensive Hispanic-Serving Institutions as Resources for Families and Communities’ Access to Higher Education and Beyond.”* American Educational Research Association: Philadelphia, PA.

Marin, P., Pereschica, P., & **Covarrubias, H.** (2014). *“Development of UCSB as a Hispanic-Serving Intensive Research Institution.”* UCSB HSI Conference: Santa Barbara, CA.

ABSTRACT

Developing a Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card:
Bridging Multiple Worlds within a California Community College
Hispanic-Serving Institution Framework

by

Henry Luis Covarrubias

California Community Colleges are mandated by state law to prepare and maintain an evidence-based Student Equity Plan (SEP) designed to coordinate services for disproportionately impacted student populations. Reaching equitable educational attainment outcomes within five success indicators (Access, Course Completion, ESL and Basic Skills Completion, Degree and Certificate Completion, and Transfer) and subsequently closing achievement gaps is the crux of this plan. Each of the 114 California Community Colleges entrusts primary responsibility for SEP activities, which include framing campus-based research efforts, to the Chief Student Services Officer (e.g., Vice President of Student Services) and their designated subordinates (e.g., Dean of Student Services, Student Equity Director/Coordinator, Diversity Manager, etc.). Although the intent of these plans is to utilize data-driven metrics toward the goal of creating policies and practices that support positive completion outcomes for students, many colleges do not currently integrate cultural competency or Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) initiatives into their existing SEPs.

The main purpose of this study was to conduct exploratory mixed-method research to investigate culturally competent student equity practices at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). The goal was to subsequently design and implement a statewide student equity report card that is culturally sensitive to HSIs and can

be utilized as a lens to gauge college-wide initiatives and strategic planning efforts within a multitude of organizational levels. Moreover, this embedded multiple case study examined several HSI-designated participant's culturally competency practices embedded with their SEPs by investigating: 1) how equity is measured at the institutional level, 2) assessing how the college's HSI designation impacts student equity and cultural competency practices, and 3) the organizational alignment of HSI designation within each participating college's existing initiatives, policies, and norms. A cross-sectional web-based survey was administered to primary Student Equity administrators (N=25) at each of the 93 HSI-designated California Community Colleges. Eleven respondents subsequently agreed to participate in a 30-60 minute follow-up phone interview for the purpose of expanding on their initial survey responses and to gather additional qualitative and quantitative data within several thematic paradigms (e.g., Student Services/Success, Campus Leadership, Mission and Core Values, Collaboration and Collegiality, Integration and Capacity Building, Curriculum and Assessment, Organizational Learning, and Professional Development).

Research study findings revealed key thematic constructs that provide a lens for understanding the integration of equity and cultural competency efforts from a broader structural perspective that ultimately impacts access to completion outcomes for underserved and underrepresented students. Respondents indicated 1) Institutional Capacity, 2) Organizational Culture, and 3) Lack of Equity and Cultural Competency/Sensitivity Mindedness as primary focal points within the process of implementing effective strategies designed to support successful educational and career goals for students, with specific emphasis in Latinx populations.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“A premise of the Equity Scorecard process is that questions like these reflect a normative model of academic success. That is, academic success is associated with the experiences, behaviors, and values of the full-time, traditional college-age student. When we come across students who are not engaged or involved, who don’t take advantage of support resources, or who rarely ask questions or seek help, we judge them as deficient and in need of compensatory interventions. These students often acquire the “at-risk” label” (Bensimon & Malcom, 2012)¹.

It has often been said that California provides a silver lining of hope and optimism in terms of reflecting its diversity and multiculturalism. California routinely is touted as a prime example of cultural and socioeconomic prowess that serves as a beacon of change for our country’s systems of higher education. Specifically, the California Community College system is the largest system of higher education in the nation, with 2.1 million students attending 114 colleges (CCCCO Key Facts for 2016-17). Moreover, one in every five community college students in the nation attends a California community college. Student demographic data indicate that enrollment comprises an array of diverse backgrounds, including Latinx enrollment at 43.6%, White/Caucasian at 26.4%, Asian at 11.5%, Filipino at 2.8%, and African-American peers at 6.1% (CCCCO Student Demographics by Ethnicity for 2016-17).

Community colleges have historically served as an open-access conduit that provides students with the knowledge and background necessary to compete in today’s economy. Many students arrive on-campus with academic skills that reflect educational disadvantage and in turn possess significant disproportionate impact in terms of successful outcomes.

¹ Bensimon, E. M., & Malcom, L. E. (2012). *Confronting Equity Issues on Campus: Implementing the Equity Scorecard in Theory and Practice*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Colleges have directed efforts (e.g., pre-collegiate outreach, matriculation, support services, supplemental instruction, tutoring, and career services) to address this disproportionate impact by enhancing critical services designed to move the student retention and persistence needle forward.

Student equity in higher education has traditionally been defined as a student's ability to access and be successful in higher education; central to the dialogue has been "the continuing disparities in access to educational opportunity and of continuing differences in educational attainment—all related to race and socio-economic status" (Luster, 2010; Bowen, Kurzweil, Tobin, & Pichler, 2005). In this context, The California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) provides significant equity funding to its 114 community colleges intended to focus on increasing 1) Access, 2) Course Completion, 3) ESL and Basic Skills Completion, 4) Degree/Certificate Completion, and 5) Transfer for all students as measured by success indicators linked to the Student Success Scorecard (CCCCO Student Success Scorecard, 2017), and other measures developed in coordination with college-wide initiatives. Colleges within the system in concert with the CCCCCO have become increasingly aware of success equity gaps among ethnic and socioeconomic groups on their respective campuses.

A crux of the student equity initiative is a data-driven college-wide plan that measures disproportionate impact within educational outcomes among the respective student sub-populations. Student equity within the data-driven plan is defined as a mechanism for helping students achieve equal outcomes on success indicators as compared to either their own percentage in the community or college student body or to other student groups. Moreover, each college's student equity plan (SEP) is guided by a series of research metrics

that are designed to measure the impact of activity on identified goals and objectives via analysis of disaggregated student population data. Each California community college is required to maintain a student equity plan that includes campus-based research as to the extent of equity for high-need student groups; goals for access to, and completion of courses, basic skills improvement, transfer and degree and certificates for all students and for high-need students; and a set of evidence-based activities to help students and the college meet these goals. Colleges should also use student equity planning as an opportunity to determine how campus policies and practices foster or hinder equitable outcomes for students and to develop the capacity of campus practitioners to address the specific student needs.

The present chapter provides a brief overview of the student equity plan process and its historical implications that translate into contemporary initiatives designed to benefit disproportionately impacted students within the context of a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) framework. In addition, the research methods utilized and discussed in subsequent chapters within this study provide the development and implementation rationale for a culturally sensitive HSI equity report card that ultimately crosswalks into substantive theoretical paradigms.

Statement of the Problem

The California Community College (CCC) system is the largest higher education system in the world (CCCCO, 2016). Moreover, the system has embraced with good intentions the effects of race, socioeconomic status, culture, experiences, environment, and (dis)ability on students' success (Luster, 2010). Bensimon (2005) posited that community college leaders should make concerted efforts to integrate equitable data metrics for underrepresented student populations into strategic planning processes as a vehicle for

examining success outcomes and simultaneously creating a core indicator for institutional accountability and excellence. Although the momentum toward achieving equity-based outcomes within the CCC for disproportionately impacted students is increasing, the uncertain trajectory lies with how and to what extent the SEPs developed by each respective community college will collectively advance college completion and student success across California in equitable ways (Ching, Felix, & Bensimon, 2015). Within the context of each of California Community Colleges' 114 SEPs, individual campuses are aligning resources to tackle inequities and systematically close achievement gaps. The reality, however, is that there is no current statewide-level report to gauge equity attainment and progression toward success outcomes compared to other states such as Texas² and Washington³. Moreover, the creation of an annual "state of equity" report that documents equity targets in addition to identifying emerging areas of inequity within California that will need to be addressed by the public systems of higher education is paramount (Ching, Felix, & Bensimon, 2015). Ultimately, CCCs should strive to reflect the community it serves by ensuring all populations have access and that underrepresented students move through the institution at the same rate as their peers (Luster, 2010).

California Community Colleges emphasis on student equity initiatives traces its roots to 1992 when its Board of Governors (BOG) initially established a student equity policy to address declining enrollment and completion outcomes, specifically for Latinx and African American students. In 1996, the BOG mandated that all community college campuses have

² Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (2016). *Closing the Gaps by 2015 Final Progress Report*. <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/8138.PDF?CFID=71801980&CFTOKEN=18922264>

³ Washington Student Achievement Council (2013). *Diversity and Equity in Washington State Higher Education*. http://www.wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/DiversityReport.FINAL_Revised.07-2013_0.pdf

an SEP as a minimum condition of receiving all state funding. The increased emphasis on student equity by the BOG was fueled by the desire to avoid the creation of a “permanent underclass” and semi-employable stratum of low-skilled workers due to the permanent under-utilization of the energies and talents of California residents, many of whom would stem from minority populations (Guichard, 1992). Consequently, no other issue was more critical to the future of California than to increase the enrollment and success of underrepresented ethnic minorities and individuals from underrepresented groups (Guichard, 1992). The integration of various campus constituency groups is an essential component to the design and implementation of a successful SEP. A well-developed plan provides the opportunity to review and coordinate what is currently being done; to examine every policy or practice, including curriculum and student support services, for the possibility it constitutes an institutional barrier to student equity or, at least, with change, could more effectively foster student success; and finally, to determine specifically what needs to be done (Guichard, 1992).

According to Luster (2010), “despite the setbacks of funding legal challenges and systemic organizational barriers, colleges are looking in new directions to move beyond just access to success” (p. 3). As California Community College faculty, staff, and administrators continue to seek integrated methods to build and sustain capacity in an effort to promote achievement outcomes, the increasing demand to do so within a student equity paradigm has opened the door to allow for input and collaboration from several key stakeholders. The University of Southern California’s Center for Urban Education (CUE) was established in 1999 with the mission to lead socially conscious research and develop tools for institutions of higher education to produce equity within student outcomes. Using existing institutional data

disaggregated by race, gender, and ethnicity, process and benchmarking tools as well as structured inquiry activities embodied in what is called the Equity Scorecard⁴, CUE helps two- and four-year colleges and state higher education systems identify problems, develop interventions and implement equity goals to increase retention, transfer and graduation rates for historically underrepresented racial-ethnic groups. Since its founding, more than one hundred two-year and four-year colleges and universities in ten states have partnered with CUE to use the Equity Scorecard and learn about the concept of “equity-mindedness” that is the foundation for institutional responsibility (Bensimon, 2004).

The California Community Colleges’ Success Network (3CSN)⁵ is a statewide professional development initiative funded through the California Community College Chancellor’s Office. The mission of 3CSN is to address the needs of under-served students via equity-based training and support mechanisms designed to increase the capacity of community colleges toward the goal of increasing completion outcomes (e.g., basic skills, degree/certificates, and/or transfer requirements). 3CSN provides sustained professional learning through its infrastructure of regional networks and communities of practice. The regional networks hold regular meetings centered around local needs and best practices, and regional network coordinators provide technical assistance to improve each colleges’ capacity to generate research, apply research to program development and evaluation and to build each colleges’ capacity for ongoing professional development. Both the regional networks and communities of practice are highly coordinated and recursive efforts

⁴ USC Center for Urban Education (CUE) Equity Scorecard. <https://cue.usc.edu/tools/the-equity-scorecard/>

⁵ California Community Colleges’ Success Network (3CSN) Annual Report (2015): <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/FlipBooks/2015-3CSN-Report/2015-3CSN-Report-122315-ADA-Web.pdf>

incorporating academic research and inquiry with engaging and collaborative problem-solving practices to achieve large-scale increases in student pathway completion.

This study assesses current equity practices within the 93 California Community Colleges identified by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)⁶ as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) via survey and follow-up participant interviews. The analysis of participant data will guide the design and implementation of an innovative equity report card that is culturally sensitive to HSIs and simultaneously aligns with Bridging Multiple Worlds (Cooper, 2011) theoretical themes.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to conduct exploratory mixed-method research to investigate culturally competent student equity practices at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). The goal was to subsequently design and implement a statewide student equity report card that is culturally sensitive to HSIs and can be utilized as a lens to gauge college-wide initiatives and strategic planning efforts within a multitude of organizational levels. To meet this purpose, this research study examined several HSI-designated participant's culturally competency practices embedded with their Student Equity Plans (SEPs) by investigating: 1) how equity is measured at the institutional level, 2) assessing how the college's HSI designation impacts student equity and cultural competency practices, and 3) the organizational alignment of HSI designation within each participating college's existing initiatives, policies, and norms. I disseminated a cross-

⁶ [Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities \(HACU\) Member Hispanic-Serving Institutions \(HSIs\): https://www.hacu.net/assnfe/CompanyDirectory.asp?STYLE=2&COMPANY_TYPE=1,5 - California](https://www.hacu.net/assnfe/CompanyDirectory.asp?STYLE=2&COMPANY_TYPE=1,5)

sectional survey to administrators at each of the 93 HSI-designated California Community Colleges who were currently serving as the primary Student Equity Coordinator by their respective institutions. Moreover, I invited each of the survey participants to engage in a 30-60 minute follow-up phone interview for the purpose of expanding on their initial survey responses and to gather additional qualitative and quantitative data within several thematic paradigms (e.g., Student Services/Success, Campus Leadership, Mission and Core Values, Collaboration and Collegiality, Integration and Capacity Building, Curriculum and Assessment, Organizational Learning, and Professional Development).

Findings from this study are intended to inform and guide policy directives and future research endeavors aligned with Student Equity initiatives. The integration of cultural competency practices within SEPs, especially at CCCs designated as HSIs, can help to build inclusive campus environments that are essential to access, completion, and transfer/workforce velocities. Similarly, professional and student development opportunities, physical environments and curricular changes that raise cultural competence and enhance empathy are essential to ensuring student equity.

Conceptual Framework

This study was guided by two theoretical perspectives, specifically Cooper's (2011) Bridging Multiple Worlds (BMW) model and Argyris and Schön's (1974) Single-loop and Double-loop Learning models of organizational learning. The BMW theoretical paradigm served as a mechanism for interpreting the various individual Latinx community college student qualitative data elements stemming from participating California Community College administrator survey responses and then subsequently examining its relationship to the process of promoting or constraining academic success from an equity perspective (Cooper,

2011; Cooper et al., 2002; Cooper et al., 1995). Single-loop and double-loop learning theories assisted this study by framing the design and implementation of a proposed student equity report card from an institutional improvement context given each HSI-designated college's adherence, or lack thereof, to the norms and organizational identity policies and procedures that drive decision-making outcomes.

The crux of this study was to propose a theoretical student equity report card framework for enhancing culturally sensitive college-wide practices and initiatives, especially from community colleges identified as Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Moreover, the experiences of Latinx students attending California Community Colleges will be paramount to addressing issues and/or opportunities for Latinx students from pre-collegiate outreach to completion of educational goals. Just as important is how the institution provides evidence for purporting success for the aforementioned student equity models. Reviewing existing student equity plan approaches from an organizational theory perspective such as single-loop and double-loop learning can also potentially assist institutions to monitor outcomes and in turn enhance its practices to achieve desired goals (Argyris, 1993; Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1977, 1974).

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study were:

- I. What culturally competent practices do student equity coordinators and administrators at HSI-designated California Community Colleges report implementing in their Student Equity Plans?
- II. How do these institutions measure cultural competency within their respective Student Equity Plans?
- III. What are differences and similarities in views according to HSI status of the college among faculty, staff, and administrators?

Utilizing the Bridging Multiple Worlds conceptual framework as a research lens, the first question served to gauge the impact of cultural competency efforts embedded within respective student equity plans at participating HSI-designated California community colleges. (N=93). Moreover, this question enabled us to highlight the innovative culturally sensitive approaches in terms of serving disproportionately impacted students, specifically Latinx populations. The second question provided us with additional insight into the process of how participants' respective institutions designed and measured cultural competency data metrics within their student equity plans. This question was especially critical given that cultural competency is not a state-mandated initiative and thus provided expanded context into integrated strategies that impacted campus climate and student outcomes (e.g., retention, persistence, completion). The third ancillary question was developed and influenced by literature on organizational learning and behavioral change, specifically single- and double-loop learning conceptual frameworks (Argyris, 1993; Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1977, 1974). This question helped us uncover fundamental assumptions and the behavioral patterns among campus stakeholders (e.g., faculty, staff, and administrators) that guide decision-making processes centered around student equity and cultural competency given the overarching HSI designation, specifically in terms of moving the student success needle forward for Latinx students. Moreover, this question focuses on the intentionality of the HSI designation with respect to student equity; in other words, are colleges Hispanic “*serving*” or merely Hispanic “*enrolling?*”

Methodology Overview

This study involved mixed-method procedures guided by an embedded multiple case study design (Gustafsson, 2017; Creswell, 2013) to investigate the culturally competent practices embedded within student equity plans (SEPs) at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) as assessed by current Student Equity administrators. Moreover, the case study design explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and reports a case description and case themes (Creswell, 2013).

According to Gustafsson (2017), “case studies also usually have a double function, which is that case studies are studies derived of its own unit structure, as well as case studies of a larger group of units” (p. 2). Consequently, primary data collection occurred in two distinct stages:

Stage I: The primary sources of data were obtained in two stages via a Background Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix B) and Student Equity and Cultural Competency cross-sectional survey (Appendix C) during Stage I and semi-structured (Merriam, 2009) follow-up phone interview (Appendix D) during Stage II. In stage I of this study, Student Equity administrators/coordinators at each of the 93 California Community College campuses designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions were contacted via email and invited to participate in the research study via a web-based interface hosted by Google Forms. After several solicitation attempts during the span of two months, the study garnered 25 participants ranging from several key student equity-related administrative roles (e.g., Vice

Presidents of Student Services, Deans of Student Services, Student Equity Director, Student Equity Coordinators, Student Success Managers, Directors of Equity and Inclusivity, etc.).

Stage II: Upon the completion of background demographic questionnaire and survey data analysis from Stage I, each of the aforementioned 25 survey respondents received a secondary invitation to participate in a 30-60 minute phone interview (Appendix D) follow-up session for Stage II of this study. Ultimately, semi-structured phone interviews were conducted with 11 participants (Merriam, 2009) during the span of two subsequent months where the primary focus was within the following areas:

- Participant definition of Student Equity.
- Participant definition of Cultural Competency.
- Campus stakeholder participation on Student Equity goals and objectives.
- Campus integration of Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) initiatives with campus policies, procedures, and strategic planning measures and the intersection with Student Equity Plan and Cultural Competency.
- Potential barriers of campus cultural competency integration among faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Professional development activities designed to foster cultural competency outcomes.

Significance of the Study

This study sought to identify culturally competent student equity practices at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) from both theoretical and practical constructs. Theoretically, its contributions to the literature is an area of critical importance. Examining the intersection of student equity and cultural competency for community college students who are disproportionately impacted will provide direction for future scholarship and research. The practical significance of this study is framed within the reflections and shared organizational applications of policies and

procedures among key campus stakeholders entrusted with the development and execution of effective student equity initiatives.

Given the critical implications for student equity outcomes within the California Community College system, funding priorities must align with satisfactory access to completion metrics. According to Griffith (2017), “with steady funding pouring into the student equity initiatives and more projected over the next few years, institutional structures must be in place to encourage the work of student equity administrators tasked with closing the achievement gap for minority students and creating equitable outcomes for all students” (p. 33). Ultimately, embedding equity-driven outcomes that close achievement gaps for underrepresented student populations within a cultural competent paradigm is the crux for the future of the California Community Colleges and its 114 institutions that serve a wide array of constituents who possess equally diverse educational and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Key Operational Terms

Achieving The Dream (ATD): A comprehensive non-governmental reform movement for student success. Together with its network of higher education institutions, coaches and advisors, state policy teams, investors and partners, they assist more than 4 million community college students have a better economic opportunity and achieve their dreams.

Basic Skills Initiative (BSI): A grant-funded initiative from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) which began in 2006 as part of the strategic planning process. The goal of the BSI is to improve student access and success.

Board of Governors (BOG): The California Community Colleges Board of Governors sets policy and provides guidance for the 72 districts and 114 colleges that constitute the system. The 17-member board is appointed by the governor and formally interacts with state and federal officials and other organizations. The Board selects a chancellor for the system. The chancellor, through a formal process of consultation, brings recommendations to the Board.

California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO): The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation, with 2.1 million students attending 114 colleges. The colleges provide students with the knowledge and background necessary to compete in today’s economy. With a wide range of educational

offerings, the colleges provide workforce training, basic courses in English and math, certificate and degree programs and preparation for transfer to four-year institutions.

Cultural Competency: Having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families (National Education Association, 2017).

Equity: Equal outcomes achieved for all when considering differences such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, language, family background, and other variables (Linton, 2011).

Equity-Mindedness: The perspective or mode of thinking exhibited by practitioners who call attention to patterns of inequity in student outcomes (Bensimon, Rueda, Dowd, & Harris, 2007).

Integrated Planning (BSI, SSSP, and Student Equity): The CCCCCO has been undergoing an effort to integrate three programs: Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), Student Equity Program (SE), and Student Success and Support Program (SSSP). These programs were selected as a starting point for integrative efforts for two main reasons: 1) all three have the same ultimate goal of increasing student success while closing achievement gaps; and 2) there is a strong potential for overlap between and among the programs.

Latinx: A person of Latin American origin or descent (used as a gender-neutral or non-binary alternative to Latino or Latina).

Student Equity Coordinator: The individual identified by a California Community College as the primary point-of-contact and facilitator of the Student Equity Plan and ultimately responsible for equity-related funding decisions.

Student Equity Plan (SEP): A formalized plan developed by each California Community College which outlines the institution's plan for closing achievement gaps within each student success indicator (e.g., access, course completion, ESL and Basic Skills course completion, degree and certificate completion, and transfer for targeted populations).

Student Success and Support Program (SSSP): Formerly matriculation, is a process that enhances student access to the California Community Colleges and promotes and sustains the efforts of credit students to be successful in their educational endeavors.

Student Success Scorecard: A performance measurement system established by the CCCCCO that tracks student success at all 114 community colleges. The data available in this scorecard tell how well colleges are doing in remedial instruction, job training programs, retention of students and graduation and completion rates.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Chapter 1 shed light on the critical need to provide a comprehensive framework for the need to examine student equity and its integration of cultural competency initiatives within an HSI paradigm. Consequently, this chapter begins with an overview of the history of the California Community College (CCC) system and its place within the American higher education model. The overview is followed by the development of the CCC student equity initiative, the external influences impacting equity, and the divergent landscape that embodies the intersection of equity and diversity including the advent of the Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation and how this federal construct impacts colleges, specifically community colleges. Literature examining the organizational learning theories that can assist student equity administrators in overcoming challenges for community colleges that serve large disproportionately impacted populations is reviewed in an effort to reduce the existence of differential educational outcomes by identifying and responding to institutional factors that can ultimately deter student success. Finally, I conclude this literature review by providing an overview of the Bridging Multiple Worlds (BMW) theoretical framework that helps to build an understanding of how diverse youth navigate their worlds of families, peers, schools, and communities on pathways to adulthood, college, and careers.

History of the California Community College System

Community colleges in America, originally termed junior colleges or two-year colleges, have their roots dating back to the Morrill Act of 1862 (the Land Grant Act), which

essentially expanded access into public higher education (Drury, 2003). The Morrill Act consequently increased access to students whom historically were not equally represented within higher education institutions. The second Morrill Act (1890) provided for the withholding of federal funds to those colleges that withheld student admission to land grant colleges based on race unless the states provided for separate institutions for minorities, which consequently allowed for the expansion of minorities being admitted into land grant colleges (Drury, 2003).

California passed various legislation upon the passage of the Junior College Act of 1907, which allowed secondary schools in to offer postsecondary course offerings and provide funding for regional 2-year junior colleges via independent districts. The law briefly stated:

The Board of Trustees of any city, district, union, joint union, or county high school may prescribe postgraduate courses of study for the graduates of such high school, or other high schools, which courses of study shall approximate the studies prescribed in the first two years of university courses. The Board of Trustees of any city, district, union, joint union, or county high school wherein the postgraduate courses are taught may charge tuition for pupils living without the boundaries of the district wherein such courses are taught⁷.

These aforementioned districts had their own boards, budgets, policies, and procedures (Drury, 2003). Consequently, California's first community colleges began to be formalized as Fresno City College in 1910 (initially a postsecondary department within Fresno High School), Citrus College in 1915, and Modesto Junior College in 1921).

California's junior college model quickly gained popularity during the post-World War II era. According to Griffith (2017), "rapid population growth, including the Baby

⁷ Winter, C. G. (1964). History of the Junior College Movement in California. Bureau of Junior College Education Release No. 20. Revised.

Boomer generation (individuals born between 1945 and 1960), put great pressure on the higher education system” (p. 22). Cohen and Brawer (1996) state that the most prominent forces behind this movement were the need for workers to be trained to operate the nation's expanding industries, the lengthened period of American adolescence, and the national drive towards social equality.

The increased access to collegiate-level courses culminated in the creation of 38 junior colleges by 1933. The creation of the GI Bill of Rights in 1944 further expanded California’s community college footprint by offering higher education benefits for currently serving or discharged veterans. Enrollment subsequently increased and by 1951 there were well over 50 junior colleges. The World War II GI Bill led to the most educated generation in American history (Jackson, 1994).

In 1960, the California State Legislature passed the Master Plan for Higher Education and the resulting Donahoe Higher Education Act designed to provide an appropriate place in California public higher education for every student who is willing and able to benefit from attendance⁸. These legislative initiatives served as the benchmark postsecondary access conduits by virtue of limiting enrollment to the California State University (CSU) system and its prestigious research-driven University of California (UC) counterpart, which ultimately allowed junior colleges to serve as vehicles for educational and economic progress for residents of California. In 1967 legislation was further enacted to create the Board of Governors (BOG) and the Chancellor’s Office for the California Community Colleges system with the mission of mandating all areas of the state be

⁸ California Education Code - EDC § 66201

represented within a community college district⁹. Moreover, “locally elected board members/trustees continued to establish policy and make fiscal decisions for individual community college districts, removing the California Community College system from the California State Board of Education’s purview” (Griffith, 2017, p. 23).

California Community College Student Equity Initiative

To address student equity in a formal, system-wide manner the California State Legislature issued a directive in 1991, charging all levels of public education, including community colleges, to provide educational equity "not only through a diverse and representative student body and faculty but also through educational environments in which each person has a reasonable chance to fully develop his or her potential” (Luster, 2010, p. 32). The California Community Colleges responded to the aforementioned directive in 1993 with a systematic initiative to require each campus to submit a student equity-based plan. Luster (2010) states that even though the Board of Governors had previously authorized student equity plans as a response to the legislative directive in September of 1992, no additional funding was identified to support this new initiative.

Colleges completed and submitted their initial student equity plans in December of 1993, with the guidance of two important resources: The Academic Senate’s Guidelines for Developing a Student Equity Plan and the Chancellor’s Office Advisory (Luster, 2010; Mertes, 1993). Specifically, Title 5 of the California Education Code regulations specify that colleges must review and address several impacted populations when looking at

⁹ Little Hoover Commission (2012). *Serving Students, Serving California: Updating the California Community Colleges to Meet Evolving Demands*. Little Hoover Commission. Retrieved 2012-10-23.

disproportionate impact, including Latinx students¹⁰. Each college develops specific goals/outcomes and actions to address disparities that are discovered, disaggregating data for indicators by student demographics, preferably in program review. College plans must describe the implementation of each indicator, as well as policies, activities, and procedures as they relate to improving equity and success at the college. Student Equity Success indicators as defined in Title 5 sections 54220 and 51026, are to measure:

- Student access to the college
- Course completion
- Degree completion
- Completion of Foundation (Basic Skills) Courses
- Transfer rates

Campus-based research as to the extent of student equity by gender and for each of the following categories of students:

- Current or former foster youth
- Students with disabilities
- Low-income students
- Veterans
- Gender
- Students in the following ethnic and racial categories, as they are defined by the United States Census Bureau for the 2010 Census for reporting purposes:
 - a) American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b) Asian
 - c) Black or African American
 - d) Hispanic or Latino
 - e) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - f) White
 - g) Some other race
 - h) More than one race

Student Equity expenditures must:

- Be targeted towards the populations, goals, and activities prioritized in the college Student Equity Plan as defined in statute and Title 5.

¹⁰ California Education Code - Title 5 § 54220 and 51026:
<http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/SSSP/Integrated%20Planning/Student%20Equity%20Title%205.pdf>

- Targeted populations, goals, and activities must be prioritized based on the results of a disproportionate impact study outlined in the Student Equity Plan.
- Meet the purpose and address the target populations and success indicators of Student Equity as defined in statute and Title 5.
- Be necessary and reasonable.

Goals for target populations are determined by extensive research and paired with associated activities to move the dial on their success. Also included within each indicator is an activity evaluation overview¹¹. Each evaluation plan is organized around: 1) student success data reported to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, as well as the local data warehouse, 2) surveys to garner feedback from students, faculty, and staff about their experiences with the activities, and 3) process measures to determine if activities meet the stated outcomes.

Beginning with investment in high school to broaden a college's reach to target groups, increase student access, and ensure students arrive prepared to be successful college students through intensive matriculation work, student equity plans extend their reach to target populations earlier in the educational pipeline. These plans consequently place a strong focus on improving opportunities for students to remediate while still in high school by offering assessments in the junior year and implementing additional dual/concurrent enrollment courses.

Student equity plans' approach is to identify completion communities for all students. These completion communities are academic, identity-focused, and/or led by categorical programs (e.g., Educational Opportunity Programs and Services, Student Support Services

¹¹ CCCC Guidelines for Measuring Disproportionate Impact in Equity Plans (2015): <http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/SSSP/StudentEquity/4%20Guidelines%20for%20Measuring%20Disproportionate%20Impact%20in%20Equity%20Plans.pdf>

and Programs, Basic Skills Initiatives, etc.). The strategies applied to all completion communities include the application of multiple measures of assessment to improve student placement, faculty-promoted instructional strategies, accelerated curriculum to get students through basic skills math and English more efficiently, and at-risk interventions.

Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice within a Divergent Landscape

Although equity is valued in principle at many higher education institutions, it is not regularly measured in relation to educational outcomes for specific groups of students (Bensimon, 2004). Moreover, the term *equity* is a complex concept that can have different meanings and is often used interchangeably, but inaccurately, with diversity (Luster, 2010; Bensimon, 2004). Equity at its core is driven by an educational outcomes construct, whereas diversity historically is defined by expanding efforts to increase outreach, recruitment, access, and representation among underrepresented student populations. Institutional support for diversity-based priorities can create a structural commitment to equitable outcomes pursuant to statewide mandates related to increasing success for disproportionately impacted groups. Research shows that campuses who create diverse and inclusive learning environments that attract and retain underrepresented students are conscious of outcomes beyond access and shows that the student body as a whole benefit from this setting (Luster, 2010).

Equity can be characterized as having all groups from marginalized communities afforded equal access and additional support to achieve and succeed. In terms of diversity, “buzz” words or phrases used in higher educational contexts such as pluralism, diversity, multiculturalism, social justice, and even dialogue, are often used interchangeably and may lose meaning in everyday over-use. Their use in scholarship poses assumptions about

demographics and skills and addresses issues like societal power and stratification differently. When some authors, individuals, or institutions use the term diversity, there is often an assumption of an acknowledgement, and perhaps, a celebration of a number of different social identity groupings – those that have been historically underrepresented in institutions such as higher education. Such social identity groups include and are not limited to different ethnicities, genders, abilities, religious and/or cultural associations, socioeconomic statuses, sexual orientations, and ages (Sleeter & Grant, 1988). Talbot (1996) described the term multiculturalism as one's ability to talk openly about difference and with a variety of people from different cultures.

Others characterize multiculturalism in the context of a set of skills or competencies for both individuals and organizations (Pope & Reynolds, 1997; Grieger, 1996). These authors identified a personal comfort that can only be attained through a much longer process of examining one's self as well as a commitment to learning about the education of the experiences of social identity groups different from one's own. However, these writings do not explicitly recognize the impacts of social oppression. The phrase social justice acknowledges social oppression and/or social power dynamics that impact people from different social identity groups. These dynamics have historically occurred and continue to occur in our society and on our campuses (Tierney, 1993).

Social justice is a term that embodies a set of values and a vision of society that is not limited to the equitable distribution of economic resources but also embodies values of participatory democracy (Tyler, 1997). Social justice as a value in educational settings has been considered as a remedy to stop institutionally created forms of inequality (Rhoads & Black, 1995). Social justice is different from multiculturalism in that it acknowledges the

role of social oppression and its manifestations and seeks to eliminate them. Bell (1997) described social justice as a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Bell explained further that this vision of society is one in which all people are able to develop fully as well as being members of an interactive and democratic community. This definition also recognizes the pervasiveness of social oppression and how its hierarchical structure affects everyone.

According to Luster (2010), “the distinction between diversity and equity, in this case, is clear; diversity represents the concept of representation from an access perspective, and equity is the focus on outcomes for all students” (p.36). Policymakers and institutional leaders increasingly recognize the urgent need to focus their efforts and resources on creating and sustaining equity in higher education (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, 2017). Organizational priorities must be re-examined, and institutional strategic planning processes need to incorporate buy-in from all campus stakeholders. Luster (2010) asserts that student equity is an organizational effort; “attempting to move colleges forward too quickly with no regard to context can derail efforts to diversify campuses and to create a climate where dialog can take place” (p. 37). Ultimately shifting institutions’ focus from what students do (or fail to do) to what institutions can do—through their practices and structures, as well as the actions of their leaders and faculty—to produce equity in outcomes for racially marginalized populations that exceed the threshold established by diversity is paramount (Peña, Harris, & Bensimon, 2012).

Impact of Hispanic-Serving Institutions within Community Colleges

Further expanding the scope and impact of student equity funding is the federal Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation that many community colleges and 4-year institutions possess. To be designated as an eligible institution of higher education, an institution must apply for and receive designation through an application process. According to the U.S. Department of Education, higher education institutions seeking HSI designation must meet the following conditions¹²:

(A) is an eligible institution; and

(B) has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application.

Bensimon (2007) found that students stemming from a Hispanic-serving community college in California who participated in a study she directed routinely cited how instrumental certain individuals (e.g., faculty, counselor, administrator, etc.) were in their transfer process based on the high level of confidence and affirmation they received in addition to the academic, cultural, and informational resources they needed to succeed. Latinx community college students are an ever-increasing population within higher education (Adelman, 2005; National Center for Education Statistics 2011b). Community colleges serve as conduits for a variety of educational pathways, including the attainment of associate degrees and transfer trajectories.

Latinx community college students, along with many of their first-generation peers, often seek constructive institutional connections that promote their motivation to find their

¹² U.S. Department of Education Definition of Hispanic-Serving Institutions: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/idueshsi/definition.html>

sense-of-belonging and in turn persist towards their respective academic and professional goals. Institutional agents, therefore, are significant in relation to minority and low-income students because these agents are in a position to transmit knowledge and resources that are particularly characteristic of the social networks and social ties of the middle and upper classes (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). Table 1 provides an overview of California community colleges that are identified as HSIs according to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) based on 2014-2015 data.

Table 1
CA Community College HSI Designation (2016-2017)

Total CA Community Colleges	CA Community Colleges - HSIs	HSI %	75% or Higher Hispanic/Latino Enrollment	50% to 74% Hispanic/Latino Enrollment
114	93	81.5	3	34

Source: HACU List of Hispanic-Serving Institutions, 2017; CCCCO Key Facts, 2017.

Pursuant to Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965, HSIs are defined as follows:

- Two or four-year non-profit institutions.
- High enrollment of needy students.
- Accredited by an agency or association recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Maintain at least a 25% Hispanic undergraduate full-time equivalent student enrollment.
- Furthermore, HSI eligibility requires that not less than 50% of all students are eligible for need-based Title IV and eligible for Title V funding.

HSIs represent 370 (11%) of all higher education institutions, with California community college campuses comprising 13.5% (Calderón Galdeano & Santiago, 2014). Moreover, Table 2 indicates that public 2-year community colleges comprise 46% of all HSIs during the

2013-2104 academic year (Excelencia in Education, 2015a, b). Given that approximately 70% of HSIs are comprised of community colleges, almost 50% of the Latinx population enrolled in post-secondary education is directly impacted by this academic system (Laden, 2004). Consequently, the alignment of organizational initiatives is vital to the institutional mission of the designation.

Table 2
Hispanic-Serving Institution Breakdown by Sector Type (2013-2014)

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Number of HSIs</u>	<u>Percentage of HSIs</u>	<u>Number of Emerging HSIs</u>	<u>Percentage of Emerging HSIs</u>
Public, 4-Year	81	20%	69	23%
Public, 2-Year	190	46%	109	37%
Private Not-for-Profit, 4-Year	125	31%	112	38%
Private Not-for-Profit, 2-Year	13	3%	6	2%
Totals	409	100%	296	100%

Source: Excelencia in Education, 2015a, b.

Community colleges are faced with the challenge of ensuring buy-in from internal and external stakeholders with respect to the intersection of existing campus cultural norms with the newly adopted HSI paradigm. The identity and college-wide initiatives that are embraced by community colleges can be potentially in contrast to the established practices and policies that guide institutional decisions.

HSIs serve as educational destinations for many Latinx students across the country, especially within community colleges (Chapa & Schink, 2006). Community colleges generally cost less to attend than four-year schools, and Latinx college students are more likely than whites to come from a lower income family (Pew Research Center, 2015).

Retention and persistence models, however, must also consider the issue pertaining to the growing number of Latinx students who find themselves in academic distress. As enrollment figures expand for Latinx community college students, increased attention to basic skills development has shed light on the completion outcomes (e.g., course completion, degree and certificate completion, transfer, etc.) that continue to lag in comparison to other student groups (Crisp & Nora, 2010).

An additional reason why Latinxs may attend two-year colleges over four-year colleges is that community colleges have open enrollment, meaning that students only need to earn a high school diploma to gain admission, which can help students who are less prepared for college (Pew Research Center, 2015). Latinxs, on average according to the College Board's College-Bound Seniors SAT Report (2013), have lower levels of academic achievement than whites. Table 3 illustrates the average SAT math score of college-bound Latinxs is 461(out of 800), compared with 534 for whites (College Board, 2013). Moreover, recent studies focusing on Latinx community colleges have also demonstrated the existence of "transfer lag" with respect to completion of transfer readiness curriculum coursework (e.g., IGETC) despite institutional initiatives (Hagedorn & Lester, 2006). Dowd (2007) noted that community colleges have served many different functions, including job training and adult basic education, but the pressure on community colleges to provide an effective and efficient mechanism for transfer has intensified in recent years.

Table 3
Total Mean SAT Scores by Ethnicity (2013)

SAT Test-Takers Who Described Themselves As:	Test-Takers		Critical Reading		Mathematics		Writing	
	Number	Pct	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
American Indian or Alaska Native	9,818	1	480	107	486	106	461	102
Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander	196,030	12	521	126	597	125	527	129
Black or African American	210,151	13	431	99	429	99	418	95
Mexican or Mexican American	114,506	7	449	98	464	98	442	92
Puerto Rican	27,871	2	456	104	453	104	445	101
Other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American	141,884	9	450	106	461	106	443	102
White	834,933	50	527	103	534	104	515	104
Other	62,251	4	492	123	519	121	490	120
No Response	62,603	4	448	134	508	131	453	127
Total	1,660,047	100	496	115	514	118	488	114

Source: College Board College-Bound Seniors SAT Report, 2013

Community colleges by definition are open-access institutions which directly align with the needs of their respective local communities (Benitez & DeAro, 2004). Given that Latinx students encompass a large majority of community college populations, especially within HSIs, the time for increased integration of college-wide policies and procedures designed to serve the most diverse student populations is long overdue. Although Latinxs complete associate degrees at similar rates as their white and African American peers, there is a huge racial disparity among those who complete bachelor’s degrees (Chapa & Schink, 2006).

Ultimately, community colleges that carry the HSI designation must ask themselves whether they are merely enrolling Latinxs or are truly taking significant steps to serve these students. As Hurtado and Ruiz (2012) argue, colleges and universities must self-assess their institutional missions in terms of what it means to be “Hispanic-Serving.” Latinx community college students must also hold their respective faculty, staff, administrators, and community stakeholders accountable in terms of embracing the initiatives and persistence outcomes that should align with the HSI designation.

Community College Leadership: Organizational Learning and Implementation

Gauging the efficacy of intervention initiatives and programs for Latinx community college students from an organizational framework is important for the implementation of successful pathways and completion outcomes. According to Argyris and Schön (1974), the development of behavioral mental maps is created by individuals in response to given situations. This process routinely comprises the planning, implementation, and review of people's actions. Consequently, people assert that it is these plans that guide their actions rather than the theories they adopt or support. As such, Argyris and Schön state that two theories of action are involved with respect to the relationships between people and organizations (2002). According to Post (2007), "Argyris and Schön (1996) and Bensimon et al. (2006) discussed first- and second-order organizational change in which single- and double-loop learning occur such that first-order change with single-loop learning does not influence the constructs of an institution the way that second-order change with double-loop learning normally does" (p. 18).

Argyris and Schön (1978) argue that organizational learning occurs in two stages: 1) initial detection, and 2) correction of a perceived error. When an error takes place the initial response for many individuals is to look for a different strategy that will address and work within the governing variables (Smith, 2013) rather than calling into question the values, norms, goals, plans, and policies that frame organizations. According to Argyris (1991), individuals should look introspectively and reflect on their own behavioral practices that may be contributing to the organizational issues identified and then change the way they respond. Paramount to this process is Argyris' (1991) seminal work within the double-loop and single-loop learning theoretical paradigms.

According to Martinez-Kellar (2012), “when a leader is not effective in fostering a culture of inquiry and evidence-based analysis within an organization, however, the risk of the organization persisting in a state of single-loop learning is enhanced” (p. 43). Argyris (2002) states that single-loop learning occurs when errors are corrected without altering the underlying governing values or norms. As Martinez-Kellar (2012) asserts, “during single-loop learning, the individual tends to avoid reflecting on himself when addressing organizational issues and will subsequently transition to blaming other organizational members for the inability to complete tasks with efficiency” (p. 146). Ultimately, “individuals may correct actions or behaviors as recommended by organizational leaders but not change the underlying or inner beliefs thereby allowing the corrected action to be merely superficial in nature and one that will not be made a more permanent part of the individual’s inherent practices” (Martinez-Kellar, 2012, p. 146).

Double-loop learning is defined as the practice when errors are addresses and collectively corrected by changing the governing values and the actions of an organization (Argyris, 2002). Moreover, double-loop learning entails an iterative process of reflection that begins within the leadership ranks and then culminated with organizational members diagnosing a particular problem from the presentation of various data brought forth by the leadership (Martinez-Kellar, 2012). The organization then works to devise solutions to address the identified issue and begins to formulate possible solutions. Once the solution has been implemented, the organization evaluates its effectiveness and creates strategies to initiate the delivery of the new process, which is intended to change the underlying practices and beliefs of the organization and its members (Argyris, 2008). According to Martinez-Kellar (2012), “a leader’s ability to develop a culture of inquiry through the practice of

double-loop learning (Argyris, 2002) allows for increased facilitation and monitoring of change within the organization’s beliefs and values and the resulting change within organizational practice” (p. 101). The outcomes associated with double-loop learning are the delineation of policies, norms, procedures, and values that organizations hold vital to their core missions as part of the goal of redefining guiding principles.

Argyris’ (2008) theory behind single- versus double-loop learning resides with the individual’s cognitive process of reflection (Martinez-Kellar, 2012). Unfortunately, individuals who engage in single-loop learning as a collective can prevent the organization from moving forward, which is especially concerning for California Community Colleges designated as HSIs given the missed opportunities for congruence of initiatives and strategic planning. Figure 1 below outlines the process of learning for both single-loop and double-loop models.

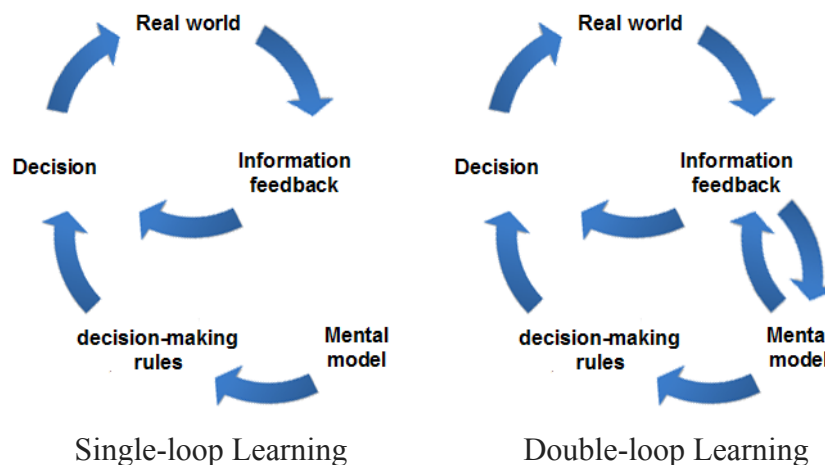


Figure 1. Single and Double-loop Process of Learning. *Source: Argyris (1977)*

Different perspectives of organizational learning have also included Yorks and Marsick’s (2000) action learning process in conjunction with collaborative inquiry. In this iterative perspective, a small group is faced with a problem or organizational issue and

subsequently learns by deciding on a suitable action, then ultimately reflecting on the impact of the action. According to Post (2007), “this process creates an opportunity for transformative learning that changes the habits of mind where there is an understanding of choices made and the impact of the organizational outcomes” (p. 19). Daft and Huber (1987) proposed two theoretical organizational learning perspectives they recommend must exist simultaneously. First was the systems-structured perspective, which prioritizes the acquisition and distribution of data as a critical component within the organizational learning process. Post (2007) asserts, “the distribution of data and subsequent compression of ideas that encapsulate and retain group meanings are indicative of this perspective” (p. 32). Second was the interpretive perspective, which emphasizes a deeper organizational information exchange. “Information, therefore, builds capacity and integrates with an individual’s understanding or mental representation and is ultimately shared with peers for the purpose of expanding discussion for the purpose of creating a learning situation in which they change their assumptions, symbols, and values” (Post, 2007, p. 32).

As Post (2007) further states, “essential to the process of examining organizational learning, especially within the California community college context of developing student equity plans that incorporate cultural competency integration, are the concepts of team and individual learning” (p.32). According to Yorks and Marsick (2000), the enhancement of organizational performance can be transformational when propelled by smaller groups who learn through active participation in action learning and subsequent collaborative inquiry toward the goal of transitional decision-making behavior.

Given that organizations are driven by individual learning at the core level, it is critical to understand its structural impacting of the norms, cultures, and traditions that frame

community college leadership decision-making. Yorks and Marsick (2000) assert that individual learning within the macro-organizational learning context is critical to the transformative learning process. According to Daft and Huber (1987), “data mean nothing until they are used by organization participants” (p.8). As illustrated in the discussion pertaining to single- and double-loop learning, the crux of organizational learning is to transition from a functional remedy to one that ultimately questions the underlying principles that create issues and barriers to systemic change. In other words, the organizational learning that normally occurs is instrumental in nature; it is learning focused on problem-solving rather than problem-questioning or interrogation of the value systems in which the process or problem is embedded (Witham & Bensimon, 2012).

Cultural Competency within an Organizational Learning and Change Framework

Community colleges that have been identified as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) encounter a series of challenges in terms of aligning college-wide goals and objectives. As Luster (2010) states, “to create learning-centered approaches to equity and diversity work, leaders must continue to build their own understanding, not to teach or convince people, but to demonstrate their own willingness to learn more about diversity and culture” (p. 54). Cultural competence is defined as a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables the system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Cross et al, 1989). The five essential elements of cultural competence are valuing diversity, having the capacity for self- assessment, being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, institutionalizing cultural knowledge, and adapting service delivery reflecting an understanding of diversity within and between cultures (Isaacs & Benjamin, 1991).

This is where the intersection with single- and double-loop learning comes into focus. Institutional barriers which impact Latinx community college students and their persistence towards positive educational outcomes can be created by the rejection to embrace the goals, values, and frameworks which guide the HSI designation. According to Contreras et al. (2008), the identity congruent with HSI designation is highly variable and can be construed as “manufactured.” While the existence of an organizational definition of how a college or university should demonstrate its HSI identity, there does exist a strict series of actions by the federal government in the event of an eligibility disqualification. Contextually, community colleges which choose to align their organizational norms, policies, and objectives with the mission and values affiliated with HSI designation in light of an apparent disconnect are demonstrating single-loop learning when there is no adverse impact to their initial trajectory; whereas community colleges that embed an HSI organizational structure into their existing framework which culminates into a modification by definition demonstrates a double-loop learning process.

The desired outcome for a community college’s decision to integrate its own norms, policies, and procedures with those embedded with the HSI designation should be one that increases success by addressing institutional practices and attributes (social, economic, and academic) that impact students (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Ultimately, organizational learning that subscribes to the tenants of equity and cultural competency should structurally align its campus leaders’ strategic planning initiatives and key performance indicators as part of the transformative change process.

Bridging Multiple Worlds (BMW) Model

Phelan et al. (1991) devised a multiple worlds model, a classification system that highlights how students navigate various social contexts (family, peer group, classrooms, and schools) or “worlds:” (a) congruent worlds/smooth transitions; (b) different worlds/boundary crossings managed; (c) different worlds/boundary crossings hazardous; and (d) borders impenetrable/boundary crossings insurmountable (Makino-Kanehiro, 2011). According to Cooper (2011), in many nations, as children move through primary and secondary school towards higher education, the number of immigrant, minority, and low-income youth who finish secondary school and attend college shrinks, signifying a global dilemma. She examines the roots of and remedies for the aforementioned academic pipeline problem. By triangulating research, practice, and policies pertaining to the expansion of pathways and pipelines, Cooper provides new quantitative and qualitative evidence to introduce the Bridging Multiple Worlds (BMW) theory on youth draw on their cultural worlds to navigate their pathways to college.

BMW theory can include attention to individual student narratives and thus aligns with the integration experiences of Latinx community college students given the cultural and developmental disconnects with respect to academia and its intersection with their respective cultural identities. In terms of student equity strategies for community college faculty, staff, and administrators, BMW theory helps conceptually frame the educational and economic disparities that Latinx community college students possess as they navigate higher education. Makino-Kanehiro (2011) asserts the key mantra with BMW theory is that, “when values, expectations, and goals between various worlds align, then students are able to transition smoothly; conversely, when values, expectations, and goals between these worlds conflict,

students run into difficulties” (p. 43). The BMW model is based on five levels or dimensions of development (below) that examine support and challenges within students’ worlds at the institutional, cultural, relational, and personal levels (Cooper et al., 2005).

Cooper’s (1999) BMW theory also involves a series of resources and best practices in terms of building pathways. Specifically, the collaborative work that the BMW performs encompasses the following:

Resources/Tools

- Aligning models and measures to build a common language among partners.
- Longitudinal data tools for qualitative and quantitative evaluation and research.
- Tools for research, policies, and practice, including formative and summative evaluation.
- Survey measures of five dimensions (below) for middle/high school and college students.
- Activities for middle and high school students for building pathways to college and careers, with pre- and post-activity surveys (in English and Spanish).
- Longitudinal case study samples.

The five dimensions of development within the BMW model are as follows:

Five Dimensions for Opening Pathways

- Demographics – students’ age, gender, national origins, race/ethnicities, languages, and parent’s education and occupation.
- Students’ aspirations and identity pathways in college, careers, and cultural domains.
- Students’ math and language academic pathways through school.
- Resources and challenges across students’ cultural worlds of families, peers, schools, community programs, sports, and religious activities, among others.
- Partnerships that reach across nations, ethnicities, social class, and gender to open pathways from preschool through graduate school (P-20).

The process of building pathways for Latinx community college students using a BMW framework is vital given the cultural, familial, and economic intersections. Despite our community values of equal access to education and the high hopes of students and families, too many low-income, ethnic minority, immigrant, and rural youth slip off their pathways through school towards college and college-based work (Cooper et al., 2006). Moreover, Cooper et al. (2006) argue that this outcome is common when parents have not attended college, schools lack qualified teachers and counselors, and support programs target only the early educational pipeline entry points. The triangulation of multiple methods to shed light on possible achievement gap leakage points is critical to the process of designing and sustaining effective intervention models.

The crux of BMW theory is the strong support systems that are defined by familial, community input, peers, and educational programs (e.g., pre-collegiate outreach) that work in tandem to promote guided pathways for success. Durán and Chaidez Ubaldo (2015) state, however, “negative encounters or experiences, in one or more multiple worlds, may temporarily or even permanently take students off of a pathway leading to college” (p.54). Within community colleges, the challenge of ensuring the success of strategic intervention models and initiatives such as supplemental instruction, tutoring, and related student life opportunities for Latinx students is an often-overwhelming task, especially given the HSI context.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed method embedded case study was to conduct exploratory research to investigate culturally competent student equity practices at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (Yin, 2014; Merriam, 2009). This study was exploratory because current student equity measures within HSI designated California Community Colleges do not currently gauge their levels of cultural competency as required by the state Chancellor's Office. Moreover, the HSI designation is not factored into the equity-driven decisions that impact target populations, especially within the Latinx student community.

Mixed methods are the best choice for this research because the combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis allow the researcher to achieve a better understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, results obtained from this study required additional examination of data results given the utilization of multiple instruments (e.g., demographic background questionnaire, web-based survey, and follow-up interview). This dissertation study utilized case study and survey methods to frame and guide the research design, data collection, analyses, and reporting of findings (Yin, 2014). Yin (2009) defined case study research as “an empirical study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 18).

The goal of this study was to subsequently design and implement a statewide student equity report card that is culturally sensitive to HSIs and can be utilized as a lens to gauge

college-wide initiatives and strategic planning efforts within a multitude of organizational levels. Given the contextual research framework for this study, this study used an embedded multiple-case design, recruiting current student equity administrators employed at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). The embedded multiple-case design approach along with survey and interview methods were determined to be a valid research method after comparisons with other quantitative and qualitative methods used in the social sciences and business given the research design, data collection, and analysis of findings (Yin, 2014).

Yin (2014) recommended a four-step process to develop a strategic plan for the analysis of the data before its collection, which included: 1) relying on theoretical propositions, 2) working your data from the ground up, 3) developing a case description, and 4) examining plausible rival explanations. Consequently, Yin (2014) recommended the consideration of five analytic techniques: 1) pattern matching, 2) explanation building, 3) time-series analysis, 4) logic models and 5) cross-case synthesis with the latter technique only used in the analysis of multiple case studies, which is the crux of this research study.

Research Sites

The research sites for this multiple-case study were 25 California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)¹³. Student equity coordinators and/or administrators were asked to participate in a survey (Appendix C) and follow-up phone interview (Appendix D) to elicit the level of cultural competency within their college's organizational structure (e.g., academic services, student services, etc.). The reason for

¹³ While each of the 25 participating student equity administrators represented their respective campus from among the 114 California Community College system, pseudonyms were utilized in order to maintain anonymity.

choosing this setting was based on the enhanced participation likelihood given the level of familiarity and knowledge within each respective student equity programmatic representative. Table 4 provides a profile of each participants' institution, which includes Latinx student enrollment based on CCCCCO 2015-2016 Scorecard data and state regional location.

Campus locations represented a wide array of geographical diversity, specifically: Central Valley (N=8; 30.8%), Los Angeles Area (N=6; 23.1%), High Desert (N=4; 15.4%), Bay Area (N=2; 7.7%), San Diego Area (N=2; 7.7%), Sacramento Area (N=1; 3.8%), Inland Empire (N=1; 3.8%), and Central Coast (N=1; 3.8%). Latinx student enrollment for these 25 campuses were all within the threshold required for HSI designation¹⁴, but several were well above 50% enrollment. Specifically, 12 campuses reported Latinx enrollment within the 53% - 91% range.

Table 4
Participants' Institutional Profile

Campus Name ¹⁵	Latinx Enrollment ¹⁶	California Location
Agriculture College	76.4%	Central Valley
Baird College	47.6%	Central Valley
Bluff College	66.3%	Central Valley
Bodie College	53.4%	Central Valley
Central College	63.5%	Central Valley
North County College	57.6%	Central Valley
Steamboat College	44.2%	Central Valley

¹⁴A Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) is defined as an institution of higher education that (A) is an eligible institution; and (B) has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25% Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application: (<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/ideshsi/definition.html>).

¹⁵ Campus names were assigned pseudonyms for anonymity.

¹⁶ Enrollment based on CCCCCO 2015-2016 Student Success Scorecard data.

Tumbleweed College	57.1%	Central Valley
Astin College	44.8%	Los Angeles Area
Foothill Valley College	29.7%	Los Angeles Area
Mary College	56.4%	Los Angeles Area
Neighborhood College	67.5%	Los Angeles Area
Rose College	46.7%	Los Angeles Area
South City College	30.4%	Los Angeles Area
Desert College	40.8%	High Desert
High Ridge College	38.3%	High Desert
South Valley College	90.5%	High Desert
Stateline College	36.3%	High Desert
Coastal Inland College	58.9%	Bay Area
Valley College	37.5%	Bay Area
Grass Valley College	32.5%	San Diego Area
Ocean View College	36.9%	San Diego Area
Hat Creek College	53.6%	Central Coast
Inland Empire College	62.3%	Inland Empire
Northern Vista College	29.1%	Sacramento Area

Participants

The selection of participants for this study was a purposive sampling process (Mason, 2002; Patton, 2002) that aimed to select groups that displayed variation on the phenomena under investigation. The sampling was aimed at ensuring that key constituencies were represented, and diversity was included, so that the construct of student equity coordinators or administrators within California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) could be explored in detail within the specified culturally sensitive/competent context. Accordingly, participants in this study were comprised of 25

California Community College student equity coordinators/administrators who hailed from campuses designated as HSIs. Table 5 provides a profile of survey participants. In terms of administrative position within their respective campuses, Figure 2 provides a breakdown of study participants. Although a broad representation of California Community College positions participated in this study, the largest group was comprised of current Vice Presidents of Student Services (N=8) followed by Student Equity Directors (N=4), Deans of Students Services (N=3), and Student Equity Coordinators (N=3). It should also be noted that many of these participants maintain dual position roles within their respective institutions but selected their primary position titles for the purpose of this study.

Table 5
Survey Participants

Name ¹⁷	Campus Name ¹⁸	Position
Aurelio	Agriculture College	VP of Student Services
Tom	Astin College	VP of Student Services
Kevin	Bodie College	VP of Student Services
Josh	Grass Valley College	VP of Student Services
Tony	Inland Empire College	VP of Student Services
Wagner	Mary College	VP of Student Services
Jennifer	Neighborhood College	VP of Student Services
Manuela	Rose College	VP of Student Services
Sophia	South Valley College	VP of Student Services
Matthew	Central College	Student Equity Director
Michelle	Foothill Valley College	Student Equity Director
Kurt	Ocean View College	Student Equity Director
Frances	Baird College	Dean of Student Services

¹⁷Participant names were assigned pseudonyms for anonymity.

¹⁸Campus names were assigned pseudonyms for anonymity.

Lucia	Hat Creek College	Dean of Student Services
Jonah	Tumbleweed College	Dean of Student Services
Diego	Coastal Inland College	Student Equity Coordinator
Miguel	High Ridge College	Student Equity Coordinator
Rachael	South City College	Student Equity Coordinator
Rebecca	Bluff College	Director of SSSP & Equity
Patrick	Valley College	Director of Equity & Inclusivity
Emily	Desert College	Student Success & SSSP Coordinator
Claudia	Northern Vista College	Associate VP of Student Services
George	North County College	Dean of Student Equity & Success
Liliana	Stateline College	Student Success Manager
Jose	Steamboat College	Student Equity & Diversity Manager

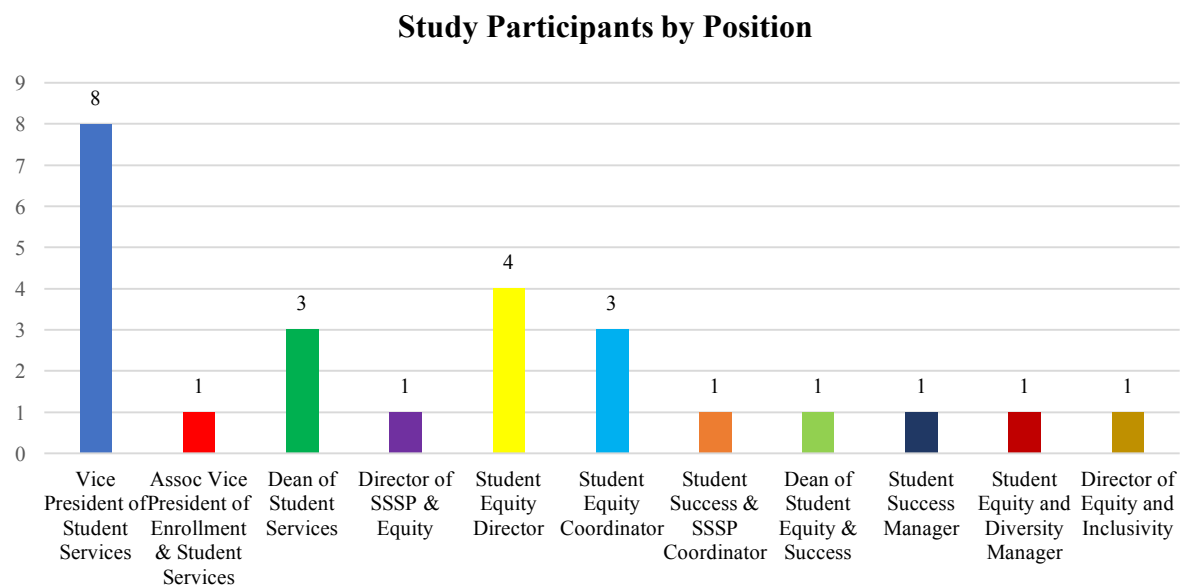


Figure 2. Study Participants by Role/Position

Participant Recruitment

Qualitative methods are, for the most part, intended to achieve depth of understanding while quantitative methods are intended to achieve breadth of understanding (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002), and as such is the approach utilized for this study. Once the survey and interview questions were finalized, human subjects committee approval was obtained in September 2016. Subsequent solicitation for study participants began in October 2016.

Study participants were recruited via an email survey solicitation in addition to a request to participate in a follow-up phone interview (Appendix D). After cross-referencing each of the 114 California Community Colleges' official student equity coordinator contacts¹⁹ with the identified institutions designated as HSIs according to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)²⁰, 93 prospective research participants were contacted by email during three separate solicitation invitations. Ultimately, 25 participants agreed to complete the web-based Google Form Student Equity & Cultural Competency Survey²¹. Participant response data were secured and password protected via my Google account in compliance with campus human subjects protocol.

Upon submission of each aforementioned study survey, a request to participate in a 30-60 minute follow-up semi-structured phone interview (Merriam, 2009) was sent via

¹⁹CCCCO Student Equity Director/Coordinator Contact List: <http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/SSSP/StudentEquity/Student%20Equity%20Web%20Material/Student%20Equity%20Directors%20Directory.pdf>

²⁰Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU) Member Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). https://www.hacu.net/assnfe/CompanyDirectory.asp?STYLE=2&COMPANY_TYPE=1,5 - California

²¹Student Equity & Cultural Competency Survey: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScHIJW_V0Ipq58nXq-pHAdAIzhVr38E70wkSm1aQJ6e9msKHQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

email. The semi-structured nature of these interviews was framed within initial formal questions that also incorporated open-ended prompts designed to allow study participants the opportunity to expand insights stemming from their initial web-based survey responses. Interviews were initially piloted with non-study participants in order to simulate rapport, process, consent, space, recording, and timing in order to “*try out*” the research instrument (Baker, 1994). Merriam (2009) pointed out that the best way to tell whether the order of your questions works or not is to “*try it out*” via a pilot interview. Given the time constraints required for phone interviews, only 11 survey respondents agreed to participate in the second stage of the research study after four invitation attempts.

Data Collection

This study was guided by participant data collection encompassing several parameters. Specifically, data were collected utilizing the two following procedures:

Stage I

- 1) Background Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix B)
- 2) Web-based Student Equity & Cultural Competency Survey via Google Forms (Appendix C)

Stage II

- 3) Follow-up phone interview (Appendix D)

Data collection took place between October 2016 and March 2017. Participants were provided with an overview of the research study and then asked to sign an informed consent authorization form (Appendix A). No incentives were offered to participants as part of this study.

Email solicitation for this research study was ongoing from October 2016 through December 2016, with 25 student equity administrators agreeing to participate in the survey and 11 in the follow-up phone interview. Participants were again asked to review and sign an informed consent authorization form and complete the background demographic questionnaire prior to receiving the Google survey link via email. Once completed surveys were submitted electronically participants were immediately contacted to schedule the 30-60 minute follow-up phone interview, which were conducted between February 2017 and March 2017. The following sections expand on the aforementioned mixed-method instruments in more detail.

Background Demographic Questionnaire Instrument

Participants were asked to complete a background demographic questionnaire (Appendix B) upon completion of the study informed consent acknowledgement. The questionnaire was a tool designed to obtain essential data pertaining to current administrative role/position, age, ethnicity, gender, highest level of education, duration of work experience within the California Community College system, and assessment of campus effectiveness in terms of addressing diversity initiatives. The aforementioned demographic questions were intended to provide transitional context toward the key questions that framed the web-based survey and follow-up phone interviews (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Questionnaires were critical to this process by guiding the interviews and establish consistency with respect to addressing important issues related to the integration of student equity and cultural competency. Moreover, the questionnaire was constructed to help elicit facts about the participants, events or situations, attitudes, and individual and organizational knowledge.

Survey Instrument

The crux of the Student Equity & Cultural Competency Survey was to identify current student equity trends and practices at California Community Colleges designated as HSIs as they relate to cultural competency initiatives statewide. Survey questions were framed with the intent to elicit themes stemming from organizational leadership and decision-making (Argyris, 1993; Argyris & Schön, 1978), Diverse Learning Environments (Hurtado et al., 2012), Bridging Multiple Worlds (Cooper, 2011), and Equity-Mindedness (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, 2017) theoretical constructs. The survey was designed to provide a baseline understanding of the organizational processes for each participating institution and to gauge its current integration of equity and cultural competency initiatives designed to foster student success. Survey responses were ultimately utilized to guide specific follow-up interview questions.

The web-based survey was comprised of 18 questions and are expanded on with greater detail as follows:

1. The first question was optional and intended to collect basic demographic information. Specifically, asking for participants' California Community College campus of employment.
2. The second question, also demographic in nature, asked for participants' current administrative role/title.
3. The third question asked respondents for insight into which constituency groups participate in the Student Equity Plan planning process on their respective campuses.
4. The fourth question asked participants who is administratively entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that student equity metrics tied to the Student Equity Plan are measured and reported on their campuses.
5. The fifth question asked participants to clarify how their respective campuses demonstrate its commitment to student equity via various methods (e.g., strategic equity or diversity planning initiatives, creation of equity or diversity statement,

- formal college-wide committee on equity or diversity, institutional metric or key performance indicator reflecting equity or diversity, etc.).
6. The sixth question asked participants to indicate what steps their campuses take to specifically integrate cross-cultural initiatives as part of its mission (e.g., cultural competency workshops/seminars, applies for or administers Title V grants, conducts Latinx student welcomes, cross-cultural student affairs or curriculum office, Office of Diversity/Inclusion, etc.).
 7. The seventh question asked participants to expand on which equity-serving programs are being implemented on their campuses (e.g., Puente, Umoja, Male Mentoring Program, Female Mentoring Program, EOPS/CARE, DSPS, CalWORKs, Financial Aid, Veteran Services, Foster Youth, etc.).
 8. The eighth question asked participants how their campuses measure and assess student equity goals and objectives (e.g., no established methodology for measuring and assessing goals and objectives, continuous tracking of progress utilizing data-driven indicators, program review, utilize previously established student equity plan indicators, program learning outcomes assessed and aligned with college-wide indicators, etc.).
 9. The ninth question asked participants how their campuses measure and assess cultural competency goals and objectives (e.g., no established methodology for measuring goals and objectives, continuous tracking of progress utilizing data-driven indicators, program review, utilize previously established student equity plan indicators, program learning outcomes assessed and aligned with college-wide indicators, etc.).
 10. The tenth question asked participants how their campuses have been able to impact instruction to include equity and cultural competency program learning outcomes (e.g., no curriculum/instructional changes have been made to date, new innovative pedagogical practices which promote equity and cultural competency, course outcomes which measure and assess learning that integrates equity and cultural competency, faculty professional development opportunities, college initiated a campus-based PLO that aligns to equity and cultural competency, etc.).
 11. The eleventh question asked participants to indicate how their campuses embed HSI initiatives into its Student Equity Plans (e.g., does not embed HSI initiatives into student equity plans, data-driven metrics, campus events, professional development activities, instruction, student services, etc.).
 12. The twelfth question asked participants to expand on whether their campuses have utilized any of the following resources to assist in the development and implementation of their Student Equity Plans (e.g., services provided by the CCCCCO, services provided by the Research & Planning Group for California Community Colleges, services provided by the USC Center for Urban Education, services provided by HACU-Higher Education Research Collective, services provided by

Achieving The Dream, services provided by the California Guided Pathways Project, services provided by the College Futures Foundation, etc.).

13. The thirteenth question asked participants to indicate how their campuses display cultural competency/sensitivity messaging (e.g., posters, artwork, films, book discussions, syllabi, speaker series, etc.).
14. The fourteenth question asked participants to expand on how equity initiatives have been integrated into their respective campus' organizational structure (e.g., goals, objectives, and actions aligned with the institutional core values and master/strategic plan, shared governance, resource leveraging and allocation, student life planning and activities, academic services and activities, college-wide dialogue, etc.).
15. The fifteenth question asked participants to indicate the organizational challenges that have impeded their college's ability to integrate cultural competency measures from a student equity perspective (e.g., lack of organizational support, lack of administrative leadership support, lack of diversity buy-in, lack of staff support, lack of faculty support, lack of resources, financial limitations, geographical proximity, etc.).
16. The sixteenth question asked participants to gauge how effective various efforts or initiatives on their campuses have been in supporting attainment of equity goals (e.g., staff professional development, faculty professional development, cultural competency activities, diversity training, campus student equity dialogue, consultation from external entities, leadership training for administrators, peer mentoring support, strategic planning with district office and sister colleges, strategic partnerships with P-20 stakeholders, etc.).
17. The seventeenth question asked participants to illuminate on how the various types of equity and diversity-serving activities impacted their respective campuses (e.g., college-wide flex day workshops on teaching and learning, college-wide flex day workshops on equity and cultural competency, guest speakers, student-initiated and facilitated activities during cultural heritage months, dialogue on diversity and race issues, etc.)
18. The eighteenth and final question was open-ended and optional, asking participants to both define equity and diversity and to provide an opinion on whether these concepts are synonymous or divergent.

Given the web-based design of the survey, it is unknown how long it took each participant to complete. The survey was designed, however, to be completed in one session since there was no ability to save responses. The Google Form interface allowed for survey data to be downloaded as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for further analysis.

Interview Instrument

In addition to surveys, follow-up semi-structured phone interviews with student equity administrators were conducted. The purpose of conducting interviews was to triangulate the data collected through the survey instrument in addition to entering the participants' perspectives (Suárez-Orozco & Qin, 2006; Patton, 1999). According to Patton (1999), triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena. Moreover, interviews can serve as a source of corroboratory or contrary evidence of the presence or absence of a phenomenon (Yin, 2003; Merriam, 1998). The phenomenon of question in this study was the organizational learning process for administrators at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) with respect to the integration of student equity and cultural competency initiatives as they relate to student success and completion outcomes.

Semi-structured phone interviews were used for this research study (Merriam, 2009). Semi-structured interviews offer topics and questions to the interviewee but are carefully designed to elicit the participant's ideas and opinions on the topic of interest, as opposed to leading the participant toward preconceived choices. They rely on the researcher following up with probes in order to obtain in-depth information, especially regarding not directly associated with the overarching study topics. Two underlying principles of the semi-structured interview are: 1) strive to avoid leading the interview or imposing meanings, and 2) strive to create relaxed comfortable conversation.

An interview protocol was utilized for this research study in order to ensure that the same basic lines of inquiry were pursued with each participant. A researcher's interview

protocol is an instrument of inquiry—asking questions for specific information related to the aims of a study (Patton, 2015) as well as an instrument for the conversation about a particular topic (e.g., someone’s life or certain ideas and experiences). Notwithstanding the structural nature of the interview protocol, critical to the interview process for each participant was the opportunity to allow for open-ended conversations congruent to the research study to emerge (Yin, 2014).

The protocol also utilized ethnographic components to elicit information, such as grand tour questions designed to provide context for each participants’ cultural scene within their respective campuses (Spradley, 1979). Prior to the interview participants were asked to complete a background demographic questionnaire. Each of the 11 interviews lasted between 30-60 minutes in length and were digitally recorded by the researcher with participant permission. The transcription process was conducted by Rev.com, a professional transcription service located in San Francisco, California. Interviews were transcribed verbatim in order to capture all relevant participant data. The transcribed and coded data were analyzed to identify patterns in participant’s responses and to evaluate in detail the specific strategies used to evaluate the integration of Student Equity Plans and cultural competency practices. Participants’ identifying information such as names and campus work-sites were edited out prior to being electronically uploaded for professional transcription services.

Data Analysis

This section expands on the strategies that were utilized to analyze the surveys and interviews in an effort to answer each respective research question. In qualitative research, the impact of this process is to aggregate data into a small number of themes, something like

five to seven themes (Creswell, 2013). During the interview process, an analysis of earlier survey and interview data collected and writing of memos that could potentially be included as a narrative in the final dissertation project was an essential construct driving the analysis (Creswell, 2014). The process of routinely reviewing data from each instrument to capture findings and themes was essential (Creswell, 2014). Thick descriptions were utilized in this research study for the purpose of revealing detailed portrayals of the participants' experiences within their respective institutions, going beyond reporting surface phenomena, and ultimately uncovering the meanings of the participant's actions. Moreover, thick descriptions will subsequently develop from the collected data and its context by describing the setting, events, and situations as verbatim narratives of individuals' accounts of their perceptions.

Data were also coded given the embedded multiple-case design, which was vital to the analysis process given the large number of participants. Coding is a key part of qualitative data analysis and is part of the interpretive process of moving from the data to the idea, and from the idea to all the data pertaining to that idea (Richards & Morse, 2007). Establishing a coding mapping process for identifying themes and construct categories of the participants' administrative experiences as they relate to the integration of student equity and cultural competency initiatives was key. According to Creswell (2009), researchers should utilize multiple coding iterations in order to translate information stemming from the specific details of each participant's interview for the purpose of extracting broader meanings and themes across interviews. Investigating patterns and relationships based on the aforementioned experiences were integral to the coding process. Creswell (2007) notes that

codes can emerge in response to not only expected patterning but also what you find to be striking, surprising, unusual or conceptually captivating.

The analysis process was ongoing and simultaneous in order to repeatedly refine and hone the thematic qualitative cues emerging from the data toward the goal of proposing effective student equity and cultural competency practices. The iterative process of data analysis within this research study interfaced well with the constant comparative method (CCM), which is aligned within a grounded theory approach but worked well with this research study from an analysis paradigm given the emphasis on open coding, axial coding, and selective coding for the purpose of developing a theoretical construct (Leedy & Omrod, 2001). The coding process, therefore, began by manually developing preliminary structural codes within the interview transcripts in an effort to align responses with the primary research questions.

The product that emerged from this process was a thematic codebook that provided the framework for further analysis via MAXQDA, a qualitative software program designed to facilitate this research project. Multiple manual coding exercises further helped to document the data analysis process via researcher notes and progression of emerging thematic outcomes. Post-interview descriptive notes were subsequently analyzed by hand utilizing the thematic codebook and cross-referenced with the finalized professional transcript and coded appropriately within MAXQDA in order to triangulate data patterns and relationships (Suárez-Orozco & Qin, 2006; Patton, 1999).

Research Role, Identity, Validity, and Reliability

Critical to this research study is my identity as a higher education administrator, specifically within the California Community College system. This identity allowed me

expanded access to the emic perspective (Headland, Pike & Harris, 1990; Geertz. 1973) given my membership in the community I was researching. According to Geertz (1973), the nature of ethnographic work involves the interpretation of cultures. This responsibility, therefore, was amplified given the perspective I chose to take through this research study and the potential impact the knowledge produced about the cultural group in question.

The process of establishing rapport (Glesne, 2006) with the participants and making them feel more comfortable and at-ease toward the goal of generating expanded and insightful responses was paramount, especially given the sensitive nature of topics covered through this research study. Possessing the emic perspective did allow for increased ease and trust with respect to asking follow-up questions, probing for additional information and circling back to key questions later to generate a rich understanding of the organizational attitudes, perceptions, motivations, and norms within their respective campuses.

Maintaining the dual role of a current community college administrator and doctoral student/researcher definitely provided me with unequivocal access to the study participants and their emic view. Moreover, I clearly prefaced each research interaction with a reminder regarding confidentiality and extreme adherence to ethical standards pursuant to the human subjects protocol guiding this study. The additional process of embedding a transparent framework with respect to the data collected, analyzed and reported further solidified my research professionalism. Within quantitative research protocols, validity and reliability are established to promote trustworthiness of the research. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), qualitative research establishes trustworthiness and rigor through four specific criteria:

- **Truth Value:** Emphasizes the integrity of the data findings
- **Applicability:** Assess level of transferability to additional constructs
- **Consistency:** Replicability of study given research protocol
- **Neutrality:** Minimization of research biases

As part of the process of establishing truth value in the data collection and findings of this research study, I afforded the participants to review their respective survey responses and interview transcripts in addition to my analysis and correct any inaccuracies. Maintaining consistency was accomplished by establishing selection criteria of all recruited participants for the purpose of ensuring administrative role congruence. Moreover, the interview data were collected through a semi-structured process (Merriam, 2009) where questions were driven by the three research questions. Critical to this exercise was the adherence to the contextual nature of the interview questions in order to maximize efficiency given participants' time constraints. According to Hertz (1997), the process of self-reflection is an important qualitative method in order for researchers to question and explain how findings are constructed. This is the crux of neutrality within the research paradigm given my higher education administrative role and potential biases based on the participant responses within this study. Ultimately, maintaining a transparent research environment was paramount toward the goal of ensuring participants' narratives and meaning-making were in the forefront.

Thus, this entire research study process was structured in such a way to ensure proper documentation, validity, and reliability (Creswell, 2009). Each of the participants routinely lauded the decision to pursue this research study given the potential contributions to

positively impact practice and simultaneously improve Student Equity Plans (SEPs) by integrating critical cultural competency and sensitivity initiatives with campus strategic priorities and outcomes. The following chapter discusses the research study findings that illuminate the thematic responses in greater detail.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to conduct exploratory mixed methods quantitative and qualitative research to investigate culturally competent student equity practices at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). The goal was to subsequently design and implement a statewide student equity report card that is culturally sensitive to HSIs and can be utilized as a lens to gauge college-wide initiatives and strategic planning efforts within a multitude of organizational levels. Findings from this study will help determine whether California Community Colleges integrate cultural competency initiatives into their Student Equity Plans for the purpose of successfully creating learning environments that are attuned to the academic and social needs of underrepresented populations, with special emphasis on Latinx students. An objective of this study was to identify examples of organizational learning models that align structural cultural sensitivity policies, practices, and procedures within the boundaries of the student equity framework as they pertain to access through completion outcomes. Data from this study were derived from 25 background demographic questionnaires and web-based surveys and 11 semi-structured phone interviews administered to California Community College student equity administrators employed at campuses designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs).

The mixed-method survey instrument was created and tailored for Chief Student Equity Coordinators/Administrators and disseminated via a Google Forms platform. Questions began with two demographic prompts in regard to participants' current HSI-designated California Community College campus and administrative role. Multiple-choice

questions comprised the crux of the survey, culminating with an optional open-ended prompt asking for participants to provide their respective definition of equity and diversity and whether these two concepts are synonymous or divergent. Participants were also asked to respond to Likert scale questions to indicate the effectiveness of equity, cultural competency, and HSI initiatives and strategies within each college. Leadership questions were also included to collect data pertaining to the institutional challenges faced by administrators attempting to integrate HSI initiatives from an organizational change framework. The survey concluded with a request indicating whether the respondent would be willing to participate in a follow-up phone interview in order to provide more in-depth information regarding the equity and cultural competency practices employed at their institution. A copy of the survey instrument can be found in Appendix C.

Qualitative data were collected from the follow-up interview with 44% (N=11) of the respondents that participated in the survey. These questions focused on the strategies and processes implemented by Student Equity Coordinators/Administrators in terms of integrating cultural competency initiatives within their colleges' organizational priorities and institutional outcomes. Interview questions also included open-ended prompts on the integration of HSI initiatives with respect to college Student Equity Plans (SEPs). Interview questions are included in Appendix D.

Research Questions

This chapter will present findings that are congruent with each of the research questions that guided this study. Specifically:

- I. What culturally competent practices do student equity coordinators and administrators at HSI-designated California Community Colleges report implementing in their Student Equity Plans?

- II. How do these institutions measure cultural competency within their respective Student Equity Plans?
- III. What are differences and similarities in views according to HSI status of the college among faculty, staff, and administrators?

This chapter is divided into several sections detailing the response rate from the background demographic questionnaire of the survey and follow-up interview respondents, the mixed method survey and follow-up interview, and a discussion of the research findings from the quantitative web-based survey and qualitative interview process. The discussion of the research findings is aligned with the three research questions guiding this study.

Summary of Participants

The research participants were selected for both surveys and interviews based on the following criteria: 1) current employment as the primary student equity coordinator or administrator (or designee) within a California Community College (CCC) campus, and 2) employed at a CCC campus designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). The term student equity coordinator varies depending on the organizational structure of the respective CCC but is primarily defined as the main contact person for the campus who is responsible for the Student Equity Plan (SEP).

For the purposes of this research study, participants carried a wide array of job titles stemming from student equity coordinator to vice president of student services. Participants who completed the web-based survey (N=25) were previously discussed in Chapter 3, including an expanded overview of their descriptions within Table 5. To protect the identity of the interview participants and also maintain the confidentiality grounded within the construct of this research study, pseudonyms were created for each participant.

Survey and Interview Response Rates

The web-based survey (Appendix C) was sent via email to 93 prospective participants. Although there are currently 114 California Community College campuses, only 93 are designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). Each email message contained a direct link to the informed consent form, background demographic questionnaire, and web-based survey via a Google Forms platform. Out of the 93 survey solicitations sent, 25 ultimately completed the survey for a response rate of 26.8%.

Three surveys were not completed and thus data were excluded from this study. Of the 25 completed surveys, 11 respondents agreed to participate in the follow-up qualitative phone interview. Consequently, all participants were current Student Equity Coordinators and/or Chief Student Services administrators employed within the California Community College system at a campus designated as an HSI.

The follow-up phone interviews were conducted with a small subset of the initial survey participants (N=11). Participants who submitted a completed web-based survey were subsequently invited to participate in a follow-up phone interview (Appendix D). The response rate was 44% after five separate solicitations during Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. Interviews were conducted via telephone appointment and utilized the same series of questions, but tailored to Student Equity Coordinators/Administrators. Interviews ranged in duration from 30 and 60 minutes in length. The interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed, and coded.

Survey and Interview Demographic Data

Given the mixed-method construct of this research study, demographic data were collected from participants through the web-based survey instrument and follow-up phone interviews. This section outlines the characteristics of all study participants, demographic data, and descriptive statistics of various equity and cultural competency initiatives within the Hispanic-Serving Institutional (HSI) context.

Survey Respondents – Student Equity Coordinators/Administrators

The initial section of the web-based survey instrument asked several questions regarding the personal demographic characteristics of the participants entrusted with the coordination and administration of their colleges' Student Equity Plan (SEP). Questions asked participants for their current role/position, age, ethnicity, gender, highest level of education, length of employment within the California Community College (CCC) system, and the assessment of their colleges' effectiveness in terms of addressing diversity initiatives. Figure 2 from page 42 provides a breakdown of survey participants. These data were collected in order to identify patterns in leadership characteristics, including continuity of leadership and its possible effects on equity and cultural competency integration outcomes.

As demonstrated in Figure 3, survey respondents were comprised of senior and mid-level administrators and the age group breakdown consisted of one in the 20-29 age group, six in the 30-39 age group, ten in the 40-49 age group, and eight in the 50-59 age group. Figure 4 expands on the survey participants' ethnic background, with twelve of the participants identifying as Latinx, eight identifying as White, four as African American, and

one as “*other*.” Figure 5 depicts the participants’ gender, with fourteen of the participants identifying as male and eleven as female.

Participants were also asked to indicate their highest level of education in addition to the aforementioned demographic questions, Figure 6 shows these responses in which eleven indicated possessing a Master of Arts/Master of Science/Master of Education, ten possessed a Doctor of Education, two possessed a Doctor of Philosophy, and two possessed a degree classified as “*other*.” Moreover, Figure 7 provides data on the participants’ years of California Community College service, with six indicating 1-5 years, three with 6-10 years, seven with 11-15 years, seven with 16-20 years, and two with 21-25 years of employment.

The final question within the web-based survey was optional in nature, yet 17 participants responded with tangible insight. Consequently, participants were asked, “*How do you define equity and diversity? Are these concepts synonymous or divergent in your opinion?*” Table 6 provides responses to these prompts.

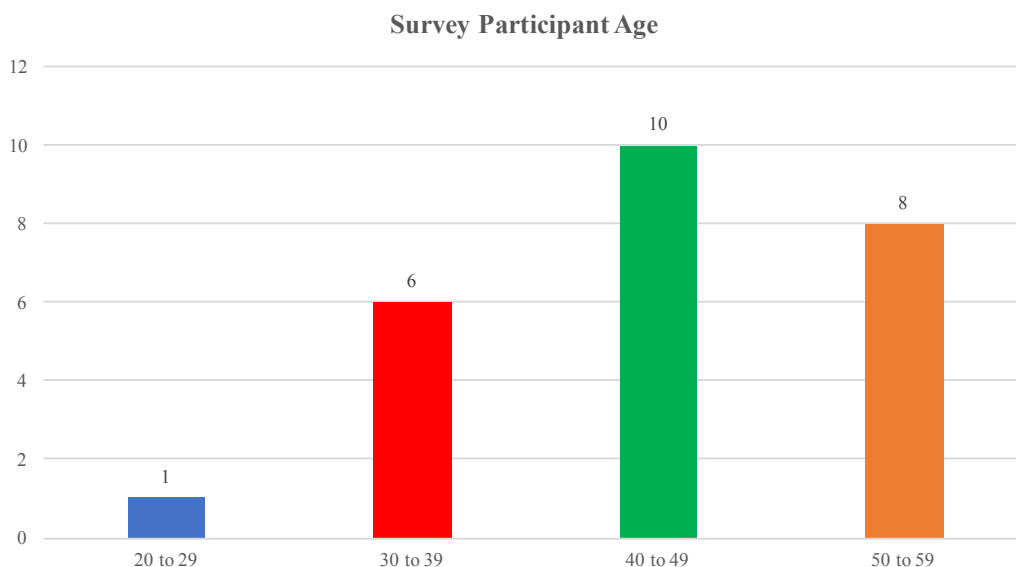


Figure 3. Survey Participant Age Breakdown

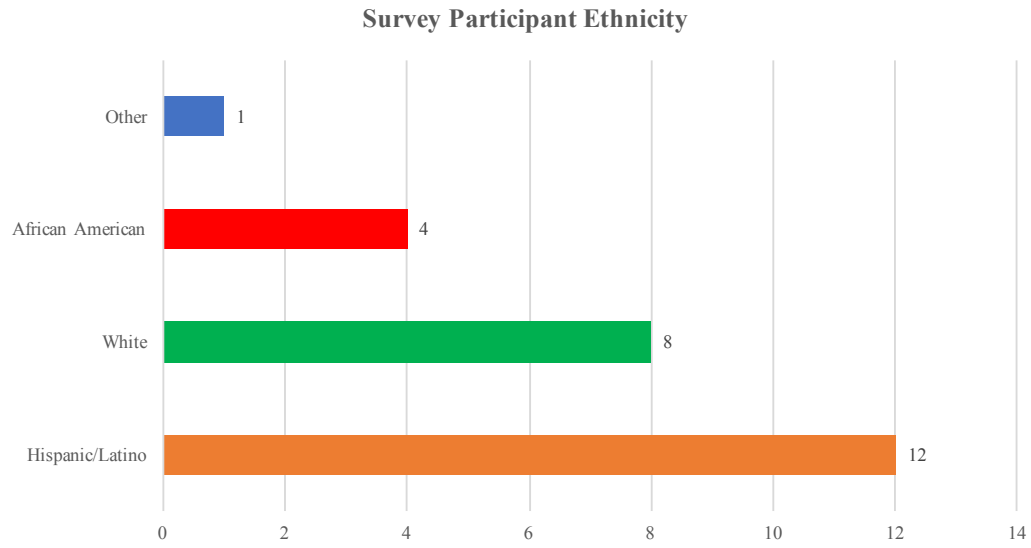


Figure 4. Survey Participant Ethnicity Breakdown

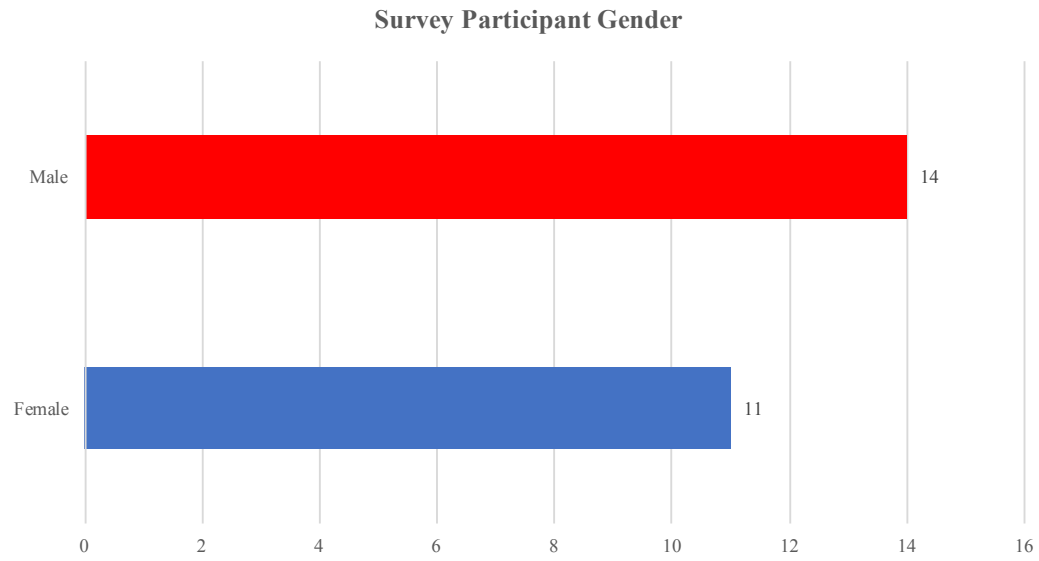


Figure 5. Survey Participant Gender Breakdown

Survey Participant Highest Educational Level

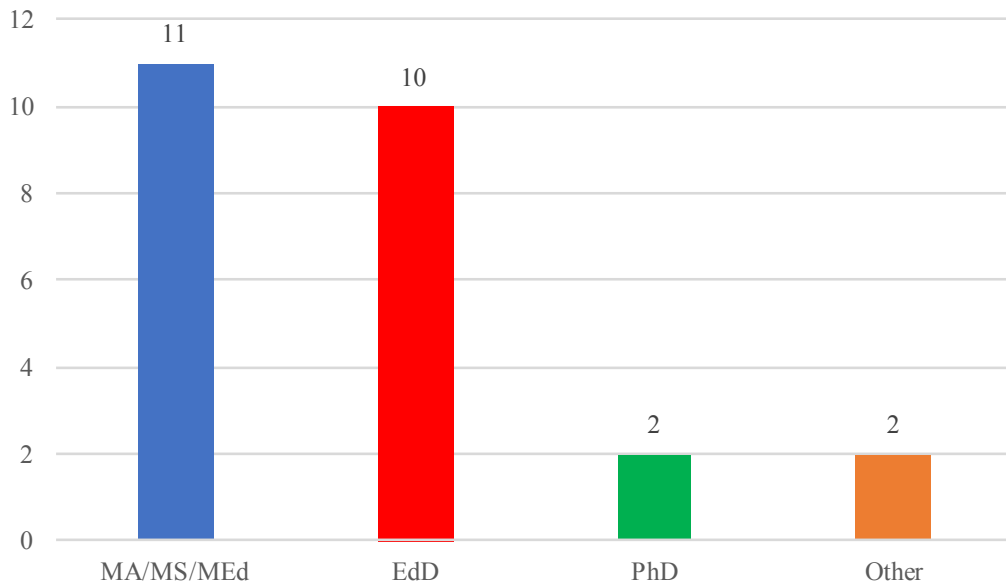


Figure 6. Survey Participant Highest Educational Level Attainment

Survey Participant Years of CCC Employment

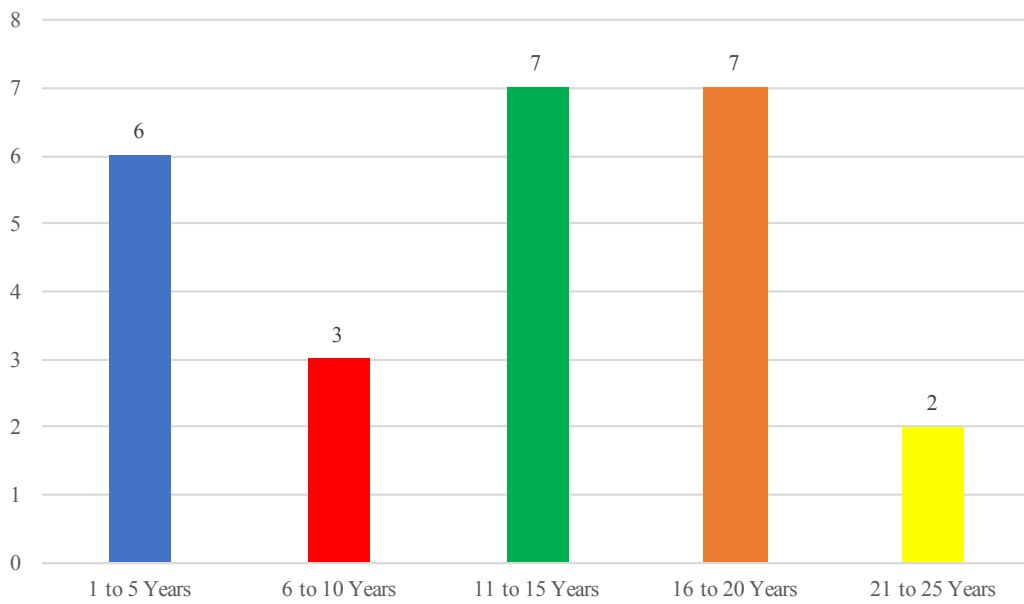


Figure 7. Survey Participant Years of California Community College Employment

Table 6
Participant Responses to Optional Survey Question – Equity and Diversity Definition

Name ²²	Campus Name ²³	Response
Tony	Inland Empire College	Equity is working at bringing groups not succeeding to an acceptable level of success and beyond. Diversity feeds into equity in that it represents all of the students (groups) that need to be served and goes beyond racial and ethnic identities.
Jennifer	Neighborhood College	Equity, diversity and social justice I believe are 3 interrelated concepts. Equity to me provides access and opportunities to ensure equitable treatment and equalize the playing field by looking at the strengths of our students to close achievement gaps. Diversity embraces and incorporates the differences of various groups, i.e. race, religion, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disabilities, gender or gender identity/expressions, language, etc.

²²Participant names were assigned pseudonyms for anonymity.

²³Campus names were assigned pseudonyms for anonymity.

Kurt

Ocean View College

While equality is about sameness, equity is about fairness. **Equity** is a prerequisite to equality. Within the context of student equity, equity is about tailoring services, programs, and resources to the specific needs of disproportionately impacted students, many of whom come from historically underrepresented, and under-served populations. **Diversity** is important but often falls short when the definition is not connected to inclusion and particularly when the 'diversity' definition is limited solely to demographic representation. **Diversity** does not automatically assume that the college environment is inclusive or welcoming. An inclusive environment is essential to access, completion, and transfer. Thus, professional and student development opportunities, physical environments (art, posters, etc.), and curricular changes that raise cultural competence and enhance empathy are essential to ensuring student equity.

Michelle

Foothill Valley College

Equity is defined by the visual cartoon given by the CCCCCO. This was the image with the boxes showing that what is equitable is not defined in any one way or with one box. **Diversity** is different to me. It can include LGBTQ as well as other under-represented groups.

Manuela	Rose College	Divergent. These mean two separate things. Equity is ensuring students get what they need in order to succeed. Diversity is identifying the cultural, ethnic, linguistic, etc., backgrounds of our students.
Claudia	Northern Vista College	Everyone has access to the same opportunities – Divergent.
Aurelio	Agriculture College	They are not synonymous.
Matthew	Central College	Providing the experience and opportunity for each individual that allows them to succeed based on their unique strengths and challenges.
George	North County College	Equity is providing students with the resources necessary to remove barriers in their academic journey. Diversity is celebrating and understanding the differences inherent in individual students that constitute the student body. These are divergent concepts, but understanding and addressing both matters ultimately improves student success.
Rachael	South City College	Being cognizant of individual differences and addressing them by providing equitable opportunities for academic success.
Diego	Coastal Inland College	Equity is providing resources necessary to give everyone equal opportunities to succeed, while diversity highlights differences among groups and individuals. Diversity helps to identify lack of equity.

Jose	Steamboat College	Equity - Some students need a hand; Some need two. Diversity is a commitment to the principle and practice of Inclusion.
Liliana	Stateline College	Equity is making sure that everyone's outcome is the same while using various resources and various amounts of resources to achieve the goal. Diversity are the unique qualities possessed culturally and environmentally by groups of people that separates them from another group who may share similar attributes.
Josh	Grass Valley College	Equity is creating equal opportunity for identified groups by providing additional support and resources to that group. Diversity is having different types of students on campus, they are very different.

**Participant Responses to Optional Survey
Question – Equity and Diversity Definition Summary**

Given the individual responses to the optional survey question prompting participants to provide their respective definitions of equity and diversity, two distinct features were revealed. First, the majority of respondents utilized an operational definition of the two aforementioned constructs by aligning their responses with those of the CCCCCO. Second, only a handful of respondents specifically indicated definitions were those stemming from their own personal and/or professional experiences. A multitude of thematic paradigms were identified within this optional survey question. Specifically, the following terms and factors were proposed by respondents within the context of equity and diversity:

Equity

- Continuity of success for all groups
- Equalization of the playing field
- Pre-requisite to equality
- Resources
- Opportunities
- Breaking down systemic barriers
- Ensuring similar outcomes

Diversity

- Inclusivity
- Embracing differences
- Must be connected to inclusion
- Opportunities
- Helps to identify lack of equity
- Unique qualities
- Representation

Social justice was also identified as a critical construct within the process of contrasting equity and diversity. Serving as a vehicle for promoting the vigilance to break down systemic barriers, respondents utilized social justice in order to expand equity and diversity efforts at their respective colleges. Diversity simply referred to representation while equity involved a deeper understanding and intentional dismantling of the systems through which inequities were designed and are continually perpetuated. Equity-minded educators ultimately approach work through a social justice and oppression reduction lens, challenging systems, processes, and biases with an acknowledgement of the historical and sociopolitical context of higher education.

Interview Respondents – Student Equity Coordinators/Administrators

Participants who completed the follow-up phone interviews (N=11) were asked to review their respective background demographic questionnaire and survey responses prior to their sessions. Four vice presidents and three student equity directors comprised the majority

of respondents as indicated in Figure 8. Table 7 provides a description of the interview participants. Figure 9 depicts the age group breakdown for the interview participants, five of the participants were in the 30-39 age group, four in the 40-49 age group, one in the 20-29 age group, and one in the 50-59 age group. Figure 10 expands on the interview participants' ethnic background, with six of the participants identifying as Latinx, three identifying as White, one as African American, and one as "other." Figure 11 depicts the participants' gender, with six of the participants identifying as male and five as female.

Participants were also asked to indicate their highest level of education in addition to the aforementioned demographic questions. Figure 12 shows these responses in which five indicated possessing a Master of Arts/Master of Science/Master of Education, three possessed a Doctor of Education, two possessed a Doctor of Philosophy, and one possessed a degree classified as "other." Moreover, Figure 13 provides data on the participants' years of California Community College service, with six indicating 1-5 years, three with 6-10 years, one with 11-15 years, and one with 16-20 years of employment.

The interview background questionnaire culminated with a request to expand on the participants' assessment of the effectiveness of their respective campus diversity initiatives. Figure 14 depicts these responses, which eight indicated as moderately effective and three categorizing these efforts as slightly effective. This question was designed to establish a foundational framework for the purposes of the one-on-one phone interviews and to gauge the participants' comfort level with discussing theoretical constructs pertaining to equity, diversity, and cultural competency on their respective campuses.

Table 7
Interview Participants

Name ²⁴	Campus Name ²⁵	Position
Aurelio	Agriculture College	VP of Student Services
Wagner	Mary College	VP of Student Services
Manuela	Rose College	VP of Student Services
Sophia	South Valley College	VP of Student Services
Matthew	Central College	Student Equity Director
Kurt	Ocean View College	Student Equity Director
Rebecca	Bluff College	Director of SSSP & Equity
Rachael	South City College	Student Equity Coordinator
Liliana	Stateline College	Student Success Manager
Jose	Steamboat College	Student Equity & Diversity Manager
Patrick	Valley College	Director of Equity & Inclusivity

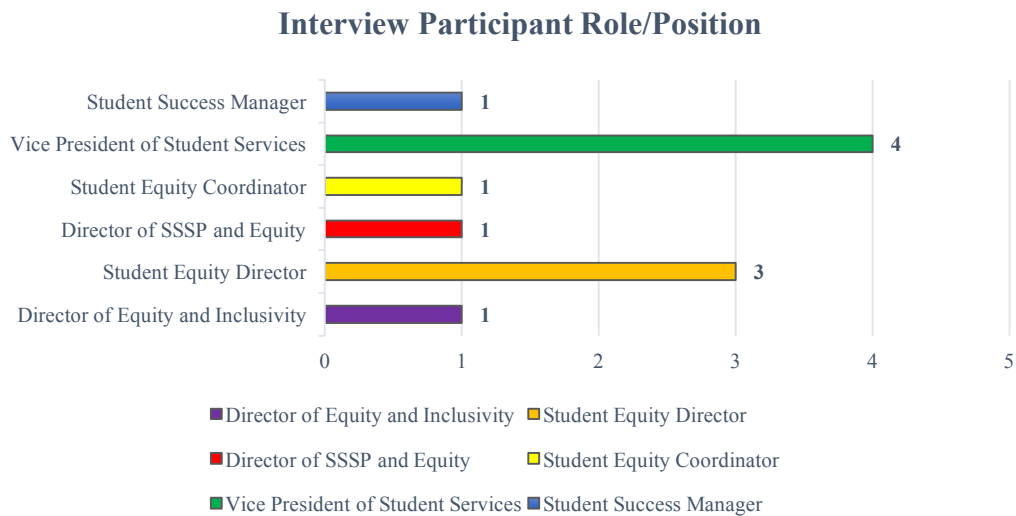


Figure 8. Interview Participant by California Community College Role/Position

²⁴Participant names were assigned pseudonyms for anonymity.

²⁵Campus names were assigned pseudonyms for anonymity.

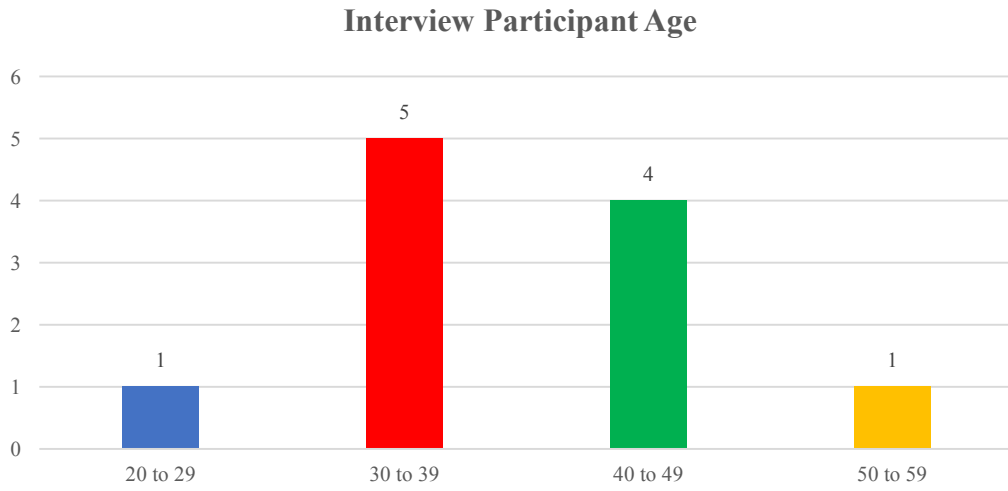


Figure 9. Interview Participant Age Breakdown

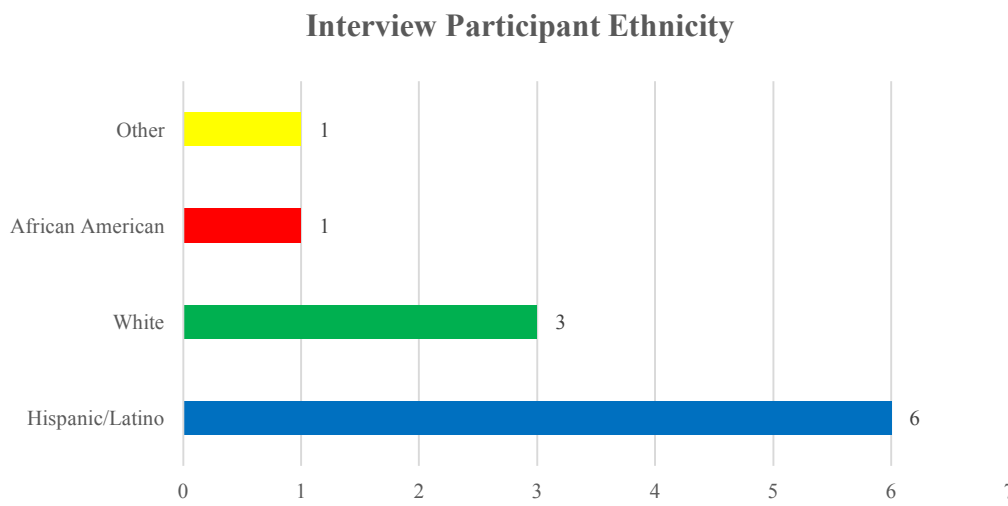


Figure 10. Interview Participant Ethnicity Breakdown

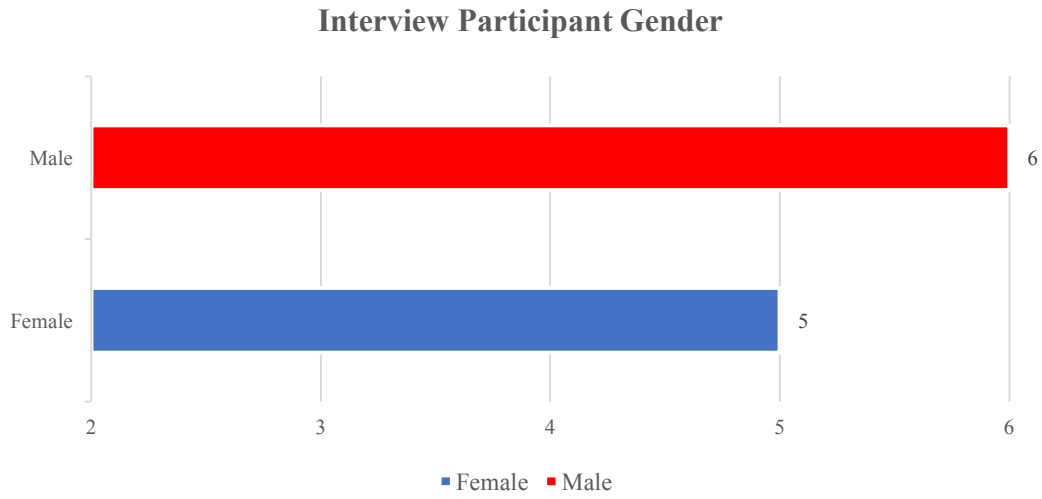


Figure 11. Interview Participant Gender Breakdown

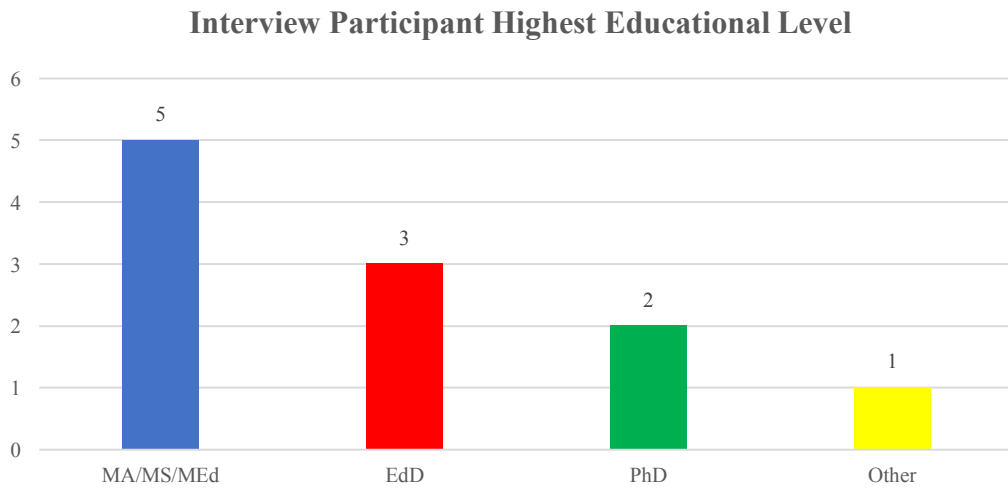


Figure 12. Interview Participant Highest Educational Level Attainment

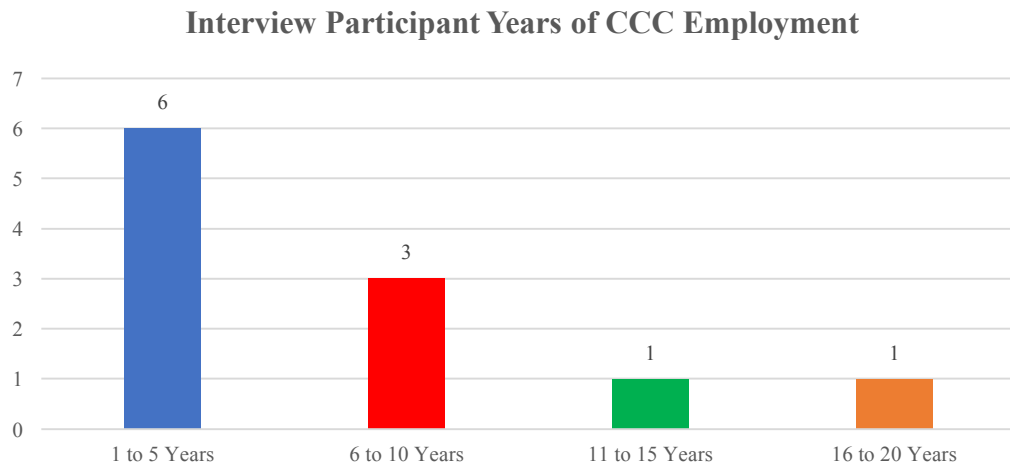


Figure 13. Interview Participant Years of California Community College Employment

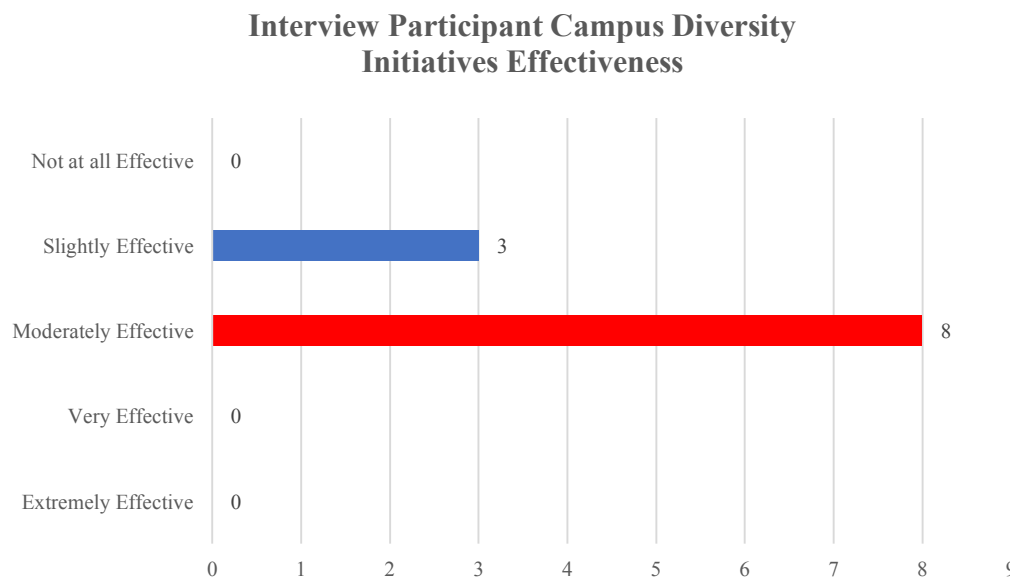


Figure 14. Interview Participant Assessment of Respective Campus Diversity Initiatives Effectiveness

Participant Definition of Equity and Cultural Competency

Data collected from the interviews were coded for thematic contextualization as they pertained to the organizational learning process aligned with student equity and cultural competency and sensitivity. The primary themes that arose from the interview data below supported those from both the demographic background questionnaire and web-based survey, which included the following: 1) Institutional Capacity, 2) Organizational Culture, and 3) Lack of Cultural Competency/Sensitivity Mindedness.

Participant responses from the interviews were framed within the aforementioned thematic constructs (Merriam, 2009) and subsequently aligned with the research study questions. The following section provides critical insight by respondents by contextualizing how they define equity and cultural competency. Respondents indicated theoretical and practice-based methods, initiatives, policies, and practices that have been utilized at their respective colleges which were designed to create inclusive learning environments. The responses were as follows:

Manuela (Rose College): Entering her second year as the Vice President of Student Services, she possessed over 23 years as a college administrator within the California State University system, including 8 years at her current institution in various administrative capacities. Manuela was truly vested in the process of integrating equity and cultural competency within her college's organizational set standards, which included creating transparent student learning outcomes (SLOs) and program learning outcomes (PLOs) that align with the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) student equity mandates. When asked to define student equity and cultural competency, she responded as follows:

Equity

First, I measure student equity through three forms. I subscribe to the methodology that I learned from the USC Center for Urban Education, which is to measure achievement gaps by drilling down to course level to identify if there are any achievement gaps that exist by race, ethnicity, gender and special population groups as defined by the Chancellor's Office. Second, determining if there are any groups that are disproportionately impacted more than other groups. The third measure is to look at the student population overall. For example, at my institution, we have 30,000 student headcount and 50.8% of the students are Latinx.

Cultural Competency

Cultural competency to me is ensuring that our faculty staff, administration, Board of Trustees, that they are aware of the specific needs of the student groups that we serve, by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation. Also, that we understand how our own individual history and privilege plays into this. We've been able to bring in experts to help our faculty, staff, and managers understand ... our Board of Trustees, we advise them too ... to understand because I think this is one of the more challenging concepts for them to wrap their brain around. If they understand their own history, their own privilege and then also the needs of our student population, we can have constructive conversations.

Kurt (Ocean View College): Serving as the Student Equity Director, which he had overseen for the last 3 years, he established himself as a dedicated higher education professional with a career spanning almost 12 years. Kurt also oversaw various other student services programs that intersect with equity efforts such as First-Year Experience, Outreach, Recruitment, Retention, Puente, and Umoja (community and critical resource dedicated to enhancing the cultural and educational experiences of African American and other students).

He defined student equity and cultural competency as follows:

Equity

Automatically, I start in terms of the Chancellor's Office guidelines, so the way that we currently measure student equity, by those definitions are how we do our disproportionate impact study and we look at those five indicators that we just aggregate by demographic information. Our specific institution also includes age as well, so that we can do, if necessary, bivariate and trivariate analyses. We've also, as an institution, included LGBTQIA but that's been a challenge. There's just simply no data or that data is not released from the Chancellor's Office, even though they aggregate it and although they collect it. That's essentially the institutional or the

Chancellor's Office definition. As a department, we define student equity as fairness. We talk about the necessity that we have equity-mindedness versus equality-mindedness and that the work that we do ensures that everyone gets an opportunity to meet their goals by providing tailored services and programs. We also keep in mind that there are certain populations that have been historically underrepresented and underserved and keeping that in mind, we tailor our services accordingly.

Cultural Competency

I think it's an awareness. It's being able to essentially challenge your own fill-in-the-blank-centrism, that not everybody has the same values, not everybody expresses themselves the same way, and to make sure that you're aware of your own biases and the lens that you see people's behaviors and interactions. I also don't define cultural competency as knowing every nuance of the many cultures that are being served by the institution. It's more of an awareness of your own culture and how it could potentially bias you or potentially impact the way that you interact with a student or interpret a student's action, or even a student's willingness to participate or what their motivations may be.

Patrick (Valley College): Currently serving as the inaugural Student Equity

Director, Patrick was also relatively new to his position, after recently celebrating one year of service within the CCC system. He possessed 10 years of higher education experience, recently transitioning from the University of California system upon completion of his Ph.D. degree. Given his extensive social justice background, Patrick also coordinated Title IX efforts at his institution. He defined equity and cultural competency as follows:

Equity

Personally, I would say the way I think about equity is probably pretty well-aligned with the way in which Ethan Zell talks about creating an environment that is socially just. So, what I mean by that is the way that he might say, I'm paraphrasing, "We created a society where people have the ability to reach their full potential without the impediment of," I don't think he said this explicitly, but, without the impediment of multiple manifestations of social repression. Personally, culturally, structurally, and the like.

Cultural Competency

Cultural competency is a phrase that's an umbrella. What I've been recognizing in a number of places here, is that there are a certain set of skills that a certain set of mindsets that people who are working in diverse organizations should have under their belt to be able to be effective, to maybe even look at power differential. I think

cultural competency is sort of a piece out of that manual. I would say another piece to reframe around that would be cultural humility. That's a kind of skillset, of having a mindset of taking the backseat to really learning about other people, and not centering oneself in the process of being able to deliver in the case it was originally framed by cultural humility.

Jose (Steamboat College): Serving as the current Director of Equity and Inclusivity, he had only worked as an administrator within the California Community College (CCC) system for 1 year. He possessed almost 20 years of management experience within the California State University and University of California systems in a variety of previous capacities. In terms of defining equity and cultural competency as it relates to the work he does at Steamboat College, he stated:

Equity

The way I personally define student equity, we go back and forth in this type of work. Equity is not a new initiative or concern when we look at students who continue to be either marginalized, disenfranchised, considered by today's definition disproportionately impacted. That's nothing new. For me, I come from a student-centered perspective as a manager and administrator. I believe in the concept, "A rising tide floats all boats." However, there are populations that don't even have a boat. I want to make sure that those particular populations are being provided either the resources, the materials, the support to construct a vessel that can then float when the Institute says, "We're going to implement something now that is equity and fair for all. Therefore, all will benefit." For me, equity is focusing in on those student populations that don't have the resources, the wherewithal, the preparation to float, let alone swim or let alone have a boat or a vessel that keeps them afloat.

Cultural Competency

For me, cultural competency has to do with one's ability to understand and appreciate diverse cultures, languages, mores, values, dare I say from a global perspective, and why so. For me, cultural competency is having not only understanding and knowledge but then using it to build bridges. I do not necessarily have to speak Hmong to reach out to individuals who hail from the hills of Laos in the Southeast Asian experience. But if I understand the history of the struggle and parallel that, possibly, to immigrant experience here in the United States with other Southeast Asian populations or those from Mexico or South America, there's a level of cultural competency that I develop that allows me to build that bridge and dare I say 'NaJung' when I meet them for the first time. There's a responsibility as an educator, and dare I say a greater responsibility of an educator who oversees equity and diversity initiatives to have a strong cultural competency skill set. Whether it's because I have,

as a professional, the knowledge and experience to do that and the awareness that if I don't have it, to go seek it and get a better understanding of it.

Wagner (Mary College): With almost 10 years of community college experience, Wagner currently served as Vice President of Student Services. Prior to that administrative capacity, he served in a similar role at another HSI-designated California Community College. Moreover, he held additional roles at various out-of-state community colleges throughout his 24-year career in higher education. For the purpose of this research study, he defined equity and cultural competency as follows:

Equity

You know, I think when I talk about student equity, and we talk about equity, what we're really talking about is regardless of characteristics that we're providing an environment which all students can achieve at the same level. I think sometimes as a state, we have gotten a little bit too caught up in specific definitions. Some of that's because we have not done a good job in certain areas and helping to clarify what that means. Looking at racial ethnicity, looking at gender, age, disability status, socioeconomic, veteran status, you know those components that we've really pulled out through the student equity. But really for me when we talked about it, it's more than just meeting the requirements of the categorical program. The whole purpose is that every student that comes to us is provided an opportunity to be as successful as his or her peers in all of the programs and services provided by the college.

Cultural Competency

Cultural competency is an awareness and an ability to modify an environment in order to ensure equitable access for students in learning and in their experiences at the college.

Rebecca (Bluff College): Although relatively new to her current position as the Director of Student Support Services Program (SSSP) and Equity, she held various student affairs positions at several out-of-state 4-year institutions. In addition to her administrative role, Rebecca was highly engaged in a variety of institutional efforts including Guided Pathways, Achieving The Dream (ATD), and accreditation. She defined equity and cultural competency as:

Equity

That's actually a really timely question because we had our Achieving The Dream coaches on campus yesterday, and one of the pieces of feedback from our ICAT survey, where we scored the lowest, was on equity. The feedback from the group was that we don't share a common definition of equity, at least not one that's widely known across the campus. So, I can't say that we as an institution have defined equity. Instead, I think we're using the Chancellor's Office definition and kind of using that to guide our strategic planning. But what I would take a bit further is that I think that we also have to use elements of cultural competence to understand the context for that disproportionate impact. For example, when we look at the access indicator and we see that there is disproportionate impact for white students or for wealthy students, there's some context there that means maybe we shouldn't pour resources into that area specifically. I think that we need to develop as an institution a more robust definition of equity that includes that cultural competence component.

Cultural Competency

For me, cultural competence is not just an understanding of the various intersections of identity and how those things might inform the way a student would navigate his or her educational experience, but it's about developing the skills, knowledge, and abilities to sensitively address those. I can't say that we in community colleges have done as good of a job of developing in our staff those skills, knowledge, and abilities. Maybe in certain pockets. If I think about counselors, typically they have some kind of coursework in cultural competence, and I think in a lot of student affairs programs. But take a history faculty member who had a degree simply in history, that's probably not a part of their curriculum.

Rachael (South City College): With almost 15 years of California Community College experience, Rachael served as the Student Equity Coordinator. In addition to her robust student equity role at South City, she also managed the SSSP initiatives as well. She defined equity and cultural competency as follows:

Equity

Well, my personal definition comes in from that same definition on our campus. So basically, it is making sure that we provide the opportunity for all students to succeed on our campus regardless of their background whether it be their religious background, their sex, their ethnic background, their gender or economic circumstance.

Cultural Competency

Cultural competency for us would be, I'll put it in my own words, is making sure that we are cognizant of every student population that we serve and their possible traumas and experiences in terms of cultural experience or background. Making sure that we are cognizant of that and we can understand and relate in order to better serve our students and to actually implement better programs that will address some of their needs.

Liliana (Stateline College): Although in her role as the Student Success Manager, she was organizationally responsible for student equity initiatives at her institution. As an alumnus of Stateline College, she personally felt a connection to the disproportionately impacted student populations given her previous first-generation student and underrepresented status experience. Consequently, she defined equity and cultural competency as:

Equity

I see equity as an effort to provide the necessary tools and resources to those who are disadvantaged for whatever reason, whether it's mental, physical, financial, any of those things. How I would measure it is, which is ironic because being in a small community we are kind of isolated. Before I took this position, there wasn't, and it continues to be very little measurement, data collecting going on. When it comes to me personally, now you know that is one of my focuses. Basically, what I am doing is pulling data. I'm looking at, I'm measuring it as what is our demographics locally within our district?

Cultural Competency

Being in a smaller community and being so isolated. We're predominately a community comprised of a Hispanic population but yet controlled by White people, who many are uneducated and come from farming backgrounds. For example, last year I tried to coordinate an HBCU trip and had to deal with administration and colleagues asking me why am I doing this. I'm like, "Why was I doing this?" I'm shocked, "What do you mean, why am I doing this?" I would say, actually, campus-wide, any type of cultural competency humility is extremely low. It is very low. They don't understand it at all. Unfortunately, the students suffer from a lack of dialogue designed to foster cultural awareness or sensitivity.

Matthew (Central College): While having finished his second year as Student Equity Director, Matthew possessed almost 10 years of CCC experience. He also

coordinated activities and initiatives within the institution's student success program, which helped demystify educational and career pathways. As a former student at Central College, he was passionate about the role equity and cultural competency played toward student outcomes. Thus, he defined both as follows:

Equity

I'd say mine is pretty aligned with what the state requires. So, I'd say we have our five indicators: access, course completion, basic skills in ESL, completion certificate, and degree completion or transfer velocity. Those are based on what our campus research shows for our disproportionately impacted groups. Plus, the groups that the state mandates, or our veterans, foster and former foster youth, low-income. So, I'd say the way I'd define student equity would be that within our local context because it's our own research to show who our disproportionately impacted groups are, but also from the state perspective.

Cultural Competency

I would say the ability to recognize, but also recognize and appreciate, the different cultures and different perspectives of everyone around you. So, with that comes some knowledge about the different cultures. So, I think you're building towards cultural competency but you also have to be open to it in the beginning, too. I kind of see it as a something you work toward. Just because you have a good heart and good intentions and you believe in diversity does not mean you have structural mechanisms designed to align with the student experience. Cultural competency, to me, you also have some knowledge background about different cultural differences, and different perspectives, and dynamics of different groups.

Aurelio (Agriculture College): With a robust career history within the CCC and CSU systems over the course of almost 20 years, Aurelio served as the Vice President of Student Services. He also possessed extensive teaching experience within the secondary and post-secondary levels, which helped him frame the work he conducted within the community college system. He defined equity and cultural competency as:

Equity

We use the CCCO standards for measuring equity, as far as the campus is concerned. And we use those standards for that purpose, so I guess it would be just the framework they provide for us, and that's kind of how we define student equity groups. How we define student equity within the contexts of the community college

for us, specifically for our institution, would be to ensure the students have equal access, equal opportunity within the programs that they are in. So that means courses are offered at the same time available throughout the day, you know, not all math classes are in the morning, not all dance classes are in the middle of the afternoon. Everything is equal as far as opportunity and access. So, we're making sure that all technology for students is available and that students are able to be able to access all of the things equally. Now again looking at the student groups with the CCCCCO framework, that's how we define the groups, but campus-wide we've really gone to more providing all the students opportunity and access equally.

Cultural Competency

You know that's something that we really haven't done much to be honest and that's why on my survey that you had given me previously I selected slightly effective. That's something we at our college definitely need to champion. You have to look at the bigger picture, the community is highly sensitive to this issue, it's conservative because of all the farmers but it's also very liberal in the sense that you have a lot of farm workers. And I think the way the community has been able to coexist so well is, they try to keep those conversations away from the main topics that surround the community. They have flared up from time to time and when they do they've been dealt with swiftly as far as they address them and move on. But I think the college reflects that also. Cultural competency isn't something that the college really dives into much. I think there's a fear, not a fear, a hesitancy from this president that we have at the college because she doesn't want to open that can of worms. And again, it's being in our geographical area, and having the conservative Board as far as the foundation Board that she has and being able to keep those relations up, I just don't think that she's ready to go there. I've inquired as to why we don't promote our HSI designation more, why isn't it something we really celebrate and put out there. She's commented that she shares a fear that someone can feel left out.

Sophia (South Valley College): As the first female Vice President of Student

Services in its 75-year history, Sophia had an extensive career history spanning almost 20 years at the same institution. She had a deep connection to the institution given her previous enrollment as a first-generation college student. With a vehement commitment to student success and viable educational and career outcomes, she defined equity and cultural competency as follows:

Equity

My own interpretation of that is being able to provide the same education quality education and services to all students so that all have the same opportunity regardless of who they are, where they come from and what mistakes they've made in life. That's

what student equity means to me. However, we know that that's not the case. I say that just in general terms, because reality not all students will have the same opportunities in life.

Cultural Competency

Cultural competency is essentially being aware of your own biases when it comes to serving anybody, whether it's a student, the community member serving others, and having a sense of understanding of who they are, where they come from, their traditions, it's understanding somebody else and understanding your own biases so that when you serve that person in any way that you do, that you understand where they're coming from.

Participant Definition of Equity and Cultural Competency Summary

These student equity administrators all offered various equity and cultural competency definitions based on several factors, which included: 1) previous experience as a first-generation student, 2) professional experience with disproportionately impacted student populations, 3) geographical proximity to diverse societal influences, and 4) external influences (e.g., CCCCO, USC CUE, RP Group, M2C3, etc.). In terms of equity, participants indicated a variety of thematic constructs to encapsulate their operational definitions. In addition to the definitions driven by the CCCCO, these constructs included:

- Identify and measure achievement gaps.
- Equity as fairness.
- Equity-mindedness versus equality-mindedness.
- Equal access and equal opportunities.
- Creating socially just environments.
- “A rising tide floats all boats.”
- Provided the resources, materials, and support to construct a vessel that can float.
- Providing environments where all students can achieve at the same level.
- Lack of clarification in terms of what comprises equity definitions.
- Every student is provided an opportunity to be successful.
- Utilize cultural competency elements to provide context for disproportionate impact.
- Campus does not share a common definition of equity, or one that is widely known campus-wide.

With respect to cultural competency, many of the responses coincided with respondents' personal definitions given the current lack of cultural competency integration within SEPs. These constructs included the following:

- Understanding how our own individual history and privilege plays into bias.
- Awareness and ability to modify an environment to ensure equitable access.
- Possessing a skill set or mindset in order to effectively serve all students.
- Possessing cultural humility as a mechanism for building bridges.
- Cognizant of power differentials.
- Not having a fear or hesitancy to engage in all pertinent conversations.
- Understanding that structural mechanisms should be aligned with the student experience.
- Ability to understand and appreciate diverse cultures, mores, values, etc.
- Awareness of your own culture and how it could potentially bias you or potentially impact the way you interact with a student or interpret a student's circumstances.
- Awareness that not everyone shares the same values.
- Awareness of your own biases and the lens you use to see people's behaviors and interactions.

Research Findings and Practices

Presentation of the quantitative and qualitative findings within the context of the literature, conceptual framework, the findings themselves, and the practical implications are included in this chapter. The discussion will be framed by the three research questions guiding this study. Quantitative data gathered through the survey instrument are presented to serve as statistical frequency information at the institutional, district, and state level. Qualitative data are discussed to provide in-depth information and richness, to supplement quantitative data, and to provide further explanation as to the organizational strategies and barriers to the integration of equity and cultural competency goals and objectives within an HSI context.

Research Question I: What culturally competent practices do student equity coordinators and administrators at HSI-designated California Community Colleges report implementing in their Student Equity Plans?

Many of the survey and interview respondents shared their respective culturally competent practices that are integrated into their colleges' Student Equity Plans (SEPs). While challenges certainly exist at the institutional level, several respondents conveyed unique and innovative ways of how their respective colleges' implement the aforementioned practices despite various organizational challenges.

Survey participants were asked to gauge their institution's commitment to student equity and given an opportunity to expand on their colleges' intentionality with respect to cross-cultural efforts. Consequently, the prompt asked, "*What steps does your college take to specifically integrate cross-cultural initiatives as part of its mission?*" Figure 15 demonstrates that responses were quite varied, with 76% (N=19) indicating that their campus applies or currently administers a Title V Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Federal U.S. Department of Education grant. The offering of cultural competency workshops and seminars for campus constituency groups (e.g., students, faculty, staff, administrators, community members, etc.) was acknowledged by 56% (N=14) of participants. In order to foster a positive access entry experience for new students, 40% (N=10) of participants stated that their college conducts Latinx student welcomes sessions. The creation of a physical campus location for a Cross-Cultural Student Services/Affairs or Curriculum Office and Diversity/Inclusion Office encompassed 28% (N=7) and 24% (N=6), respectively. The "other" prompt yielded insight into the large spectrum of cross-cultural integration strategies at HSI-designated California Community Colleges. Responses included the Social Justice & Equity Center (Kurt from Ocean View College), Campus Cultural Awareness Center

(Claudia from Northern Vista College), and Cultural Student Learning Communities and Dream Center resources (Wagner from Mary College). **Patrick (Valley College)** once again offered additional insight into his college’s efforts:

The college just hired me five months ago and I truly feel they want me to do some of the above but with limited funds and institutional placement of my role in the organizational chart, the reality is that these efforts will not transpire any time soon.

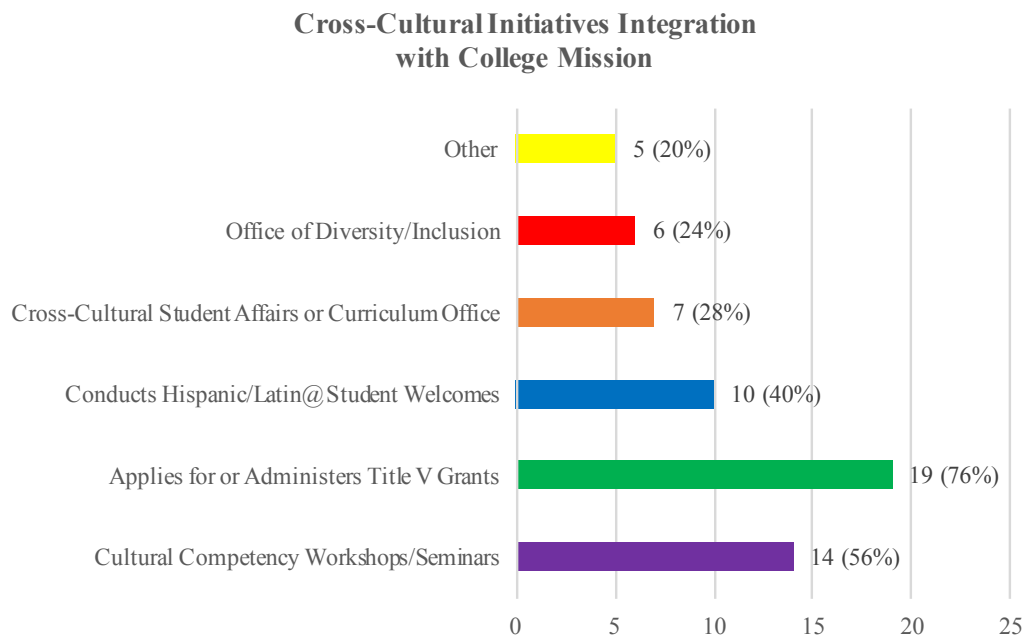


Figure 15. Cross-Cultural Initiatives Integration with College Mission

Survey participants were also asked, “*Which equity-serving programs are being implemented on campus?*” This question asked respondents to indicate which specific equity-serving programs were currently being implemented at their respective colleges. Figure 16 illustrates the specific programs, which included EOPS/CARE (100%; N=25), DSPS (100%; N=25), CalWORKs (100%; N=25), Foster Youth Services (96%; N=24), Veterans Services (96%; N=24), Financial Aid (92%; N=23), Puente Project for Latinx students (52%; N=13), Umoja for African American students (40%; N=10), Male Mentoring

Program (40%; N=10), and Female Mentoring Program (20%; N=5). Several participants (20%; N=5) also selected the “*other*” prompt and indicated additional equity-serving programs such as Mana (akin to Puente and Umoja for Pacific Islander students), Dreamer Center and LUPE (Latinos Unidos Por Educación) for undocumented students, PRIDE Center, and Padrinos for Latinx students.

Current Equity-Serving Programs on Campus

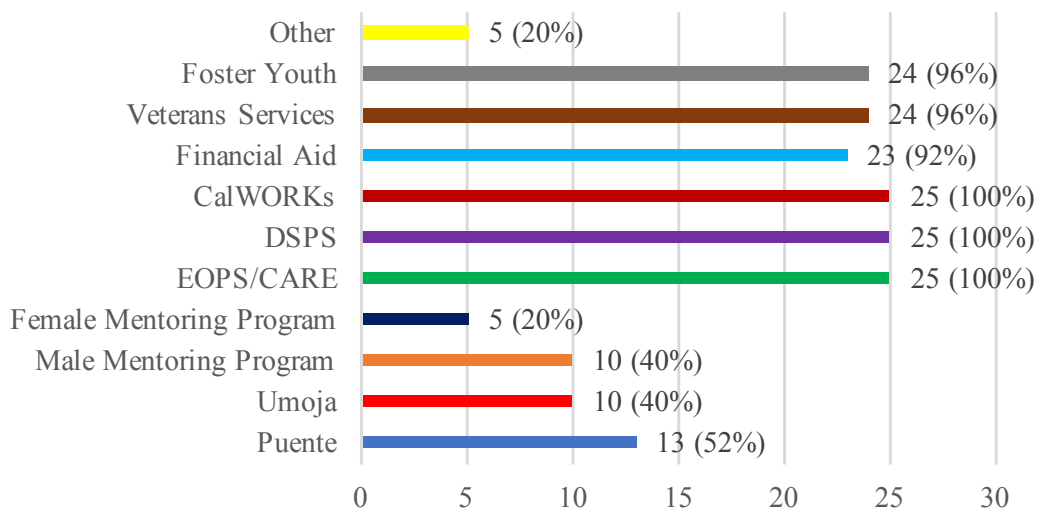


Figure 16. Equity-Serving Programs Currently Implemented on Campus

An additional survey question focused on the various systemic aspects of colleges’ structural processes such as academic instruction, HSI designation, institutional resources, and campus messaging to all stakeholders. Given the critical alignment between access to completion outcomes and instructional initiatives, participants were asked, “*How has your college been able to impact instruction to include equity and cultural competency program learning outcomes (PLOs)?*” Figure 17 provides the participants’ responses. According to Nunley, Bers, and Manning (2011), learning outcomes assessment practices in community

colleges vary with respect to comprehensiveness, approach, dissemination, use of results, and the extent to which they were either institutionalized or perceived as marginal to the core work of teaching and learning. Participants overwhelmingly cited faculty professional development as the highest-rated method for integrating student equity and cultural competency into its PLOs (92%; N=23). Within the “*other*” category, two participants (8%) indicated partnerships with the Male Community College Collaborative (M2C3) at San Diego State University (Patrick at Valley College) and the University of Southern California’s Center for Urban Education (Rachael at South City College) as strategies for building instructional capacity within an equity and cultural competency framework.

Equity and Cultural Competency Impacting PLOs

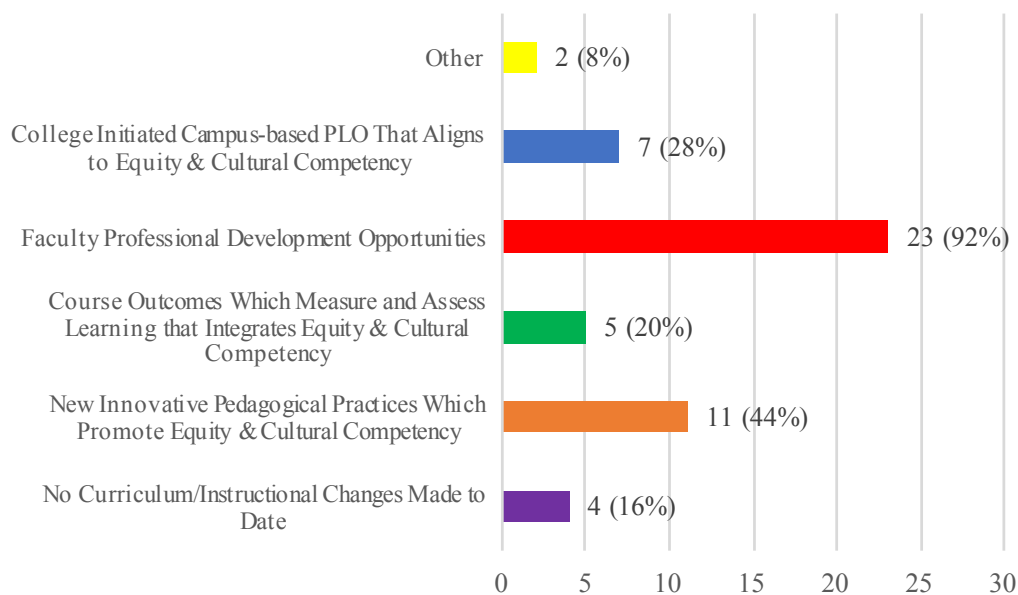


Figure 17. Equity and Cultural Competency Impacting Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

The impact of visible equity and culturally pertinent materials on college campuses can spur dialogue and a critical sense-of-belonging for students, thus survey respondents were asked, “*How does your college display cultural competency/sensitivity messaging on*

campus?” Figure 18 provides the participants’ responses. The largest responses garnered were for a campus Speaker Series (68%; N=17), Posters (52%; N=13), and Artwork (48%; N=12). Within the classroom context, faculty implementation of syllabi containing cultural competency/sensitivity messaging was only noted by a smaller number of participants (24%; N=6). The “*other*” category yielded various responses as well, including the offering of Cultural Events (Manuela at Rose College), and Committee Discussions (Rachael at South City College). Two additional responses from the “*other*” category also provided rich examples of cultural competency and sensitivity messaging. **Patrick (Valley College)** stated:

I am still learning about how we have done this historically given its impact on our student equity indicators. I have been consulting with people in leadership positions on ways we are falling short in these regards. Also holding impromptu public forums for national events are definitely impacting our campus climate.

Rebecca (Bluff College) also expanded on her college’s cultural competency/sensitivity messaging approach:

The process varies; mostly managed through Student Life and student organizations. Our North Campus offers cultural programming and faculty individually promote cultural activities. Some activities from International Student Affairs on campus also is included in these efforts too.

College Cultural Competency and Sensitivity Messaging

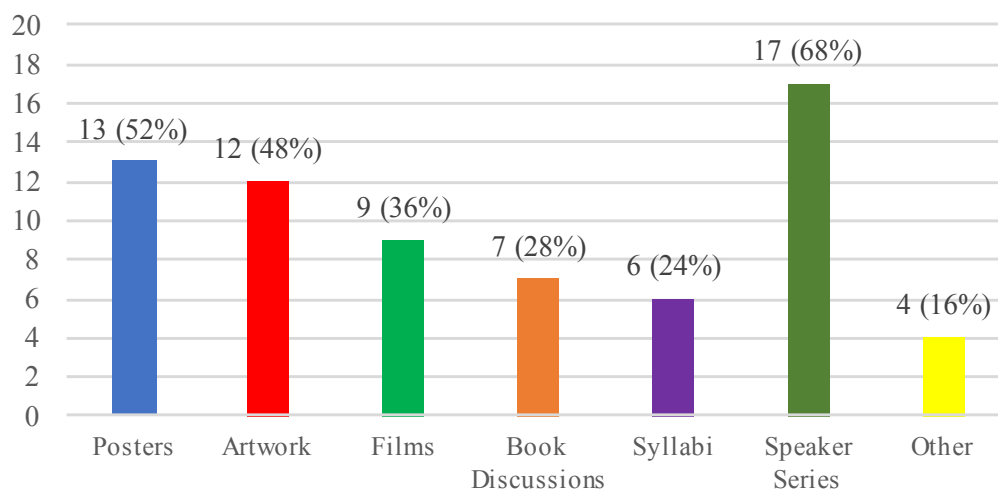


Figure 18. College Display of Cultural Competency and Sensitivity Messaging

The organizational implications and processes for integrating equity and cultural competency initiatives into California community colleges designated as HSIs is a major focus of this dissertation study. Survey respondents were asked, “*How have equity initiatives been integrated into the organizational structure of the college?*” Figure 19 provides the respective responses. Participants indicated a wide array of operational procedures and intentional efforts to incorporate equity-driven initiatives. Responses were fairly consistent across all question prompts, with Shared Governance (88%; N=22), Resource Leveraging and Allocations (84%; N=21), and Student Life Planning and Activities (76%; N=19) yielding the highest acknowledgements. Amongst the “*other*” category, several participants (12%; N=3) indicated varied insights into their colleges’ integration of equity initiatives from an organizational perspective. **Patrick (Valley College)** indicated, “I believe all of these above equity initiatives happen but I am not truly convinced of their efficacy as of yet to be completely honest.” **Kurt (Ocean View College)** stated that his

institution employs a Department of Student Equity and Social Justice and Equity Center to interface with organizational efforts aligned with equity mandates and outcomes. **Rebecca (Bluff College)** stated, “our Director of Equity representative serves on multiple campus-wide committees, including hiring search committees as well.”

Equity Initiatives Integration into College Organizational Structure

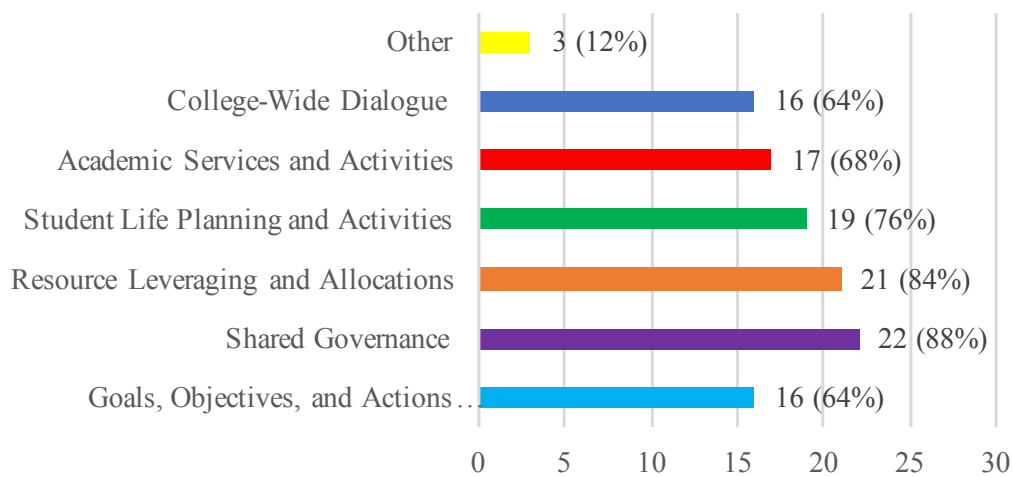


Figure 19. College Integration of Equity Initiatives into Organizational Structure

On the other end of the organizational spectrum for survey respondents was a question designed to drill down further based on the previous question. They were subsequently asked, “*Indicate organizational challenges that have impeded your college's ability to integrate cultural competency measures from a student equity perspective.*” This question was critical in order to understand the potential capacity and/or buy-in limitations that are impeding a colleges’ ability to fully embrace cultural competency measures from an organizational learning framework. Figure 20 provides the participants’ responses. Although the majority of barriers were viewed as minimal in nature, there were five specific significant areas that seemed to present an organizational challenge for participants.

Geographical Proximity, Financial Limitations, Lack of Resources, Lack of Faculty Support, and Lack of Diversity Buy-in were the most common emphasized response choices. Student Equity Coordinators and/or Administrators can engage in decision-making dialogue with fellow colleagues to ensure adequate organizational measures are employed to avoid the aforementioned challenges that can potentially create adverse outcomes for disproportionately impacted students.

Organizational Challenges - Integration of Cultural Competency Measures Impediment

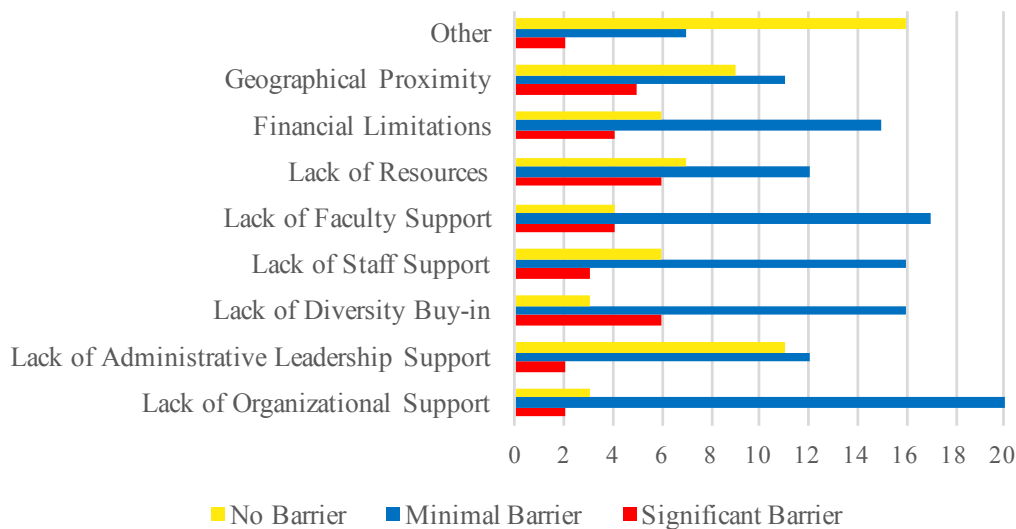


Figure 20. College Organizational Challenges That Impeded Ability to Integrate Cultural Competency Measures – Student Equity Perspective

Survey respondents were given an opportunity to share the impact of their colleges’ student equity practices by being asked, “How effective have various efforts or initiatives on your campus been in supporting attainment of equity goals on your campus?” Figure 21 provides the participants’ responses. While the previous question asked about the organizational challenges impacting the integration of cultural competency measures for

colleges, this question was specifically designed to gauge the effectiveness of campus-based efforts aligned with the promotion of student equity goals, objectives, and success outcomes. In terms of effective efforts or practices, four strategies were identified by participants as instrumental in their intentional campus equity goals: Staff Professional Development, Faculty Professional Development, Peer Mentoring, and Leadership Training for Administrators. On the other end of the spectrum, several equity-driven goal initiatives were assessed as ineffective. These highest rated ineffective efforts as assessed by participants included Cultural Competency Activities, Campus Student Equity Dialogue, and Diversity Training.

Effectiveness of Efforts/Initiatives in Support of Campus Equity Goals

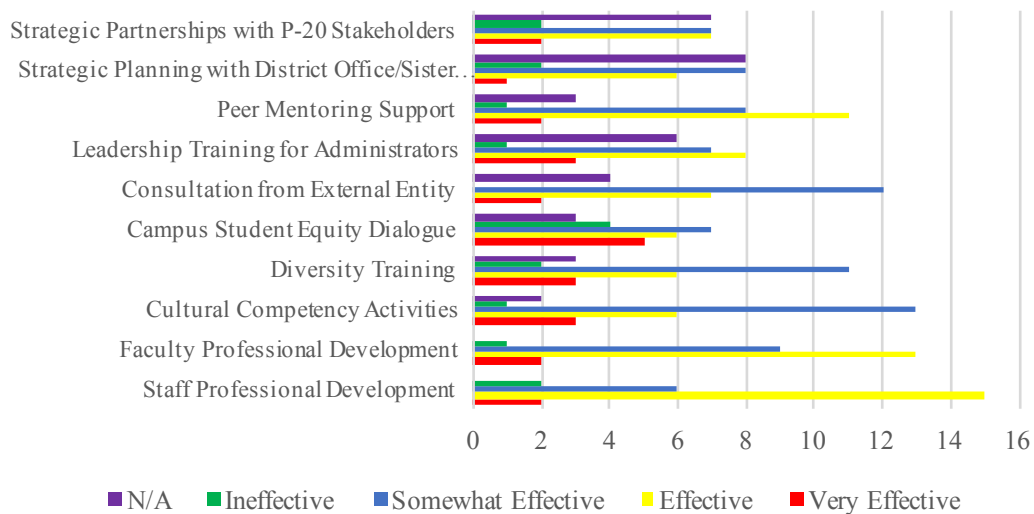


Figure 21. Effectiveness of Campus Efforts/Initiatives in Support of Equity Goals

The intentionality of integrating equity initiatives is paramount in order to measure and assess its impact on students, especially within the context of disproportionately impacted populations. Respondents were asked, “How have the following types of equity

and diversity-serving activities impacted your campus?” Figure 22 provides the participants’ responses. The highest rated impact activities included Guest Speakers (N=14), Flex Day Workshops framed within an Equity and Cultural Competency context (N=12), Flex Day Workshops within a Teaching and Learning context (N=12), campus Dialogue on Diversity and Race Issues (N=11), and Student Initiated/Facilitated activities during respective cultural heritage months (N=10).

Campus Impact of Equity and Diversity-Serving Activities

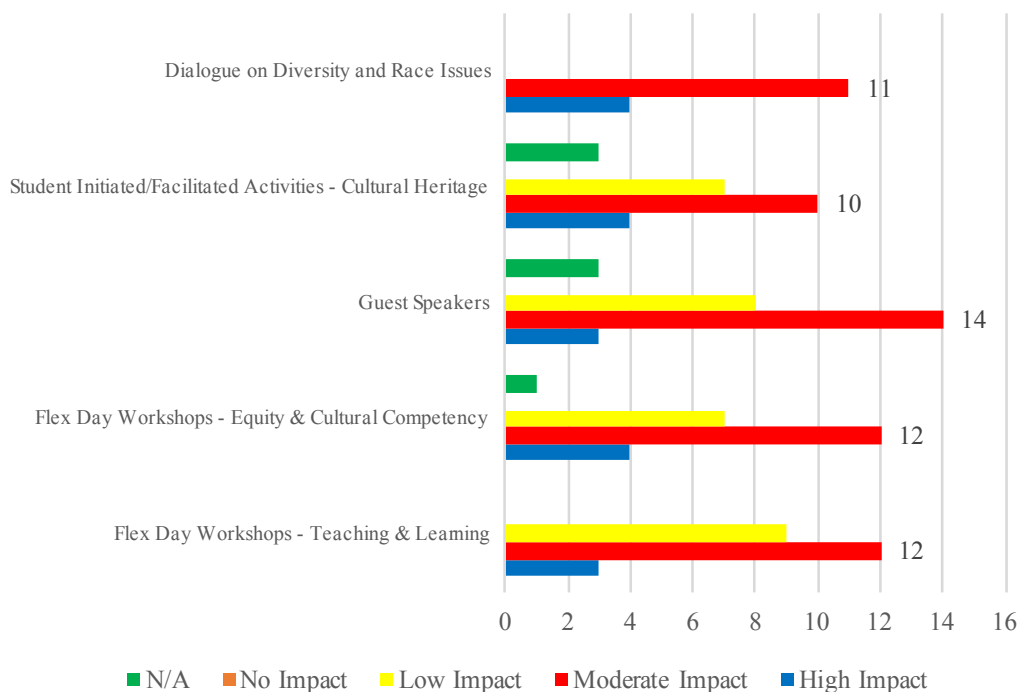


Figure 22. Impact of Campus Equity and Diversity-Serving Activities

Interview respondents also offered insight into the various culturally competent efforts expended at their respective colleges. Ranging from an engaging speaker series, professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, to curriculum redesign, participants shared insight into practices that are designed to move the cultural competency

needle forward within the Student Equity Plan (SEP) development and implementation process.

Patrick (Valley College) offered his college's experience with cultural competency and SEP initiatives, which can produce variable impact based on organizational influences:

What I would say is that we've had a few initiatives. We've had ethnicity-based groups come to campus. They'll do some innovative instruction methods. Other folks have visited with us to offer a variety of professional development training sessions during our staff and faculty flex days. 3CSN and Bensimon's group from USC are also frequent partners in our goal to implement an equity-mindedness framework here. The challenge though is that there seems to be an old guard that seems to be resistant to these types of conversations, and I am starting to see an acceptance of that approach by the administration.

Manuela (Rose College) also offered her college's extensive approach to the equity and cultural competency integration efforts:

That's been the crux of our student equity goals, our first is professional development. We made a partnership with Center for Urban Education and Estela and her team. We brought in an expert for unintended bias in hiring and cultural competence training. We brought in Darla Cooper at RP Group for her work with Students Support (Re)defined. We brought Rob Johnstone, he is currently leading the guided pathways effort for the state but he came in specifically to talk about how colleges can go beyond financial aid to support students. Some of the Lumina studies go beyond financial aid. We also had presentations on the multiple measures project and our math and English voted to place students based on high school GPA after his presentation. We brought in Diane Goodman, she's also from the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity and she's in what is equity versus equality versus diversity. We've also had an expert visit to talk about unintended bias in the classroom and what strategies on how to, in your teaching, to encourage cross dialogue between different groups. This semester we're bringing in a noted UCLA professor to talk about microaggressions because a lot faculty and staff, they don't know what that means but our students experience it regularly.

Rebecca (Bluff College) specifically talked about the impact faculty are having as part of the goal to integrate cultural competency measures into its SEP:

In terms of faculty, I think faculty are the ones placing, or really responsive, to the fact that cultural competency isn't as much of a priority in the equity plan, or in our equity procedures. They're the ones kind of responding; saying that these "boutique" programs really matter because it takes individual interactions to support these

students in a very particular way. We see the faculty advocating, but we only have a very small number of core faculty who are vocal about it, I think, or vocal in a way that's really visible to anyone. And so, they just sort of become the people who are nagging, and I don't know that they're taken super seriously.

Jose (Steamboat College) touched on the integration of campus colleagues to assist in the SEP process as he navigated the cultural competency construct:

I feel that there's now greater support to accelerate some of our training and development initiatives, especially around diversity and cultural competency. As the chair of the student equity committee, I attend President's Council and give updates. There's a constant now. There's a constant presence of our training, our diversity, our inclusion and our cultural competency growth as an institution. Of course, granted, it's easier with management. On our campus, because we're not represented, we don't have a union, but I'm building bridges with the CSEA union and the CTA union and leadership to ensure that they're included in whatever discussion and deliberations, and I'm not just rolling something out and saying, "Here, we have to do this." There's a practice of the shared governance, especially within our Student Equity Planning process. It's a shared ownership with this. I do feel that having access to upper administration in that capacity affords me the opportunity to build these bridges with faculty, staff, and administration. I'll be honest with you, everybody knows the equity plan has a lot of resources.

Research Question I Summary

This research question presented data gathered from participant survey and follow-up interview responses. It explored the integration of cross-cultural initiatives, implementation of equity-serving programs, equity and cultural competency impact within instructional PLOs, cultural competency/sensitivity messaging, equity initiative integration within organizational structures, organizational challenges impeding cultural competency integration, effectiveness of equity initiatives/efforts, and the impact of diversity-serving activities. Participants' experiences with these thematic constructs underscored the importance of recognizing that cultural competency practices within Student Equity Plans (SEPs) are varied yet consistently call for institutionalization from an organizational perspective.

The process of supporting disproportionately impacted student groups with dedicated programs and services that extend beyond binary categories is needed in order to foster sustainable learning environments that focus on the experiences and barriers impeding success outcomes. Moreover, expanding campus climate discussions that include pivotal campus constituency (e.g., faculty, staff, and administration) engagement and support is essential to connecting college initiatives and activities to student equity success indicators and simultaneously creating organizational structures that are equity-minded. This process is especially timely given the onboarding of new statewide initiatives and their intersection with equity and cultural competency measures such as Guided Pathways and AB705²⁶, which requires California community colleges to consider high school GPA or coursework as part of the menu of tools they use to determine whether a student is ready for college-level math and English classes. Perhaps now is the time for an increase in “boutique” programs that would require individual faculty, staff, and administration interactions to support disproportionately impacted students. These programs, although not entirely scalable, could provide for instructional and student services footprints that can move the equity and cross-cultural needle and ultimately increase success outcomes through the process of building bridges with faculty, staff, administration, and most importantly, students.

Research Question II: How do these institutions measure cultural competency within their respective Student Equity Plans?

The process of measuring and assessing Student Equity Plans (SEPs) are critical to the effective integration strategies of creating sustainable activities and initiatives designed to

²⁶ AB-705 Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012: matriculation: assessment. (https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB705)

move disproportionately impacted student groups from access to completion outcomes.

Various equity data analysis methods are employed by respondents' colleges, often utilizing external resources to bolster institutionally-driven practices.

Respondents provided insights into the measurement and assessment of student equity initiatives given its critical efficacy to the process of leveraging resources designed to impact disproportionately impacted groups. Moreover, the integration of cultural competency goals and objectives that create opportunities for all campus stakeholders to become more aware and sensitive to the unique challenges facing many student populations. Survey respondents shed light on how their colleges gauge the effectiveness of their student equity methods by being asked, *“How does the college measure and assess student equity goals and objectives?”* Figure 23 provides the participants' responses. The three highest responses were the utilization of previously established student equity plan (SEP) indicators (76%; N=19), the continuous tracking of progress utilizing data-driven indicators (68%; N=17), and the use of program review (60%; N=15), respectively. In terms of the *“other”* prompt, several responses provided insight into the participants' processes for identifying which student equity metrics are aligned with institutional priorities. Responses indicated the utilization of several approaches, including the 5-Column Model (Rachael from South City College), the Community College Survey of Student Engagement – CCSSE (Liliana from Stateline College), and metrics established within the College Strategic Plan (Wagner from Mary College). **Patrick (Valley College)** was extremely transparent in his approach to gaining traction with equity-driven goals and objectives congruent with his college's key performance indicators:

To be honest, I'm not sure yet. I think I will need to develop some strategies with our IR office. I've arrived in the middle of implementation (in some ways) which has not

always been very thoughtful of assessing the efficacy of the initiatives we're funding [single-loop learning], so I'm feeling like I'm trying to catch up from behind in that regard.

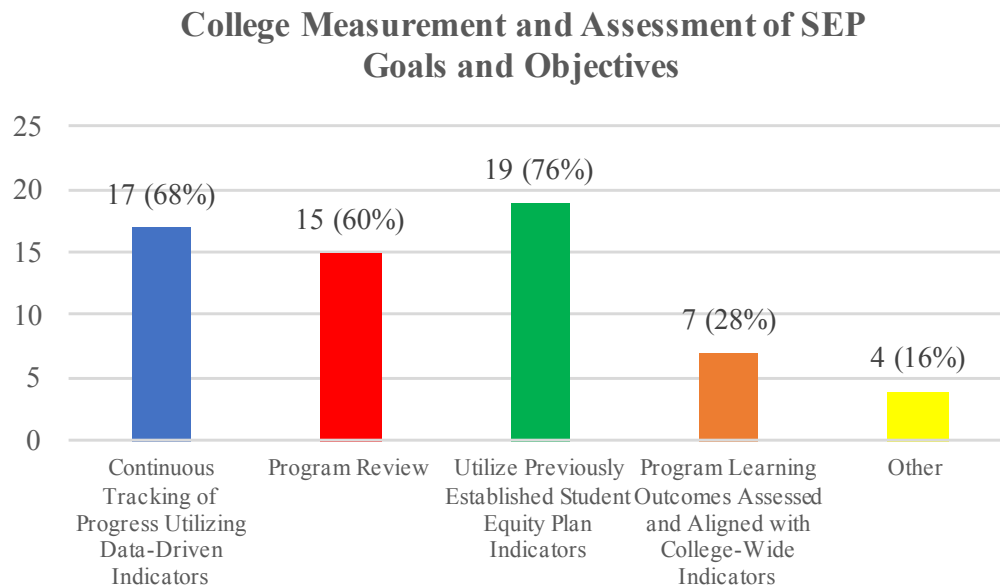


Figure 23. College Measurement and Assessment of Student Equity Goals and Objectives

Similar to the previous survey question pertaining to the measurement and assessment of equity-driven goals and objectives, an emphasis was placed on the cultural metrics framing participants’ institutions by asking, “*How does the college measure and assess cultural competency goals and objectives?*” Figure 24 provides the participants’ responses. The continuous tracking of progress utilizing data-driven indicators was the highest rated response with 52% (N=13), followed by program review at 40% (N=10). Several participants (28%; N=7) indicated that their respective college does not currently incorporate an established methodology for measuring and assessing goals and objectives associated with cultural competency, which may elicit further examination of the activities and initiatives currently utilized within the context of increasing disproportionate impact for respective student populations from an organizational perspective. A few participants (12%; N=3)

selected the “*other*” category and provided insight into additional strategies designed for measuring and assessing cultural competency goals and objectives. **Patrick (Valley**

College) discussed his college’s history with respect to cultural competency metrics:

We have used, in the past, the IDI to help with incoming faculty but no real institutionalized process as of yet. I have many more thoughts about this, but not enough support currently exists to engage in meaningful discussions.

Kurt (Ocean View College) also provided additional insight into his college’s integration of cultural competency within the student equity paradigm:

Faculty, staff, and students can apply for special 'Diversity' funds that are separate from 'Equity' funds. Part of the requirement to get money is to develop metrics that measure learning.

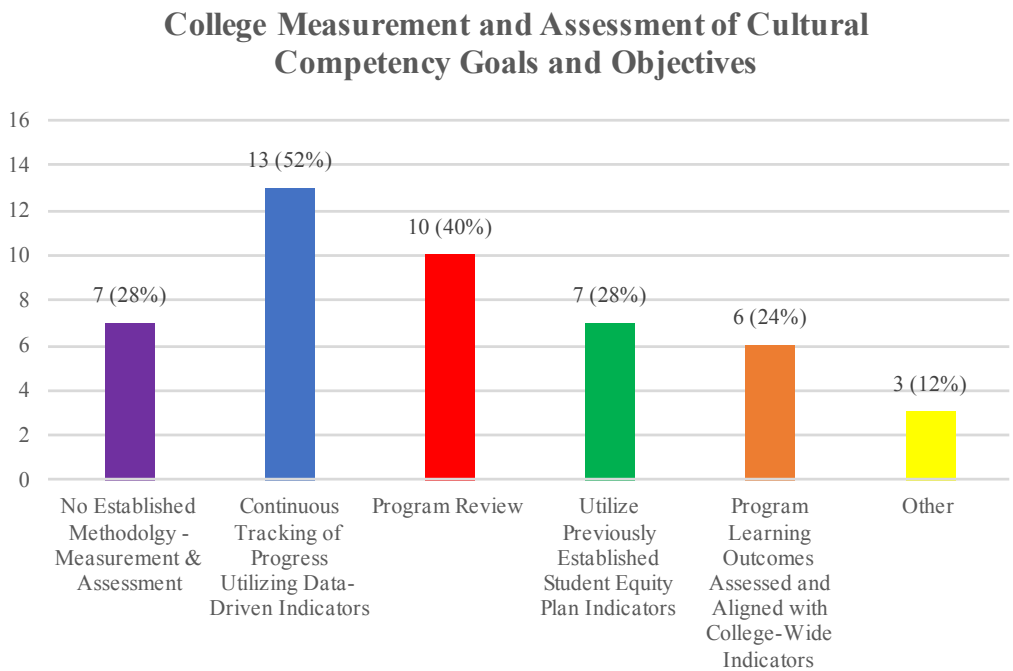


Figure 24. College Measurement and Assessment of Cultural Competency Goals and Objectives

Interview respondents were also asked to articulate the cultural competency measurement methods utilized at their colleges within the framing of Student Equity Plans (SEPs). The majority of respondents adhere to similar measurement and assessment

practices, albeit the decision-making process that dictated a course of evaluation trajectory varied based on a multitude of internal and external influences. Moreover, college constituency groups (e.g., faculty, staff, administrators, students, Board of Trustees, etc.) also played a critical role within these paradigm shifts as well.

Patrick (Valley College) discussed his experience as a fairly new member of the campus community during his attempts to expand the scope and intentionality of equity and cultural competency data evaluation and planning:

We've had the XITO Institute come to campus thus far. I think they're good, I just don't know, I should say I don't know that we are doing a good job of measuring the efficacy of those cultural competency and diversity efforts. We also had H2C3 guys here for flex day, I looked at the assessment tool we were using and it was terrible. I gave all kinds of feedback about it. Maybe that's why I'm not invited to the staff development committee anymore. I inherited my student equity plan. There are some ways I like it, there are some ways I don't. I don't really see the core part of equity and cultural competency assessment into the things that we say that we're going to, all 86 of them. Went through the plan with a fine-tooth comb and came up with approximately 86 things that we're going to do, but really no plan to measure any of it. At the end of the day, we're still in a fog with respect to having a real methodology for measuring and assessing cultural competencies within our equity plan.

Jose (Steamboat College) provided insight into his institution's strategic planning process for measuring and assessing the connection between equity and cultural competency efforts by reaching out to external entities that have helped to clarify goals and objectives toward student success:

When it comes to cultural competency effectiveness, I think recognition by leadership, that's an area that they want to invest more support in. They're embracing the direction that the Committee on Employee Diversity and Professional Development recommends because that is a shared governance committee. The role that my office plays as a common denominator across several of these arenas is demonstrating a commitment to the cultural competency aspect of enhancing the data-driven framework we use to create better intervention strategies for our students. There is an example I wanted to share with you that the campus embarked on before I arrived, but my office is overseeing it. We engage in the Diverse Learning Environment survey that comes out of HERI at UCLA as well and have seen fairly

significant improvements thanks to our enhanced data collection analysis with the campus institutional research folks. We implemented that about a year and change ago. My office is currently working with Institutional Research and Effectiveness, looking at the data. We're going to start rolling out research briefs and infographics that reflect the data. We're going to roll it out, and embedded in those research briefs are going to be, here's what our data says and here's what my office is doing or supporting in response to this data, whether it's favorable or not. That's going to be a strategic effort on our part to hold ourselves accountable to creating a campus climate that is welcoming, supportive, and demonstrates a commitment to the diverse populations that it serves within that data. In the spring of 2018, we're going to implement the DLE again to see how we've moved the equity and cultural competency needle.

Rachael (South City College) talked about the need to include all campus

stakeholders in the data conversation as part of the equity and cultural competency efforts:

It's making sure that when we talk about cultural competency, that we educate our entire staff, whether it be classified staff, the front desk, management or faculty, we all need to be on board of what the student experiences may be in order to better serve them and come up with better solutions for them. Unfortunately, we should be doing a whole lot better job of training campus constituencies to collect and analyze data that can be used to bolster our cultural competency initiatives as a standard protocol, not just when it's convenient or timely with the drafting of our student equity plan.

Wagner (Mary College) expressed the challenges experienced at his institution with

respect to defining the equity metric evaluation and assessment models. Specifically, he

stated:

One of the things that we have as an executive team here, this last year we've been really working on making sure that all of our activities are integrated and aligned with our student equity plan. We spent a lot of time really talking about the data alignment process and how we can accurately assess our progress and outcomes. Are all the project activities driving the equity plan or equity plan driving all these activities and then how do we integrate and support. The new integrated plan hopefully will help us with some of that, including the incorporation of campus-specific metrics aligned with cultural competency efforts both in and outside of the classroom. But I think that's one of the challenges for the administration, where they impede is that we get so caught up in bringing on new projects. We get so caught up in running these separate programs and not taking the time to really align and focus on what we're really trying to do. That can be a challenge. I think for faculty, this becomes a very personal issue. Because ultimately when we talk about how our institutions are fundamentally, inherently institutionally racist for example, it's easy for me in student services, as a vice president to sit down and talk about how the application process or

how we structure our financial aid or how we select for student government. I'm removed, so I can talk about those very logically. About philosophically about how those things need change.

Research Question II Summary

Given the importance of accurately measuring and assessing the efficacy of student equity efforts within the California community colleges, participant responses yielded various strategies and initiatives designed to leverage existing resources for the purpose of either developing or enhancing existing equity and cultural competency metrics. Although examples of current data-driven methods were conveyed by participants (e.g., program review, CCCCO and external stakeholder student equity methodologies, CCSSE instrument, College Strategic Plans, etc.), evident within responses were acknowledgements pursuant to the lack of tangible established methods for measuring and assessing goals and objectives aligned with cultural competency and diversity efforts. According to survey and interview responses, this absence of an institutionalized process for measuring and tracking cultural competency metrics was due to a variety of factors. These included the lack of campus support to engage in meaningful dialogue, deficient or “*terrible*” existing assessment tools, lack of connection with core part of equity and cultural competency assessments in terms of actual SEP impact, and lack of communication among equity stakeholders and internal institutional research colleagues for the purpose of triangulating data collection analysis.

The primary takeaway from this research question is the participants’ responses indicating a pledge to integrate a strategic effort to hold themselves accountable for creating supportive campus environments that are welcoming and ultimately demonstrate a collaborative commitment to the diverse populations they serve. This commitment requires all campus constituency groups (e.g., faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustees, etc.) to

understand the student experience and continuously devise data-driven strategies for increasing access to completion outcomes. Lastly, participants heralded the newly implemented CCCCO Integrated Plan (BSI/SSSP/Student Equity) as a vehicle for potentially clarifying campus-specific metrics aligned with cultural competency efforts in and out of the classroom environment.

Research Question III: What are differences and similarities in views according to HSI status of the college among faculty, staff, and administrators?

Given the crux of this dissertation study, survey participants were asked to report the level of their colleges' integration of Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) initiatives into their respective Student Equity Plans (SEPs). Specifically, participants were asked, "*How does your college embed HSI initiatives into its student equity plans?*" Figure 25 provides the participants' responses. Participants selected Student Services (76%; N=19) and Professional Development Activities (72%; N=18) as the primary programmatic areas aligned with HSI efforts. Despite the fact each of the participants represents a campus designated as an HSI, several (24%; N=6) indicated that their college does not currently embed initiatives into their SEPs. There were responses within the "*other*" category (8%; N=2). **Patrick (Valley College)** indicated that his institution's HSI alignment with SEPs may not be entirely communicated college-wide:

Not entirely sure as of yet. I believe there will be some support and overlap with outreach activities but my college has not exactly gone out of their way to announce institutional integration with Title V (HSI) grant funds.

Rebecca (Bluff College) cited several programs campus-based efforts that embed HSI initiatives into its SEPs:

We have a fairly robust HSI-driven approach within our Student Equity Plan. Currently, these include our newly awarded Title V grant and its Summer Bridge

component, dual enrollment efforts, and the rural initiatives given our geographical proximity to these student populations.

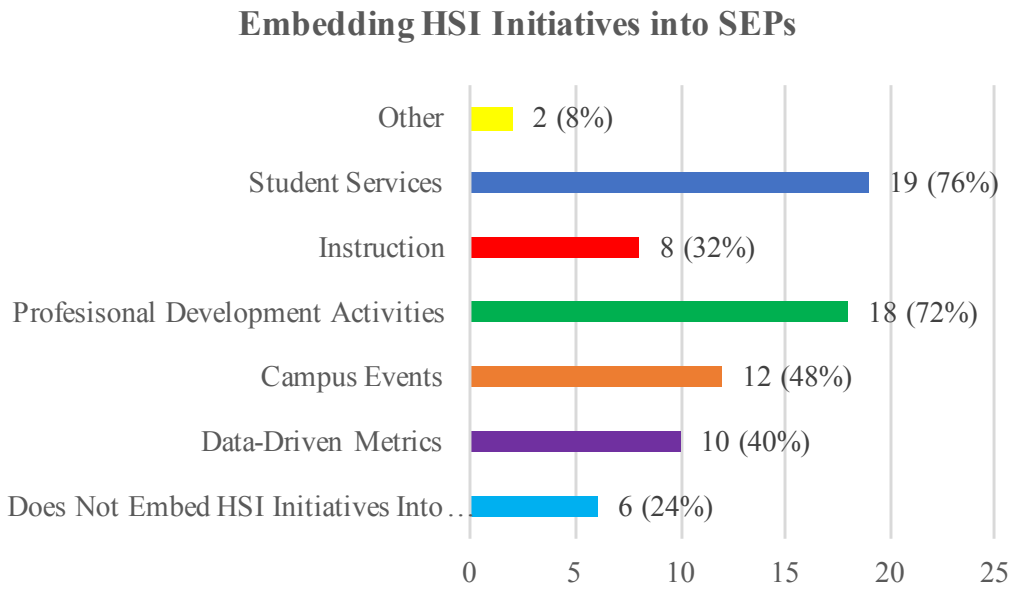


Figure 25. College Embedding HSI Initiatives into Student Equity Plans (SEPs)

Interview respondents provided candid insights into the wide array of viewpoints stemming from a colleges' HSI designation. An institution's HSI status is designed to increase capacity and leverage resources designed to integrate with student success measures. In terms of Student Equity Plans (SEPs), HSI-designation is not routinely integrated into a colleges' student success indicators. Respondents discussed these viewpoints in addition to highlighting the organizational culture driving their respective HSI constructs.

Aurelio (Agriculture College) was transparent in the assessment of the lack of HSI integration on his campus, especially given the external influences impacting institutional priorities:

We don't really promote and push the idea that we're an HSI, it's just something they don't do at the college given the hesitancy based on community member resistance. We definitely integrate the HSI promotion as far as we are a Hispanic-serving institution, which we are, 70% of our student body is Latinx. Most of our programs

are not directed toward the population but they definitely have a flavor, because ultimately that's who we're serving. To make matters worse, our faculty continuously challenge the HSI designation and it's partially why we don't embed it in any way into our student equity plan.

Patrick (Valley College) also indicated a lack of equity integration with his institution's HSI designation:

Is there a specific way in which we've thought about that because of our HSI designation? I don't know, I certainly don't feel it. Most staff on our campus are engaged and somewhat committed, with the exception of faculty. In fact, many of the faculty I have interacted with during my initial year here are extremely vocal about their lack of support or understanding of what it means for our campus to carry the HSI designation. To be completely honest, they will publicly support the designation if it translates into funding for a professional development opportunity they want us to support, otherwise, it's radio silence.

Rachael (South City College) shared Patrick's narrative in terms of an institutional lack of support or recognition for its HSI designation:

I'll be honest with you, we are a Hispanic-serving institution, but I have not seen a document that says we're a Hispanic-serving institution and this is what we're going to do for that population, there's no official document. So, when you say how are we going to implement or integrate those initiatives, I don't think it's happening. The only way that I see that we are serving the Hispanic population is through our equity plan because our biggest disproportionate groups are Hispanics, African Americans, Hawaiian Pacific Islander and then we go into the special populations like veterans and foster youth. But in terms of ethnic backgrounds, it will be those top three, African American, Hispanics and Hawaiian Pacific Islanders. So that is the only way that we are addressing this, through enrollment. There's no conversation like we're a Hispanic-serving institution and here's what we should do, that has not been the case. Honestly, I didn't know that I should be asking we're an HSI, what does that mean, what are we supposed to be doing with that status. I don't think that's the conversation on our campus, rather the conversation is we're an HSI and now we qualify for these funds.

Sophia (South Valley College) conveyed her commitment to inject organizational change at her institution with respect to its current HSI status:

We're going through a paradigm shift that I'm thoroughly driving. I graduated from this institution so I relate to these students in a different manner. We've reframed our student educational master plan and intentionally aligned our HSI status with our equity initiatives and institutional strategic plan. I created the Integrated Student

Success Committee as a mechanism for not only embracing our HSI designation but also to ensure that its footprint intersects with all facets of our student success measures and outcomes. Staff and faculty are truly on board and routinely take advantage of training sessions designed to leverage our HSI and equity DNA.

Kurt (Ocean View College) was honest about his institution's lack of HSI

integration to campus-wide priorities:

I don't think we really do anything with our HSI designation. I think right now, we worked really hard to get that designation but we have had difficulty actually integrating that into what we do and also even just simply applying for specific grants like Title V. I think that in the past, they have brought together committees. I haven't been invited to them, and I think something that I forgot to share is that I've just been here for about a year and four months, so there's a history that I'm not aware of, but from what I have been privy to, I don't think we've made a lot of traction, specifically to our HSI designation.

Wagner (Mary College) indicated that his institution has made a concerted effort to

not highlight its HSI status for fear of alienating other student populations:

We found that in our conversations, it's been more advantageous when we talk about equity and we talk about how to best serve students to not focus on the HSI status in order to not alienate the other student groups. But instead to focus on the commonality of meeting the disproportionate needs of all our students, which would mean meeting the expectations of being a Hispanic-Serving Institution or a minority-serving institution.

Jose (Steamboat College) provided further evidence of institutional challenges

encountered within the integration process of HSI designation and equity planning:

I do know that there's an effort in implementing these particular goals for establishing ourselves as an HSI and the responsibilities that come with that. We do have it within our policies. It's not to say that my colleagues aren't recognizing that. They're doing what they're going to do, but my presence there is to ensure that there's support as well, resources through my office, and a reminder that we are an HSI. For strategic planning, you used the phrase earlier, crosswalk. We're engaged in crosswalks as we speak with the integrating SSSP, Equity, and Basic Skills efforts. We're also in discussions of crosswalks looking at the new resources that are coming through with CTE and workforce development, especially given our HSI status and strong workforce initiative. Our college is trying to be very strategic.

Research Question III Summary

The overwhelming thematic takeaway from this research question was the organizational disconnect in terms of HSI status and integration with SEPs. Survey respondents indicated student services efforts and campus professional development activities as the primary college-wide mechanisms for embedding HSI initiatives into SEPs. Unfortunately, however, several respondents honestly stated that their respective colleges' do not currently embed HSI initiatives within SEPs in any official capacity. Lack of campus-wide communication to formally announce an institutional integration with HSI status was also cited. While the majority of respondents conveyed minimal campus-wide buy-in in terms of HSI integration with SEPs, examples of best practices did include initiatives such as dual enrollment alignment, rural efforts, and Summer Bridge/First-Year Experience.

Interview participants also echoed survey responses with respect to their colleges' practice of not integrating HSI designation within SEPs. Moreover, organizational culture norms, policies, and practices were also identified as potential barriers to HSI status and SEP integration. Additional examples of HSI integration with SEPs included campus hesitancy due to community resistance, faculty pushback based on several factors (e.g., unfamiliarity with HSI designation, lack of support, or "*quid pro quo*" based on professional development or funding). Overall, the most repeated message from both survey and interview participants was the need for intentional campus-wide messaging regarding HSI status and its strategic plan for not just SEP purposes, but also for how the designation will specifically improve success outcomes for all student populations including Latinxs.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings

Beyond the state-mandated requirements for Student Equity Plans (SEPs), several colleges featured in this research study have created innovative strategies for not only integrating cultural competency/sensitivity and equity metrics but also engaging all campus stakeholders in these efforts. I employed three research questions to frame the practices of respondents at their respective institutions:

- I. What culturally competent practices do student equity coordinators and administrators at HSI-designated California Community Colleges report implementing in their Student Equity Plans?
- II. How do these institutions measure cultural competency within their respective Student Equity Plans?
- III. What are differences and similarities in views according to HSI status of the college among faculty, staff, and administrators?

These questions were designed to illuminate the organizational culture and learning of California Community Colleges (CCC) designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) in terms of the existing structural processes that currently exist for the purpose of implementing equity-minded practices and creating culturally sensitive environments for all disproportionately impacted student groups.

This research study was contextualized by a review of the literature that examined the history of the CCC system, with specific emphasis in the developmental process of the student equity initiative given the extensive political and legislative support mechanisms established in response to educational outcomes inconsistent with increasingly diverse student populations. Moreover, the intersection of equity, diversity and social justice

constructs converged to illuminate structural student success strategies. The growing HSI movement further expands the fiscal, developmental, and instructional priorities aligned with institutional identity (Contreras, Malcolm, & Bensimon, 2008). Discussion within the context of cultural competency building and organizational behavior at HSI-designated CCCs also placed emphasis on accountability and the decision-making relationships congruent with readiness for change. This organizational change and learning framework can subsequently help create sustainable pathways via the bridging multiple worlds construct for students that maintain critical ties to their families and cultural communities that ultimately improve educational and career outcomes for first-generation, low-income, immigrant, and other fellow disproportionately impacted populations.

Critical to the study were the two data collection and analysis stages, which provided unique insight into the equity and cultural competency integration strategies at HSI-designated CCCs. The impact of these practices within the organizational structure of each respondents' college also provided best practices for peer institutions at multiple levels (e.g., district, state, and national). The web-based survey was completed by 25 of the 93 HSI-designated CCC student equity administrators and the follow-up phone interviews were subsequently completed by 11 of the 25 survey respondents.

Survey and interview data were coded and organized by theme. While many overlapping quantitative and qualitative trends were evident through respondent data, the analysis process ultimately yielded the following thematic categories:

1. Institutional Capacity
2. Organizational Culture
3. Lack of Equity and Cultural Competency/Sensitivity Mindedness

These aforementioned thematic constructs, therefore, frame the discussion of the findings in the following section of this chapter. Student equity administrator views allowed further inquiry into the leadership and institutional decision-making process, and ultimately its connection to equity and cultural competency/sensitivity efforts at their respective colleges.

Discussion of Findings

This research study examined student equity administrator views at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) in terms of the cultural competency practices embedded within their respective Student Equity Plans (SEPs). Specifically, findings were framed based on participant responses which were designed to investigate: 1) how equity is measured at the institutional level, 2) assessing how the college's HSI designation impacts student equity and cultural competency practices, and 3) the organizational alignment of HSI designation within each participating college's existing initiatives, policies, and norms. Consequently, the aforementioned key thematic constructs provide a lens for understanding the integration of equity and cultural competency efforts from a broader structural paradigm that ultimately impacts access to completion outcomes for underserved and underrepresented students.

Institutional Capacity

Critical to the successful integration of any initiative is the ability to sustain momentum at the institutional level. Dedicating proper bandwidth to expanded equity and cultural competency efforts must also align with strategic planning and key performance indicators that are driven by internal and external priorities (e.g., fiscal, instructional, shared governance, etc.). For the purpose of this research study, several questions within both data collection instruments were asked in order to gain knowledge from respondents' experiences.

Although several questions were utilized to hone responses congruent with institutional capacity, intentional question prompts included:

- *Has your college utilized any of the following resources to assist in the development and implementation of your student equity plan?*
- *What steps does your college take to specifically integrate cross-cultural initiatives as part of its mission?*
- *Which equity-serving programs are being implemented on campus?*
- *How does your college integrate Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) initiatives into its policies, procedures, and strategic planning measures?*

Survey and follow-up phone interview responses indicated a wide array of strategies designed to build institutional capacity while simultaneously increasing or maintaining cultural competency efforts within student equity initiatives. In terms of survey responses, participants identified an integration of internal and external influences as a mechanism for building and sustaining institutional capacity needs for equity and cultural competency activities and objectives. With the fiscal assistance of categorical grant funds (e.g., SSSP, Equity, EOPS, Title III, Title V, TRIO, etc.), one of this study's main findings is the integral connection and dependency on these types of funding streams to offset institutional shortcomings for the purpose of promoting and sustaining equity initiatives. Moreover, interview responses demonstrated that internal decision-making with respect to expanded equity and cultural competency initiatives were consistently minimized due to competing priorities or perceived categorization of these efforts as “*boutique*” given the challenge to scale these initiatives. For example, Rebecca (Bluff College) said that her institution routinely gauges any prospective cultural competency initiative through a series of data-driven institutional metrics for viability and college-wide impact. As Rebecca stated,

“potential needle-moving success efforts usually end up on the cutting room floor if it cannot be scaled at a level consistent with our senior administration’s strategic planning goals.”

Basing institutional capacity decisions within the equity and cultural competency paradigm was further diminished when integration with HSI-designation was factored into the equation. Another significant finding of this study was the disconnect with “*crosswalking*” HSI initiatives into the colleges’ strategic planning and governance efforts within its Student Equity Plan process, which is the crux of the Title V Department of Education Developmental grants many of these campuses had recently received. With the exception of three participants, none of the colleges were actively integrating HSI initiatives and institutional capacity processes. The challenge of creating inclusive campus environments while simultaneously building institutional capacity was by far one of the critical findings of this study. Compounding this issue is the sustained efforts required to integrate all campus stakeholders, which is especially difficult for administrators and faculty. Respondents indicated reluctance from senior-level administrators and faculty members to publicly adhere to equity, cultural competency, and HSI efforts beyond the scope of the state and/or federal mandates required to maintain funding requirements. To provide context, examples of single- and double-loop learning approaches pursuant to respondents’ institutional capacity experiences included the following:

Single-Loop Learning

- **Patrick (Valley College):** “I’ve arrived in the middle of implementation (in some ways) which has not always been very thoughtful of assessing the efficacy of initiatives we’re funding, so I’m feeling like I’m trying to catch up from behind in that regard. There are so many competing initiatives and just not enough time to adequately dedicate energy and capacity to programs and services, especially if they fall outside our prescribed matrices.”

- **Patrick (Valley College):** “I gave all kinds of feedback about it. Maybe that’s why I’m not invited to the staff development committee anymore. I don’t really see the core part of equity and cultural competency assessment into the things that we say that we’re going to, all 86 of them.”
- **Aurelio (Agriculture College):** “I think there's a fear, not a fear, a hesitancy from this President that we have at the college because she doesn't want to open that can of worms.”

Double-Loop Learning

- **Aurelio (Agriculture College):** “I've inquired as to why we don't promote our HSI designation more, why isn't it something we really celebrate and put out there. She's [President] commented that she shares a fear that someone can feel left out. But I have created momentum on our campus in terms of looking at how we can leverage our HSI status in a way that highlights our existing categorical efforts while not exclusively focusing our attention on just Hispanic students.”
- **Manuela (Rose College):** “When I started at Rose eight years ago I made sure that we were involved with HACU (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities). I also brought in a representative from the United States Department of Agriculture’s HSI program. The college was already applying for HSI grants but was unsuccessful, so I simply made sure that we were prioritizing our students’ needs by engaging all constituency groups to incorporate their plans and vision for the direction of our strategic goals and objectives in tandem with our governing performance indicators.”

Organizational Culture

In addition to the institutional capacity construct is the organizational processes that shape colleges’ culture, norms, and policies. Respondents overwhelmingly discussed the cultural expectations and practices that shape their respective institutions, especially as it pertains to equity and cultural competency discussions. Questions driving these responses included:

- *How have equity initiatives been integrated into the organizational structure of the college?*
- *Who is administratively entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that student equity metrics tied to the Student Equity Plan are measured and reported?*
- *Indicate organizational challenges that have impeded your college's ability to integrate cultural competency measures from a student equity perspective.*

These questions yielded comprehensive insight into the organizational structures that respondents navigate within the student equity domain. While the Student Equity Plans (SEPs) are normally the main organizational responsibility of Chief Student Services Officers (e.g., Vice Presidents), many of the respondents indicated that SEP accountability is routinely delegated across various roles/positions based on institutional needs and administrative priorities. This is a major finding given the equity-funding models that drive decisions at respondents' campuses are somewhat fragmented due to inconsistent communication and buy-in from campus stakeholders. Moreover, respondents conveyed frustration with the validity of equity and HSI initiatives based in large part on conflicting organizational messages from senior-level administrators. Openly discussing innovative ways to increase equity and cultural competency efforts were routinely met with organizational pushback given historical organizational protocols that are not aligned with existing norms and traditions according to study participants. College Presidents resistant to integrating HSI or cultural competency initiatives for fear of campus or community reprisals were also revealed by respondents.

On the other end of the organizational culture spectrum, several respondents conveyed integrative methods currently in use toward the goal of promoting college-wide performance-based outcomes that align with equity and HSI initiatives. Examples included the creating of Integrated Student Services Committees, Diversity Committees, Planning and Governance Council, Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) that possess cultural competency components among Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Additionally, faculty and staff professional development activities that support the inclusion of equity and HSI-related constructs were also identified by respondents.

From an organizational change perspective, examples of affirmation for equity and cultural competency practices that are responsive to the needs of disproportionately impacted student populations by creating diverse learning environments attuned to evolving societal shifts. Organizational learning processes that subscribe to the equity goals of increasing access, course completion, ESL and basic skills completion, degrees, certificates and transfer for all in addition to an integrated cultural competency and HSI framework are thoroughly serving and not simply enrolling students. Contextually, examples of single- and double-loop learning approaches pursuant to respondents' organizational culture experiences included the following:

Single-Loop Learning

- **Rebecca (Bluff College):** “We see the faculty advocating, but we only have a very small number of core faculty who are vocal about it, I think, or vocal in a way that’s really visible to anyone. And so, they just sort of become the people who are nagging, and I don’t know that they’re taken super seriously.”
- **Kurt (Ocean View College):** “The typical usual suspects make most of the operational decisions within the President’s cabinet, which ultimately makes most proposals or ideas fall by the wayside in my opinion. It’s so frustrating to keep coming back to the same student success outcomes year after year despite the numerous brainstorming sessions we continue to have, which are fairly pointless since the status quo is to not base decisions from a data-driven approach but rather one from the path of least resistance in terms of our Chancellor and Board of Trustees.”

Double-Loop Learning

- **Jose (Steamboat College):** “That’s going to be a strategic effort on our part to hold ourselves accountable to creating a campus climate that is welcoming, supportive, and demonstrates commitment to the diverse populations that it serves within that data.”
- **Rachael (South City College):** “So I have a series of ally trainings that I provide to the entire campus throughout the entire fiscal year to educate our staff in relation to the different populations that we serve. They helped us to be more educated and also learn whatever students’ experiences may be and will guide us into better

implementing programs that better suit the needs of our students, not just blindly implementing programs without knowing what they may be experiencing or needing which is what used to occur on our campus.”

Lack of Equity and Cultural Competency/Sensitivity Mindedness

The final thematic construct focused on the resistant methods experienced at respondents' colleges with respect to equity and cultural competency mindedness. While cultural competency and HSI-designation integration are not stipulated within the SEP process pursuant to the Chancellor's Office mandate, all of the respondents indicated various levels of resistance to these initiatives. Responses to this phenomenon were driven by the following questions:

- *How does the college measure and assess cultural competency goals and objectives?*
- *Do you have specific examples of how your college addresses diversity initiatives?*
- *Please tell me about the ways your college's HSI designation intersects with your Student Equity Plan in regard to cultural competency?*
- *How does your college's senior administration impede the integration of cultural competency initiatives? What about faculty? What about staff?*

Participants were extremely vocal in their experiences with examples of lacking support for equity and cultural competency mindedness. The primary finding within this area focused on the unwillingness among faculty and administration to call attention to patterns of inequity in student outcomes (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015; Bensimon & Malcom, 2012).

In addition to mid-level administrators who participated in this study, many of the current Vice Presidents for Student Services voiced frustration with conflicting messages pertaining to the integration of equity, cultural competency, and HSI initiatives on their campuses. Emphasis on social justice and diversity-serving efforts were routinely quelled by

faculty and top-level administrators who did not assess value in these expanded activities and objectives designed to remove structural inequities.

The process of measuring and assessing cultural competency and HSI initiatives were also lacking pursuant to respondents' experiences. Beyond the scope of utilizing data-driven methodologies for student equity initiatives, none of the respondents indicated that a viable instrument or set of metrics were in place that effectively measured and assessed non-equity efforts. Although respondents were extremely transparent in their active attempts to integrate cultural competency and HSI-related objectives into existing programs and services, the overwhelming response was encapsulated with resistance and/or minimal support. This dilemma can provide context for the eventual inclusion of cultural competency and HSI constructs into future Student Equity Plans, which must be ultimately approved by the Chancellor's Office if there is hope for a possible intersection of these initiatives moving forward in alignment with increasingly diverse student populations. To provide context, examples of single- and double-loop learning approaches pursuant to respondents' experiences with a lack of equity and cultural competency/sensitivity mindedness included the following:

Single-Loop Learning

- **Rachael (South City College):** "So that is the only way that we are addressing this, through enrollment."
- **Patrick (Valley College):** "We've had committees in the past that have tried to play the role of a chief diversity officer in terms of looking at data, looking at various discrimination claims, looking at programming for the campus, and looking at training for the campus. Unfortunately, critical issues and opportunities are either missed or ignored on a fairly consistent basis due to political or personal priorities rather than moving the success needle. There were some really awesome and committed people that have been on some of those committees in the past, and some of them have been personality-driven, some of it has been not really institutionally-

driven. Either way, it's often hit or miss with respect to embedding equity-minded constructs in and outside our classrooms.”

Double-Loop Learning

- **Rachael (South City College):** “Honestly, I didn’t know that I should be asking we’re an HSI, what does that mean, what are we supposed to be doing with that status.”
- **Sophia (South Valley College):** “I've created a new committee that will be led by the CIO here at the institution. It's much larger than it used to be because I want to ensure that we are truly serving our students and the commitment to student equity. Those decisions are now much more holistic since it's an institutional matter, not just a student services matter as it was in the past. Student success includes the entire institution so all folks need to be at the table when making decisions, even if feelings have to get hurt.”

Developing a Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card within Bridging Multiple Worlds and Double-Loop Learning Frameworks

The crux of this research study was to develop a viable culturally sensitive student equity report card that can be utilized by administrators at California Community Colleges (CCCs) designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) to gauge efficacy in current and proposed programs and services for disproportionately impacted student groups. Moreover, the report card instrument can be used as a lens to integrate a variety of social justice and diversity-serving initiatives toward the goal of effectively promoting successful educational and career outcomes within colleges’ Student Equity Plans (SEPs) by aligning Bridging Multiple Worlds (Cooper, 2011; Cooper et al., 2006) and double-loop learning and change (Argyris, 2002; Argyris & Schön, 1996) theoretical models. Table 8 provides a description of the proposed culturally sensitive student equity report card model that integrates cultural competency and HSI-related initiatives in alignment with existing CCCCCO student equity success indicators (e.g., Access, Course Completion, ESL and Basic Skills Completion,

Degree and Certificate Completion, and Transfer). Current initiatives are provided based on respondents' campus-specific examples.

Table 8
Proposed Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card Model

Current Student Equity Success Indicator	Current Culturally Sensitive Initiatives	Proposed Culturally Sensitive Initiatives
Access	Rural Outreach Initiatives, First-Year Experience, Latinx Scholarship Fund, Research Introduction Program, STEM Squad, Safe Zone Coalition, Minority Male & Female Initiative, Guided Pathways, Get Focused...Stay Focused!	Faith-based Partnerships, Staff/Faculty/Administrator of Color Recruitment Initiative, Integrate HSI Status & Guided Pathways, Correctional/Prison Pipeline, Faculty Equity Academy, Integrate Equity/Cultural Competency and Accreditation Standards, Create Data-Driven Metrics to Measure & Assess Cultural Competency & HSI Initiatives, Dual Enrollment Integration with Equity & Cultural Competency Efforts
Course Completion	Learning Communities, Peer Mentoring, Book Sharing Program, Intensive Cultural Book Analysis Program, Integrated Student Success Committee, Staff & Faculty Professional Development, Guided Pathways	OER (Online Educational Records), Microaggression Faculty Training, Ethnicity-Inclusive SLOs/PLOs/ALOs/ILOs, Integrate HSI Status & Guided Pathways, Faculty Mentoring Model, Faculty Equity Academy, Integrate Equity/Cultural Competency & Accreditation Standards, Create Data-Driven Metrics to Measure & Assess Cultural Competency & HSI Initiatives, English & Math Co-Requisite Models, Equity/Cultural Competency Framed College Success Course(s)
ESL and Basic Skills Completion	Math (Algebra) Bootcamp, Latinx Student Math & Science Immersion, Integrated Student	OER, Microaggression Faculty Training, Ethnicity-Inclusive SLOs/PLOs/ALOs/ILOs, Integrate

	Success Committee, Staff & Faculty Professional Development, Guided Pathways	HSI Status & Guided Pathways, Faculty Mentoring Model, Faculty Equity Academy, Integrate Equity/Cultural Competency & Accreditation Standards, Create Data-Driven Metrics to Measure & Assess Cultural Competency & HSI Initiatives, English & Math Co-Requisite Models, Equity/Cultural Competency Framed College Success Course(s)
Degree and Certificate Completion	Faculty-Student Engagement Week, Integrated Student Success Committee, Staff & Faculty Professional Development, Guided Pathways	OER, Microaggression Faculty Training, Faculty Mentoring Model, Ethnicity-Inclusive SLOs/PLOs/ALOs/ILOs, Integrate HSI Status & Guided Pathways, Faculty Equity Academy, Integrate Equity/Cultural Competency & Accreditation Standards, Create Data-Driven Metrics to Measure & Assess Cultural Competency & HSI Initiatives, Equity/Cultural Competency Framed College Success Course(s)
Transfer	HBCU and HSI Transfer Caravans, Integrated Student Success Committee, Staff & Faculty Professional Development, Guided Pathways	HACU Transfer Partnerships, Staff/Faculty/Administrator Transfer Mentoring Academy, Microaggression Faculty Training, Integrate HSI Status & Guided Pathways, Integrate HSI status & Guided Pathways, Faculty Equity Academy, Integrate Equity/Cultural Competency & Accreditation Standards, Create Data-Driven Metrics to Measure & Assess Cultural Competency & HSI Initiatives, Equity/Cultural Competency Framed College Success Course(s)

This proposed Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card Model provides a starting point for HSI-designated California community colleges to assess existing cultural competency efforts and increase best practices designed to acknowledge the specific academic and sociocultural needs of underserved and underrepresented students. Integral to this dialogue of redefining student equity metrics and ultimately SEPs is the discussion of how the integration of Bridging Multiple Worlds (Cooper, 2011; Cooper et al., 2006) and double-loop learning and change (Argyris, 2002; Argyris & Schön, 1996) conceptual frameworks can assist in expanding sustainable programs and services for the aforementioned populations. These frameworks can provide additional theoretical lenses for key campus stakeholders in terms of how substantive organizational planning and execution can move the success needle for underrepresented and disproportionately impacted students, especially within the newly adopted 2017-2019 integrated BSI/SSSP/Student Equity platform implemented by the CCCCO.

The Bridging Multiple Worlds (BMW) theoretical model (Cooper, 2011; Cooper et al., 2006) is an essential component of the proposed equity report card given that disproportionately impacted student populations enter the higher education worlds with defined identities and yet must now develop critical new worlds within California community colleges designated as HSIs. Incorporating cultural competency/sensitivity metrics into SEPs, especially within HSIs, can help guide colleges' understanding and institutional effectiveness planning process in terms of how to effectively design, measure, assess, and replicate viable initiatives and programs for ethnically diverse student populations.

The double-loop organizational learning and change construct (Argyris, 2002; Argyris & Schön, 1996) further refines the cultural competency lens that must be applied by

community college constituency groups' (e.g., faculty, staff, administration, etc.) integrated equity efforts in order to effectively serve a cadre of students that are increasingly more diverse and prepared to make significant academic and economic contributions within our society. Specifically, double-loop learning can embed a decision-making layer that challenges governing variables and ultimately creates an organizational shift where strategies and core values can be questioned and re-framed toward the goal of enhancing campus cultural climate on every level impacting the student experience.

Implementing a process change for Student Equity Plans (SEPs) at the campus level requires a systemic movement that is evidence-based and grounded within theoretical and practice-driven constructs. Respondents unanimously agreed that SEPs are long overdue for a cultural competency shift given the increasingly diverse student populations that encompass their respective service regions. Whether the discussion entails expanded access efforts that align with equity and cultural competency objectives and performance indicators to implementing graduation requirements that include cultural sensitivity completion outcomes, all college stakeholders must work in unison to ensure students are prepared to navigate and thrive within an ever-growing diverse society.

Study Limitations and Delimitations

One main limitation of this study is the research only examined the viewpoints of student equity administrators from a small subset (28%) of California Community Colleges designated as HSIs. The assumption is the participant's experiences, challenges, and organizational cultures apply to the remaining peer institutions and subsequently yield similar achieved outcomes, thus the results may not accurately represent the population. This study was also limited by voluntary responses and non-response bias given the survey and

phone interview data were not collected from a random sample set. Despite efforts to not disclose my role as a community college administrator, many of the potential participants who chose not to respond to the survey and/or phone interview indicated an unwillingness to provide insight for fear of admonishment or reprimand by their respective campuses due to the knowledge of my professional capacity. This means that the sample data potentially consisted of participants who were motivated by impressing the researcher within the process of sharing their experiences.

The study was delimited to student equity administrators who work at California Community College (CCC) campuses that also carry the HSI designation, it did not include individuals in similar roles from non-HSI peer institutions within the CCC system. Moreover, this study was delimited in that it did not include insight from additional community college stakeholders such as faculty, professional classified staff, or students. Perhaps this additional data collection and analysis would have provided critical perceptions that could contextualize the integration of student equity initiatives and cultural competency strategies.

Conclusion and Implications for Research and Practice

For research, this study should be replicated given the strong evidence presented by the respondents' experiences pertaining to equity and cultural competency efforts from the bridging multiple worlds and organizational learning and change paradigms. Moreover, the newly implemented 2017-2019 CCCCO Integrated Plan (BSI/SSSP/Equity) will also potentially provide a mechanism expanding the scope of student equity and cultural competency initiatives for all 114 California community colleges. As student populations continue to grow and become increasingly more diverse, community colleges must ensure

that all campus constituency groups (e.g., students, staff, faculty, administrators, Board of Trustees, etc.) integrate strategies designed to align academic and student services initiatives propelled by iterative decision-making processes. This research study can provide an opportunity to expand equity, cultural competency, and diversity-serving discussions in concert with existing local, regional, and statewide mandates by also incorporating critical student and faculty voices.

For practice, the findings from this research study can provide useful guidance for community college stakeholders throughout the nation in their efforts to increase cultural competency/sensitivity efforts within an equity-mindedness paradigm. Moreover, colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) carry an additional responsibility to expand educational opportunities for Latinx students while simultaneously improving their measures for academic and career attainment. Consequently, community colleges can incorporate the strategies and recommendations of the respondents in this study by doing the following:

- Implementing Student Equity Plans (SEPs) that embed cultural competency and sensitivity, cultural humility, and social justice metrics aligned with data-driven success indicators.
- Creating uniform instructional, student services, and professional development standards for staff, faculty, and administrators that adhere to equity and cultural competency expectations.
- Align student equity, cultural competency, and HSI status (if applicable) to college mission and core values with transparent messaging to internal and external stakeholders.
- Conduct regular campus climate studies for all constituency groups (e.g., students, staff, faculty, and administrators) to accurately assess the attitudes, behaviors, and levels of respect for individuals given current diverse learning environments.
- Frame developments in statewide BSI/SSSP/Student Equity efforts within an integrated approach to encourage double-loop learning outcomes.

This study contributes to the developing knowledge of equity and cultural competency constructs within community college systems. Given the increased emphasis in guided pathways and changing the experiences and expectations for today's diverse populations, systematic approaches to better understanding the unique needs of our current students versus traditional constructs are desperately required in order to effectively serve as conduits for successful educational and career/workforce outcomes. Rather than frame pedagogy and student services from a deficit-model approach, the emphasis should focus on how current organizational systems and structures can change and be attuned to the cultural needs of our students. Redesigning the community college model should include integrated approaches that challenge higher education leaders to seek innovative and inclusive methods toward the goal of enhancing successful access to completion outcomes for all students.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT AUTHORIZATION

Consent to Participate in the “Developing a Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card: Bridging Multiple Worlds within a California Community College Hispanic-Serving Institution Framework” Research Study

It is up to you to decide whether to participate in this study. If you want to participate please sign the form below if the following statements are true:

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to participate in research. I have also received a copy of this form to take with me.

Signature of Person Participating in Study

Date

Printed Name of Person Participating in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect.

I hereby certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he or she understands:

1. What the study is about.
2. What procedures/interventions/investigational drugs or devices will be used.
3. What the potential benefits might be.
4. What the known risks might be.

I also certify that he or she does not have any problems that could make it difficult to understand what it means to participate in this research study. This person speaks the language that was used to explain this research study. This person reads well enough to understand this form or, if not, this person is able to hear and understand when the form is read to him or her.

This person does not have a medical/psychological condition that would compromise comprehension and therefore makes it difficult to understand what is being explained and can, therefore, give informed consent. This person is not under the influence of substances that may cloud their judgment or make it difficult to understand what is being explained and can, therefore, give informed consent.

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

APPENDIX B

BACKGROUND DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

“Developing a Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card: Bridging Multiple Worlds within a California Community College Hispanic-Serving Institution Framework”

Henry L. Covarrubias
Background Demographic Questionnaire

Please check box where appropriate or fill in the answer.

1. What is your current role/position at the college?

Chancellor	
President	
VP of Student Services	
Dean of Student Services	
VP of Academic Services/Instruction	
Dean of Academic Services/Instruction	
Faculty	
Student Equity Director	
Student Equity Coordinator	
SSSP Director	
SSSP Coordinator	
Other (please specify)	

2. What is your current age?

20 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	Other (please specify)

3. What is your ethnicity?

Latinx	White	African American	Asian	Pacific Islander	Other (please specify)

4. What is your gender?

Female	Male	Other (please specify)

5. What is your highest level of education?

BA/BS	MA/MS/MEd	MBA	Ed.D.	Ph.D.	J.D.	Other (please specify)

6. How long have you worked within the California Community College system?

1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 15 years	16 to 20 years	21 to 25 years	More than 25 years

7. How effective do you feel your college is in terms of addressing diversity initiatives?

Extremely Effective	Very Effective	Moderately Ineffective	Slightly Effective	Not at all Effective

APPENDIX C
SURVEY PROTOCOL

2016 Student Equity & Cultural Competency Survey

This survey instrument is being utilized to gather data regarding student equity initiatives at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) as part of a doctoral study at UC Santa Barbara. Individual responses will be kept confidential. The crux of the study is to identify current student equity trends and practices as they relate to cultural competency initiatives statewide. You may also be contacted to participate in a brief phone interview to follow-up on your responses. Thank you for your time and insight.

* Required

1. Email address *

2. 1. Optional: Please indicate your California Community College campus.

Mark only one oval.

- Allan Hancock College
- Antelope Valley College
- Bakersfield College
- Barstow Community College
- Berkeley City College
- Cabrillo College
- Canada College
- Cerritos College
- Cerro Coso Community College
- Chabot College
- Chaffey College
- Citrus College
- Coastline Community College
- College of Marin
- College of San Mateo
- College of the Canyons
- College of the Desert
- College of the Sequoias
- Compton Community College
- Contra Costa College
- Crafton Hills College
- Cuesta College
- Cuyamaca College
- Cypress College
- De Anza College
- East Los Angeles College
- El Camino Community College
- Evergreen Valley College
- Fresno City College
- Fullerton College
- Gavilan College
- Glendale Community College

- Golden West College
- Grossmont College
- Hartnell College
- Imperial Valley College
- Lake Tahoe Community College
- Las Positas College
- Long Beach City College
- Los Angeles City College
- Los Angeles Harbor College
- Los Angeles Mission College
- Los Angeles Pierce College
- Los Angeles Southwest College
- Los Angeles Trade Technical College
- Los Angeles Valley College
- Los Medanos College
- Mendocino College
- Merced College
- Merritt College
- MiraCosta College
- Modesto Junior College
- Monterey Peninsula College
- Moorpark College
- Moreno Valley College
- Mt. San Antonio College
- Mt. San Jacinto Community College District
- Napa Valley College
- Norco College
- Orange Coast College
- Oxnard College
- Palo Verde College
- Palomar College
- Pasadena City College
- Porterville College
- Reedley College

- Rio Hondo College
- Riverside City College
- Sacramento City College
- Saddleback College
- San Bernardino Valley College
- San Diego City College
- San Diego Mesa College
- San Joaquin Delta College
- San Jose City College
- Santa Ana College
- Santa Barbara City College
- Santa Monica College
- Santa Rosa Junior College
- Santiago Canyon College
- Sierra College
- Skyline College
- Solano Community College
- Southwestern College
- Taft College
- Ventura College
- Victor Valley College
- West Hills College Coalinga
- West Hills College Lemoore
- West Los Angeles College
- West Valley College
- Woodland Community College
- Yuba College

3. 2. What is your position at the college? *

Mark only one oval.

- Chancellor
- President
- Vice President of Student Services
- Dean of Student Services
- Vice President of Academic Services/Instruction
- Dean of Instruction
- Vice President of Administrative Services
- Faculty
- Student Equity Director
- Student Equity Coordinator
- Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) Director
- Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) Coordinator
- Other: _____

4. 3. Who participates in the mandated Student Equity Plan planning process on your campus? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- Students
- Administrators
- Faculty
- Staff
- Community Stakeholders
- Consultants (e.g., R.P. Group)
- Other: _____

5. 4. Who is administratively entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that student equity metrics tied to the Student Equity Plan are measured and reported? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- Vice President of Student Services/Affairs
- Dean of Student Services/Affairs
- Director of Student Equity
- Student Equity Coordinator
- Vice President of Academic Services/Affairs
- Dean of Instruction
- SSSP Director
- SSSP Coordinator
- Do Not Know
- Other: _____

6. 5. Does your college demonstrate its commitment to student equity in any of the following ways? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- Strategic equity or diversity planning initiatives
- Creation of equity or diversity statement (e.g., website, college catalog, syllabi, etc.)
- Formal college-wide committee on equity or diversity (e.g., Student Equity Plan committee)
- Institutional metric or key performance indicators reflecting equity or diversity
- Other: _____

7. 6. What steps does your college take to specifically integrate cross-cultural initiatives as part of its mission? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- Cultural competency workshops/seminars
- Applies for or administers Title V grants
- Conducts Hispanic/Latin@ student welcomes
- Cross-cultural student affairs or curriculum office(s)
- Office of Diversity/Inclusion
- Other: _____

8. 7. Which equity serving programs are being implemented on campus? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- Puente
- Umoja
- Male Mentoring Program
- Female Mentoring Program
- EOPS/CARE
- DSPS
- CalWORKs
- Financial Aid
- Veteran Services
- Foster Youth
- Other: _____

9. 8. How does the college measure and assess student equity goals and objectives? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- No established methodology for measuring and assessing goals and objectives
- Continuous tracking of progress utilizing data-driven indicators
- Program Review
- Utilize previously established student equity plan indicators
- Option 5
- Other: _____

10. 9. How does the college measure and assess cultural competency goals and objectives? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- No established methodology for measuring and assessing goals and objectives
- Continuous tracking of progress utilizing data-driven indicators
- Program Review
- Utilize previously established cultural competency indicators
- Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) assessed and aligned with college-wide indicators
- Other: _____

11. **10. How has your college been able to impact instruction to include equity and cultural competency program earning outcomes (PLOs)? ***

Check all that apply.

- No curriculum/instructional changes have been made to date
- New innovative pedagogical practices which promote equity and cultural competency
- Course outcomes which measure and assess learning that integrates equity and cultural competency
- Faculty professional development opportunities
- College initiated a campus-based PLO that aligns to equity and cultural competency
- Other: _____

12. **11. How does your college embed HSI initiatives into its student equity plans? Check all that apply. ***

Check all that apply.

- Does not embed HSI initiatives into student equity plans
- Data-driven metrics
- Campus Events
- Professional development activities
- Instruction
- Student Services
- Other: _____

13. **12. Has your college utilized any of the following resources to assist in the development and implementation of your student equity plan? Check all that apply. ***

Check all that apply.

- Services provided by the California Community College Chancellor's Office
- Services provided by the Research & Planning Group for California Community Colleges
- Services provided by the USC Center for Urban Education
- Services provided by HACU – Higher Education Research Collective (H3ERC)
- Services provided by Achieving the Dream (ATD)
- Services provided by California Guided Pathways Project
- Services provided by College Futures Foundation
- Other: _____

14. 13. How does your college display cultural competency/sensitivity messaging on campus? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- Posters
- Artwork
- Films
- Book Discussions
- Syllabi
- Speaker Series
- Other: _____

15. 14. How have equity initiatives been integrated into the organizational structure of the college? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- Goals, objectives, and actions aligned with the institutional core values and master/strategic plan
- Shared governance
- Resource leveraging and allocation
- Student life planning and activities
- Academic services and activities
- College-wide dialogue
- Other: _____

16. 15. Indicate organizational challenges that have impeded in your college's ability to integrate cultural competency measures from a student equity perspective. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Significant Barrier	Minimal Barrier	No Barrier
Lack of organizational support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of administrative leadership support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of diversity buy-in	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of staff support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of faculty support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial limitations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Geographical proximity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. 16. How effective have various efforts or initiatives on your campus been in supporting attainment of equity goals on your campus? *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Very effective	Effective	Somewhat effective	Ineffective	N/A
Staff professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural competency activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Campus student equity dialogue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consultation from external entity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership training for administrators	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer mentoring support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic planning with District Office and sister colleges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic partnerships with P-20 stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. 17. How have the following types of equity and diversity serving activities impacted your campus? *

Mark only one oval per row.

	High Impact	Moderate Impact	Low Impact	No Impact	N/A
College-wide flex day workshops on teaching and learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
College-wide flex day workshops on equity and cultural competency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guest speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student initiated and facilitated activities during respective cultural heritage months	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dialogue on diversity and race issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. **18. Optional: How do you define equity and diversity? Are these concepts synonymous or divergent in your opinion?**

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APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

“Developing a Culturally Sensitive Student Equity Report Card: Bridging Multiple Worlds within a California Community College Hispanic-Serving Institution Framework”

Henry L. Covarrubias
Interview Protocol and Questions

Pseudonym:

Date:

Time:

At least two weeks prior to interviews, the researcher will invite the subjects to complete background questions in advance of the interview to maximize interview time. Prior to commencing the face-to-face interview, the researcher will again summarize the nature of the study. Dissertation subjects will be given a copy of the abstract and the consent form to sign as well.

The following is the dialogue the researcher will utilize prior to the interview:

- A. This research is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a dissertation at UC Santa Barbara.
- B. The purpose of this mixed-method study is to investigate culturally competent student equity practices at California Community Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). Moreover, the goal is to subsequently design and propose a statewide student equity report card that is culturally sensitive to HSIs and can be utilized as a lens to gauge college-wide initiatives and strategic planning efforts within a multitude of organizational levels.
- C. Interviews will last 30-60 minutes in duration.
- D. I will utilize a journal to take notes of our conversation. Furthermore, I will audio record the interview to help reference interview content.
- E. Any interview questions can be bypassed or either party can stop the interview at any time.
- F. I will share transcripts of the interview with you to review for accuracy.
- G. The summary of key findings from the interview will be provided to you.
- H. The data collected will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the home and/or office of the researcher. Data will be destroyed after 3 years of study completion.

- I. This information will not be shared with anyone other than the researcher and dissertation committee members.
- J. Responses will be kept anonymous and confidential.
- K. Please remember that you will not be compensated for participation. Participation is voluntary.
- L. We can begin when you are ready.

Primary Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me how you define and measure student equity?
2. How do you define cultural competency?
3. Which campus stakeholders decide on student equity goals and objectives?
4. Do you have specific examples of how your college addresses diversity initiatives?
5. How does your college integrate Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) initiatives into its policies, procedures, and strategic planning measures?
6. Please tell me about the ways your college's HSI designation intersects with your Student Equity Plan in regard to cultural competency?
7. How does your college's senior administration impede the integration of cultural competency initiatives? What about faculty? What about staff?
8. Can you give me examples of effective efforts or initiatives at your college in terms of cultural competency?
9. What specific professional development activities does your college provide or encourage to increase cultural competency outcomes? How does this encourage cultural competency outcomes?
10. Are community members involved in the student equity planning process?
11. How does your college assess whether student equity and cultural competency initiative are effective (on-campus? To stakeholders? For students?)?
 - How are these initiatives embraced by on-campus stakeholders?
 - What about off-campus stakeholders?