Disparities Remain: Addressing Race Avoidance and Equitizing Pathways

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OCCRL’S MISSION

OCCRL researchers study policies, programs, and practices designed to enhance outcomes for diverse youth and adults who seek to transition to and through college to employment.
ACTIVITY, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT

STEM PIPELINES

EQUITY CONSCIOUS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PATHWAYS

Exploring Strategies to Close Gaps in Community Colleges

Transitioning Learners to Calculus in Community Colleges

Advancing Racial Justice & Equitable Outcomes in Community Colleges Institutes

Career and Technical Education as a Gateway to EQUITY

STEM PIPELINES

Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

REVERSE TRANSFER

Postsecondary Pathways for Former Foster Care Youth

OCCRL
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Guided Pathways: Planning, Implementation, Evaluation

Creating guided pathways requires managing and sustaining large-scale transformational change. The work begins with thorough planning, continues through consistent implementation, and depends on ongoing evaluation. The goals are to improve rates of college completion, transfer, and attainment of jobs with value in the labor market — and to achieve equity in those outcomes.

**PLANNING**

**ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS**
Make sure the following conditions are in place — prepared, mobilized, and adequately resourced — to support the college's large-scale transformational change:
- Strong change leadership throughout the institution
- Faculty and staff engagement
- Commitment to using data
- Capacity to use data

**PREPARATION/AWARENESS**
Understand where you are, prepare for change, and build awareness by:
- Engaging stakeholders and making the case for change
- Establishing a baseline for key performance indicators
- Building partnerships with K-12, universities, and employers
- Developing roadmaps of how students choose, enter, and complete programs
- Developing an implementation plan with roles and deadlines

**SUSTAINABILITY**
Commit to pathways for the long term and make sure they are implemented for all students by:
- Determining barriers to sustainability (state, system, and institutional levels)
- Redefining the roles of faculty, staff, and administrators as needed
- Identifying needs for professional development and technical assistance
- Revamping technology to support the redesigned student experience
- Reallocation of resources as needed
- Continuing to engage key stakeholders, especially students
- Integrating pathways into hiring and evaluation practices

**IMPLEMENTATION**

**CLARIFY THE PATHS**
Map all programs to transfer and career and include these features:
- Detailed information on target career and transfer outcomes
- Course sequences, critical courses, embedded credentials, and progress milestones
- Math and other core coursework aligned to each program of study

**HELP STUDENTS GET ON A PATH**
Require these supports to make sure students get the best start:
- Use of multiple measures to assess students' needs
- First-year experiences to help students explore the field and choose a major
- Full program plans based on required core/transfer exploration
- Contextualized, integrated academic support to help students pass program gateway courses
- K-12 partnerships focused on career/college program exploration

**HELP STUDENTS STAY ON THEIR PATH**
Keep students on track with these supports:
- Ongoing, intrusive advising
- Systems for students to easily track their progress
- Systems/procedures to identify students at risk and provide needed supports
- A structure to redirect students who are not progressing in a program to a more viable path

**ENSURE STUDENTS ARE LEARNING**
Use these practices to enrich and assess student learning:
- Scaled high-quality, program-relevant, applied learning experiences
- Intentional and sustained student engagement
- Evidence-based, high impact teaching practices across modalities
- Institution-wide commitment to equity-minded, asset-based teaching improvement
- Quality assessment of program learning outcomes that lead to credentials, further education, and/or gainful employment

**EARLY OUTCOMES**
Measure key performance indicators, including:
- Number of college credits earned in first term
- Number of college credits earned in first year
- Completion of gateway math and English courses in the student's first year
- Number of college credits earned in the program of study in first year
- Persistence from term 1 to term 2
- Rates of college-level course completion in students' first academic year
- Equity in outcomes

**EVALUATION**
Revisit conditions, sustainability, and implementation. Continuously improve pathways by building on elements that work and adjusting or discarding elements that are not serving all students well.
Guided Pathways: Planning, Implementation, Evaluation

Creating guided pathways requires managing and sustaining large-scale transformational change. The work begins with thorough planning, continues through consistent implementation, and depends on ongoing evaluation. The goals are to improve rates of college completion, transfer, and attainment of jobs with value in the labor market — and to achieve equity in those outcomes.

PLANNING

ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS
Large-scale transformational change requires strong leadership, a commitment to using data, and other key conditions. Make sure these conditions are in place — prepared, mobilized, and adequately resourced — to support the college’s pathways effort.

PREPARATION/AWARENESS
Understand where you are and prepare for change.

SUSTAINABILITY
Commit to pathways for the long term and make sure they are implemented for all students.

IMPLEMENTATION

CLARIFY THE PATHS
Map all programs to transfer and career. Include features that clarify paths, such as detailed outcomes, course sequences, and progress milestones.

HELP STUDENTS GET ON A PATH
Require supports that help students get the best start, including first-year experiences and integrated academic support.

HELP STUDENTS STAY ON THEIR PATH
Keep students on track with supports such as intrusive advising and systems for tracking progress.

ENSURE STUDENTS ARE LEARNING
Use program-level outcomes, culturally responsive teaching practices, and high-quality assessment to promote student learning inside and outside the classroom.

EARLY OUTCOMES
Measure key performance indicators.

EVALUATION

Revisit conditions, sustainability, and implementation. Continuously improve pathways by building on elements that work and adjusting or discarding elements that are not serving all students well.

Pathways collaborative organizations: AACC, AAC&U, Aspen, ATD, Carnegie/WestEd, CCA, CCCSE, CCRC, Dana Center, JFF, NCII, OCCRL, Sova, and UNCF.
EQUITY CONSCIOUSNESS

The awareness of unequal advantages and disadvantages that result in inequitable treatment and outcomes and a willingness to take direct action that seeks to address and rectify the inequities.

Diagram:
- Self-Reflection
- Awareness
- Change in Practice
- Change in Attitudes
- Awareness + Action = Equity Consciousness
CONSIDERING FRAMING

The expression equity does not elicit the fear and defensiveness evoked by the word racism. It is open to interpretation, and people have an intuitive sense that when we are speaking about equity we are speaking about fairness...

Further, many White Americans do not acknowledge that educational practices can be discriminatory in the absence of conscious, overt, interpersonal acts of racial discrimination.

Dowd & Bensimon (2015)
RACIAL ILLITERACY & DECENTERING WHITENESS

Bensimon, 2021
FACE RACE

4 Levels of Racism

- **Personal**: Private beliefs, prejudices, & ideas that individuals have
- **Interpersonal**: The expression of racism between individuals
- **Institutional**: Discriminatory treatment, policies & practices, within organizations & institutions
- **Structural**: System in which public policies, institutional practices, and other norms perpetuate racial group inequality

The Role of Senior Leaders in Building a Race Equity Culture
Kerrian Suarez Director of Equity In the Center

OCCRL Office of Community College Research and Leadership
OACC SUCCESS CENTER FOR OHIO COMMUNITY COLLEGES
• Structural racial inequity

• GP as transactional and not intersectional

• The need for both process and outcome
FACE RACE

• Coloring whiteness
• “I don’t see color”
A CALL FOR RACIALLY CENTERED EQUITY CONSCIOUSNESS PATHWAYS:

Highlights from OCCRL’s Guided Pathways Delphi Study
• Guided Pathways model needs more buy in from faculty and academic/student affairs staff;

• Model needs a shared understanding of equity.

• Model needs assessment around the impact of technology on inequities;

• Further consideration of how to bridge K12/P20 with the GP model is imperative.
• Educators need more clarification on the components of GP (roles and process).

• Institutions remain stagnant—slow to change and/or unable to change in meaningful ways to meet students’ needs;

• Current model is centered around improving college completion rates, attaining jobs; elevates efficiency over quality (efficiency model).

• Deficit and gap-oriented language.
• Guided Pathways model is race-neutral.

• Model lacks (but needs) a forthright equity statement/position.

• GP model is norm-referenced for PWIs; it is not one size fits all.

• Faculty is largely missing from the model.
• Systems misalignment between K12 and postsecondary

• Disconnect between GP framework and workforce/career

• Racial equity is neutral, transactional, and remains status quo within the GP model

• Questions about who is shaping the GP narrative

• Questions about how to disrupt the dominant frame
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