

**Advancing Racial Equity
in Hybrid and Online
Career and Technical
Education (CTE)
Programs**

Summary of
College Action Plans in
the CTE CoLab Initiative



The posters included in this publication were developed by the Career and Technical Education (CTE) CoLab Community of Practice for the CTE CoLab Toolbox, an online repository of resources and research developed to support an equity-centered approach to online CTE programming.

The CTE CoLab is a collaboration led by the Urban Institute in partnership with five national organizations. Together, they convene a community of practice made up of 12 community and technical colleges to build knowledge and develop tools to address inequities for students of color in credit-bearing online CTE programs. Funding for this effort comes from ECMC Foundation.

Learn more at ctecolab.org

Equity Action Planning Process

April 2021

**RFP Application:
Set initial goals**

- Identify CTE program in which to pilot changes.
- Build the college team.
- Gather background information and data.
- Identify initial equity goals.

July – September 2021

**Activity 1:
Revisit application
goals**

- Review challenges, goals and current data.
- Identify data and information needed and available to inform and refine goals and outcomes.
- Identify opportunities to make outcomes for students of color more equitable.
- Develop the equity goals.

October-November 2021

**Activity 2:
Complete Equity
Practices Assessment**

- Reflect on current equity practices using the Equity Practices Assessment.
- Identify strengths, resources, gaps, and opportunities to build on ongoing work in the following practice areas:
 - Student support and engagement
 - Curriculum design and delivery
 - Pathways for future education and high-quality employment
 - Overarching equity practices.

December 2021-
January 2022

**Activity 3:
Develop/Refine the
Equity Action Plan**

- Develop the draft Equity Action Plan by outlining a detailed set of goals, strategies, and action steps to improve racial equity in the program.
- Team of reviewers and coaches provide input on drafts to support refinement and implementation of action plans as part of an iterative process.

January 2022-
March 2023

**Activity 4:
Plan for Sustainability**

- Articulate a plan for sustaining the work and continuing to track progress toward equity action goals.
- Identify additional supports and stakeholders needed to engage in the work to advance equitable outcomes for students of color.

Colleges receive support in this process from coaches Sandy Goodman (WEI), Darlene Miller (NCWE) and Jen Vanek (WEI) and Urban's CTE CoLab Team: Shayne Spaulding, Amanda Briggs, Theresa Anderson, Julia Payne, Izabela Solosi, Daniel Lopez, and Ayesha Islam

Chippewa Valley Technical College – Eau Claire, Wisconsin

About Our Information Technology-Software Developer Program

- Spring 2023 Enrollment: 169 students
- Prepares students to become software development professionals, including application developers, web developers, and database administrators
- Serves students in the western Wisconsin area and is expanding to serve a wider region.

Problem Statement: Families of color have a lower average family income locally, and approximately 50% of program students receive financial aid. We're working to 1) lower the financial barriers to participation; 2) Increase our students' sense of community as **17% of students of color reported being dissatisfied with at least one aspect of the campus climate vs. 6% of white students**; and 3) cultivate a sense of belonging in our asynchronous online program.



Racial Equity Goals

Remove technology barriers preventing racially/ethnically diverse students from enrolling and progressing in the online IT-Software Developer program.

Promote student interactions with peers, faculty, and industry partners to improve community and highlight diversity.

Improve support for students' personal obligations in courses.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Promoted low-cost options to purchase necessary computers.** We surveyed our students, updated our program technology requirements, and contacted a local business to provide discounts to our program (and later, the entire college's) students. We promoted this information with advisors and others working with potential students.
- **Documented and promoted technology lending options.** We evaluated library lending and virtual computer options for their program suitability. We're promoting library options as a short-term support option and are piloting virtual computers in multiple classes.
- **Embedded digital literacy skills into intro course.** Each week's material covers fundamental literacy skills ranging from computer components and their uses to searching effectively online. These literacy skills are connected to other course learning objectives and materials.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Embedded communication activities to promote a sense of community and belonging. These include instructor contact activities, communication templates, and peer interaction activities. Student feedback has been positive – *"...thank you for providing such a welcoming and open environment for your students. I'm straight out of online high school...and I've been practically pulling my hair over starting tech school with professional expectations and communication when I have no experience...this class has eased my nerves."*
- Identified and advertised college and community support services in our program-wide course with reinforcement in online classes. This support includes mental-health support, scholarships, emergency funds, and more and continues to expand.
- Included information on bias and its relevance to our students as future professionals in multiple classes.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

As part of this grant, we have **made small course-level changes** that help sustain **student-faculty communication** even in online asynchronous environments. We have made **larger changes** as our plan to **increase access to computers grew from solely our program to encompass our college**. And our work will continue as we exchange lessons learned, perspectives, and experiences with a growing network of interested students, faculty, staff, and advisors both internally and externally. This grant has highlighted the **importance of developing a thick web of communication**, and we are grateful for the reminder.

To connect further, contact Kevin Harris at kharris20@cvtc.edu.

Community College of Aurora – Aurora, Colorado

About Our Early Childhood Education Director Certificate Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 141 students taking 243 education courses
- CCA's Early Childhood Education programs enable individuals to enter the workforce as an entry-level assistant, teacher, or director in a childcare center.
- Can earn professional licensure after their associate's degree, transferring to a 4-year partner to finish a bachelor's degree.

Problem Statement: Hispanic or LatinX and English language learners are under-represented in the program in comparison to the student population as a whole (16% LatinX enrollment in ECE vs. 29% overall). The ECE program is investigating barriers to enrollment, completion, and retention related to technology and linguistic needs. We would like to create a more deliberate approach to online instruction with strategies focused on working with non-native English speakers and less tech-savvy students.



Racial Equity Goals

Understanding linguistic and technological needs of students in the ECE Director Certificate program. Our goal was to move this program entirely online to accommodate our students' flexible scheduling needs.

Expanding access to technology: Information literacy has always been a concern of instructors at the Community College of Aurora.

Improving retention and completion rates through a system of wrap-around instructor and student supports.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Issued a student survey that ~ 50% of students completed. Main findings:**
 - Students did not indicate a need for a Spanish-speaking tutor.
 - 90% of the students had a sufficient level of information literacy to participate effectively in in-person, remote, and asynchronous online modalities.
 - However, 74% did not know how to get technical help.
 - Most students preferred in-person instruction over the other modalities. They also felt evening courses fit their schedules better than daytime courses.
- **Following the survey, we:**
 1. Reprioritized technological support, purchasing more laptops for the classroom.
 2. Shifted resources toward the wraparound instructor supports.
 3. Are augmenting the course map/repository and the D2L information literacy shell.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- The Colorado Community College System moved to a consortium model for offering online courses, and this removed CCA's ability to control its online ECE courses. Online sections are being offered by other colleges now, so CCA can no longer monitor curriculum. Instead, we have shifted to providing supports on campus to aid in information literacy skills.
- We have placed more emphasis on access to technology on campus through laptop purchases for the classroom. This provides an alternative to smart phones. The laptops come with a subscription to Grammarly to aid in writing assignments.
- The ECE program now has the capability to create an environment where students can interact with technology to simulate the needs of an ECE work environment.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

The digital literacy needs **survey**, available in both English and Spanish, collected data on **students' access to and comfort with digital literacy** (e.g., internet service, learner management system, and computer equipment). Our survey indicated the **students in the program have sufficient access to computers and internet service at home**. CCA has already established systems to **track student data, disaggregated by demographic factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, and first-time college enrollment**, etc. CCA utilizes Tableau dashboards designed and maintained by the Institutional Research department for transparent data access. The faculty and instructors, department chair of ECE, Dean of Concurrent Enrollment, and VP of Academic Success will be able to compare students' performance in-class versus online.

To connect further, contact Michelle Pacheco, Dean of Concurrent Enrollment (Michelle.Pacheco@CCAurora.edu)

CUNY Kingsborough Community College – Brooklyn, New York

About Our Criminal Justice Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 425 students
- Interdisciplinary program designed to meet students' equity needs by providing opportunities to students who have been historically marginalized.
- Our faculty are from a wide variety of backgrounds. They are committed to providing a real-world experience so students can better understand complex and controversial issues while developing their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Problem Statement: Formerly incarcerated people of color face the greatest educational disadvantages. According to the Prison Policy report (2018), of formerly incarcerated individuals with no high school diploma or GED, 40% were Hispanic women and 30% Hispanic men, followed by 33% Black women and 28% Black men. The number of underserved and non-traditional students who continue to enroll at KBCC is creating a growing sense of urgency to confront the challenges that delay their success. Our students' changing circumstances and outdated institutional practices result in persistent success barriers that often widen achievement gaps. One of our focuses is strengthening service delivery and accessibility for our justice-impacted students and increasing our equity practices across the institution for all students, including returning citizens, narrowing the equity gaps.



Racial Equity Goals

Improve the quality and diversity of existing faculty.

Develop new site locations for improved access to college courses.

Increase equity practices across the institution for all students, especially returning citizens.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Established a Steering Committee and a training schedule for the Thrive program.**
- The Thrive training program provided KBCC faculty/staff with the knowledge and skills to enhance their ability to respond to justice-impacted students with compassion and respect. The training created a space to discuss increased Equity practices across the institution for all students, particularly returning citizens. The training also provided a platform to explore ways to improve the institution's accessibility and level of service to justice-impacted students who are disproportionately from BIPOC communities.

The Ones Still Home: Incarcerated Photography – Short piece created by a former student turned current staff of the Men's Tech program. This piece was used as part of the introduction to the Thrive training.



Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Designated on-campus access to computers in the Men's Resources AND Career Centers
- Online teaching essentials training for faculty through the Kingsborough Center for eLearning (KCEl)
- Faculty access to laptop loaners program
- Mandatory Online teaching certification

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

Upon completion of the Thrive training in January 2023, many KBCC staff and faculty agreed that strengthening our service delivery and increasing our equity practices across the institution for all students, including returning citizens, will assist in narrowing the equity gaps. The attendees agreed that ongoing workshops should be developed. Attendees demonstrated interest in new initiatives to broaden knowledge around resources, employment, rights, and licensing laws that affect justice-impacted people. Our takeaway is that creating a space for meaningful and engaging conversation where KBCC staff & faculty can learn how to begin to support CJ-impacted people through a different lens and incorporating the Thrive evidence-based practices is a critical component of the KBCC equity and inclusion plan.

To connect further, contact Dr. Stuart Parker (stuart.parker@kbcc.cuny.edu) and Dr. Vanda Seward (vanda.seward@kbcc.cuny.edu)



Diablo Valley College – Pleasant Hill, California

About Our Art Digital Media Program (ARTDM)

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 673 students; Spring 2023 enrollment: 832 students
- Prepares students for creative careers in website design, user experience/user interface (UX/UI) design, game design, video production, 3D animation, visual effects, and virtual production.
- Attracts new entrants to the industry, skill-builders, career changers, and transfer students
- In a department with Film, Television, Electronic Media Program (FTVE)

Problem Statement:

Average success rate for African-American students in fully online ARTDM courses was **59% vs. 69% across all demographics** in Fall 2021. Increasing enrollment in African-American, Native-American, Hispanic, and Filipino students, but **course success rates differed by 6% in comparison to Asian and White peers (66% vs. 72%, Fall 2021)**. Needs included 1) **stronger student support structure** in program and 2) **data infrastructure and racial equity training** to drive equity practices in faculty and administration.



Racial Equity Goals

Build a foundation of student support to increase outreach, enrollment, and connection to faculty and program.

Establish department infrastructure and training to center racial equity

Key Strategic Actions

- **Created a full semester training course on “Building Racial Equity”**
 - Ten instructors from ARTDM and FTVE
 - Surveys noted that training provided strong resources for connecting to equity principles, practices, and resources, and offered significant opportunities to reflect on equity goals.
- **Expanded, centralized, and promoted Instructor Resource Hub**
 - ARTDM and FTVE Hub includes departmental information, program resources, student resources, student lab hours, and opportunities for curriculum sharing.
- **Equity data book benchmarking success rates across modality**
 - Data disaggregated by demographics
 - Collected survey data across equity initiatives
 - Included student survey data from Spring 2022.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Offered an open house to connect 120 students to program offerings, faculty, and resources. All students of color respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the open house and studio tour provided a good overview of the program.
- Built and strengthened instructor-facing program resources and communication to create a stronger connection and community among instructors.
- Created racial equity course to strengthen instructors’ understanding of equity, inclusivity, and supportive teaching practices.
- Began building Student-facing Orientation to connect students to the program and community; clarify certificate and degree pathways; showcase student supports and technology; and identify career and internship opportunities.

Most Significant Learnings On How To Improve Racial Equity

Create an equity plan with clearly defined goals and strategies. Benchmark, build, organize, and **implement specific practices**, and **create major shifts in building foundational racial equity practices** within the program. The **biggest lesson** was how to **bring faculty together to commit to** and centralize **racial equity work** as a **major priority** by building community and enhancing communication.

Fletcher Technical Community College – Schriever, Louisiana

About Our Machine Tool Technology Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 11 students
- Provides classroom instruction and practical shop experience to prepare students for employment in the use of machines to manufacture products and parts.
- Fletcher’s proximity to the Gulf of Mexico means that many of its business partners are members of the oil and gas industry.

Problem Statement: Our program advisory committee had no members of color despite the program student demographics being 50% White, 30% Black, and 10% Hispanic (Spring, 2021). We were also unsure if our members’ organizations were participating in DEI initiatives. With a more diverse program advisory committee, our students and faculty will have access to program advisory committee members and **potential mentors with similar backgrounds and experiences.**



Racial Equity Goals

Increase diversity of members serving on Machine Tool Program Advisory Committee and evaluate current member organizations’ participation in DEI initiatives.

Create a framework for reimagined Machine Tool Program Advisory Committee with an emphasis on DEI initiatives.

Provide program advisory committee members or staff from their organizations an opportunity to attend an annual DEI-focused workshop/event.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Create two handbooks: one for college faculty and staff that establishes the purpose, guidelines, and best practices for program advisory committees** with an emphasis on the need for diversity of its members to advance racial equity in opportunity and employment outcomes for students of color and one that is for program advisory committee members that establishes their purpose, responsibilities, and expectations with an emphasis on DEI initiatives.
- **Create an orientation for new program advisory committee members.**
- **Create a member agreement to be signed annually.**

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Students are now notified of Fletcher’s laptop loan program coordinated through our library.
- Developed a “Fletcher Learning” course in Canvas to introduce students to our learning management system.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

We initially intended to recruit and retain more students of color in our Machine Tool Technology Program. After reviewing relevant data, we realized we are doing a good job with this. Through discussions with our team leads and other colleges participating in this project, we realized that **members of our program advisory committee do not currently reflect the diversity of our students.** While it has at times been difficult to have conversations about areas **our college and business partners need to address related to DEI**, we believe these discussions are necessary and will be to the **benefit of our students.** Fletcher is composed of individuals from different races, ethnicities, nationalities, socioeconomic statuses, religious backgrounds, genders, gender identities and expressions, and sexual orientations. Fletcher is **committed to providing an environment that is inclusive for all.**

To connect further, contact Nancy Clement, Fletcher’s Dean of Technical Education at nancy.clement@fletcher.edu.



Modesto Junior College – Modesto, California

About Our Child Development Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 1,362 students
- Hybrid career training and college transfer program that offers 5 nested CTE certificates and associate degrees for transfer
- A Hispanic Serving Institution located in a refugee-impacted county in California

Problem Statement: Year after year, our county struggles to provide services to all young children who qualify to receive them due to a lack of trained childcare professionals. Our advisory board and office of education have reported that students find the level of English language proficiency needed to be a barrier to continuing their education. As a result, we have made it our **goal to develop English language support materials related directly to the child development text used in our entry level course.**



Racial Equity Goals

Support persistence and continued enrollment in Child Growth and Development (CLDDV 103), the Child Development certificate and degree programs for our English Language Learners.

Mitigate attrition and help all students feel more supported by providing more technological support and instruction throughout the Child Growth and Development course.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Created and piloted an Open Educational Resource (OER) English language workbook** that works alongside the OER textbook used in our class.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Initially, all technical instruction and support was in a “Start Here” module within our learning management system, where students were expected to read the instructions early and seek support when needed. However, students did not always retain the information, often feeling confused about how to use certain technology during the course. Now, along with the “Start Here” module, the instructions and support are duplicated throughout the course to ensure they are near the assignments they relate to so that help is readily available and does not require searching.
- Through the instructor survey, we learned that nearly half of the child development professors who responded were not including examples or resources explicitly intended to represent our diverse population in their course. Our curriculum committee at the college has formed a committee to address reviewing curriculum for equitable and culturally responsive materials and instruction.
- The instructor survey also revealed that while many faculty are familiar with how students can access academic supports, not as many are familiar with how our students can access basic needs supports. Our college is currently conducting research about employee perceptions of basic needs challenges for MJC students, which will help determine what areas of training are most needed for our faculty.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

Our most significant lesson has been that to best support our students our practices should be responsive and reflexive to the needs of our students and community. We came into this project with one idea of how we would provide that support. **Our students and community let us know that approach did not work for them. Our ability to pivot what we were creating to create an independent learning tool was in direct response to that feedback.** Further, we have learned how to better **support our instructors to feel confident** that they are meeting the needs of our diverse student population as well.

To connect further, contact
Dr. Jessica Brennan
Professor of Child Development
brennanj@Yosemite.edu
209-575-6343



Mt. San Jacinto College – Menifee, California

About Our Water Technology Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 136 students
- Prepares students to become water technology professionals working in municipal agencies who can ensure water is safe from chemical and biological pollutants, protect the environment by processing wastewater effectively, and advance the field of water technology.
- Students learn environmental regulatory compliance, water use efficiency, wastewater collections, and water utility management.

Problem Statement: African Americans are underrepresented in the Water Technology program. There are only usually **only 2 to 6 students a year**. Program level data shows continued **gaps in college completion** among various racial, ethnic groups as well as gender, with **African Americans earning fewer A's than other groups**.



Racial Equity Goals

Increase recruitment and retention of individuals from underserved groups, particularly African Americans.

Address the equity gaps in grading.

Incorporate equity and career topics into every water technology class.

Incorporate equity topics into the Water Technology Advisory Committee agendas.

Incorporate equity minded concepts when creating or revising curriculum.

Key Strategic Action

- **Developed a customized Canvas module template on equity and careers for the Water Technology program.**

The Water Technology faculty built on the template developed by Geography faculty and academic counselors on the Student Success Committee (Guided Pathways) and tailored the module for their students. Content included information on African American water technology faculty, and resources such as the Diversity Center of the American Water Works Association and the National Society of Black Engineers.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Faculty committed to ongoing professional development on diversity, equity, and inclusion and have participated in trainings provided by the college and external groups.
- Faculty have ensured that their students are aware of and have had access to all the support systems at the college – including Chrome books, wi-fi, food pantry, free mental health counseling, scholarships, and grants.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

At the college level (MSJC), we have not engaged as much with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in career education fields as we did in the “transfer” disciplines. While the engagement with DEI has not been as strong, the structure of career education provides opportunities to address these practices in more comprehensive ways. There is a Career Education Committee at the college in which all career education disciplines come together. There are regional, multi-college entities as well. In addition, **the shift to online teaching and the discussions about different success rates in different modalities has generated robust conversations about how to best support our students.**

To connect further, contact Joyce Johnson (jajohnso@msjc.edu)

Nicolet College – Rhinelander, Wisconsin

About Our Native American Tribal Business Management Certificate Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 20 students
- Develops business skills in an Indigenous context for students who want to work in a Tribal organization or Native American business environment, focusing on the impact of a sovereign Indigenous nation's legal, political and cultural context
- Upon certificate completion, students may move into the Business Management Associate's degree program, a flexible, competency-based online program

Problem Statement: Students face several challenges, including having limited access to college resources due to location and lack of internet connectivity. The Nicolet College district is home to three sovereign tribal nations, distanced from the main campus and each other. To better serve these students, we plan to **redevelop the existing courses for online delivery delivery while maintaining the vital connections to the tribal communities and building student cohorts key to student success.**



Racial Equity Goals

Redesign the certificate into a technical diploma embedded into the Business Management program with direct input from our tribal communities.

Redevelop the existing courses for online delivery while maintaining the vital connections to the tribal communities and building student cohorts key to student success.

Build support services that meet indigenous students where they are in their educational journey.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Align the curriculum to cultural values and work context.** As these courses are designed to meet the needs of tribal employers, the inclusion of culturally relevant content is critical. Because the tribes are sovereign nations, their businesses operate with multiple sets of requirements and cultural values. While there are many commonalities across tribes, distinctions among them influence how business is conducted. In this case, equity is served from both the student and employer standpoint. The end goal is to decolonize the curriculum.
- **Review and build curriculum using a scaffolded approach to online learning.** Scaffolding the delivery mode of the courses to build student success in online modalities while maintaining the student cohort and placed-based learning models are important for the cultural aspects of the program.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Our instructional design team provided intentional support for the instructor moving to a hybrid and online model. This has allowed the instructor to gain confidence and proficiency in delivering the curriculum using technology.
- Embedded an Academic Success Center faculty member in the beginning of the course to help guide and train students in the learning management system and other technology the College uses. Students responded very positively to this intentional structure: "I like being in a classroom and I liked using Brightspace. I feel like I finally got used to everything in Brightspace."

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

This grant allowed us to focus attention on the Tribal Business Management curriculum and really consider what we need to do to best serve our students. The action planning process highlighted the complexity of implementing change given available resources and staffing challenges. **We started to develop a framework for scaffolding online delivery into in-person classes, laying the foundation that will help faculty and students leverage technology to extend and make future teaching and learning more flexible.** Our students have reminded us that the in-person contact, and community building featured in our current course delivery remains vital to them. Student insights such as this will inform how far we go with our online build-out and design choices for a future associate's degree in tribal governance and administration.

To connect further, contact Laura Wind-Norton, Associate Vice President of Academic Services at lwindnorton@nicoletcollege.edu.



Olive-Harvey College – Chicago, Illinois

About Our Cannabis Program, “Still I Rise”

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 41 students
- This program offers training in Cannabis Dispensary Operations and is a new initiative, which aims to create social equity in an industry that has directly impacted Black people and people of color.
- The newly legalized recreational cannabis market in Illinois offers a significant growth in employment opportunities.

Problem Statement: *Still I Rise* offers wrap-around services and educational opportunities for those who have cannabis convictions on their records. **In Illinois, Blacks were 7.5 to 8.5 times more likely than whites to be arrested for having cannabis.** The program aims to address the racial inequities created by the war on drugs by offering training specific to the Illinois cannabis industry, along with offering wellness support, financial support, and certifications that prepare them for the industry.



Racial Equity Goals

Increase online program retention and graduation for those with cannabis convictions.

Directly engage with the emerging cannabis industry via partnerships to offer employee training and employment for students.

Address inequitable practices in the cannabis industry workforce by teaching the industry about the current demographics of those seeking employment.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Curriculum is now credit based and approved by the Illinois Community College Board with a statewide designation.** This allows students across Illinois to get in-district tuition fees across the state of Illinois.
- **Courses are now offered in 3 modes: in person, online live, and asynchronous.** The additional mode of asynchronous online courses for the core classes of the program provided students with the needed flexibility to take the course on their own schedule. This option has increased the overall enrollment of the program.
- **Students in Still I Rise were provided with wrap around resources.** Students were offered soft skill development, employment opportunities, summer internships, mental health support, childcare support, transportation support, and all-around academic support.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- The addition of EdTech tools increased course engagement and allowed students to learn at their own pace. EdTech tools reinforced key concepts to ensure students were grasping course objectives and learning outcomes for each course.
- Asynchronous options allowed students to study at their own speed and around their busy schedules.
- The focus was on training faculty, who were mainly from industry, on how to approach teaching in an academic institution. Online training opportunities were offered by the department as well as the college to support professional development with a more academic lens and structure.
- Program orientation was developed to address deficiencies in college readiness for students. An online and in-person orientation reviewed the resources provided by the program and the college policies to ensure students were engaged in college life and had accessibility to all academic procedures.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

Students gained insight on a plant that changed their lives that is now being utilized by many in a recreational environment. Students learn about the insights on the needs for those with small convictions and how limiting these can be for their future. The program showed the significance in the need of various learning modes and the significance of wrap around services for students. The main hindering factors for students is scheduling and access; the development of asynchronous and multiple learning modes offered a solution to this obstacle. The simple advertisement of resources allowed students to empower themselves and made it possible for them to continue their educational pursuits.

To connect further, contact Akilah Easter at aeaster5@ccc.edu.

Onondaga Community College – Syracuse, NY

About Our Health Information Management Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 41 registered students + 110 students from other programs taking the medical terminology course.
- Health information management (HIM) professionals ensure the availability, accuracy, integrity, and security of all data related to patient healthcare encounters that result in better clinical and business decisions to enhance healthcare quality.
- Prepare students to work in any setting that provides health care or uses health information in their business model.
- Graduates are eligible to sit for a national certification and many continue to pursue their bachelor's degree.

Problem Statement: Our data and experience exposed an academic progression and completion gap among students of color and English language learners characterized by limited access to and knowledge of technology, nonacademic and academic support and resources. Faculty of the Health Information Technology (HIT) program needed methods and processes to increase opportunities for students to engage with the content, with peers and instructors within the asynchronous course. A professional development platform to increase DEI awareness and pedagogical strategies for delivery of asynchronous online courses was also needed to support faculty, particularly including adjuncts.



OCC's core HIT team: (L to R), Dori Larue (class of 2011) Dr. Karen Fabrizio (Proud Dean), M'Kaila Clark (class of 2016)

Racial Equity Goals

Ensure students are provided technological, academic and wrap around support throughout their academic journey.

Increase the professional development opportunities centered on equity awareness and strategies to mitigate disparities for full-time and adjunct faculty.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Created Learning Module 0** to provide students the ability to engage with the learning management system and its features prior to the course starting. This helps to highlight the technology needed for successful completion and helps the instructors determine if students need additional support.
- **Faculty set guidelines** to consistently raise flags for students to help identify need for support from success coaches, learning and tutoring center, and the community care hub.
- **Faculty adopted use of student surveys** to provide students an opportunity to communicate concerns and successes.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Increased access to technology through loaner laptops and hotspots.
- Students assigned advisors from School of Health team based on metrics indicating possible risk, includes 1st generation and history of poor success in previous semesters.
- Increased access to support and training for adjuncts as these are historically limited or uncompensated.
- Ensure students are given a voice and opportunity to clarify their needs.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

The words **“one size fits all”** do not align with the needs of students in any higher education program as each individual brings their own experiences, confidence, aptitude, abilities and supports to the classroom, and at varying degrees. However, we have discovered that if one student is struggling, it is very likely another is as well. As we explore the barriers experienced by the students of color in our program, we have noticed patterns and discovered related issues. From a student point of view, the work completed through this grant ensures **students are given a voice and an opportunity to clarify their needs** as we introduce new avenues to engage with students throughout the semester, and benefit from a **heightened awareness and the skills to investigate and not accept the status quo.**

To connect further, contact Dr Karen Fabrizio, fabrizik@sunyocc.edu.



Wake Tech – Raleigh, North Carolina

About Our Network Management AAS Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 243 students
- Prepares students to work in entry level IT jobs such as network technicians/administrator roles.
- Students learn the skills to support both local and wide-area networks and are prepared to sit for industry certifications such as CCNA, NET+, and SEC+.
- Offers upskilling opportunities in network-related areas such as wireless technologies or earning the CCNP certification.

Problem Statement: College data shows **students of color** are **graduating at a much lower rate** (only 4%) and make up **67% of the students on academic probation**. Currently, the college **does not collect qualitative data to understand these students' challenges and barriers**. Additionally, **faculty expressed a challenge in not knowing how to provide support** to students facing non-academic barriers.

Racial Equity Goals

Identify the unique needs of students of color in the Network Management program to ensure we are providing meaningful supports that will eliminate barriers.

Develop professional development for faculty, particularly adjuncts, on how to recognize students experiencing nonacademic barriers/challenges and how to refer them for support.

Ensure that students of color are prepared for the coursework and the time commitments required in 8-week courses.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Student surveys to gain an understanding of nonacademic barriers that are impeding success**
 - 54% of students reported Work Obligations as the most significant barrier to success, particularly in 8-week courses
- **Survey faculty for previous knowledge of non-academic student barriers and gather student resources.**
 - 50% of Network Management faculty were not aware of the College's Student Success Coaches
 - 25% of Network Management faculty were not aware of the College's Care Center
- **Develop and offer professional development to faculty.**
- **Partnership with the college's DEI Council**
 - Assisted in the development of student surveys and facilitating focus groups
 - Sharing the PD across the college



Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Increased awareness of nonacademic barriers faced by students.
- Sharing resources with faculty focused on student supports and equity-focused practices such as creating inclusive environments, intentional wording in syllabi.
- Develop partnerships with other entities at the college focusing on DEI.
- Educated faculty on the resources that Wake Tech offers students and how to make these equity resources a part of the classroom conversation.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

The most significant lesson has been improving our **awareness of equity issues** and the **nonacademic challenges faced by our learners** – particularly, how these challenges and barriers directly **affect learning and student success**.

To connect further, contact Cindy Luttrell at cluttrell@waketech.edu.

WSU Tech – Wichita, Kansas

About Our Machining Technology Program

- Spring 2022 Enrollment: 128 students
- Provides students the skills and knowledge needed in various manufacturing procedures and operations, including lathe and mill operations and manual and Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machining operations utilizing similar machines students will encounter on the job.
- Four stacked exit points align with entry-level industry careers. Students earn WSU Tech Technical Certificates or an Associate of Applied Science Degree at each exit point along with a number of industry-recognized third-party credentials.

Problem Statement: Over 1/3 of enrollment in the program are students of color and local industry for this occupation is less diverse than WSU Tech’s program, with only 15% of the workforce identifying as African-American, Asian, or Hispanic. To provide better support for students, this project needed to 1) build structure that provides students resources to be successful and adjust to college and employment expectations; 2) review instructional materials from an equity lens; and 3) seek involvement from industry members who are representative of our student population as key areas to assist with the transition to college and work.



Racial Equity Goals

Explore curriculum and instruction through the lens of racial equity.

Build a strong network of student support with a foundation in equity.

Include industry partners in the discussion of what is important for racial equity, creating a two-way conversation.

Key Strategic Actions

- **Researched and established an orientation to assist students** with navigating starting the program, college, resources, basic needs, IT essentials, and equity principles.
- **Launched a mentoring program** to link students of color with industry and professionals associated with manufacturing, education, and machining.
- **Utilized student focus group data to validate progress and issues** from the student perspective.

Strategies for Boosting Equity in Online Learning

- Integrated fundamental digital literacy skills into an introductory course and will be evaluating results.
- Used data to pinpoint inequities impacting retention and completion segmented by demographics and other characteristics.
- Explored potential issues with digital infrastructure.
- Created paper textbook library for students who only previously had e-book option.

Most Significant Learning On How To Improve Racial Equity

Our work has brought the focus of racial equity into a CTE program, where traditionally equity may have been forgotten. We now **bring equity into conversations on program resources, development, planning, and program review.** This includes reviewing first day experiences all the way to gaining feedback from students as they exit the program. We have also **partnered with industry** so they can better understand the business case for advancing racial equity within the machining profession. This led to us creating a culturally responsive mentor program so students of color have **expanded options to build relationships with and receive support from mentors and WSU Tech industry partners.** Using data, we are exploring other potential areas where issues exist and what equity, inclusion, and access solutions could be created to assist students. Overall, the college has started to **explore new possibilities to extend equity practices into the classroom** and beyond to benefit the student while integrating our industry partners.

To connect further, contact Scott Lucas (slucas@wsutech.edu).

