

Operationalizing Equity: Student Equity Matrix

- From publishing our institutional student equity matrix to developing an annual operating plan with the goal of making explicit the equity-minded inquiry, planning, actions, and assessment underway on our campus.
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Moving from Equity-minded Data to Equity-minded Planning

- Cape Cod Community College (CCCC) had not previously disaggregated data by race, ethnicity, and Pell eligibility, CCCC aligned student outcomes to the focus areas identified by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's (MASS DHE) [Equity Agenda](#) (2019) and to the metrics developed by the American Association of Community College's (AACCC) [Voluntary Frameworks of Accountability](#) (VFA, 2012).
- The Equity matrix, which compares 11 key performance indicators (KPIs) representing milestones to students' completion, disclosed alarming gaps in outcomes among African American and Latinx students as compared to students overall.
- The college understood that this data was a wake-up call to make sweeping changes.

Four steps to operationalizing equity

- **Step 1: Review Student Equity Matrix and Strategic Plan.**
- **Step 2: Adopt the “Five Principles for Enacting Equity by Design” in the Operating Plan**
- **Step 3: Build the Operating Plan to Include Measurable Equity-oriented Objectives**
- **Step 4: Review Operating Plan Continuously: Measure progress, reflect on, and refine the plan annually to hold the institution accountable for improving equitable outcomes and moving the college toward becoming an “equity-minded” institution.**

Step 1: Review Student Equity Matrix and Strategic Plan

<i>Student Equity Matrix 2017-2019</i>												
Success Indicator	All			Latinx			African-American			Pell-Recipient		
Access (change from 2017-2019)	-10%			+14%			+ 11%			-10%		
	2700	2544	2440	205	228	234	171	194	190	1552	1456	1395
Course success rate	77%			+1%			-3%			+7%		
Complete college-level math within first 24 credits	21.6%			-1.0%			-12.1%			-4.4%		
% enrolled in college level math	34%			+1.7%			-15%			-5.4%		
College-level math success rate	63.5%			-8.5%			-13.5%			-7%		
Complete college-level English within first 24 credits	52.3%			-2.3%			-2.3%			+2.9%		
% enrolled in College-level English	72.6%			-3%			-3.6%			+2.5		
College-level English success rate	72.1%			-0.3%			+0.3%			+1.4%		
Fall-to-Fall Retention (3-year average)	52%			+ 0.3%			+ 5.0%			+ 3.4%		
4-year Completion Rate	19%			-7%			-13%			+2%		
6-year Transfer Rate	27%			+0%			-5%			+0%		
6-year Success Rate	42%			+2%			-8%			-1%		

■ = No Equity Gap: Sustain and Improve

■ = Equity Gap: Action Needed

**Step 2: Adopt
the “Five
Principles for
Enacting Equity
by Design” in the
Operating Plan**

- Principle 1: Clarity in language, goals, and measures is vital to effective equitable practices.
- Principle 2: “Equity-mindedness” should be the guiding paradigm for language and action.
- Principle 3: Equitable practice and policies are designed to accommodate differences in the contexts of students’ learning—not to treat all students the same.
- Principle 4: Enacting equity requires a continual process of learning, disaggregating data, and questioning assumptions about relevance and effectiveness.
- Principle 5: Equity must be enacted as a pervasive institution- and system-wide principle (Witham, et al., 2015).

**Step 3: Build
the Operating
Plan to Include
Measurable
Equity-oriented
Objectives**

- The operating plan transformed key aspects of the strategic plan into an action plan that is assessed annually.
- It is organized to follow the strategic plan's objectives and strategies
- This approach makes clear who is responsible for advancing each initiative
- This approach also delineates the annual progress expected toward achieving the desired five-year outcome.

Step 4: Review Operating Plan Continuously: Measure progress, reflect on, and refine the plan annually to hold the institution accountable for improving equitable outcomes and moving the college toward becoming an “equity-minded” institution.

Obj. #	Strategy	Initiative	Leaders Responsible	Metric	2020 Benchmark	Year 1 progress (2021-22)	Year 2 progress (2022-23)	Year 3 Progress (2023-24)	Year 4 Progress (2024-25)	Desired 2025 Outcome
1.2	Foster growth mindset and sense of belonging	Closing Equity Gaps at the Course Level: Implement State grant with focus on closing equity gaps in high enrolled courses and courses with large equity gaps	Dean, faculty, IR Director	# of courses with improvements in equity gaps	20 courses with either equity gaps or high enrollment were identified for improvement	Faculty teaching 17 courses with enrollments of at least 50 students of color over a 3-year period underwent training. Faculty revised curricula, established DEI statements, revised grading policies.	13 out of 17 courses saw improvements in students' of color success rate and completion gaps	TBD	TBD	17 out of 17

Lessons Learned and Next Steps:

- Returning to the beginning of this journey with the publication of the 2017-19 student equity matrix in the 2020-2025 strategic plan, we can see that the operating plan become both a catalyst for and a symbol of how “humanistic data use motivated by an ethic of care” (Dowd et al., 2018) inspires change.
- Two years after the initial student equity matrix was published, it was updated with new data.
- The matrix was slightly revised to capture data that was more easily replicable.
- The new matrix includes 13 KPIs that once again provide the College with a rich source of data for measuring and tracking student progress and outcomes (See Next Slide).

Cape Cod Community College Student Equity Matrix (2021- 2023)

Student Equity Matrix (2021-2023)															
	All			Latinx			Black/ African-American			Two or More Races			Pell-Recipient		
1. Enrollment (% Change from Fall 2021 to Fall 2023)	6%			32%			45%			33%			11%		
Fall Term (End of Term)	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Headcount	2541	2398	2685	270	273	357	188	223	273	115	134	153	785	737	869
All Degree-Seeking Students (Fall Term)															
2. Course Success Rate	72%			-3%			+2%			-5%			0%		
3. Developmental Math Course Success Rate	54%			-1%			+6%			-2%			+4%		
4. College-level Math Course Success Rate	55%			-7%			+5%			+2%			-3%		
5. College-level English Course Success Rate	64%			-2%			+2%			-8%			0%		
First-Time Degree-Seeking Students															
6. % Enrolled in College-Level Math within First Year	37%			+3%			-20%			-4%			-2%		
7. Complete College-Level Math within First Year	21%			+3%			-10%			-11%			-2%		
8. % Enrolled in College-Level English within First Year	82%			+1%			-2%			+3%			+6%		
9. Complete College-Level English within First Year	57%			+1%			-2%			+2%			+3%		
10. Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate	48%			+2%			+2%			-8%			+2%		
11. 4-year Completion Rate	20%			-3%			-4%			-3%			+1%		
12. 4-year Success Rate	40%			+3%			0%			-6%			-2%		
13. 6-year Success Rate	44%			-7%			-1%			-14%			-2%		

*The Equity Matrix is updated each February.
Updated: 2/28/2024

No Equity Gap: Sustain and Improve
 Equity Gap: Action Needed

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

- What is emerging at Cape Cod Community College is an institution which thoughtfully collects, analyzes, and reflects on data in its operating plan to implement plans and make changes that are improving equitable student outcomes.
- With the 2017-2019 student equity matrix as the genesis for change, the college has built its operating plan not only to respond to the gaps exposed in the matrix but also to expand its efforts to become a more equitable institution.
- Reflecting on the plan, its progress, and desired outcomes has brought college leadership to two discoveries: 1) the plan needs to expand its focus area to include striving for equitable outcomes for not only students of color, but also faculty and staff of color as well; and 2) the plan must also gather qualitative data to capture the real experiences of students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color who are navigating a predominantly white institution.

