

Equity Considerations for Guided Pathways

We are interested in how colleges connect equity efforts to their pathways work, planning, and discussions. The guiding questions in each of the four areas can help colleges consider how equity intersects with specific pathways practices. As themes, ideas, or areas for future work emerge during your discussion, please note the ways in which equity issues connect with guided pathways implementation in “Progress to Date” and “Next Steps”

MAPPING PATHWAYS TO STUDENT END GOALS

1. Are the college’s website and program pages easy to navigate and understand for students and families without prior experience with higher education?
2. How could the college ensure that access to and use of this information is equitable for students who have been historically underrepresented and/or underserved in higher education (e.g., racial/ethnic minority students, lower-income students, first-generation students, students with disabilities, indigenous students, formerly incarcerated students, veterans, undocumented students, etc.)?
3. How are financial costs, potential debt, and economic benefits of program completion (including paths to program-relevant regional employment, projected earnings, and transfer outcomes) made clear for prospective students? Do program websites clarify differences in earnings potential between related certificates and degrees and across levels of educational attainment?

HELPING STUDENTS CHOOSE AND ENTER A PROGRAM PATHWAY

4. Does the college assess whether historically underrepresented and high needs students are disproportionately enrolled in programs that lead to lower remuneration careers? Has the college considered how it can help underrepresented students raise their educational and career expectations while at the same time meeting their more immediate economic needs?
5. For critical program courses, does the college disaggregate enrollment, pass rate, and subsequent success data by student characteristics? What strategies has the college used to improve overall student success in these courses?
6. Does the college proactively partner with feeder high schools that serve predominantly underrepresented and high needs students to help students explore academic and career interests and develop viable plans for college? Are dual enrollment opportunities made available to high school students who are deemed “not yet college ready”? Is the college building bridges to high-opportunity college programs for students in adult basic skills programs?

KEEPING STUDENTS ON PATH

7. How does the institution support advisors to incorporate engaging, proactive, and culturally relevant advising practices to better support underrepresented students’ success in their programs?
8. How does the college ensure that underrepresented students are not disproportionately directed away from competitive, limited access programs?
9. How does the college integrate academic and student support services into pathways so that the support is unavoidable and therefore less stigmatized?

10. How does the college ensure that low-income students' financial stability needs (e.g., nutrition, transportation, childcare, public benefits, emergency assistance) are being met so they can make progress toward program completion?

ENSURING THAT STUDENTS ARE LEARNING

11. How is the college ensuring that underrepresented students participate in program-relevant active and experiential learning opportunities?
12. As faculty make curricular changes to better align course assignments with program learning outcomes, how does the college support faculty to implement pedagogical changes that better support learning outcomes success for underrepresented students (e.g., culturally responsive teaching)?
13. What opportunities exist for faculty or advisors to critically examine their role in advancing equity-minded teaching and advising practices at the college (e.g., critically examining the role of unconscious bias in the classroom or advising that could affect student aspirations for a particular field and/or program selection)?
14. Is the college disaggregating program learning outcomes data, program retention and completion data, and other assessment measures by race, income, age, and gender to examine equity gaps? How is this data disseminated and discussed among college staff, with students, and with the outside community?