We’ve Been Waiting And Are Ready For You:
A Framework for Creating a Climate and Culture of Equity & Inclusion for Black Students
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What Are Our Objectives

To create/maintain a culture and climate that supports Black student success by…

1. Understanding and grounding our work in Black students’ experience (Listen)
2. Identifying what we're doing that is and is not working and what we need to change to effectively support black students’ success (Learn)
3. Considering a framework to inform institutional transformation (Learn)
4. Outlining aspects of climate and culture that support Black student success (Level Up)
## What Do We Mean By Culture & Climate

The following table was developed by Steve Gruenert and Todd Whitaker and is drawn from their books, *School Culture Rewired* and *School Culture Recharged*, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CULTURE</th>
<th>CLIMATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...is the college’s personality</td>
<td>...is the college’s heart and soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...provides for a limited way of thinking</td>
<td>...creates a state of mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...takes years to evolve</td>
<td>...is easy to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...is based on values and beliefs</td>
<td>...is based on perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...can’t be felt, even by administrators,</td>
<td>...can be felt when you enter a room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faculty, staff, and students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...is “the way we do things around here”</td>
<td>...is “the way we feel around here”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...determines whether or not improvement is</td>
<td>...is the first thing that improves when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possible</td>
<td>positive change is made</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The following table was developed by Steve Gruenert and Todd Whitaker and is drawn from their books, *School Culture Rewired* and *School Culture Recharged*, respectively.
Understanding and grounding our work in Black students’ experience
Student Voices and Stories...
Factors Negatively Affecting Black Students’ Experiences

- **PREJUDICE**: incorrect, overgeneralized, or inflexible belief about a group associated with negative affect.
- **RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**: unequal treatment of individuals or groups based on race or ethnicity.
- **IMPLICIT BIAS**: refers to unconscious attitudes, reactions, stereotypes, and categories that affect behavior and understanding. In higher education, implicit bias often refers to unconscious racial or socioeconomic bias towards students.
- **INSTITUTIONAL RACISM**: structures, policies, practices, and norms that result in differential access to goods, services, and opportunities for participate racial groups.
- **SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION**: the intentional disadvantaging of groups of people based on their identity while advantaging members of the dominant group, such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and language.
- **MICROAGGRESSIONS**: intentional and unintentional slights, snubs, or insults which communicate negative, hurtful messages (Equity in the Center, 2020).
Students Tell Us That They Don’t Feel We Are Waiting or Ready for Them

AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL:
- Isolation
- Invisibility
- Bias - racism, prejudice, microaggressions

AT THE CULTURAL LEVEL:
- Lack of caring
- Lack of transparency
- Lack of accountability

AT STRUCTURAL LEVEL:
- Unclear paths
- Inability to access or lack of needed resources
- Mixed messages
What Some Research Suggests...

- STEM faculty who believe ability is fixed have larger racial achievement gaps and inspire less student motivation (Canning et al., 2019).

- Faculty-student interaction, exposure to diversity, and usage of support services were significant predictors of sense of belonging for Black men attending community colleges (Wood & Harris, 2015).

- Students perceive classrooms as sites of bias - more so than faculty, and saw faculty’s attempts to address it as a mixed bag (Boysen et al., 2009).

- Black male students who had greater interactions with diverse peers increased their odds of being “very likely” to transfer and increase sense of belonging (Wood & Palmer, 2013).
Identifying what we're doing that is and is not working and what we need to change to effectively support black students' success
How Do We Create a Culture & Climate for Black Students at the structural, cultural, & individual levels that is...

• **FAIR**: Personal and social circumstances do not prevent students from achieving their academic potential,

• **INCLUSIVE**: Basic minimum standard for education that is shared by all students regardless of background, personal characteristics, or location, and

• **PERSONALIZED**: Educational experiences and supports offered to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students

https://www.thinkingmaps.com/equity-education-matters/
# We Need To Shift Our Thinking...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOT STUDENT-CENTERED</th>
<th>STUDENT-CENTERED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are the subject and we are the object (student blaming, college ready, deficit mindset)</td>
<td>We are the subject and students are the object! (focus on practice/policy, strength/asset based, student ready, growth mindset)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Why aren’t Black students not being successful?</td>
<td>● What are we doing to advantage white students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Why are Black students not taking advantage of available supports?</td>
<td>● What are we doing that is not supportive to Black students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Black students are a monolithic group</td>
<td>● There is diversity among Black students that we need to recognize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Black students have achievement gaps</td>
<td>● Black students are experiencing equity gaps</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Factors Positively Affecting Black Students’ Experiences

- **EQUITY:** dismantling of oppressive systems (structural, cultural, and individual) and creating a college community where success is not predictable by race.

- **RACE EQUITY:** the condition where one’s race identity has no influence on how one fares in society (Equity in the Center, 2020).

- **GROWTH MINDSET:** most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point (Dweck, 2015).

- **STUDENT-CENTERED:** nurture and address students’ learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds.

- **VALIDATION THEORY:** upholds students as creators of knowledge and as valuable members of our college learning community.

- **CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY:** teaching that acknowledges, responds to, and celebrates fundamental cultures offers full, equitable access to education for students from all cultures (The Education Alliance, Brown University).
Umoja has 18 practices organized around these 7 values

1. **Students Are Our Highest Priority** (serving to promote student success for all students)
2. **Touching the Spirit** (using a holistic approach to reach each student—Body, Mind, and Spirit)
3. **Building Community** (creating an environment that encourages students to be accountable to each other’s learning)
4. **Connections to the African Diaspora** (expanding students’ cultural awareness of the diaspora and articulating their place in that experience)
5. **Ethic of Love** (expressing compassion and care in the learning community)
6. **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Practices** (developing curriculum relevant to the students’ lives for learning)
7. **Ritual** (engaging in cultural practices rooted in African traditions to strengthen the community and the people within the community)

*Learn about our events on our website: Umojacommunity.org/events*

Umoja is a 501c3 nonprofit organization.
Umoja Makes a Positive Difference in Students’ First Year (leading indicators)

Umoja students vs. Non-Umoja students…

• Enrolled in an average of 3 more units
• Earned an average of 2 more units
• Successfully completed their first-year coursework at a rate that was 3.4 percentage points higher
Umoja Students Outperform Peers on Certain Intermediate-term Outcomes (lagging indicators)

Umoja students vs. Non-Umoja students...

- Completed transfer-level English in one year at more than double the rate
- Completed transfer-level math within three years at a rate 7.6 percentage points higher
- Completed both transfer-level English and math within three years at a rate that was 7 percentage points higher
Umoja Students Outperform Peers on Certain Long-term Outcomes (lagging indicators) - cont.

Umoja students vs. Non-Umoja students…

- Earned a Chancellor’s Office-approved award within four years at a rate that was double
- Earned an associate degree at a rate that was double
- Earned an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) at a rate that was more than three times
- Became transfer ready at a rate that was more than double
Umoja Builds a Sense of Community for Students

Shared specific ways program had:
• Sparked their motivation and focus
• Nurtured their personal growth
• Boosted their academic success

Reported most important Umoja program elements as…
• Supportive faculty, staff, and student relationships and bonds
• Sponsored courses that provide safe, supportive space to share, with focus on relevant curricula and assignments

The Importance of Belonging and Acceptance to Black Student Success (2020)-
The Ethic of Love Infographic (2020)-
Once Black Students Reach Key Milestones, They Are Most Likely to Transfer... But Too Few Get This Far

Findings:

• 75% Black students who make it near or at the gate ultimately transfer — highest among any ethnic group

• Yet, many Black students do not make it past 30 units in six years

Question for Reflection:

• What can the college do to get more Black students near or at the gate?

https://rpgroup.org/Portals/0/Documents/Projects/ThroughtheGate/TransferStoriesAndStrategies_FINAL.pdf?ver=2020-10-08-164202-620
Considering a framework to inform institutional transformation
Guided Pathways and Equity 2.0 Framework at Foothill

**CONNECTION**
From interest in college enrollment to application

**ENTRY**
Enrollment to completion of first college-level course

**PROGRESS**
Entry into program of study to 75% of requirement completion

**COMPLETION**
Complete program of study to credential with labor market value
Leadership focused on completion and successful student outcomes

Proactive student engagement

Technology to support student engagement

Local and state policies that support student progress

1. **Connection**
   - Interest through registration

2. **Entry**
   - Enrollment through gateway course completion

3. **Progress/Completion**
   - Entry into course of study through 75% of credential requirements met

4. **Advancement**
   - Complete course of study through transition to labor market or college transfer
How We Can Serve Our Black Students Better?*  
* From Equity Strategic Plan

**CONNECTION**
- Broader outreach
- More effective onboarding
- Attention to ensuring applicants register and attend classes

**ENTRY**
- Address students’ basic needs
- Expand access to and limit eligibility requirements for programs
- Consider how current spaces serve students
- Examine where services are located and how that affects access
How Well Do We Serve Black Students?*  * From Equity Strategic Plan

PROGRESS/COMPLETION
- Offer programs that are focused, streamlined, flexible, and accelerated
- Examine demos and enrollment patterns of students who take courses online to id needed resources
- Recognize and address implicit bias, stereotype threat, racism, tokenism, etc.
- Prioritize Black student retention
- Expand access to and eligibility requirements for programs
- Diversify faculty - who teaches a course affects who and what is taught -
- Insist on culturally responsive pedagogy / curriculum
- Focus on structural changes as part of equity efforts that will improve culture and climate
- Promote peer-to-peer interactions

ADVANCEMENT
- Demand accountability to equity strategies and their successful implementation
- Prioritize Black student persistence and completion with attention to closing equity gaps
Six Success Factors

- Students have a goal and know how to achieve it
- Students stay on track—keeping their eyes on the prize
- Students’ skills, talents, abilities, and experiences are recognized; they have opportunities to contribute on campus and feel their contributions are appreciated
- Students feel somebody wants and helps them to succeed
- Students feel like they are part of the college community
- Students actively participate in class and extracurricular activities

Student Support (Re)defined Focus Groups: Student Quotes by Success Factor
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0B3H_pY9T2ulbfmtBM29GR2p2RU5kOGNkaHRjeGtRWHVQOTZPMXdFSU9zRmFpNUE5amowVFk
Key Themes

1. Colleges need to foster student motivation.
2. Colleges must teach students how to succeed in the postsecondary environment.
3. Colleges need to structure support to ensure all six success factors are addressed.
4. Colleges need to provide comprehensive support to historically underserved students to prevent the equity gap from growing.
5. Everyone has a role to play in supporting student achievement, but faculty must take the lead.
Differing Perspectives on the Student Experience

What we see...

- Student Services
- Instruction
- Special Populations Programs

What the student experiences...

- the teacher who believes in me
- the dean who helped me get into Math 1A
- the counselor who helped me with my ed plan
- the students I study with
- the patient tutor
- the man in the cafeteria who asks how I’m doing
- the nice woman in financial aid
**Directed and Focused:**

**Key Findings for African-American Students**

**DIRECTED**

- African-American students were more likely to cite the importance of having programs and services available to help them successfully navigate college.

**FOCUSED**

- African-American students were more likely to indicate that not passing a class as a very important reason not to re-enroll.
Engaged and Connected: Key Findings for African-American Students

ENGAGED

• African-American students were more likely to indicate that working with diverse groups of students positively affected their learning and that they learn best when working with others.

CONNECTED

• African-American students were more likely to be report spending their time outside of class on campus alone.
Nurtured and Valued: Key Findings for African-American Students

NURTURED

• African-American students were more likely to say that **having someone at the college who cared about them** was a key motivating factor in their decision to return to the college the following semester.

VALUED

• African-American students were more likely to indicate that **feeling valued was important to their success**.
What Welcoming and Readiness Looks Like...

“I went to a predominately white school and it was really hard to find my identity. But once I got here at Foothill I made many friends in the BSU [Black Student Union], I was really able to find my identity and explore myself.” - African American student

“The counselors here are super nice and understanding and helped me find my way at Foothill.” - African American student/DRC student

“Having a Black male as a role model has changed my perspective of Foothill. It has been a game changer for me.” African American student

“When Foothill released the Black Lives Matter statement, I felt like I belong here. One should be proud, head held high, and embrace every aspect of their “blackness” and know where they came from.” African American Student

“ In order to be successful, I need the colleges that I attend to realize that Americans education system was never built based on the needs of African American students. We need a different support system than other students because of our traumatic experiences. I would like to be able to meet black professionals in my field.” African American Student

"In order for me to be successful, I need to be pushed by others and surround myself with like-minded people who want success just as much as me. I highly believe that if you surround yourself with successful people you will be successful one day.” African American Student

Outlining aspects of climate and culture that supports Black student success
Climate and Culture of Equity & Inclusion

Connection
- Registration to census date

Entry
- Census date to first major test/project

Progress/Completion
- First major test/project to 75% date

Advancement
- 75% date to end of course

When colleges...
- FAir
- INCclusive
- Personalized

Through college efforts such as...
- [Strategies, activities, approaches, policies, processes]

Then students...
- Directed
- Focused
- Nurtured
- Connected
- Engaged
- Valued
**Climate and Culture of Equity & Inclusion**

**Connection**
- Registration to census date

**Entry**
- Census date to first major test/project

**Progress/Completion**
- First major test/project to 75% date

**Advancement**
- 75% date to end of course

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<th>THROUGH COLLEGE EFFORTS SUCH AS...</th>
<th>THEN STUDENTS...</th>
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<td>Demonstrate to students how taking specific courses and completing key actions and milestones will lead them to their goal. (P, INC, I)</td>
<td>Educational plans – contextualized general education courses – student-centered course scheduled</td>
<td>are more willing to take the necessary steps to reach their goal. (F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FAir, INClusive, Personalized**
- Cultural, Individual, Structural

**Directed, Focused, Nurtured, Connected, Engaged, Valued**
Breakout Activity

1. Which strategies and activities will ensure that Black students know / feel that Foothill College has been waiting for and is ready for them? How and why?
   ○ Fair, (FA), inclusive (INC), and personalized (P) at individual (I), cultural (C), and structural (S) levels

2. What outcomes do we desire for Black students at the stages of connection, entry, progress / completion, and advancement?
   ○ Students are Directed (D), Focused (F), Connected (C), Engaged (E), Valued (V), and Nurtured (N)

** 25-minutes for group activity and 20-minute report out **

Google spreadsheet:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1eZ2sC9Vq4KXoQxkvWagq05x8Q4CUTOB1jvZE5kaBFHZU/edit?usp=sharing
Breakout Rooms:

- Rooms 1 & 2: CONNECTION
- Rooms 3 & 4: ENTRY
- Rooms 5 & 6: PROGRESS/COMPLETION
- Rooms 7 & 8: ADVANCEMENT
1. What is one strategy or activity you outlined to support a culture and climate that is fair, inclusive, and personalized at the individual, cultural, and structural levels for Black students? How and why?

2. How will this strategy or activity ensure that Black students are directed, focused, connected, engaged, nurtured, and valued?

** 20-minute report out **

Google spreadsheet: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1eZ2sC9Vg4KXoQxkvWagq05x8Q4CUTB1jvZE5kaBFHZU/edit?usp=sharing
Recommended Readings

What is Student Support (Re)defined?
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5834c1702e69cfabdc9617089/t/5a834d1cf9619a6bdee14dc1/1518544397382/Student+Support+%28Re%29+defined+Project+Description++Summer+2014.pdf

(Re)designing for Student Success: Applying Lessons and Resources from Student Support (Re)defined and Completion by Design

What students say they need to succeed: Key themes from a study of student support
https://rpgroup.org/Portals/0/Documents/Archive/StudentPerspectivesResearchBriefJan2013.pdf

Student Experience Crosswalk: Where Student Support (Re)defined and Guided Pathways Meet
References


Canning, E. A., Muenks, K., Green, D. J., & Murphy, M. C. (2019). STEM faculty who believe ability is fixed have larger racial achievement gaps and inspire less student motivation in their classes. *Science advances*, 5(2), eaau4734.


Collymore, K.V. (2020, July 1) Colleges must confront structural racism: Here are steps they should now. The Chronicle of Higher Education.


References - cont.


Thank you!

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