

# WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION 2014-2020



---

## INTRODUCTION

In February 2014, a yearlong, comprehensive planning process culminated when the Walla Walla Community College (WWCC) Board of Trustees approved an updated institutional plan that provides a strategic roadmap for the next several years. The plan was then presented across the College and posted on its website.

The plan is framed by revised vision and mission statements. The vision statement states, WWCC “will be the catalyst that transforms our students’ lives and the communities we serve.” The mission statement is, WWCC “inspires all students to discover their potential and achieve their goals by providing relevant, equitable, and innovative learning opportunities and services.” Among the overarching strategies identified, “cultivate equity” emerged as a key objective that intersects with two of the College’s three core themes: Student Success and Strong Communities.

The Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion is an extension of the institutional plan, and is also one of the pillars of the College’s Achieving the Dream (ATD) initiatives. The plan identifies specific interventions whose intent is to lay the foundation of WWCC’s equity and inclusion agenda. The strategic goals and objectives provide a vehicle for the College to enhance its outcomes pertaining to student success and strengthening our internal and external communities.

Many colleges have equity plans that solely focus on student success; closing achievement gaps with the goal of increasing attainment rates. While student success is central to WWCC’s mission, the intent of this plan is to broaden that work by reaching into the internal workings of the College in ways that can positively impact student success. In other words, the College recognizes that limiting its student success work to the classroom without also simultaneously addressing the underlying culture or norms that fundamentally shape that work is inadequate. As the College embarks on this project, the statement below captures the guiding principle framing this plan:

*We are perfectly designed to achieve the results we are getting.  
If we want different results, then we must change the way we do things.*

The goals and objectives set forth in the plan target the College’s organizational culture and institutional practices, while also attending to external partnerships that are crucial to strengthening the communities it serves.

---

## WHY EQUITY AND INCLUSION?

Equity assumes difference and takes that into account to ensure a fair process and, ultimately a fair and equitable outcome. Equity recognizes that some groups are historically disadvantaged in accessing education (and economic) opportunities and subsequently underrepresented or marginalized in many organizations and institutions. That history carries forward; creating effects of exclusion that often linger systemically within organizational policies, practices, and procedures.

Equity at WWCC is the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, faculty, and staff, while simultaneously striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Inclusion at WWCC is the intentional creation of environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. In that sense, inclusion is the active and ongoing engagement with diversity and difference – in people, the curriculum, and the communities we serve – in ways that increases one’s awareness and knowledge of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions. At the College, inclusion is about focusing on the needs of every individual and ensuring the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve their full potential. By combining equity with inclusion the College seeks to ameliorate the conditions or barriers experienced by underrepresented groups.

---

## THE PROCESS

In fall 2013, the College contracted with equityworksNW to conduct an equity and inclusion assessment. That assessment combined with WWCC’s Achieving the Dream work. It was informed by focus groups with college employees, students, and community partners. WWCC’s Achieving the Dream data coach, Dr. Mark Figueroa, was hired in the summer of 2014 to facilitate the strategic equity and inclusion planning process. Dr. Figueroa built on the work of equityworksNW and also conducted focus groups with College staff, faculty, and leadership, as well as community stakeholders. The data from both processes were combined, resulting in richer, more robust data to inform the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.

The following section presents WWCC’s vision and mission statements for equity and inclusion, followed by the goals and objectives that will guide the College’s equity agenda over the next several years.

### **Vision Statement for Equity and Inclusion**

Walla Walla Community College will create an equitable and inclusive learning environment.

### **Mission Statement for Equity and Inclusion**

Transform Walla Walla Community College’s culture and practices by embedding equity and inclusion competencies that support the success of **all** students, faculty, and staff.

---

## STRATEGIC GOALS

The strategic goals that emerged from the planning process are listed below. While each goal can stand on its own, their successive, or in some cases simultaneous, implementation is designed to effectively weave equity and inclusion into the fabric of the College. As WWCC embarks on this path, it is important to realize that the equity and inclusion agenda is never “complete,” but an ongoing process that evolves in relation to the dynamic interplay between the College, the communities it serves, and the external operating environment.

### **Strategic Goal I: Establish a leadership-level position for a “Chief” Equity and Inclusion Officer**

**Objective:** Create an “Equity and Inclusion” position to direct that work of the College. The primary responsibility of that position is to provide leadership that facilitates organizational change and achieves institutional coherence pertaining to the College’s equity and inclusion work. Recognizing the strategic value of this position in creating an environment that is inclusive and equitable for all students and staff, its jurisdiction would span the institution in order to effectively facilitate organizational change.

Until that position is established, the Diversity Committee will continue to provide leadership by monitoring the implementation of the plan, and work with all stakeholders to ensure a model of continuous institutional improvement is adopted and maintained.

**Objective:** Establish student resource centers of equity and inclusion in Walla Walla and Clarkston that provide dedicated student space for historically underrepresented groups.

### **Strategic Goal II: Build equity, diversity and inclusion competencies<sup>i</sup> (Appendix A) for WWCC employees through sustained professional development and training.**

**Objective:** Institute mandatory college-wide trainings for all faculty and staff.

**Objective:** Provide faculty training that integrates equity and inclusion with pedagogy and classroom strategies aimed toward enhancing student success

**Objective:** Incorporate equity and inclusion training into individual professional development plans.

**Objective:** Identify and require equity and inclusion training in all compliance areas including non-discrimination, sexual harassment, and reasonable accommodation.

**Strategic Goal III: Increase recruitment of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups.**

**Objective:** Embed equity, diversity, and inclusion competencies into:

- Position announcements.
- Job descriptions.
- Job postings.
- Posting locations and recruitment strategies.
- Hiring criteria and the evaluation of applicants.

**Objective:** Implement mandatory training for search committee participants to reduce unconscious bias.

**Objective:** Use utilization analysis<sup>ii</sup> to drive outreach efforts.

**Strategic Goal IV: Increase the retention of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups (need to identify what it is now and set a goal).**

**Objective:** Incorporate competencies in new employee orientation and on-boarding processes.

**Objective:** Include equity and inclusion competencies in performance evaluations for exempt employees.

**Objective:** Negotiate equity and inclusion competencies into performance evaluations with union-represented employee groups.

**Strategic Goal V: Strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations and provide services to underrepresented populations in the district.**

**Objective:** Build and expand awareness of the College and its mission among community-based organizations.

**Objective:** Streamline pathways to enrollment (and completion) and increase educational attainment in the College's service district.

**Objective:** Strengthen community networks to enhance wraparound services for students.

**Objective:** Acquire and utilize resources that can contribute to building institutional equity competencies.

---

**END NOTES**

<sup>i</sup> Equity, diversity and inclusion competencies are defined in accordance with the NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. Those competencies include the "knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to create learning environments that are enriched with diverse views and people. They are also designed to create an institutional ethos that accepts and celebrates differences among people, helping to free them of any misconceptions and prejudices" (<https://www.naspa.org/about/student-affairs/equity-diversity-and-inclusion>).

<sup>ii</sup> Utilization analysis is a statistical analysis of affirmative action/equal opportunity data of employers which is used as a tool for assessing the available workforce for specified geographical regions. The purpose of this process is to ensure equal access and opportunities for all workers. Utilization analysis is used to establish goals and time tables for the selection of protected class individuals by obtaining a workforce analysis, comparing it with labor market availability data, and determining the utilization of women and racial/ethnic minorities (<http://definitions.uslegal.com/u/utilization-analysis/>).

---

## **APPENDIX A**

### **NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education**

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) competency area includes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to create learning environments that are enriched with diverse views and people. It is also designed to create an institutional ethos that accepts and celebrates differences among people, helping to free them of any misconceptions and prejudices.

#### ***BASIC***

##### **One should be able to:**

- identify the contributions of similar and diverse people within and to the institutional environment;
- integrate cultural knowledge with specific and relevant diverse issues on campus;
- assess and address one's own awareness of EDI, and articulate one's own differences and similarities with others;
- demonstrate personal skills associated with EDI by participating in activities that challenge one's beliefs;
- facilitate dialogue effectively among disparate audiences;
- interact with diverse individuals and implement programs, services, and activities that reflect an understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences;
- recognize the intersectionality of diverse identities possessed by an individual;
- recognize social systems and their influence on people of diverse backgrounds;
- articulate a foundational understanding of social justice and the role of higher education, the institution, the department, the unit, and the individual in furthering its goals;
- use appropriate technology to aid in identifying individuals with diverse backgrounds as well as assessing progress towards successful integration of these individuals into the campus environment;
- design culturally relevant and inclusive programs, services, policies, and practices;
- demonstrate fair treatment to all individuals and change aspects of the environment that do not promote fair treatment; and
- analyze the interconnectedness of societies worldwide and how these global perspectives affect institutional learning.

#### ***INTERMEDIATE***

##### **One should be able to:**

- engage in hiring and promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, proactive, and nondiscriminatory;
- integrate cultural knowledge with specific and relevant cultural issues on campus;
- develop effective multicultural training that expands the cultural knowledge of one's staff;
- identify systemic barriers to equality and inclusiveness, and then advocate for and implement means of dismantling them;
- apply advocacy skills to assist in the development of a more multiculturally sensitive institution and profession;
- supervise, challenge, and educate other professionals around issues of diversity and inclusion;

- facilitate others' learning and practice of social justice concepts;
- provide opportunities for self-reflection and self-evaluation on issues of EDI; and
- provide opportunities for diverse interactions with professionals in higher education who focus on this work.

### ***ADVANCED***

#### **One should be able to:**

- ensure institutional policies, practices, facilities, structures, systems, and technologies respect and represent people's diverse abilities, beliefs, and characteristics;
- assess the effectiveness of the institution in addressing issues associated with EDI and in overcoming any barriers that exist;
- ensure that elements of EDI are demonstrated throughout institutional mission, goals, and programs;
- create ongoing strategic plans for the continued development of diversity initiatives and inclusive practices throughout the institution and ensure that competence in these areas is fully integrated into departmental practices throughout the campus;
- provide consultation to other units, divisions, or institutions on strategies to increase support and opportunities for underrepresented groups;
- provide leadership in fostering an institutional culture that supports the free and open exchange of ideas and beliefs, and where issues of power and privilege are identified and addressed;
- demonstrate effectiveness in responding to acts of hatred or intolerance that affect the institution; and
- ensure individuals throughout the institution are treated respectfully, justly, fairly, and impartially

<https://www.naspa.org/about/student-affairs/equity-diversity-and-inclusion> November 21, 2014



**Walla Walla Community College...**

*Your Best Choice!*