

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

Concepts and Activities for Racial Equity Work



CENTER *for* URBAN
EDUCATION

USC Rossier
School of Education

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The inquiry tools presented in this guide are the product of the staff who worked at the Center for Urban Education (CUE) from 1999 to 2018. The tools evolved over time, in response to what CUE staff learned from using the tools at campuses across the country, as well as from research on race, racism, and racial equity. Presented here is a collection of CUE's most impactful tools, organized and edited by Cheryl D. Ching, PhD., who served as a research assistant at CUE from 2012 to 2017 and as a post-doctoral scholar from 2017 to 2018.

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ADDITIONAL TOOLS

For additional inquiry tools, please contact us at cue.media.communications@gmail.com.

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INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS EQUITY?

The word “equity” means different things to different people. Dictionary definitions often equate “equity” with notions of fairness and justice—yet in practice, it remains open to interpretation, and within specific fields it can take on a particular definition.

In higher education, equity generally refers to creating opportunities for equal access and success among historically underserved student populations. Further distinctions are made about **which** populations should be equity’s focus, **what** the goals of equity should be, and **how** equity should be achieved. At the Center for Urban Education (CUE):

- Our **who** are **racially minoritized¹ students**, including Black, Latinx², Native American, and Pacific Islander students.
- Our **goal** is to **achieve equity in outcomes for racially minoritized students** in areas such as retention, degree and certificate attainment, and participation in honors programs and STEM disciplines, as well as access to college-level courses and transfer to four-year institutions for community colleges specifically.
- Our **how** is for **practitioners to develop “equity-mindedness”** through an action-research process that promotes critical inquiry into existing policies and practices.

¹ Following David Gilborn (2005) and Shaun Harper (2012), we use the term “minoritized” rather than minority to underscore what Harper describes as “the social construction of underrepresentation and subordination in US social institutions” (p. 9). He continues, “Persons are not born into a minority status, nor are they minoritized in every social context (e.g., their families, racially homogenous friendship groups, or places of worship). Instead, they are rendered minorities in particular situations and institutional environments that sustain an overrepresentation of whiteness” (p. 9). “Minoritized” thus reflects the fact that with few exceptions—historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) being the most prominent example—American colleges and universities were founded and designed to serve white students. At certain points we use the terms “people of color” and “students of color” to describe populations that are traditionally labeled racial and ethnic “minorities.”

² Similar to a growing number of researchers (e.g., Garcia, 2017; Felix, 2018), we use “Latinx” rather than “Latina/o” to respect the gender identities of students with Latin American, Mexican, Caribbean, or South American heritage.

GUIDE CONTENTS

In this guide, we discuss the *why* of our approach. Interspersed into that discussion are tools we have developed that help higher education practitioners orient their equity work.

WHY RACE	PAGE 7
1. A demographic imperative	
2. An economic imperative	
3. A justice imperative	
4. Present day manifestations of racism	
5. Socioeconomic status or income cannot fully explain inequalities by race/ethnicity	
6. Summary: The racial equity imperative	
WHY EQUITY IN OUTCOMES	PAGE 22
1. The two dimensions of racial equity	
WHY EQUITY-MINDEDNESS?	PAGE 26
1. Diversity-mindedness	
2. Deficit-mindedness	
3. Equity-mindedness	
4. Equity-mindedness in action	
ACTIVITIES	PAGE 32
1. Finding your equity stance	
2. Creating your educational history map	
3. Defining campus equity	
4. Creating a campus equity history map	
5. Identifying deficit- and equity-minded statements	
6. Equity quadrant	
7. The “Bob” cartoon: Unpacking institutional racism	
8. Facilitating equity-minded conversations and navigating resistance to race	

REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

PAGE 65

APPENDIX

PAGE 68

The historical trajectories of racial inequity
in the United States

WHY RACE?

A question we often get in our work is why CUE focuses on race. Our rationale for racial equity rests on demographic, economic, and justice imperatives. It is also premised on the fact that socioeconomic class and income alone do not fully account for inequalities experienced by racially minoritized students.

A DEMOGRAPHIC IMPERATIVE

For some time now, demographers have predicted that the United States will turn into a “majority-minority” nation, as each generation of Americans becomes more racially and ethnically diverse than the one before. Current U.S. Census projections note that nationally, this will occur around 2044, and from that point it is unlikely to be reversed (Colby & Ortman, 2015). Certain states such as California already have populations with a majority of people of color, with Latinx eclipsing whites as the largest racial-ethnic group in 2015. U.S. Census projections further suggest that the fastest-growing populations through 2060 will be (1) individuals of two or more races; (2) Asians; (3) Latinx; and (4) Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, in that order. The Black and Native American population will continue to grow as well, although at more modest rates. At least through 2043, Blacks and Latinx will remain the two largest groups of people of color.

These demographic trends have significant implications for educational institutions at the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary level. Already, students of color outnumber white students in public K-12 public schools (Hussar & Bailey, 2014). The number of white high school graduates will continue to decrease as the number of Latinx, Asian, and Pacific Islander high school graduates will increase (Bransberger & Michelau, 2016) (Figure 1). After record numbers of Black high school graduates between 2010 to 2012, projections suggest a slow decline in the coming years.

Given this demographic reality, the equity question for higher education—and the question that CUE addresses—is whether colleges and universities are prepared to serve the students of color who are coming to their doors in rising numbers, and for whom many of these institutions were not intended or designed?

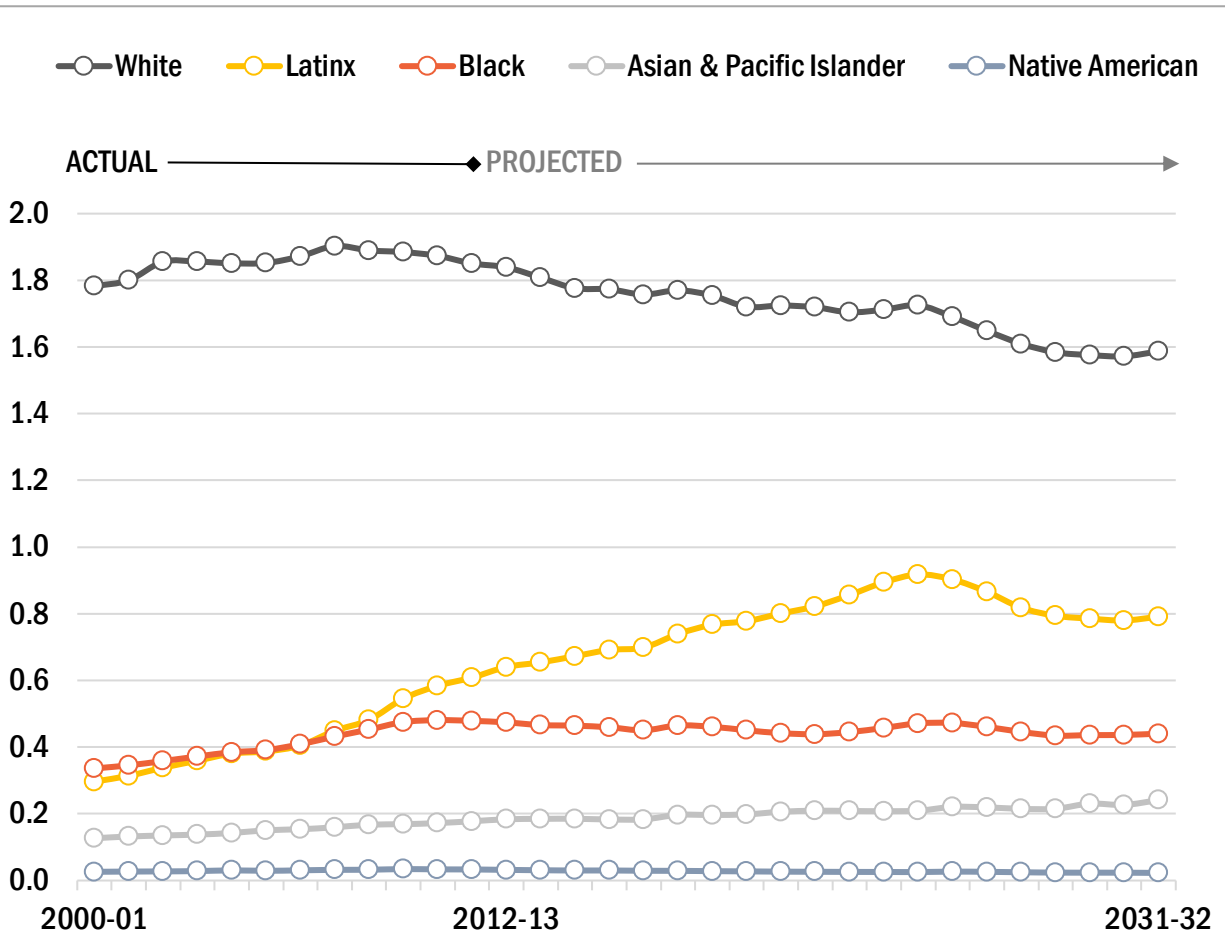


FIGURE 1. High school graduates from public and private schools by race and ethnicity, in millions (2001-01 to 2012-13 actual; 2013-14 to 2031-32 projected). Data source: Bransberger and Michelau (2016), *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates*.

AN ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE

The shifting racial-ethnic makeup of American’s high school graduates—and by extension, college student population—is intimately tied to the economic justification for racial equity. While not new, this call grew louder following the launch of the College Completion Agenda in 2009, when President Barack Obama announced the *American Graduation Initiative* at Macomb Community College in Michigan. Since then, state and federal policymakers, funders, and advocacy organizations have argued that equity—defined as closing gaps in access and completion—is necessary for the economic future of the country, states, communities, and individuals (see page 10).

Analyses of college completion outcomes are sobering, often showing that Black, Latinx, and Native American students attain bachelor’s degrees at rates lower than white and Asian students (Figure 2). As many policymakers and researchers have pointed out, these racial/ethnic equity gaps in baccalaureate attainment risk exacerbating inequalities in other arenas that contribute to the overall economic and social well-being of the country, such as employment, voting, and healthcare.

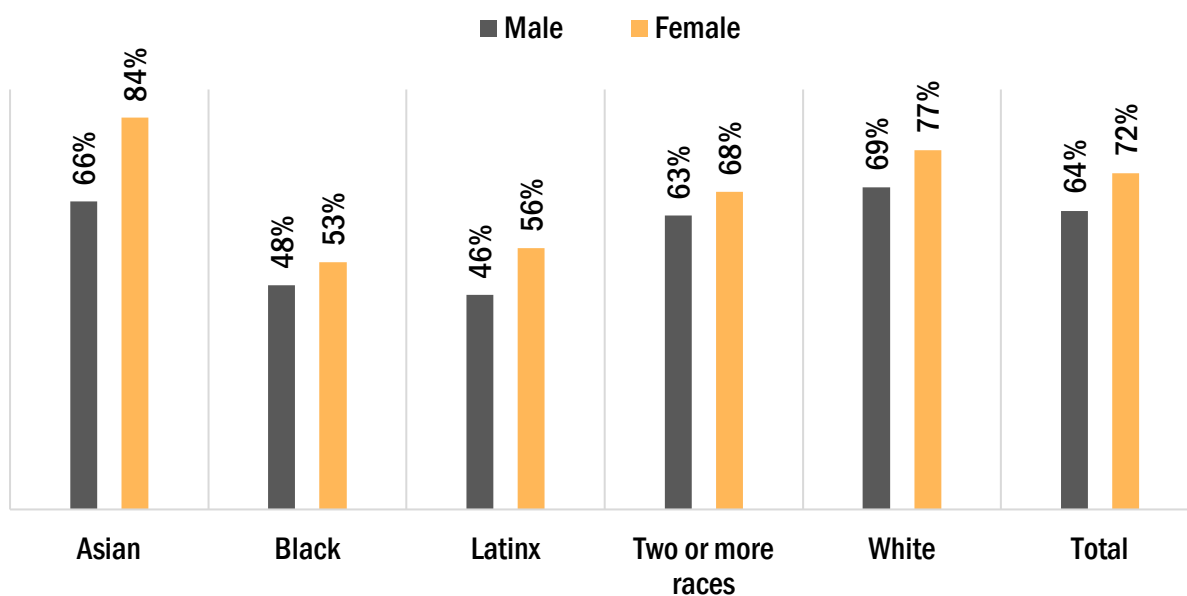


FIGURE 2. Percentage of 2003-04 full-time, beginning postsecondary students who attended a four-year institution and attained a bachelor’s degree by June 2009, by race and ethnicity and sex. Reproduced with permission from Ross et al., *Higher Education: Gaps in Access and Persistence Study* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), figure 37.1.

THE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE FOR EQUITY

STATE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION: COLORADO COMMISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

“If the state of Colorado is to prepare its students for changing workforce demands and maintain its high quality of life and vibrant economy, it must invest more in the educational attainment of all its citizens

Today Colorado faces a critical decision: Invest in expanded access in order to mitigate affordability and equity gap challenges or bear the weight and financial burden of an undereducated citizenry.”

FUNDER: LUMINA FOUNDATION

“Achieving Goal 2025 requires the acknowledgement of systemic disparities and the imperative of placing equity and excellence at the center of all work to improve postsecondary attainment.”

“55 million jobs will be created by the end of this decade. 40 million jobs will require a postsecondary education—a certificate or degree that is beyond the high school degree. Goal 2025 seeks to increase the percentage of Americans with high-quality postsecondary credentials to 60% by 2023 in order to address these needs.”

ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION: THE CAMPAIGN FOR COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY

“The Campaign for College Opportunity’s mission has been to ensure that all eligible and motivated students in California have an opportunity to go to college and succeed. The Campaign remains committed to keeping the State of California from breaking its promise of college opportunity to its next generation of young people in order to ensure a strong state for all of us.”

“California must address the growing inequity in college enrollment and degree completion, across both race and gender. This is not just a problem for men, or Blacks and Latinos; this imbalance affects all Californians.”

A JUSTICE IMPERATIVE

The demographic and economic imperatives for racial equity are oriented toward the future: the projected racial-ethnic makeup of the American population and the economic prospects of the country. Racial *inequity*, however, is a problem that was born in the past and that has endured over time. It was born out of slavery and subsequent Jim Crow laws that legalized segregation and limited opportunity for Blacks. It was born out of genocide and land-grabbing that diminished the population and territories of Native Americans, as well as out of the colonization and assimilation projects that sought to “civilize” the “savage natives.” It was born out of waves of Asian, Latinx, and Pacific Islander migration, some of which was sanctioned by the American government (e.g., through the *Immigration Act of 1965* and asylum seeking) and some of which was not. For all people of color, racial inequity was born from policies and practices that were designed to benefit the dominant population of whites and to directly and/or indirectly exclude, marginalize, and oppress people of color. (See the Appendix A for a discussion of the historical trajectories of communities of color in the United States.)

Addressing racial inequity is therefore an act of justice that requires explicit attention to structural inequality and institutionalized racism, and demands system-changing responses.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON
HOWARD UNIVERSITY
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

JUNE 4, 1965

“But freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: Now you are free to go where you want, and do as you desire, and choose the ladders you please.

You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, ‘You are free to compete with all the others’ and still justly believe that you have been completely fair.

Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates. And this is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights.

We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result.”

Rights Era, beginning with the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 through the 1960s, redressed the racial inequities that preceded it. Empirical analyses, however, demonstrate that racial equity remains an unfinished project, and despite the gains of the Civil Rights Era, structural inequalities remain. Each region, state, county, city, and college has likely had an equally sobering story about racial inequity. Equity work requires practitioners to understand the history of race and race relations in their local context, as well as the forms of structural inequality and institutionalized racism that manifest in their communities.

PRESENT-DAY MANIFESTATIONS OF RACISM

Equity work also requires practitioners to consider how race and racism manifest in their actions at an interpersonal level, and how those actions, which may seem small and inconsequential, are ultimately tied to the history of racial injustice in the United States. In this section, we present two ways racism persists today: microaggressions and implicit bias.

Racial microaggressions

Racial microaggressions are brief and commonplace verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group. Microaggressions are often unconsciously delivered. These exchanges are so pervasive and automatic in daily conversations and interactions that they are often dismissed and glossed over as being innocent and innocuous (Sue et al., 2007). Yet microaggressions are detrimental to persons of color because they impair performance in a multitude of settings by sapping the psychic and spiritual energy of recipients and by creating inequities (Franklin, 2004; Sue, 2004).

As a concept and word, “microaggression” has gained popularity in recent years such that it is often used without clear definition, routinely transformed from a noun to a verb (i.e., “microaggressed”), and widely applied to other stereotyped groups (e.g., women, LGBTQ). It’s important to point out, however, that microaggression comes from the anti-racist work of psychiatrist Chester Pierce and his colleagues (1978), who framed microaggressions specifically as “‘put downs’ of blacks by offenders” (p. 66). Some years later, drawing on Pierce’s work, the legal

scholar Peggy Davis (1989) associated race and power, asserting that microaggressions “stem from unconscious attitudes of white superiority and constitute a verification of black inferiority” (p. 1576). More recently, in his reflections on why the notion of microaggressions is critical to thinking about race and racism in higher education, education scholar Daniel Solórzano (2018) stated that “[r]acial microaggressions matter because they are symptoms of larger structural problems—racism and white supremacy” (p. 97).

How microaggressions manifest and how they perpetuate racism takes a number of forms, which have been identified by psychologist Derald Wing Sue (2004) as:

1. **Microinsults**, which are verbal remarks or behaviors that convey rudeness and insensitivity that demean a person’s racial heritage or identity.
2. **Microinvalidations**, which are verbal remarks or behaviors that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person or color.
3. **Microassaults**, which are explicit racial derogations characterized primarily by a violent verbal or nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim.
4. **Environmental microaggressions**, which are racial assaults, insults, and invalidations that are manifested at systemic and environmental levels.

In “Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice,” Sue et al. (2007) further elaborated on the forms racial microaggressions can take. A summary is provided in the table on pages 13-14, which is adapted from Sue’s article.

EXAMPLES OF RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

MICROAGGRESSION	REMARK/BEHAVIOR	MESSAGE
<p>Alien in own land When people of color are assumed to be foreign-born</p>	<p>“Where are you from?” “Where were you born?” “You speak good English.” Asking a Latinx or Asian person to teach you words in their native language.</p>	<p>You are not American. You are a foreigner.</p>
<p>Ascription of intelligence Assigning intelligence to a person of color on the basis of their race</p>	<p>“You are a credit to your race.” “You are so articulate.” Asking an Asian person to help you with a math or science problem.</p>	<p>People of color are generally not as intelligent as whites. It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent. All Asians are intelligent and good in math and science.</p>
<p>Color-blindness Statements that indicate a white person doesn’t want to acknowledge race.</p>	<p>“When I look at you, I don’t see color.” “America is a melting pot.” “There is only one race, the human race.”</p>	<p>People of color are not racial/cultural beings. People of color do not have experiences that are racialized. People of color must assimilate/acclurate to the dominant culture.</p>
<p>Criminality or assumption of criminal status Presuming that a person of color is dangerous, a criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race.</p>	<p>A white man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latinx person approaches or passes. A store owner/manager/clerk following a person of color around the store.</p>	<p>You are a criminal. You are going to steal. You are poor. You do not belong. You are dangerous.</p>
<p>Denial of individual racism A statement made when whites deny their racial biases.</p>	<p>“I’m not a racist. I have Black friends.” “As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority.”</p>	<p>I am immune to racism because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can’t be a racist. I’m like you.</p>

MICROAGGRESSION	REMARK/BEHAVIOR	MESSAGE
<p>Environmental microaggressions Macro-level microaggressions that are apparent on a systemic and environmental level.</p>	<p>College and universities with buildings that are all named after white men.</p> <p>Television shows and movies that feature (almost) all white people, with no representation of people of color.</p> <p>Overcrowding and/or underfunding of public schools in communities of color.</p>	<p>People of color don't belong.</p> <p>People of color won't succeed here.</p> <p>People of color are outsiders.</p> <p>People of color don't exist.</p> <p>People of color are not valued as learners.</p>
<p>Myth of meritocracy Statements that assert that race does not play a role in life successes.</p>	<p>"I believe the most qualified person should get the job."</p> <p>"Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough."</p>	<p>People of color are given unfair benefits because of their race.</p> <p>People of color are lazy and/or incompetent and need to work harder.</p>
<p>Pathologizing cultural values/communication styles The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant/white culture are ideal.</p>	<p>Asking a Black person: "Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down."</p> <p>To an Asian or Latinx person: "Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal. Speak more."</p> <p>Dismissing an individual who brings up race/culture in work/school settings.</p>	<p>People of color must assimilate/acclurate to the dominant culture.</p> <p>People of color need to leave their cultural baggage out of the classroom/workplace.</p>
<p>Second-class citizen When a white person is given preferential treatment over a person of color.</p>	<p>Person of color is mistaken for a service worker.</p> <p>A taxi driver passes a person of color to pick up a white passenger.</p>	<p>People of color are servants to whites. They can't possibly occupy high-status positions.</p> <p>People of color are likely to cause trouble and/or travel to a dangerous neighborhood.</p>

Implicit bias

“Implicit biases affect behavior and are far more predictive than self-reported racial attitudes” (Godsil, Tropp, Goff, & Powell, 2014, p. 10). Implicit bias refers to the process of associating stereotypes or attitudes toward categories of people without conscious awareness. Implicit bias affects behavior because human beings process an enormous amount of stimulus by organizing the environment into categories consisting of automatic associations between concepts that share similar characteristics. The categories allow humans to effortlessly navigate the world. These categories guide how people react to objects and how people socially interact. For example, grade school children learn to categorize adults into teachers, principals, and parents. Each categorization is associated—through socialization—with characteristics. Godsil et al. (2014) use the example of children who quickly learn to respond automatically with polite attention when the person called “Principal” walks into the classroom. Such categorizations and socialization perform important social functions that allow the school to function smoothly.

People also associate attitudes with categories. For example, people may generally share the association of characteristics with the category of teachers. But each individual will associate different feelings toward teachers. However, some emotional associations may be laden with stereotypical characteristics about categories. Latinx people are often associated with images of being “illegal” immigrants, or Black men as big and intimidating criminals. These stereotypical and emotional associations toward Latinx and Blacks perpetuate implicit racial biases. Although many people do not consciously believe in defining groups with stereotypes, regular exposure to such representations in media and social environments prompts people to unconsciously respond with implicit biases that can be detrimental to stigmatized social groups.

The following information defines key words associated with implicit bias:

- **Implicit:** A thought or feeling about which individuals are unaware or mistaken.
- **Bias:** When individuals have a preference or an aversion toward a person or a category of person as opposed to being neutral

- **Stereotype:** A specific trait or attribute that is associated with a category of person.
- **Attitude:** An evaluative feeling toward a category of people or objects—either positive or negative—indicating what individuals like or dislike.

Jerry Kang, professor of law and vice chancellor for equity, diversity and inclusion at the University of California at Los Angeles, offers a compelling illustration of implicit bias in this TED Talk: <http://jerrykang.net/2011/03/13/getting-up-to-speed-on-implicit-bias/>.

Research on implicit bias has identified and proposed various interventions to challenge implicit biases. The table below illustrates different interventions that can be practiced at the individual level.

INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS AND REDUCE IMPLICIT BIAS	
DOUBT YOUR OBJECTIVITY	Recognize and accept that you are susceptible to the influence of bias and assumptions.
STEREOTYPE REPLACEMENT	Replace stereotypical responses with non-stereotypical responses. To use this strategy, one must recognize that their perceptions of a person are based on stereotypes.
COUNTER-STEREOTYPING	Visualize abstract images of non-stereotypical people.
INDIVIDUATION	Obtain specific information about group members to make evaluations at the individual level and not by group.
PERSPECTIVE-TAKING	View the world from the eyes of a member of a stereotyped group.
INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTACT	Seek opportunities to engage in positive interactions with stereotyped groups.
IMPROVE DECISION-MAKING CONDITIONS	Slow down thinking by engaging in mindful and deliberate processing.
USE DATA	Collect empirical data and evidence to investigate racial disparities and inequities.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OR INCOME CANNOT FULLY EXPLAIN INEQUALITIES BY RACE/ETHNICITY

The question of “why race?” is implicitly a question about why CUE does not focus on socioeconomic status (SES)/income, gender, ability, or other group categorizations for which issues of equity also exist. We are sensitive to inequities associated with these groups, as well as to how inequities can compound for people who belong to or identify with more than one category.³ For instance, Black students who are low-income face greater inequities than those who are high-income.⁴ At the same time, empirical analyses show that income or class alone cannot account for the inequities experienced by Blacks. As Anthony Carnevale and Jeff Strohl (2013) explain in *Separate and unequal: How higher education reinforces the intergenerational reproduction of white racial privilege*.

Class and race overlap and are most virulent in combination. Along with many other researchers, we find that the reason for persistent racial inequality begins with the fact that Blacks and Hispanics seem to face barriers not faced by whites. Unequal educational and career outcomes for economically disadvantaged whites can be explained with variables like family income, parental education, and peer expectations. These same variables *do not fully* explain African American and Hispanic educational and economic outcomes. Earlier research shows income effects are more fully explained by observable things, like peer group and tutoring, while differences by race are not so easy to pin down. (p. 36)

In another analysis focused on college completion, Carnevale and Strohl (2010) demonstrate that white students and high-SES students who begin higher education in community college earn certificates, associate degrees, and baccalaureate degrees at rates between 40% and 46%, as compared to

³ The idea that inequities, along with discrimination and marginalization, compound draws on Kimberle Crenshaw’s (1989) seminal work on “intersectionality.” Using the case of Black women, Crenshaw argues that the “multidimensionality” of experience must be acknowledged and as such, treating race and gender—for example—as “mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis” is highly problematic (p. 139).

⁴ For in-depth analyses of the particular and cumulative effects of race and socioeconomic status on educational opportunity in higher education, see *America’s unmet promise: The imperative for equity in higher education* (Witham, Malcom-Piqueux, Dowd, & Bensimon, 2015) and *Separate and unequal: How higher education reinforces the intergenerational reproduction of white privilege* (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013).

39% for low-SES students and below 30% for racially minoritized students. This finding suggests that there is at least a 9-percentage-point gap between students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and racially minoritized students, meaning that the gap cannot be explained by SES alone.

Using National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88)⁵ data, Carnevale and Strohl (2010) empirically investigated the relationship between race, SES, and college admission test scores, seeking to explain “whether the effects of race can be replaced by the effects of other observable [SES] factors, most notably income” (p. 169). The answer to this question is “no.” In their full regression model, being in the lowest-income tier is associated with a negative-13-point differential relative to being in the highest-income tier; being Black is associated with a negative-56-point differential relative to being white. They also find that low-SES Blacks pay a greater penalty in terms of SAT/ACT scores, compared to low-SES whites, a pattern that persists even with middle- and upper-middle-class Blacks. As the authors conclude: “[S]ocioeconomic status itself is not race-blind” (p. 167).

The imperative for racial equity is clear on demographic, economic, and justice grounds. For far too long, racial *in*equity has been the norm in the United States, with policies and practices that were designed and/or that work to limit the opportunity of people of color.

For more on the imperative to focus race over socioeconomic status or income when it comes to equity, see *Why race? Understanding the importance of foregrounding race and ethnicity in achieving equity on college campuses* (Ching, 2013), which is available at https://cue.usc.edu/files/2016/01/CUE_WhyRace_2013.pdf.

⁵ NELS:88 is a well-used and oft-cited data set that followed a nationally representative sample of eighth-graders from 1988 to 2000 (<https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/nels88/>). The purpose of NELS:88 was to examine important educational and life transitions (e.g., middle to high school, high school to college, college to workforce).

SUMMARY: THE RACIAL EQUITY IMPERATIVE

1

EQUALITY imagines an equal world.
"I care about all students equally"

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Racial equity requires policies and practices directed where they're needed to fix barriers to achievement and provide the necessary support. When colleges focus solely on diversity, they bring more students into systems that put too many students on predictable paths toward failure.

2

But the world **ISN'T EQUAL.**

Poorly Funded Schools
 Less-Skilled Teachers
 Counselor Ratios: 1:1000
 Truncated Curriculum

Scholarships
 Educated Parents
 SAT / ACT Tutors
 Middle to Upper Class
 Honors Courses, AP Credit & Highly Skilled Teachers
 Active Social Networks and Social Capital

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4

And it has **BIAS AND SYSTEMIC RACISM.**

Predominantly White
 Microaggressions
 Implicit Bias
 Disproportionate Remediation
 Predominantly Marginalized Racial/Ethnic Groups

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3

Within this same picture, a **DIVERSITY** lens focuses only on bringing more students into an unequal pathway.

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5

In contrast, **EQUITY** redirects resources to the pathways with greatest need to fix barriers and intentionally provide support.

Regular data disaggregation & analysis
 Goal setting and action planning
 Faculty & staff training to be equity facilitators
 Inquiry to understand how practices impede equity

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WHY EQUITY IN OUTCOMES?

When CUE says equity, we're talking about not just equal *access*, but equal *outcomes* for racially minoritized students in higher education. Our goal is to see equal outcomes in measures such as (but not limited to):

- Persistence through developmental and basic skills education
- Transfer from 2- to 4-year institutions
- Degree and certificate attainment
- Participation in honors programs
- Participation and completion in key majors

The terms “Equity” and “Diversity” are often treated interchangeably, but they refer to different measures. Diversity (as well as “equal opportunity”) generally refers to *access* to the institution. Many educational institutions have been successful in granting access to racially minoritized students and are thus proud of efforts that have resulted in creating a diverse student body. While access is important, focusing *only* on creating a diverse student body allows other inequitable outcomes to remain invisible. Problems such as unequal graduation and transfer rates cannot be fixed so long as they go unnoticed.

For example, if the entering class on a campus is 56% white and 32% Latinx, we would expect that the graduating class would also be 56% white and 32% Latinx, even if the total number of students has decreased (Figure 3). *When the representation of graduating students mirrors their representation in the entering student body, we have achieved equity.*

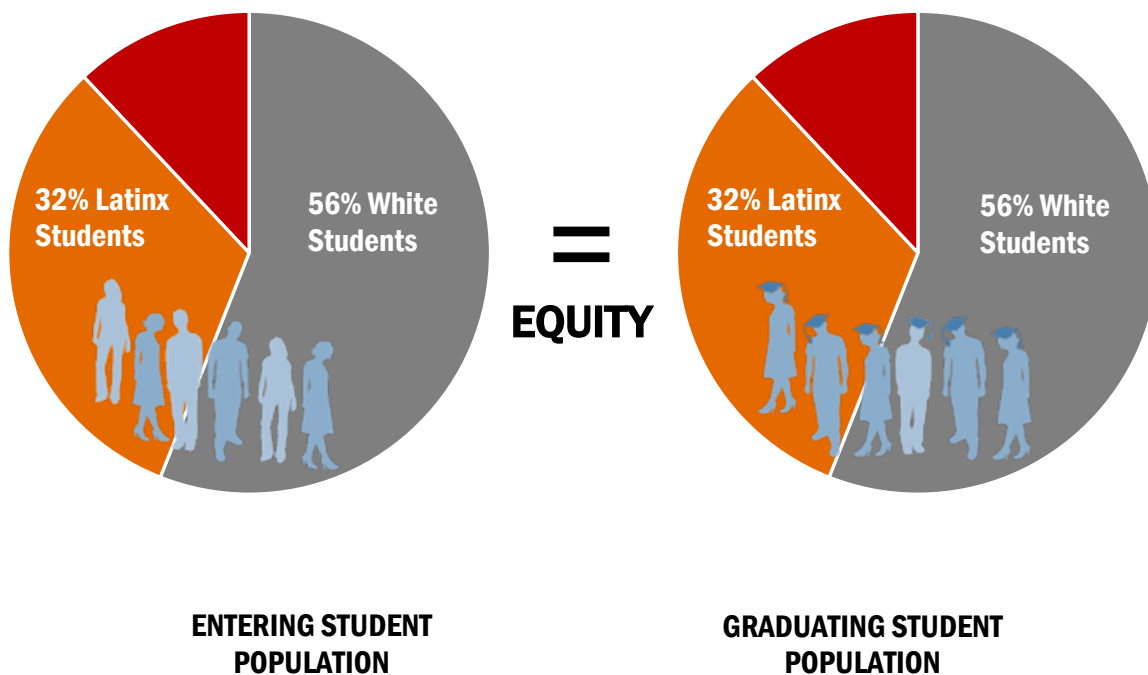


FIGURE 3. Example of equity in outcomes

There are several advantages to focusing on outcomes when it comes to racial equity.

1. Outcomes are measurable.
2. Colleges and universities already collect huge amounts of data that can be used to define these outcomes.
3. Outcomes data allow practitioners to see how students from different racial and ethnic groups fare overall, and relative to each other, as they progress through college milestones.

The latter, which is captured in what CUE calls the **equity gap**, is an especially important piece of racial equity work. An equity gap refers to the underrepresentation of racially minoritized students in a given measure, such as graduation or matriculation. Equity gaps are determined by comparing a student group's outcome data to a set baseline and benchmark, as well as the baseline and benchmark data of other student groups for the same measure. Colleges can decide to set the benchmark at

the **average success rate** for that measure, or at the success rate for the **highest-performing group**. The elimination of an equity gap for a particular outcome (e.g., equity gap for Pacific Islander students in degree attainment) is one marker of racial equity. See CUE's Data Tools Guide for more information.

THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF RACIAL EQUITY

These advantages highlight the **accountability** dimension of equity in outcomes, which enables colleges to:

- Define the problem of racial inequity in a tangible way;
- Identify areas where colleges and universities are underserving racially minoritized students; and
- Account for progress (or lack thereof) toward racial equity.

The accountability dimension of equity in outcomes has particular importance for the economic imperative for racial equity. Inequality in higher education is detrimental to everyone. It negatively impacts the entire country, economically and socially, in such matters as

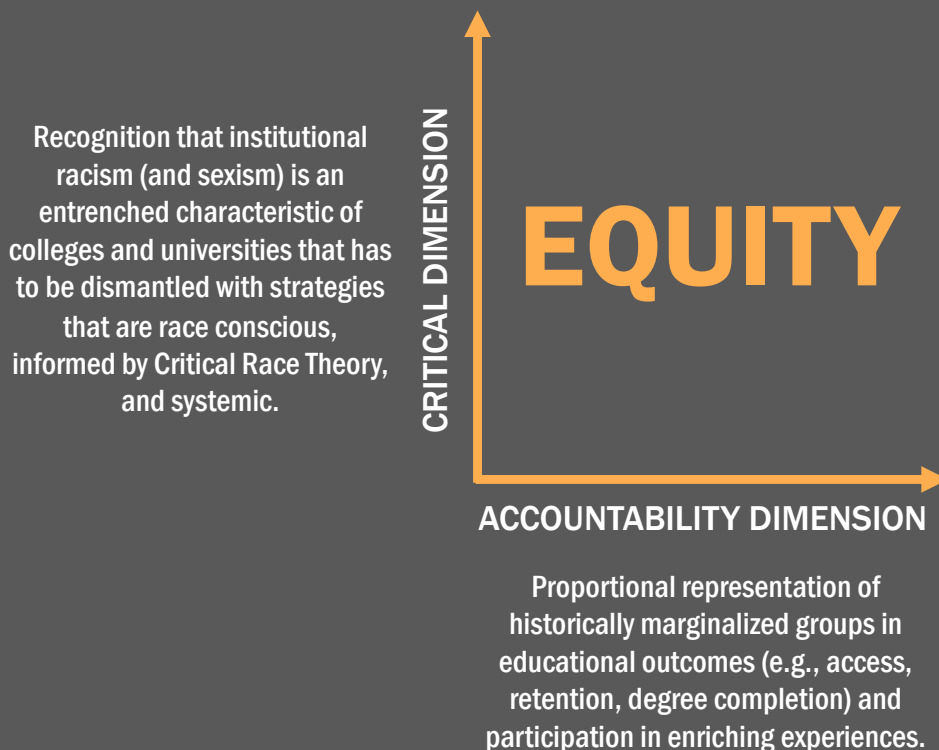


FIGURE 4.
The two dimensions of racial equity

unemployment rates, welfare costs, voter turnout, income, and healthcare. Outcomes data can be used to define indicators that could help call attention to and prioritize racial equity issues at the policy level.

Alongside the accountability dimension, equity in outcomes allows colleges to bring a **critical** dimension to racial equity work, which emphasizes equity's justice imperative. Identifying equity gaps not only defines the equity problem at a college and points to areas for change, but also helps shine a light on longstanding, institutionalized campus- and practitioner-level policies and practices that are producing racial inequities.

WHY EQUITY-MINDEDNESS?

Indeed, equity requires the provision of resources to students who face the greatest barriers and continually face inequities in their educational experiences and outcomes. At CUE, however, we believe that (re)distributing resources and repairing broken structures are insufficient unless those actions and other efforts to equalize opportunity and outcomes are implemented with “equity-mindedness.” Developed by Dr. Estela Bensimon (2005), equity-mindedness is a type of “cognitive frame,” a mental map of attitudes and beliefs a person maintains to make sense of the world. A cognitive frame determines which questions are asked, what information is collected, what is noticed, how problems are defined, and what course of action should be taken. Three cognitive frames that govern how we understand racial equity are **diversity-**, **deficit-**, and **equity-mindedness**.

At CUE we have studied practitioners’ conversations about race and equity to understand which cognitive frames are commonly relied upon to understand inequities in outcomes. We have learned that cognitive frames are developed through everyday practices and transmitted through social conversations and institutional cultures. They are also developed through dominant models of student success and student development (Bensimon, 2007).

DIVERSITY-MINDEDNESS

Ensuring students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds have access to college is a longstanding focal area of higher education policy and practice. Success from a diversity-minded perspective is judged by whether a college campus has a student body that exhibits a wide range of demographic differences. Missing from this cognitive frame, however, is that the very students who make a campus “diverse” may experience inequities in retention, graduation, participation in high-impact practices, etc. Diversity-mindedness could result in access *without* success, in terms of outcomes.

DEFICIT-MINDEDNESS

In our work with college practitioners, we have observed that the dominant cognitive frame is one of deficit-mindedness. Practitioners often recognize that diversity is insufficient to produce equity in outcomes; however, explanations for inequities are typically grounded in what racially minoritized students lack or how they don't exhibit the qualities of "successful" college students who are self-motivated, goal-oriented, efficacious, and academically prepared. Furthermore, a deficit-minded orientation encourages practitioners to see the perceived shortcomings of Black, Latinx, Pacific Islander, and Native American students as the product of their attending poorly resourced schools, growing up in low-income communities, being raised by single-parent households, coming from families that do not value education, and the like. That is, these shortcomings are a "natural" outcome of these students' backgrounds, and addressing attendant inequities requires compensatory programs that "fix" students and teach them how to assimilate into the dominant college culture. Focusing on student characteristics can make it seem as if higher education's policies and practices have played no role in producing racial inequities.

Important to acknowledge is that while students do play a role in realizing their educational outcomes, engaging in deficit-minded thinking places the responsibility for action and change *solely* on students. Reframing the discussion empowers the institution and allows practitioners to focus on how they can improve their policies and practices to improve student outcomes.

EQUITY-MINDEDNESS

Advancing equity through higher education policy and practice requires a cognitive shift, not only away from thinking in terms of targeted programs, but also away from deficit-minded assumptions about students. **Equitable policies and practices must target educational institutions and systems, not the students those institutions and systems have not served well.** We describe this cognitive reframing as "equity-mindedness," which involves taking stock of the contradiction between the ideals of inclusive and democratic education on the one hand, and the policies and practices that contribute to disparities in educational outcomes for racially minoritized

students on the other hand. Equity-mindedness reflects an awareness of the sociohistorical context of exclusionary practices and racism in higher education, and the effect of power asymmetries on opportunities and outcomes for racially minoritized students. Equity-mindedness is a way of understanding and addressing social inequities that challenges the rhetorical and enacted blame of inequities in access, opportunity, and outcomes on students' social, cultural, and educational backgrounds; rather, equity-mindedness frames racial inequity as a dysfunction of higher education's policies and practices.



 EQUITY-MINDED COMPETENCE	 LACK OF EQUITY-MINDED COMPETENCE
Aware of their racial identity	Claims to not see race
Uses quantitative and qualitative data to identify racialized patterns of practice and outcomes	Does not see value in using data disaggregated by race/ethnicity to better understand the experience of racially minoritized students
Reflects on racial consequences of taken-for-granted practices	Resists noticing racialized consequences or rationalizes them as being something else
Exercises agency to produce racial equity	Does not view racial equity as a personal responsibility
Views the campus as a racialized space and actively self-monitors interactions with racially minoritized students	Views the classroom as a utilitarian physical space

FIGURE 5. Summary of equity-minded competencies

Equity-minded practitioners are aware of their **racial identity**, as well as their **racialized beliefs, expectations, and practices**. That is, they understand that who they are is influenced by the racial/ethnic group to which they belong, and that the way they think and act could have a racial character, even in the absence of underlying intent.

They take a **data- and evidence-oriented approach to racial inequity**. They define the cause of unequal outcomes in ways that make them observable, manageable, and measurable. They monitor outcomes by race and ethnicity, as well as their progress in meeting set goals and benchmarks.

Practitioners who take an equity-minded approach **reflect on the racial consequences of institutionalized practices**, question patterns of racial inequity in outcomes, and contextualize these inequities in light of historical exclusion, discrimination, and oppression. They resist the temptation to base their interpretation of inequities on racial stereotypes; for example, “Higher education is not a priority for Black students,” or “Latinas only go to schools close to their families.”

Finally, equity-mindedness requires that practitioners **exercise their agency** and assume responsibility for eliminating racial inequities in outcomes. Rather than viewing inequalities as unfortunate but expected outcomes, practitioners allow for the possibility that inequalities might be created or exacerbated by taken-for-granted practices and policies, inadequate knowledge, a lack of cultural know-how, or the absence of institutional support. Practitioner responsibility for racial equity means asking questions such as: “Why are our practices failing to assist racially minoritized students?” “In what ways might the policies of our institution contribute to the formation of unequal racial outcomes?” “How can I use the power of my position, my knowledge, my social networks, and other resources at my disposal to work on behalf of these students?” It also means **attending to relationships and interactions with students**, ensuring that racial microaggressions, implicit bias, and other forms of racism are minimized, and then addressed when they occur.

EQUITY-MINDEDNESS IN ACTION

Across higher education, policy and practice solutions to equity gaps generally take the form of small-scale compensatory programs or broad-scale redesigns of existing structures and/or curricula. For example, opportunity programs offer services that help students who experience economic and academic barriers to education—many of them racially minoritized students—navigate and adjust to college. Redesigns of developmental education seek to compress the remedial sequence and

reduce the time college students—again, many of whom are racially minoritized—spend in pre-college work.

These are solutions that can potentially improve success and persistence rates, as well as increase the number of students who complete college in less time. At the Community College of Aurora, a CUE partner campus, redesigning the developmental math sequence resulted in a 21-percentage-point increase in the overall student success rate over a two-year period. However, when these data were disaggregated by race and ethnicity, white students emerged as the chief beneficiaries of this reform; equity gaps for Black and Latinx students actually increased (Figure 5).

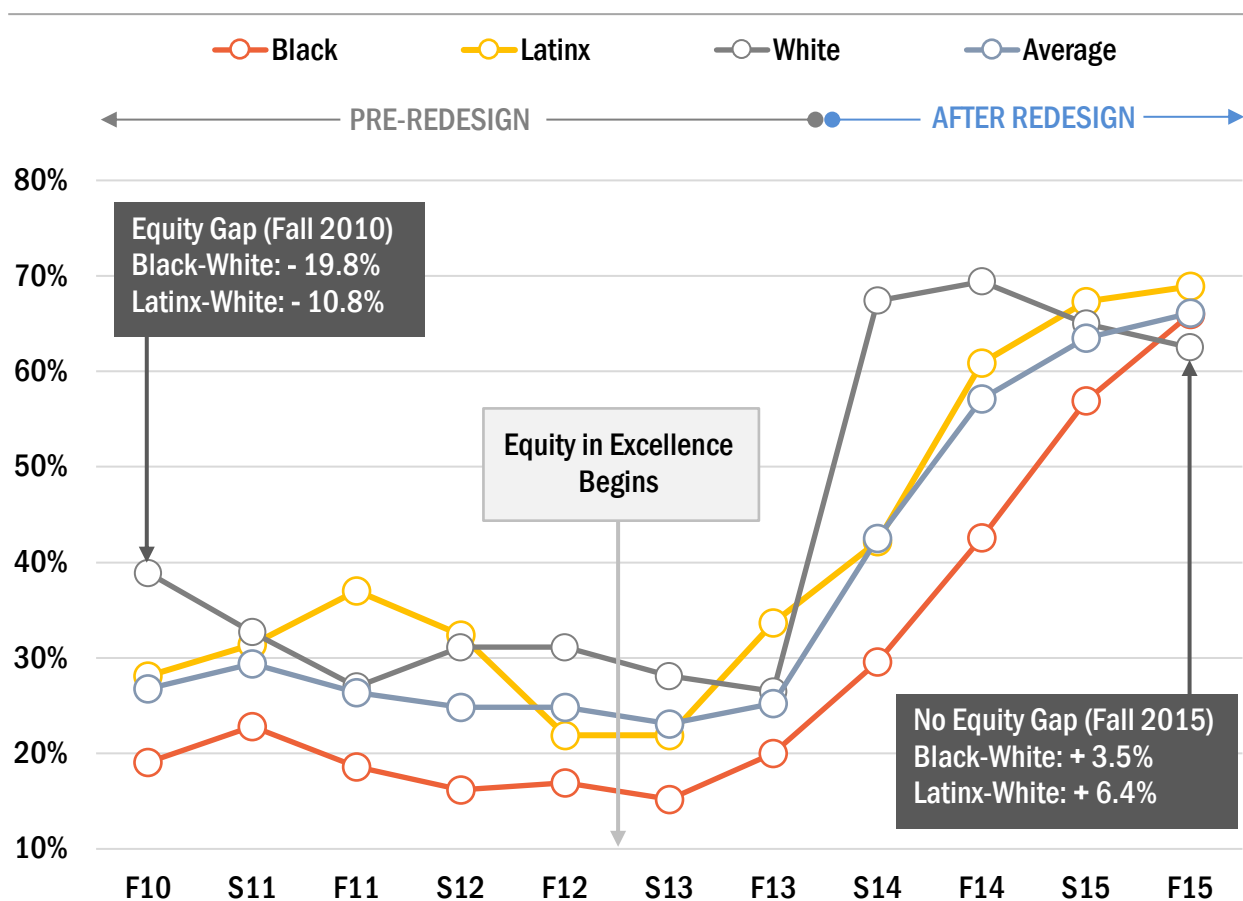


FIGURE 6. Success rates for students placed in lowest-level developmental math, by race and ethnicity, before curriculum redesign (Fall 2013 and prior), after redesign (Spring 2014), and after professional development on inquiry and equity-mindedness (Fall 2014 onward). Data source: CUE (<http://cue.usc.edu/equity/impact/>).

Through the *Equity in Excellence* project, we worked with math faculty at the Community College of Aurora to conduct inquiry into their practices and reconfigure them in an equity-minded way. (For an overview of the initiative, see Felix, Bensimon, Hanson, Gray, & Klingsmith, 2015.) In particular, CUE helped the faculty inquire into the culture of their classrooms through their course syllabi, how they structure the first day of class, and how they communicate expectations to their students.

The inquiry process exposed the faculty's assumptions, biases, and motivations. For example, one instructor stated:

I came to see that many of my behaviors were white middle-class woman behaviors. While another person who looked like me might be able to understand that my suggestions voiced to the class as a whole were really individual mandates, those black and Hispanic males from 18 to 25 were hearing that it was fine with me if they chose to fail. As with T-shirts, one size does not fit all.

In fall 2014, the success rates for all students in developmental math increased again, but especially for Black and Latinx students. By fall 2015, the equity gaps between Black and white and Latinx and white students disappeared.

ACTIVITY: FINDING YOUR EQUITY STANCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is for practitioners to interrogate their beliefs about their college's role in addressing equity. Important to note is that this activity is *not* asking for beliefs about goals, but beliefs about actions. This activity is adapted from a protocol developed by the School Reform Initiative (<http://www.schoolreforminitiative.org>).

WHO

This activity is for a small group of practitioners (minimum 2), such as your campus' equity committee or an academic department.

TIME COMMITMENT

Up to one (1) hour

MATERIALS

Printed copies of "Equity Stances A" and "Equity Stances B," on separate sheets.

STEP ONE: READ "EQUITY STANCES A"

On your own, read Equity Stances A and determine which stance most closely matches your own. Feel free to jot down initial reactions and questions.

STEP TWO: READ "EQUITY STANCES B"

On your own, read Equity Stances B. Feel free to jot down reactions and questions.

STEP THREE: PAIR-SHARE

With a partner, share the stance you chose and discuss how you would negotiate the tough questions for your stance.

EQUITY STANCES A

STANCE A: EQUALITY OF INITIAL OPPORTUNITY

Colleges should guarantee that each student has the same chance to avail of, or compete for, a particular opportunity.

STANCE B: EQUALIZATION OF OPPORTUNITY

Colleges should guarantee that each student deserves an academic program that allows her/him “to demonstrate performance that meets or exceeds a common high level within a reasonable length of time.”

STANCE C: CARE

Colleges should foster:

- Awareness of the communities from which students come, and concern for their overall welfare;
- Education as a relational practice; and
- The creation of non-discriminatory and non-oppressive educational settings that validate students’ cultural experiences, convey their value to the campus community, and cultivate their personal and social development.

STANCE D: EQUITY-MINDEDNESS

Colleges should:

- Use evidence (disaggregated outcomes data and/or inquiry findings);
- Attend to whether or not students from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups are participating, feeling welcome, and succeeding;
- Focus on changing institutional policies, practices, and mindsets, not just those of students;
- Recognize and counteract structural racism; and
- Take action to eliminate inequities in outcomes.

EQUITY STANCES B

STANCE A: EQUALITY OF INITIAL OPPORTUNITY

Colleges should guarantee that each student has the same chance to avail of, or compete for, a particular opportunity.

EXAMPLE IN PRACTICE: Student grades or assessment scores are used as gatekeepers for access to certain academic programs or courses.

TOUGH QUESTIONS FOR THOSE WHO TAKE THIS STANCE:

- Doesn't this approach to equity help preserve the status quo, with some students being denied access to academic programs or courses in which they might perform well, based on their past performance and/or someone else's estimation of their future performance?
- Shouldn't access to academic programs and courses be open to all students who have a genuine interest in them, regardless of their past performance?

STANCE B: EQUALIZATION OF OPPORTUNITY

Colleges should guarantee that each student deserves an academic program that allows her/him "to demonstrate performance that meets or exceeds a common high level within a reasonable length of time."

EXAMPLE IN PRACTICE: College practices and resources are heavily weighted in favor of providing different and more programs and support for lower-performing students.

TOUGH QUESTIONS FOR THOSE WHO TAKE THIS STANCE:

- Doesn't heavily weighting practices and resources in favor of lower-performing students create an attitude of dependency within those students?
- Shouldn't practices and resource allocations be evenly weighted on what each and every student needs, rather than just on what each lower-performing student needs?
- Shouldn't students have access to these programs for an unlimited length of time?

STANCE C: CARE

Colleges should foster:

- Awareness of the communities from which students come and concern for their overall welfare;
- Education as a relational practice; and
- The creation of non-discriminatory and non-oppressive educational settings that validate students' cultural experiences, convey their value to the campus community, and cultivate their personal and social development.

EXAMPLE IN PRACTICE: Campus spaces physically reflect the culture and heritage of students of color. Practitioners proactively reach out to students of color and affirm their belonging on campus.

TOUGH QUESTIONS FOR THOSE WHO TAKE THIS STANCE:

- Doesn't this approach to equity focus too much on students' psycho-social development, and less on their academic performance and outcomes?
- Doesn't this approach to equity overtax college practitioners, potentially leading to burnout?

STANCE D: EQUITY-MINDEDNESS

Colleges should:

- Use evidence (disaggregated outcomes data and/or inquiry findings);
- Attend to whether or not students from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups are participating, feeling welcome, and succeeding;
- Focus on changing institutional policies, practices, and mindsets, not just those of students;
- Recognize and counteract structural racism; and
- Take action to eliminate inequities in outcomes.

EXAMPLE IN PRACTICE: Colleges use data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to identify equity gaps and policies/practices that may be contributing to those gaps. Based on this evidence, colleges change their policies/practices and monitor the impact of these changes on closing racial/ethnic equity gaps.

TOUGH QUESTIONS FOR THOSE WHO TAKE THIS STANCE:

- Doesn't this approach to equity require colleges to remediate racial/ethnic inequities that stem from broader societal conditions?
- Does this approach to equity exclude white and most Asian students in favor of Black and Latinx students?

ACTIVITY: CREATING YOUR EDUCATIONAL HISTORY MAP

PURPOSE

As a practitioner, it is important to reflect on your own educational journey in order to think critically about assumptions you've made, and to understand how your own experiences impact your teaching philosophy and practice. To accomplish this goal, there is a need to reflect on your educational trajectory during primary, secondary, and higher education, using the questions below as a guide. The goal of this activity is to allow you to think about your personal experiences and shed light on possible hardships, dilemmas, and opportunities that made a significant impact on who you are today.

WHO

This activity is for a small group of practitioners (minimum 2), such as your campus' equity committee or an academic department.

TIME COMMITMENT

Up to two (2) hours

MATERIALS

Educational history worksheet

STEP ONE: BRAINSTORM

Here are some questions to consider as you think about your educational history. Feel free to jot notes in the educational history worksheet provided.

Challenges

1. What difficulties did you face in primary, secondary, and higher education? How did you overcome these difficulties? Were they different as you progressed?
2. What obstacles and/or hardships did you experience/overcome in your life, your neighborhood, and/or your community?

Opportunities

1. In school, which key people helped facilitate your success? Why?
2. What activities, groups, or resources were available to you through your family, community, school, or other institutions?
3. What motivated you to take advantage of these opportunities?
4. How did you decide which educational opportunities to pursue?

Goals

1. What circumstances in your life helped you set an educational goal and objective for yourself?
2. What hopes, aspirations, dreams, or achievements did you strive for? Were you successful?

Support networks

1. What significant events in your home and on your job impacted your educational journey?
2. Who was your biggest supporter, and why? What did your supporter do that was the most beneficial to you?
3. Can you identify people or organizations that helped you along your educational path? What role did your family play?

STEP TWO: PRESENTATION

After you complete your brainstorm, please be prepared to present about your educational journey. Everyone will be presenting their narrative. The goal is to have a dialogue and discussion about the learning environment at your campus, and how you can better serve students and close the equity gap for Latinx and Black student populations.

Consider how to engage your peers when telling your story, without distracting the audience from your central message. Good luck, and we look forward to learning about your educational journey.

STEP THREE: DEBRIEF

Following the presentations, discuss the following questions:

1. In what ways—if any—has this activity helped develop your understanding of how your educational history influences the work you currently do?
2. What are the strengths of this activity?
3. What are the weaknesses of this activity?
4. How might you change this activity to suit different settings at your campus?
5. How might you use this activity with colleagues at your campus?

WORKSHEET

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY MAP

	ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	HIGHER EDUCATION
OPPORTUNITIES			
CHALLENGES			
GOALS			
SUPPORT NETWORKS			

ACTIVITY: DEFINING CAMPUS EQUITY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to identify how equity is defined on your campus by seeking *which* populations are focused on, *what* the goals of equity are, and *how* equity is approached in key institutional “artifacts” – documents that signal campus priorities and values (e.g., strategic plans, equity plans, information about campus support programs, faculty job descriptions, and more).

WHO

This activity is for a small group of practitioners, such as your campus’ equity committee or an academic department.

TIME COMMITMENT

Up to three (3) hours

MATERIALS

Selection of institutional artifacts

STEP ONE: IDENTIFY KEY INSTITUTIONAL ARTIFACTS

Consider the following questions to help with the selection process:

1. Which artifacts on your campus communicate campus goals and priorities (e.g., strategic plans, equity plans)?
2. Which artifacts on your campus communicate leadership vision (e.g., presidential addresses, newsletters)?
3. Which artifacts on your campus communicate job responsibilities (e.g., job descriptions, department by-laws)?
4. Which artifacts on your campus communicate direct support for racially minoritized students (e.g., TRIO program brochures, student services plans)?

STEP TWO: ASSIGN INSTITUTIONAL ARTIFACTS

Assign the selected institutional artifacts to participating practitioners. Consider whether individual practitioners will review one or two documents each, or whether practitioners will review all documents so findings can be compared.

STEP THREE: REVIEW THE ARTIFACTS

This activity includes two rounds of review. The first round of review asks you to identify **who** are named as recipients of institutional support or resources, **what** equity gaps or goals are targeted, and **how** the support or resources will be used to address the gaps or goals. The second round of review asks you to identify whether the who, what, and how are associated with a deficit-, diversity-, or equity-cognitive frame. Examples and worksheets to guide these rounds of review are provided below.

STEP FOUR: DISCUSSION

Once the review of artifacts is complete, consider the following discussion questions:

1. Think about the frames provided in this protocol (deficit, diversity, and equity). Which frame(s) is/are generally present in the artifact(s) you reviewed?
2. Now, think about the document(s) you reviewed from the point of view of students. Reading these artifacts, how would you feel about the campus and the practitioners who created them?
3. Stepping back: Do you feel the artifact(s) reviewed reflect what you believe the campus' approach to equity is? What are some issues that should be raised for campus discussions?
4. How can these artifacts (and the campus' focus in general) be modified? Identify possible changes that could be made to the documents that could further support equity for racially minoritized students.

WORKSHEET

DEFINING CAMPUS EQUITY

This worksheet supports the review of your institutional artifacts.

FIRST ROUND OF REVIEW

As you go through the artifacts, take note of the following:

- (A) **WHO:** Which groups (racial/ethnic, gender, or other disproportionately served groups) are named to receive specific support or resources? Write the names of these groups in the first column. Be sure to note if no groups are named, as well (for example, if “all students” is used).
- (B) **COUNT:** How many times is each student group named?
- (C) **WHAT:** For the group(s) named (the “Who”), what does the document name as the “gap” to be addressed and/or “goal” that be achieved, if any?
- (D) **HOW:** What support and/or resources will be used to achieve the “gap” and/or the “goal”?

Use the table on the next page to write down your findings.

WORKSHEET

DEFINING CAMPUS EQUITY

A	B	C	D
WHO	COUNT	WHAT	HOW

WORKSHEET

DEFINING CAMPUS EQUITY

SECOND ROUND OF REVIEW

To orient yourself to the second round of review, read pages 23-26 of CUE's Guide on Concepts and Tools for Racial Equity, which describes deficit-, diversity-, and equity-mindedness. Also review the table, "Identifying a deficit, diversity, or equity frame," which follows this worksheet.

Based on the findings from your first round of review, identify whether your campus has a deficit, diversity, or equity frame for the WHO, WHAT, and HOW. Note your responses below, and explain why you chose each frame.

1. The **WHO** named in your campus document has a _____ frame.

What led you to select this frame?

2. The **WHAT** listed in your campus document has a _____ frame.

What led you to select this frame?

3. The **HOW** listed in your campus document has a _____ frame.

What led you to select this frame?

IDENTIFYING A DEFICIT, DIVERSITY OR EQUITY FRAME

	Deficit-Minded	Diversity-Minded	Equity-Minded
WHO	<p>Students are described as deficient and race/ethnicity is alluded to, but not named:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unprepared • Developmental • Urban • Minorities 	<p>Diverse and equal representation is emphasized without any one group being specifically or intentionally targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • Inclusive • Diverse • Multicultural 	<p>Specific racial/ethnic groups experiencing gaps in access or outcomes are specifically named and focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latinx students • Black students • Native American students • Pacific Islander students
WHAT	<p>The “gap” pertains to the student (under-preparation and lack of motivation, for example), and the “goal” is to fix the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare • Develop • Remediate 	<p>The focus is solely on increasing access and representation, without mention of outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent • Equal • Include • Celebrate 	<p>The “gap” is found in the institution’s preparation and response to historically underserved racial/ethnic groups’ educational needs. The goal is to use disaggregated data to find gaps and fix the policies, practices, and mindsets that haven’t been sufficient to ensure equity.</p>
HOW	<p>Support services that are an “add-on” to existing campus practices, are the primary intervention, and are intended to fix the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutoring • Summer programs • Remediation • Basic skills 	<p>Cultural traditions and important leaders from racially minoritized groups are celebrated, but are an “add-on” to existing campus practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Dia de los Reyes Magos are listed on the campus calendar, but are absent from course curricula • Black and Latinx student unions exist, but are under-resourced 	<p>The institution is the focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All institutional data is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and any gaps are named and targeted • Faculty and staff are trained on culturally inclusive practices • Faculty and staff are expected to critically examine their practices to determine if historically underserved racial/ethnic groups are equitably served

ACTIVITY: CREATING A CAMPUS EQUITY HISTORY MAP

PURPOSE

It's important when embarking on a new racial equity effort to account for what was previously done to further equity, as well as the related matters of diversity and inclusion on your campus. It's equally important to understand how past and present efforts sit within the broader racial context of your campus, city, region, state, and country. To accomplish these goals, CUE recommends creating a history map using the worksheet provided.

WHO

This activity is for a small group of practitioners, such as your campus' equity committee or an academic department, who can work together to co-construct the history map.

TIME COMMITMENT

Up to two (2) hours

MATERIALS

Equity history map questions; equity history map poster; sticky notes

STEP ONE: GUIDING QUESTIONS

For this activity, consider the following questions about your college's past and current equity efforts, as well as the campus, city/region/state, and national racial context in which these efforts unfolded or are presently unfolding.

Answer these questions on your own, and record your answers on individual sticky notes. For example, each racial equity, diversity, and/or inclusion effort should be noted on one sticky note.

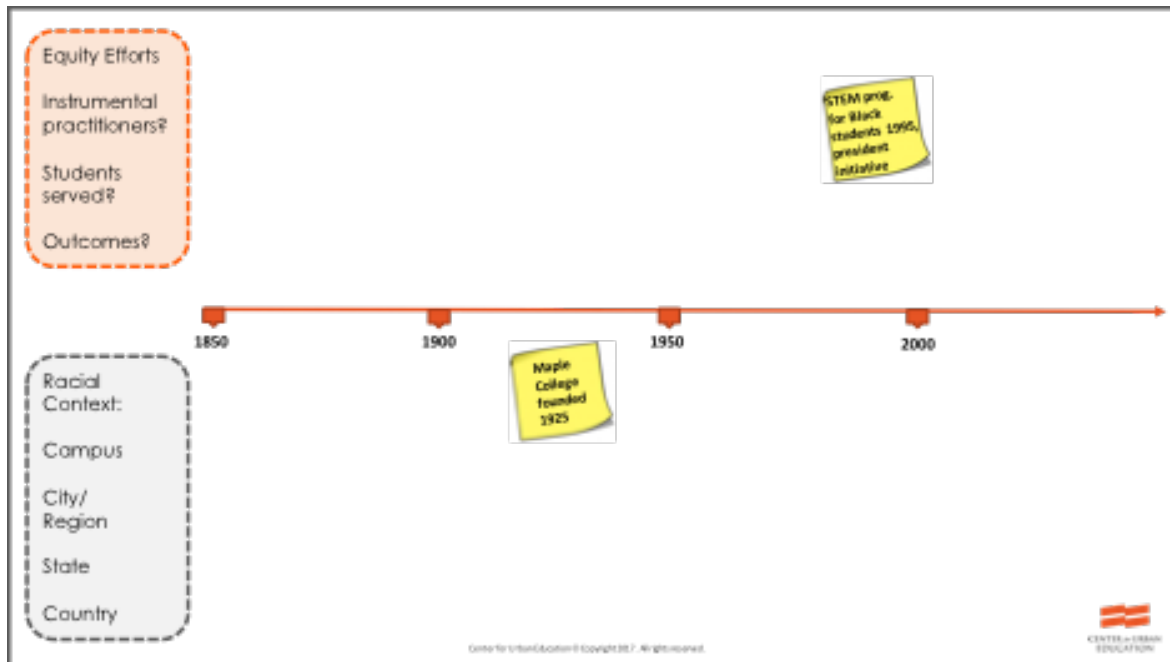
1. What racial equity, diversity, and/or inclusion efforts is your campus currently undertaking? What efforts has your campus undertaken in the past?

2. For each effort, consider:
 - a. Which campus committees, groups, and/or individual practitioners have been/are instrumental to implementing these efforts? Write this answer on the same sticky note.
 - b. Who was served by these efforts? Write this answer on the same sticky note.
3. What significant events have impacted equity, diversity, and race-related efforts on your campus? For each event, note whether it occurred at the campus, city/region, state, or national level. Write this answer on a separate sticky note.

STEP TWO: COMPLETING THE POSTER

Once everyone has completed Step One, turn to the poster. On a sticky note, write down when your college was founded and place it along the timeline.

Each person should then place their sticky notes on the poster. The equity-efforts sticky notes should be placed on the top half of the poster, while the racial-context sticky notes should be placed in the bottom half (see below). Don't worry about duplication—it helps illustrate where there is shared knowledge and consensus.



STEP THREE: GROUP REFLECTION

Once all the sticky notes have been placed on the poster, step back and consider the information presented. As a group, discuss the following questions:

1. To the best of our knowledge, does this poster fully reflect our college’s equity story with respect to efforts undertaken and the contexts in which those efforts were introduced? What does this poster say about our college’s approach to addressing racial equity?
2. What have been the outcomes and impacts of these efforts? In what ways are the impacts of these efforts consequential today? How have these efforts advanced racial equity on our campus overall?
3. Are there missed opportunities—that is, equity efforts that should have been undertaken but were not?
4. What is the “next frontier” for racial equity work on our campus?

EQUITY HISTORY POSTER

Equity Efforts

Instrumental
practitioners?

Students
served?

Outcomes?

1850

1900

1950

2000

Racial
Context:

Campus

City/
Region

State

Country

ACTIVITY: IDENTIFYING DEFICIT- AND EQUITY-MINDED STATEMENTS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to enhance practitioner understanding of deficit- and equity-mindedness. Specifically, participants will identify statements as either deficit- or equity-minded, and reframe deficit-minded statements into equity-minded statements.

WHO

This activity is for a small group of practitioners, such as your campus' equity committee or an academic department.

TIME COMMITMENT

Up to one (1) hour

MATERIALS

Sample deficit- and equity-minded statements; answer sheet

STEP ONE: REVIEW THE STATEMENTS

Distribute the statements to participants, an equal number each. Review each statement and determine whether it is a deficit- or equity-minded statement.

STEP TWO: GROUP DISCUSSION

Participants take turns reading one of their statements to the group and saying whether it is deficit- or equity-minded, and why. As a group, work together to reframe deficit-minded statements into equity-minded statements.

STEP THREE: DEBRIEF

Once all the statements have been discussed, consider the following questions:

1. In what ways—if any—has this activity helped develop your understanding of deficit-mindedness and equity-mindedness?
2. What are the strengths of this activity? What are the weaknesses of this activity?
3. How might you change this activity to suit different settings at your campus?
4. How might you use this activity with colleagues at your campus?

STATEMENTS

<p>1. “You can teach students all you want, but if they’re going to choose not to learn, not to show up for class, or not to follow the rules, they aren’t going to succeed no matter what the teacher does.”</p>	<p>2. “There are fewer Black students who graduate after five years because they aren’t educationally prepared in the same way others are. There is very little we can do.”</p>
<p>3. “Students of color oftentimes find themselves needing to quickly adapt not only to the culture of our institution but also to the expectations required of our courses, so it’s important that we take them seriously.”</p>	<p>4. “We have to be more aware of how we talk to our students and make them feel inept, inferior, or stigmatized. Individuals have the capacity to learn at any time, but we tend to see students of color as underprepared.”</p>
<p>5. “I can lead a horse to water, but I can’t make it drink.”</p>	<p>6. “They’re just not prepared. There’s nothing I can do about that.”</p>
<p>7. “What if we experimented with some new ways to do things based on what seems to be working—and then see if the gaps close?”</p>	<p>8. “Shouldn’t we really be talking about our teaching pedagogy rather than what students don’t know?”</p>
<p>9. “If we look at the data together, we’ll be able to see specifically where students are struggling and where we can take specific steps to help them succeed.”</p>	<p>10. “We’re all doing peer observations this term so we can better understand our classes—do you want to join us?”</p>
<p>11. “Because we want to be well-informed about what’s happening with our students, it’s important to investigate any questions with data. We need to find out what’s happening with this student group, no matter the size.”</p>	<p>12. “Why don’t we look at our department data so we can better understand our students based on race and ethnicity?”</p>
<p>13. “I can’t help the Black students in my courses, because they just don’t ask for help.”</p>	<p>14. “Students receive limited support about career options in their first and second semesters. This may impact their retention.”</p>
<p>15. “Students are not focused, and lack motivation.”</p>	<p>16. “Information on student support services is poorly disseminated in the classroom.”</p>

ANSWER SHEET

<p>1. “You can teach students all you want, but if they’re going to choose not to learn, not to show up for class, or not to follow the rules, they aren’t going to succeed no matter what the teacher does.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEFICIT</p>	<p>2. “There are fewer Black students who graduate after five years because they aren’t educationally prepared in the same way others are. There is very little that we can do.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEFICIT</p>
<p>3. “Students of color oftentimes find themselves needing to quickly adapt not only to the culture of our institution but also to the expectations required of our courses, so it’s important that we take them seriously.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEFICIT</p>	<p>4. “We have to be more aware of how we talk to our students and make them feel inept, inferior, or stigmatized. Individuals have the capacity to learn at any time, but we tend to see students of color as underprepared.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEFICIT</p>
<p>5. “I can lead a horse to water, but I can’t make it drink.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEFICIT</p>	<p>6. “They’re just not prepared. There’s nothing I can do about that.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEFICIT</p>
<p>7. “What if we experimented with some new ways to do things based on what seems to be working—and then see if the gaps close?”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUITY</p>	<p>8. “Shouldn’t we really be talking about our teaching pedagogy rather than what students don’t know?”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUITY</p>
<p>9. “If we look at the data together, we’ll be able to see specifically where students are struggling, and where we can take specific steps to help them succeed.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUITY</p>	<p>10. “We’re all doing peer observations this term so we can better understand our classes—do you want to join us?”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUITY</p>
<p>11. “Because we want to be well-informed about what’s happening with our students, it’s important to investigate any questions with data. We need to find out what’s happening with this student group, no matter the size.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUITY</p>	<p>12. “Why don’t we look at our department data so we can better understand our students based on race and ethnicity?”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUITY</p>
<p>13. “I can’t help the Black students in my courses, because they just don’t ask for help.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEFICIT</p>	<p>14. “Students receive limited support about career options in their first and second semesters. This may impact their retention.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUITY</p>
<p>15. “Students are not focused, and lack motivation.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEFICIT</p>	<p>16. “Information on student support services is poorly disseminated in the classroom.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUITY</p>

ACTIVITY: EQUITY QUADRANT

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to enhance practitioner understanding of equity-mindedness—in particular, the characteristics of race consciousness and practitioner/institutional responsibility. Practitioners are asked to categorize a set of statements in one of the four quadrants in CUE’s Equity Quadrant Poster. These statements capture sentiments expressed by practitioners in racial equity work CUE has facilitated.

WHO

This activity is for a small group of practitioners, such as your campus’ equity committee or an academic department.

TIME COMMITMENT

Up to one (1) hour

MATERIALS

One sample statement sheet, cut where indicated; copies of sample statement sheet, one per participant; one equity quadrant poster

STEP ONE: REVIEW THE SAMPLE STATEMENTS AND CREATE ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

On your own, review the sample statements and decide in which quadrant each statement belongs. Feel free to use sticky notes to jot down additional statements that come out of experiences on your campus.

STEP TWO: COMPLETING THE POSTER

Once everyone has completed Step One, turn to the poster. As a group, consider each sample statement and discuss in which quadrant it should be placed. In cases of full agreement, place the sticky label with the statement in the appropriate quadrant; in cases of disagreement, discuss the options and, if possible, come to a consensus as to where the statement belongs.

For participants who created additional statements, present each statement to the group and determine which quadrant aligns best.

STEP THREE: DEBRIEF

Once all the sticky labels and additional statements have been placed on the poster, discuss the following questions:

1. In what ways—if any—has this activity helped develop your understanding of being race-conscious and being responsible for racial equity?
2. What are the strengths of this activity?
3. What are the weaknesses of this activity?
4. How might you change this activity to suit different settings at your campus?
5. How might you use this activity with colleagues at your campus?

SAMPLE STATEMENTS

<p>“You can teach students all you want, but if they’re going to choose not to learn, not to show up for class, or not to follow the rules, they aren’t going to succeed no matter what the teacher does.”</p>	<p>“What if we experimented with some new ways to do things based on what seems to be working—and then see if the gaps close?”</p>
<p>“There are fewer Black students who graduate after five years because they aren’t educationally prepared in the same way others are. There’s very little that we can do.”</p>	<p>“It’s really an issue of pedagogy. If we improve our quality of instruction, all students will benefit.”</p>
<p>“Students of color oftentimes find themselves needing to quickly adapt not only to the culture of our institution but also to the expectations required of our courses, so it’s important that we take them seriously.”</p>	<p>“If we look at the data together, we’ll be able to see specifically where our Latinx students are struggling, and where we can take specific steps to help them succeed.”</p>
<p>“We have to be more aware of how we talk to our students and make them feel inept, inferior, or stigmatized. Individuals have the capacity to learn at any time, but we tend to see students of color as underprepared.”</p>	<p>“We’re all doing peer observations this term so we can better understand our classes and how Black and Latinx students might be experiencing them—do you want to join us?”</p>
<p>“I can lead a horse to water, but I can’t make it drink.”</p>	<p>“They’re just not prepared. There’s nothing I can do about that.”</p>
<p>“Why don’t we look at our department data so we can better understand our students based on race and ethnicity?”</p>	<p>“I can’t help the Black students in my courses, because they just don’t ask for help.”</p>
<p>“Because we want to be well-informed about what’s happening with our students, it’s important to investigate any questions with data. We need to find out what’s happening with this student group, no matter the size.”</p>	<p>“If you ask me, all students are unfocused and lack motivation. Race doesn’t matter—it’s just that our students are young and have a sense of entitlement. They think they should pass just for showing up. And they don’t even show up all the time.”</p>

SAMPLE STATEMENTS

“I understand the importance of data and the culture of evidence the dean wants to build, but I think we should be helping all students.”

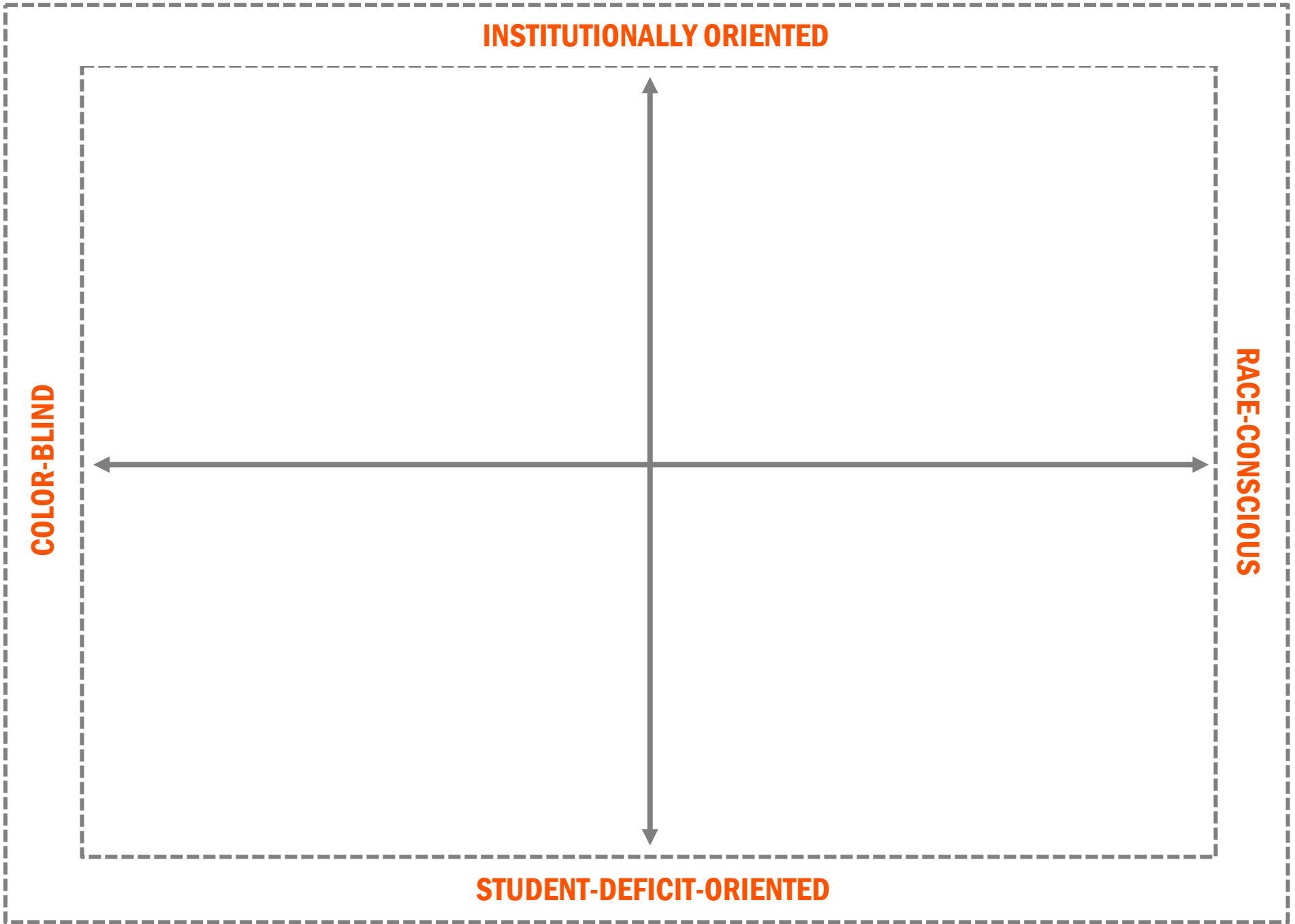
“I honestly don’t look at my students—their heritage [is not] in my head, like ‘Here’s everybody. What can I do to keep you interested in what I’m doing or what I’m trying to teach?’”

“Many of our Latinx and Black students need remediation due to inadequate academic preparation, but they’re not willing to put in the work necessary to be able to transfer. Some of them may need two or three years of remediation even to begin taking courses that are transferable, and this discourages many students.”

“The transfer rates for Latinx students are lower because they have different goals from other students. They want to go out and work and make money to help their families, so they stop after a certificate. But Asian students are expected to get a degree, so they’re more likely to transfer to a four-year institution.”

“Well, we’re surrounded by five military bases, and when you enter the military you—any racism that you’ve brought with you gets literally beaten out of you by the time you’ve gotten through Basic Training, and by the time you have a lot of people of other colors and ethnicity to save your life and depend on you, you stop noticing what color people are ... so it just—people don’t notice as much what color anybody else is, and it’s a very multi-racial society here...”

EQUITY QUADRANT



ACTIVITY: THE “BOB” CARTOON: UNPACKING INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

PURPOSE

When doing racial equity work, it's important to consider how institutionalized forms of racism are embedded in policies and practices that can lead to and perpetuate outcome inequities. Institutionalized racism, however, can be difficult to discern, particularly for those who benefit from its persistence. The “Bob” cartoon by Barry Deutsch (<http://leftycartoons.com/>) provocatively introduces some of the ways institutional racism works to disadvantage racially minoritized people in the United States. As such, it offers a platform for practitioners to discuss how institutional racism may be playing out on their campus.

WHO

This activity is for a small group of practitioners, such as your campus' equity committee or an academic department.

TIME COMMITMENT

Up to one (1) hour

MATERIALS

The Bob cartoon

STEP ONE: READ THE BOB CARTOON



STEP TWO: GROUP DISCUSSION

Consider the following questions:

1. According to the cartoon, how has racism benefited Bob?
2. What enables Bob to **not** see the privileges granted to him and his family?
3. What do you agree with in the cartoon? What do you disagree with?
4. What assumptions does the author of the cartoon hold?
5. Imagine a panel focused on education with the title, "How Bob fared in college." What would you draw? How does racism benefit Bob as a college student?

6. As a practitioner seeking to bring about racial equity, what steps would you take to address the benefits Bob accrues as a college student and, conversely, the penalties paid by racially minoritized students?

STEP THREE: DEBRIEF

Consider the following questions:

1. What are the strengths of this activity?
2. What are the weaknesses of this activity?
3. How might you change this activity to suit different settings at your campus?
4. How might you use this activity with colleagues at your campus?

ACTIVITY: FACILITATING EQUITY-MINDED CONVERSATIONS AND NAVIGATING RESISTANCE TO RACE

PURPOSE

When doing racial equity work, it's likely that deficit-minded explanations will be proposed for equity gaps, that the focus on race will be questioned, and/or that conversations will veer toward equity for all students. The purpose of this activity is to build the capacity of practitioners to facilitate race-conscious and equity-minded conversations, as well as to respond to resistance to focusing on race in equity work.

WHO

This activity is for individual practitioners or a small group of practitioners, such as your campus' equity committee or an academic department.

TIME COMMITMENT

Up to one (1) hour

MATERIALS

Handouts on common responses to racial equity work and strategies for facilitation and navigating resistance; practice worksheet

STEP ONE: REVIEW THE HANDOUTS ON COMMON RESPONSES TO RACIAL EQUITY WORK AND STRATEGIES TO FACILITATE EQUITY-MINDED CONVERSATIONS AND NAVIGATE RESISTANCE

STEP TWO: PRACTICE THE STRATEGIES

Following the example provided on the worksheet, apply one strategy to one of the responses provided in the handout, or an example from your own experience.

STEP THREE: GROUP DISCUSSION (IF ACTIVITY IS DONE IN A SMALL GROUP)

Consider the following questions:

1. Can these strategies realistically be deployed on your campus? Why or why not? If not, what support would you need to implement these strategies?
2. What additional strategies could you employ to either facilitate equity-minded conversations or navigate resistance to race?
3. As practitioners seeking to bring about racial equity, what reading or resources will you need to consult to effectively respond to colleagues who on the fence, skeptical, or opposed to the focus on race?

STEP FOUR: DEBRIEF

Consider the following questions:

1. What are the strengths of this activity?
2. What are the weaknesses of this activity?
3. How might you change this activity to suit different settings at your campus?
4. How might you use this activity with colleagues at your campus?

COMMON RESPONSES TO RACIAL EQUITY WORK

In CUE's work with college and universities, we routinely confront comments that at their heart question the racial focus of our approach to equity. Below, we present a few of the most common responses we and practitioners who advocate for racial equity have heard.

1. Practitioners interpret suggestions about focusing on racial equity as accusations of racism.

"I actually had a colleague send an email to me when he read something I had said about equity-mindedness, and I assume, took it kind of personally to mean that he might be doing something discriminatory in his class, and he basically said, 'Well, I treat everybody the same, and that is my inclusive pedagogy.'"

2. Practitioners prefer to examine other forms of diversity.

"We had our retreat in the summer and I presented on the [Equity] Scorecard, and there was a wide range of resistance to it. It went from, 'Shouldn't we really be talking about class rather than race,' to 'Shouldn't we be talking about diversity of thought rather than diversity of people?'"

3. Practitioners blame students for poor outcomes.

"They're just not prepared. There's nothing I can do about that."

"If only they try harder."

"I can lead a horse to water, but I can't make it drink."

4. Practitioners assume a focus on equity would result in lower standards.

"Some chairs had the reaction that, 'Well, you know, it's important to maintain standards, and we see ourselves as the best undergrad institution in the state and we need to uphold that tradition.'"

STRATEGIES TO FACILITATE EQUITY-MINDED CONVERSATIONS AND NAVIGATE RESISTANCE

1. Act as a mirror.

Reflect back to the speaker what you heard them say, and ask if this is what they intended to communicate.

2. Address the needs of the practitioner who made the comment.

Consider what might be motivating the speaker's comment, and focus the conversation on that underlying factor.

3. Ask, "Who benefits"?

Ask the speaker to think critically about who—in regard to race/ethnicity and educational opportunity—are being best served by a particular way of thinking, policy, practice, etc.

4. Re-center race-consciousness.

Call attention to the importance of being race-conscious in equity work, especially when conversations become race-neutral and when equity does not seem to be central to practitioners' actions and decision-making.

5. Name practices that undermine equity.

Explicitly point out race- or equity-blind approaches and concepts that, if left unchallenged, will lead to inequitable outcomes.

6. Use data to demonstrate that racial inequity must be addressed.

Reference course-, department-, and/or campus-level data showing inequities in outcomes for racially minoritized students.

7. Agree to hold each other accountable.

Ask practitioners to speak up and name potential equity issues as they arise, and to find alternatives.

WORKSHEET

FACILITATING EQUITY-MINDED CONVERSATIONS AND NAVIGATING RESISTANCE TO RACE

COMMENT	STRATEGY	POSSIBLE RESPONSE
EXAMPLE: "Well, you know, it's important to maintain standards, and we see ourselves as the best undergrad institution in the state and we need to uphold that tradition."	Ask, "Who benefits?"	"I agree with you that we need to maintain high standards. But we also need to ask ourselves what those standards are, what we mean by 'the best,' and whether these uninterrogated notions serve our white students while undermining the success of our Black and Latinx students."

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APPENDIX A: THE HISTORICAL TRAJECTORIES OF RACIAL INEQUITY IN THE UNITED STATES

BY CHERYL D. CHING & ROMÁN LIERA, CENTER FOR URBAN EDUCATION

In CUE's work we encounter tensions about the relevance of societal-level forms of racism in student experiences at the local level. For example, some educational practitioners ask, "How do historical events inform the improvement of classroom practices?" Educational practitioners' questions about the interdependence of national and local levels seem to be connected to their perceptions about the relationship between present and past forms of racism. Neoliberal ideals that race no longer plays a role in student experiences propel educational practitioners to talk about race without racism (Harper, 2012; Museus, Ledesma, & Parker, 2015). That is, without considering the diverse yet similar historical trajectories of communities of color in the U.S., educational practitioners run the risk of engaging in race talk without considering the role of their own racial biases that maintain racial inequities in student outcomes.

THE TRAJECTORY OF INEQUITY FOR AFRICAN BLACKS

Unlike the stories of other communities of color, the stories of most Blacks in the U.S. are rooted in slavery. Similar to other communities of color, the familial legacies and cultural knowledge of Blacks were erased. After slavery was legally abolished, Blacks continued to experience systemic forms of racism that excluded them from academic opportunities (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009). From racially segregated schools to mass incarceration, Blacks continue to experience societal barriers that negatively impact their participation in higher education.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, in the 2014-2015 academic year, Blacks made up 13.9% of total enrollments in higher education (Ginder, Kelly-Reid, & Mann, 2016). In particular, they made up 10.5% of all students who earned degrees from four-year institutions, and 14.4% of all students who earned degrees from two-year institutions (Ginder et al., 2016).

College-educated Blacks continue to face discrimination. According to a Pew Research Center survey, Blacks who have attended college are more likely than those without any college experience to report being racially discriminated against (Anderson, 2016) (Figure 1).

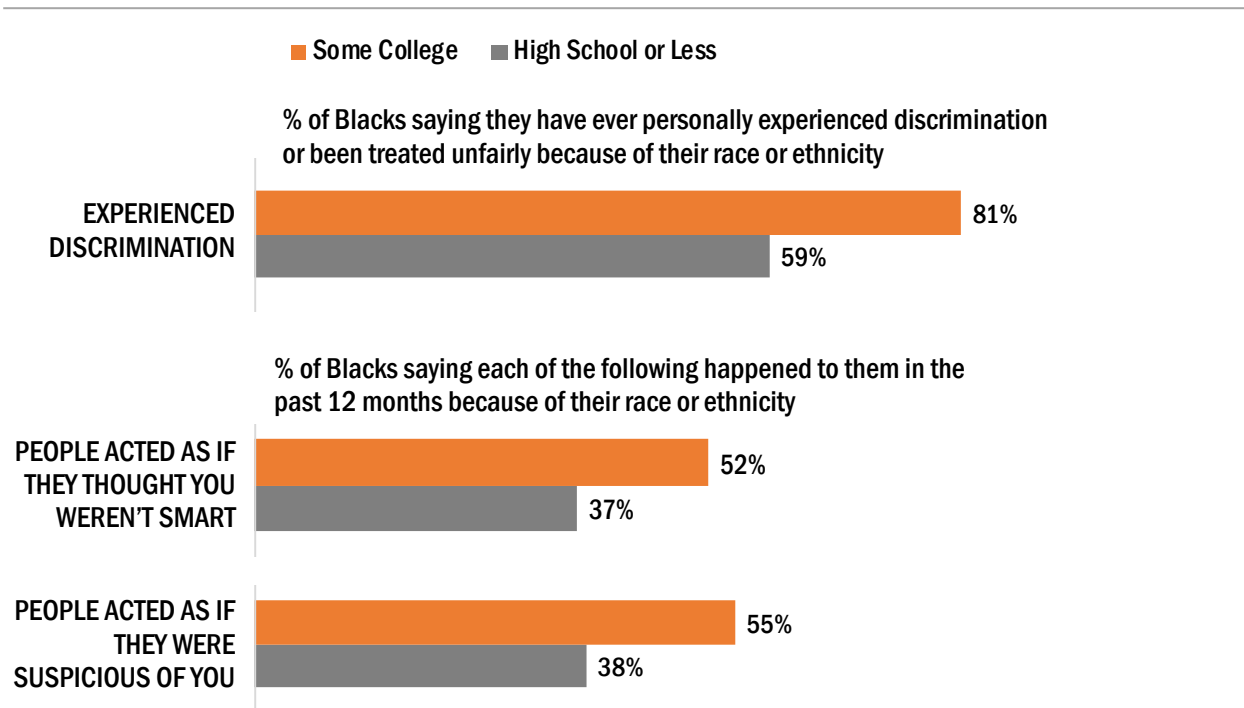


FIGURE 1. College-educated Blacks who report facing acts of racial discrimination. Note: Blacks includes only non-Latinx. Adapted from Anderson (2016). Data source: Pew Research Center Survey of American adults conducted between February 29 and May 8, 2016.

These findings support literature that report Black students experience college campuses as more racially hostile than white students (Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, & Hart, 2008). Smith, Allen, and Danley (2007) collected data from 36 Black students through focus groups. They found that this group of students were stereotyped and placed under increased surveillance by community and local policing tactics, on and off campus. Black students are at higher risk of experiencing racial discrimination in academic, social, and public spaces on campus (Smith et al., 2007). For example, one student said he was racially profiled when studying for an exam in the physics lab on a Sunday:

“One summer I was taking a physics course—I used to be in engineering. I went to the physics lab on Sunday to study on the computers. Our assignments were on a Plato program. A university officer came into the computer lab and asked for my ID. I asked him why. He stated that someone called and reported a suspicious-looking person entering the building... I laughed and said, ‘Oh really?’ I told him that I’m a student studying for an exam and I wouldn’t even be able to log onto the computer if I wasn’t enrolled in the class. He [the campus police officer] again asked for my ID. At this point I handed him my student ID. Wait... there’s more. The officer then asked, ‘Do you have another piece of ID?’” (Smith et al., 2007, p. 563)

These everyday experiences with racial discrimination are psychologically, emotionally, and physiologically detrimental to Black students’ well-being (Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011; Anderson, 2016). For educators to implement practices and policies that could improve the educational experiences of Black students, they need to come to a conclusion about the permanence of racism (Bell, 1992) in U.S. institutions (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Godsil et al., 2014) that continue to have adverse impact on students of color.

THE TRAJECTORY OF INEQUITY FOR ASIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS

As a group, Asian and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students occupy an interesting position in higher education generally, and in equity work specifically. Given that the AAPI population is projected to grow rapidly in the coming decades, AAPIs cannot be ignored in research, policy, and practice. AAPIs currently make up 5.6% of the American population, and are projected to grow by 134% over the next four decades, making them the fastest-growing racial/ethnic group in the country (Nguyen, Nguyen, Teranishi, & Hune, 2015; Nguyen, Nguyen, Chan, & Teranishi, 2016). In California, the AAPI population is even higher at 13.4%; they were the fastest-growing group between 2000 and 2010 (Nguyen, Nguyen, Chan, & Teranishi, 2016) and are projected to be the second-fastest growing population behind Latinx over the next five decades (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2015).

The “model minority” stereotype masks educational inequities among AAPI students. “Asian Americans” have been stereotypically construed as a “model minority,” comprised of academically high-achieving and motivated students who come from homes where education is valued and prioritized. This image, however positive it may seem, is problematic. Based on generalizations about certain East Asian and South Asian students, it masks the challenges the 48 ethnic groups that are considered “AAPI” face (Museus, 2014; Nguyen, Nguyen, Teranishi, & Hune, 2015; Teranishi, 2007).

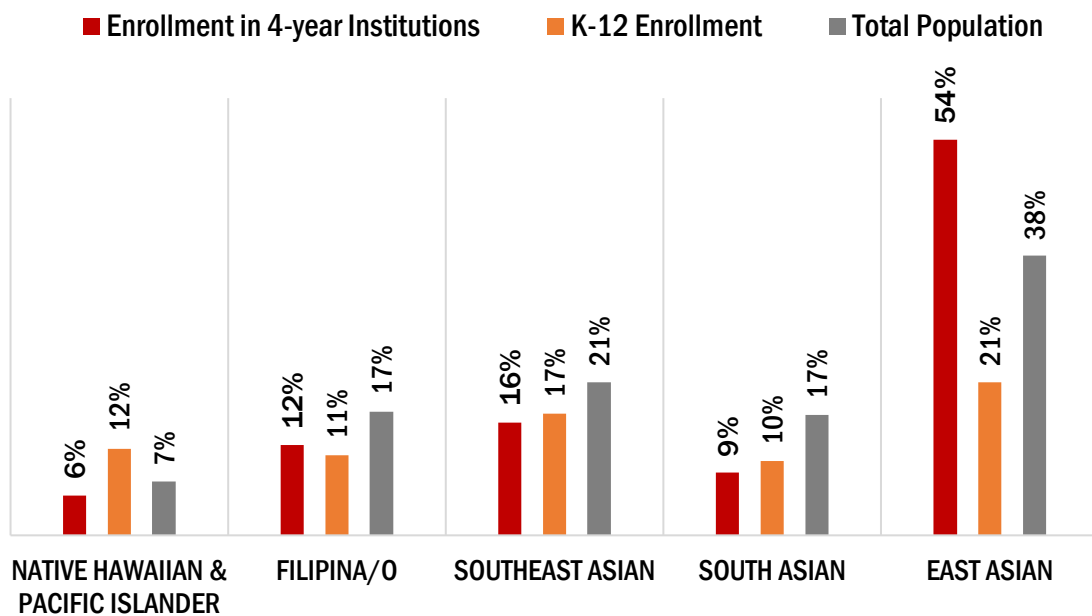


FIGURE 2. Proportional representation in enrollment in K-12 schools and four-year postsecondary institutions in Washington state (2013). Adapted from Nguyen, Nguyen, Teranishi, & Hune (2015). Data source: U.S. Census American Community Survey one-year estimates, 2013; ERDC postsecondary enrollment data, 2013.

Consequently, AAPIs are “highly visible” as a “successful” racial/ethnic group, but “invisible” and overlooked in educational research and policy despite inequities within the group (Teranishi, 2007; Museus & Kiang, 2009). AAPIs are rarely considered a “minority” population that needs attention, support, and resources, when considered alongside Black and Latinx populations (although recent efforts are shifting this perception). Using the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS), Museus, Ledesma,

and Parker (2015) show wide disparities in (K-12) educational attainment by ethnicity on the whole. Over 95% of AAPIs have earned a high school diploma; however, when disaggregated the data show that 71% of Bhutanese, 53% of Burmese, 36% of Tibetan, 35.5% of Cambodian, and 29% of Laotian students do not have a high school diploma.

Using data from Washington state, Nguyen, Nguyen, Teranishi, and Hune (2015) show disparities in college enrollment by major AAPI groups (Figure 2). The same goes for baccalaureate degree attainment (Figure 3).

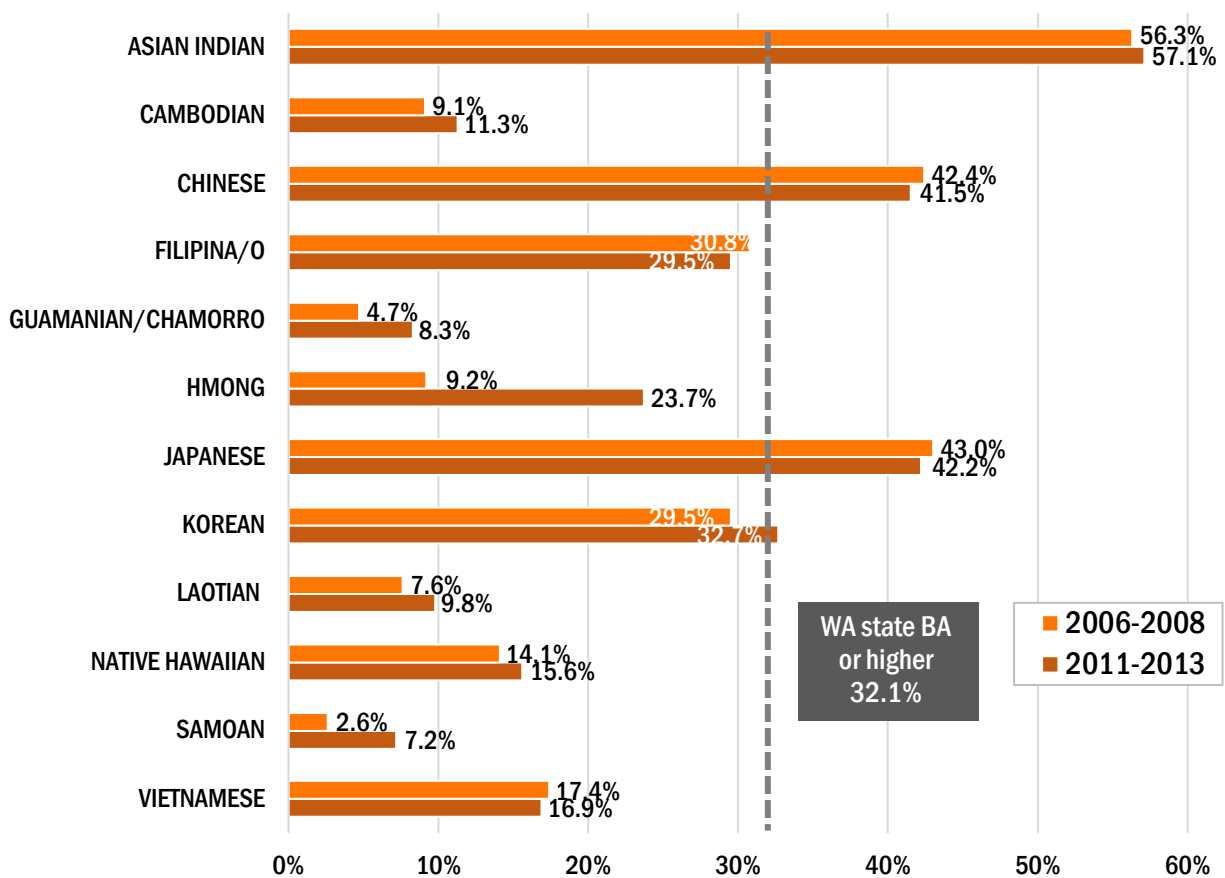


FIGURE 3. Bachelor's degree attainment for Asian and Pacific Islander students by ethnicity, 2006-2008 and 2011-2013. Institutions in Washington state. Adapted from Nguyen, Nguyen, Teranishi, & Hune (2015). Data source: U.S. Census American Community Survey three-year estimates, 2006-2008 and 2011-2013.

In the California Community Colleges, six-year completion rates vary greatly by ethnicity, with a more than 40-percentage-point gap between Chinese students (73%) and Samoans (29%) (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2015).

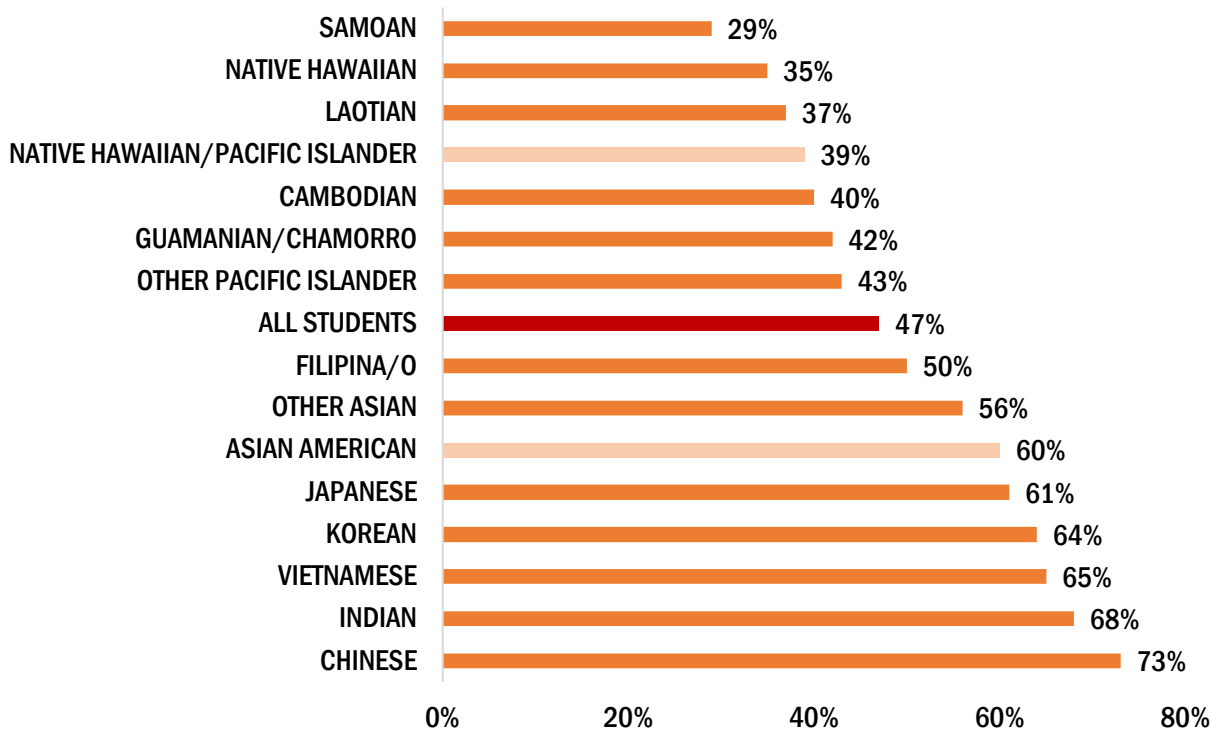


FIGURE 4. Six-year completion rates for Asian and Pacific Islander students by ethnicity; cohort entering in 2007-08. Adapted from The Campaign for College Opportunity (2015). Note: Completion refers to students who attained a certificate or associate's degree, or who met transfer requirements. Cohort is defined as first-time students with a minimum of six units and who attempted a math or English course during the first three years of enrollment. Data source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Inequities within the AAPI population stem partly from a history of migration. Historians often characterize the Asian American story as one of immigration to the United States (e.g., Takaki, 1989). They generally agree that Asians arrived in two waves, the first from the late-1800s to the mid-1900s, and the second after 1965. The first wave was composed mostly of Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Koreans, and South Asian Indians. The

second wave started with the Immigration Act of 1965, which opened the United States to a more heterogeneous immigrant population in terms of ethnicity, class, education level, language, culture, religion, and homeland. For the most part, those who came in the first wave and through the Immigration Act were economic migrants seeking work and a better life in America. Within the second wave, however, also came refugees fleeing politically unstable and repressive regimes, particularly in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

This history has implications for AAPI students' educational opportunities and outcomes. *Who* AAPIs are, and *when* and *why* they came to the United States, have implications for their educational opportunities and likelihood of enrolling in and completing college, particularly for those who arrived during the second wave (Teranishi, 2004). Some came out of poverty, some from the middle class, some from wealthy families. Some left as students or professionals (e.g., teachers, engineers, doctors, lawyers, accountants) from relatively stable countries, others from places of war and violence where staying was not an option. Some have come more recently and are foreign-born; others arrived earlier and are second-generation Americans. Some have integrated and assimilated into the United States; others have established so-called "enclave" communities that contribute to the pattern of residential segregation across many American communities. Research tells us that economic, language, and generational status are associated with educational outcomes.

Teranishi (2004) suggests that the issue of residential segregation is an especially important factor to consider as it affects "the social contexts of family, community, and school," "compounding [the] economic, educational, and cultural barriers" for students. His study of Vietnamese and Hmong students highlights this point. Although both are more recent in their arrival, both are from politically unstable areas, and both are more likely to come from and continue to live in poverty, focus groups with Vietnamese and Hmong high school students in California nonetheless brought into high relief distinct differences in their college aspirations. Vietnamese students were more likely to be encouraged to attend selective institutions, Hmong students community college. Vietnamese students were also more likely to have siblings and other relatives already in college, Hmong students not. Vietnamese students were more likely to have

college-educated parents, relative to Hmong students. Experiencing more poverty, Hmong students were more likely to attend college closer to home so they could still contribute financially to their families.

THE TRAJECTORY OF INEQUITY FOR LATINX

Latinx make up 17% of the U.S. population, and are projected to represent more than one-third of the U.S. population under the age of 5 by 2050 (Santiago, 2015). Forty-five percent of Latinx undergraduate students attend community colleges, in comparison to 34% of all undergraduates (HACU, 2016). In particular, Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) enroll 62% of Latinx undergraduates. However, only 23% of Latinx over the age of 25 have earned an associate's degree or higher, and they have the lowest completion rates among any racial and ethnic group (Valle, 2016). Fifty-four percent of Latinx undergraduate students are the first in their families to attend college, and 41% receive Pell Grants. Moreover, 62% of Latinx undergraduates work while enrolled as full-time students (Valle, 2016). Given that Latinx are projected to represent a high proportion of the U.S. population in the coming years, it is imperative to address the equity gaps Latinx students experience in higher education success indicators.

Latinx represents a growing but diverse ethnic group. The history of Latinx in the U.S. is as diverse as their cultures, language dialects, and phenotypes. For different reasons, some groups of Latinx are afforded more educational opportunities and are more academically successful than other Latinx groups. Although differences exist among the diverse subgroups of Latinx, the majority of this ethnic group's members have a history with European colonialization; in particular, most of the pan-ethnic group shares a common culture that is rooted in the Spanish language and Catholic religion (Almaguer, 2012). However, as a group Latinx are racially diverse, with African, Indigenous, and European ancestry. Unlike other racially oppressed groups, the U.S. federal government has over time both classified and declassified Latinx as whites (Almaguer, 2012).

The largest subgroup of Latinx is of Mexican origin. Before the U.S.-Mexico war, the Southwest was populated by Mexicans and Indigenous groups (Glenn, 2002). After the war, Mexicans in the Southwest were granted U.S. citizenship and deemed an honorary white population

(Almaguer, 2012). Although Mexicans in the Southwest were granted U.S. citizenship, they lost their land and most of their rights to white settlers. In contrast, Mexican immigrants are not considered white and oftentimes do not have citizenship, which shapes their own and their children's educational opportunities. Similarly, for political reasons Cuban immigrants who fled Cuba once Fulgencio Batista's regime ended academically benefited from the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act that put them on a fast track for U.S. citizenship (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Rusin, Zong, & Batalova, 2015). Unlike their Cuban counterparts in the 1960s, Guatemalan immigrants fleeing Guatemala's civil war did not receive the same citizenship opportunities (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

For these reasons, it is imperative to consider the type of Latinx students attending a specific campus, and that the experiences of Mexican students might not be the same as the experiences of Guatemalan students. The figure below shows that in 2013 25% of Cubans over the age of 25 had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to only 10% of Mexicans over the age of 25. Considering the diverse historical and political experiences of Latinx, it is imperative to understand the differences in educational outcomes among Latinx groups.

For Latinx students, "educacion" means more than academic learning.

In her seminal book *Subtractive Schooling*, Angela Valenzuela defined *educacion* as a shared cultural understanding of how one should live. That is, for Latinx communities education also means respect, responsibility, and solidarity (Valenzuela, 1999). Rooted in relationships, *educacion* is the foundation for all forms of learning. Latinx students who do not feel educators authentically care for their well-being are less likely to form trusting relationships with educators. Although Latinx have diverse cultural norms and beliefs, educators cognizant that most Latinx value caring and trusting relationships could academically engage Latinx students at higher levels.

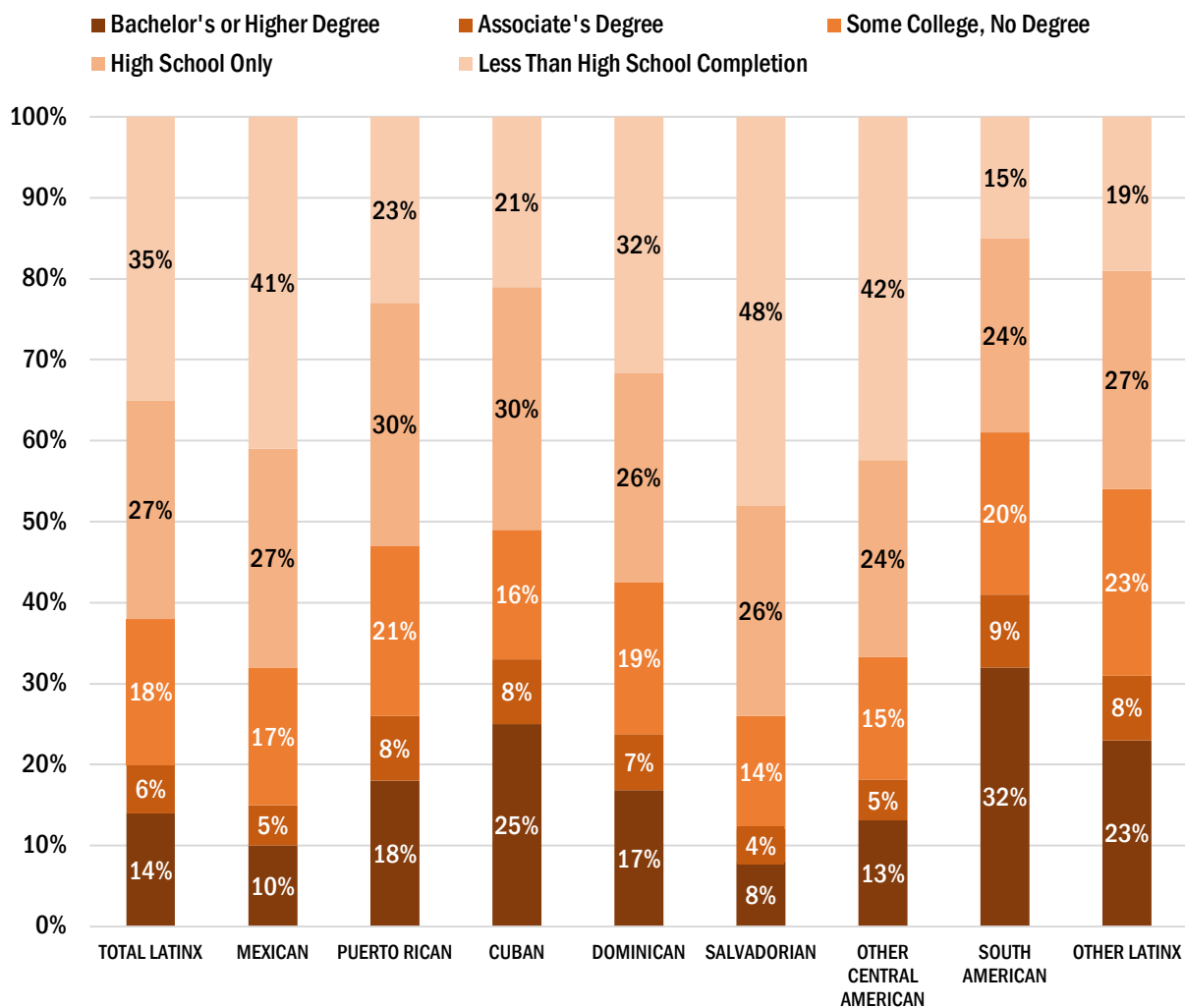


FIGURE 5. Percentage distribution of the educational attainment of Latinx age 25 or older by subgroup, 2013. Note: High school completion includes diploma recipients and alternative credentials (e.g., GED). Adapted from NCES *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*. Data source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, and American Community Survey 2013.

THE TRAJECTORY OF INEQUITY FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

Native Americans comprise the smallest racial/ethnic student group in higher education, accounting for roughly 1% of the entire college population (Brayboy, Fann, Castagno, & Solyom, 2012). For this reason, it is perhaps no surprise that when confronted with equity gaps for Native American students, they are not often prioritized because of their relatively small numbers. Native Americans, however, face some of the greatest

inequities in access, persistence, and completion outcomes. Only 26% of 18- to 24-year-old Native Americans enroll in college, as compared to a 37% all-student average. Close to 46% attend two-year schools (mostly tribal colleges), a higher proportion than the all-student average of 41%, thus making them overrepresented in open-access institutions. Their six-year graduation rates are the lowest at 37%; white students graduate at a rate of 57%, and AAPIs at a rate of 63%.

In California, 75% of Native American students do not complete the entrance requirements for the UC and CSU systems, and data from fall 2011 to fall 2012 shows that their enrollment is declining at the community colleges (by 16%) and CSUs (by 61%), while increasing at the UCs (by 67%) (Proudfit & Gregor, 2014).

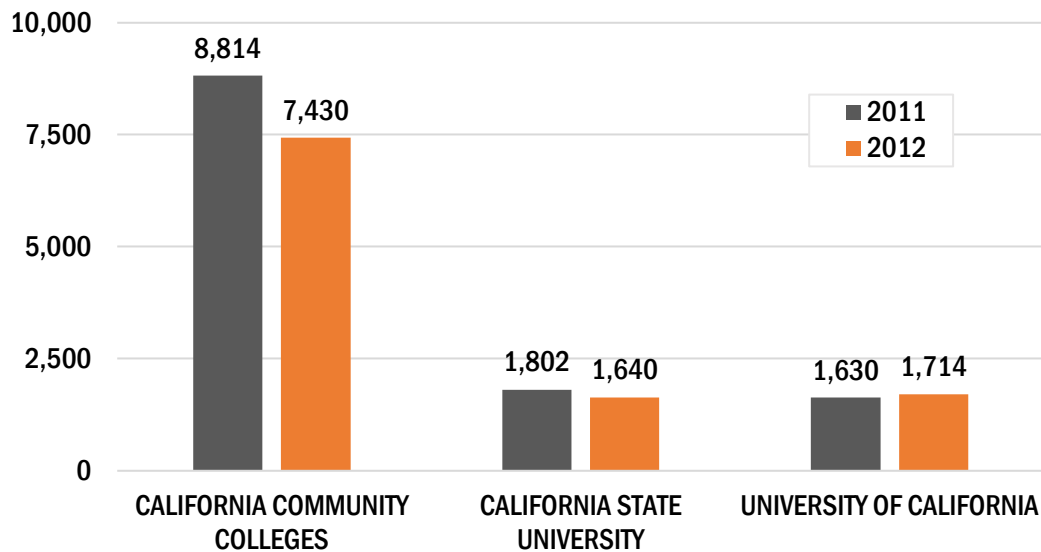


FIGURE 6. Native American and Alaskan Native enrollment in public higher education in California, by system (2011-2012). Adapted from Proudfit and Gregor (2014). Data source: University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges.

A colonization and missionary project. The history of Native Americans in higher education is one of colonization, a “civilizing” project undertaken by white European Americans to Christianize and assimilate “savage”

natives (Wright & Tierney, 1991). In the mid-1600s, newly established colleges and universities (e.g., Harvard, Dartmouth, The College of William and Mary, The College of New Jersey—now Princeton) used charitable money from England and Scotland to house and educate Native American students. These colonizing experiments were largely unsuccessful: Parents declined to send their children to places with customs that differed from their own; for some who enrolled, monies ran out and forced their departure; others died from diseases to which they had no immunity.

Assimilation into white America and rejection of tribal culture contributes to academic success (at a price) and failure, then and now.

The federal government's involvement in educating Native American students increased in the 19th century. The government supported the construction of off-reservation boarding schools, which took students away from their tribes and enforced strict disciplinary tactics and a Protestant work ethic (Wright & Tierney, 1991). (This coincided with tribes such as the Cherokee and Choctaw establishing and running boarding schools on their reservations.) Wright and Tierney (1991) observe that these boarding schools “were designed to remake their Indian charges in the image of the white man,” one who was vocationally trained in “agricultural, industrial, and domestic arts—*not* higher academic study” (p. 14; italics in original). In contrast to the missionary-funded Native American students who had access to the same curriculum as white students, those attending the federal boarding schools were destined for occupations as farmers, mechanics, or housewives.

The few Native American students who continued to higher education institutions understood that they had to exchange tribal culture for “civilization.” Of one such student who graduated from Dartmouth and continued to Boston University for a medical degree in the early 1900s, Wright and Tierney (1991) write:

Eastman was keenly aware that his academic success depended on his acceptance of American civilization and the rejection of his own traditional culture. “I renounced finally my bow and arrow for the spade and the pen,” he wrote in his memoirs. “I took off my soft moccasins and put on the heavy and clumsy but durable shoes. Every

day of my life I put into use every English word that I knew, and for the first time permitted myself to think and act as a white man.” (p. 14-17)

As the federal government got out of the boarding school business, it shifted resources toward scholarships for Native American students to attend postsecondary institutions, particularly in the post-World War II era (Brayboy, Fann, Castagno, & Solyom, 2012). Notable as the increases in enrollment in the 1950s and 1960s were, they accounted for only 1% of the entire indigenous population in the country. Furthermore, even while more Native American students were enrolling in college, “little had changed with regard to the assimilationist aspect of mainstream, white-dominated American education” as “they were still expected to leave their tribal cultures at home, because schools, after all, were designed to ‘kill the Indian and save the man’” (p. 8).

Research suggests that this longstanding push for assimilation into white culture has resulted in schisms that negatively impact the outcomes of Native American students. Brayboy, Fann, Castagno, and Solyom’s (2012) review of literature shows how these incompatibilities occur in different areas, from the stark differences between students’ home culture (e.g., focus on community, family, and cooperation) and that of predominately white institutions (e.g., focus on individuals and competition), to ontological and epistemological differences in what worldviews and knowledge are considered valid. These incongruities contribute to the “cultural dissonance” (p. 62) that Native American students can feel in college and that, in turn, can contribute to their departure.

Guillory and Wolverton’s (2008) interviews with Native American students at three predominantly white research universities reveals how these schisms also appear in what students identify as keys to their persistence (family, tribal community support) versus what the institutions believe are needed to ensure students’ success (financial factors, appealing academic programs). This suggests that predominantly white colleges and universities continue to have very little grasp of what is needed to achieve equitable outcomes for Native American students.

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