

**Illinois Valley
Community College
Oglesby, Illinois**

PACE Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Qualitative Report
PACE Climate Survey for Community Colleges

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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Qualitative Analysis

Racial injustice continues to be embedded in systems and institutions across the United States and within higher education. In an effort to facilitate conversations around this topic at community colleges, we provided an opportunity for faculty, staff, and administrators to respond to two qualitative questions that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The PACE Climate Survey is intended to promote evidence-based decision making across critical issues at community colleges, including topics like this.

The questions are grounded in Bensimon’s Equity-Minded framework as depicted on the University of Southern California Center for Urban Education website (see Figure 1). Equity-mindedness is a way of approaching educational reform that foregrounds the policies and practices contributing to disparities in educational achievement and abstains from blaming students for those accumulated disparities (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015). Community college leaders need to improve practice, inform policy, and extend theory to address racial and other disparities in educational achievement that exist across the higher education ecosystem. For this reason, the two DEI-focused questions are related to the role of leadership in equity-focused work and understanding the institutional challenges that may create barriers to equity on community college campuses.



Figure 1. Bensimon’s Equity-Minded Framework

Of the 189 Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) employees who completed the PACE Climate Survey for Community Colleges (PACE Climate Survey), 99 (52.4%) provided open-ended comments for these two questions.

Please refer to Tables 1 and 2 for the qualitative responses to the two DEI open-ended questions. Please note that responses to open-ended questions are listed in alphabetical order and quoted exactly as written except in instances where the integrity of the report or and/or confidentiality are compromised. Comments are reported without demographics, and any phrasing or sentences in the open-ended responses that may reveal the identity of the survey respondent will be removed. Any additional edits for confidentiality are indicated by [].

1-Center for Urban Education | USC. (n.d.). *Equity mindedness*. Retrieved September 28, 2020, from <https://cue.usc.edu/about/equity/equity-mindedness/>

2-Dowd, Alicia C., & Bensimon, M. E. 2015. *Engaging the “race question”: Accountability and equity in U.S. Higher Education*. Teachers College Press.

Table 1. Leadership Priority Responses

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Qualitative Question 1: When thinking about your institution's work to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, what do you think should be institutional leadership's top priority in this next year? (n=92)

Table 1.

1. We do offer many programs for diversity in culture, but it does not seem evident in staffing. 2. Enhancing consistency in Payroll and adding part-time employee benefits. I have received conflicting responses regarding payroll and stipend calculation issues. Numerous part time employees have given many years of service, and it seems very limited benefits. My salary is not the issue. In my current faculty position, I have assisted with tasks, discussions, copying, conferences with other disciplines, and students, etc. My current supervisor states my extra time is not recognized, I'm told my time cannot be entered. Continuing education, as required for this position is on my own. Can we clarify this?

A sense of comradery after all the separation from COVID

Admitting we need to make changes.

All of these: diversity, equity, and inclusion should be a top priority.

All the leaders need to understand what it is & why it's important. Training should start with our administration and board, as this would illustrate the commitment and importance of it to the college. Faculty and staff should receive regular professional development opportunities.

As I mentioned in my previous statement, there is absolutely zero effort being made to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus. The leadership simply has to make DEI a priority, otherwise, students and prospective employees will not be interested in applying to this institution. The leadership can focus on such initiatives by first creating a DEI statement and then a plan that has to be implemented. I am aware of the DEI committee researching such plans, so it might be of interest to invite representative from the committee to participate in the creation of the both the statement and the plan. In today's world, to simply not have a DEI statement and/or plan is embarrassing.

Ask employees for ideas and suggestions. Ask the current student population. It is not just theirs to promote or figure this out.

Attracting more students

Table 1.

Continue to make it a priority. Think outside the box.

Continue with the programs and discussions the college has begun this past year.

Create a position solely dedicated to DEI. Include DEI initiatives in the top level of the college's strategic planning. Conduct a campus climate survey for DEI. Create a DEI strategic plan.

Creating a culture that values DEI

De-coupling the DEI position from the political science/history faculty position. We need a DEI chair that is JUST focused on diversity, equity and inclusion. For that matter, we need to change DEI to be EDI, putting EQUITY first.

Diversity

Don't know, lots of administration changes.

Drop this libtard, woke, socialist crap and focus on educational curricula leading to good paying jobs. Too many high paid employees here that spend way too much time on this garbage.

Educating faculty about bias and the appropriate way to interact with ALL students, not just those who are friendly and approachable.

Electing a new president.

Embrace Diversity

Employing more individuals with diverse backgrounds to relate with our students.

Table 1.

Engagement in the conversation, not just checking the box.

Ensure the work being done is continued.

Evaluate its current policies and make changes to better promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

Explaining what they are doing to promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

Hire the most qualified people possible. Educating individuals about diversity, equity and inclusion is very important. Forcing on people is wrong.

Hiring individuals of color

Hiring minority people to IVCC especially in administration. Treat all people respectfully.

Hiring more diversity

Hiring people of color, no question then educating the board and administration about why DEI is important. They still think they can let other people 'do it,' and fail to understand even why it's important (or should be) to them--practically. I would like to think they understand the ethics of it, as well, but I am not convinced of that--especially given the fight staff had to get legal bathroom signs for people of all gender identities.

I believe alot of our conversations focus on bringing in diverse employees. However, I don't always believe this is a community where a candidate with diverse qualifications may seem themselves. I believe our focus should be on what diversity lies within our student body and how we foster that.

I don't care about this topic. It's been far too sensationalized in society, making it grow into a monster that is no longer helping the people it's supposed to be helping.

Table 1.

I don't know.

I feel plenty included. While it would be nice to have more diversity, I think it's as diverse as it can be given the area of the school and the demographics of the students.

I feel that the college as a whole has been trying to learn more about these topics. In that regard, I think we need to continue with educating our employees about diversity, equity and inclusion. In addition, I feel it is important to ask our stakeholders (students, community, etc.) what we can do to improve the above topics.

I feel this institution does an excellent job.

I have confidence the College will continue to work on this issue despite falling short at times. Because of IVCC's rural location increasing diversity can be a problem when looking to expand the recruitment pool.

I hope the college will continue to lead by example and monitor policies that may make student development uneven.

I think inclusion should be.

I think IVCC is quite inclusive.

I think our institution should continue to hire the most qualified candidates regardless of race, ethnicity, age, religion, etc.

I think the institution has made great strides with professional development, our OER initiatives, and other programs to help students with different needs. However, I feel there is a gap in employing or at least trying to recruit job applications from people of different color and gender. As an institution in a rural area, I understand the difficulty, but our student body is more diverse than our employee body.

I think they go a bit overboard when it comes to diversity.

Table 1.

I think they should start by revisiting the stated core values and actually follow them.

I think we are above average in this category, well done.

Inclusion

IVCC is as diverse as the area is. Our Hispanic population is large, the second largest group of people in the community, and many Hispanic students are very successful. At least in the chemistry lab. I don't need anymore "doctoring" about inclusion, equity, and diversity. So knock it off. Our students throughout the campus have the opportunity to excel, at least as the physical sciences are concerned, my area of expertise.

Leadership needs to keep the all groups identified involved and valued. Encourage and empower everyone on campus.

Making it local, start with issues here. Think of future issues for the population here, in this area, not at Oakton.

Making sure that while transitioning from general educational goals to institutional learning outcomes we never lose sight of the value of diversity, cultural awareness and social consciousness. Our new academic vice president has demonstrated leadership in this area in the past and he will be happy to do so for IVCC going forward.

No comment

no opinion

None.

Not applicaple

Table 1.

Not to put these in faculty development days

Nothing

Nothing.

Organizing community events and utilizing the cultural center would be nice to see.

Our Hispanic enrollment seems to be increasing so I believe we should attempt to seek out more qualified Hispanic instructors.

Pay employees more so quality employees will stay for more than a month or two.

pay raises

promote more women in STEM classes along with minorities

Promoting diversity in the top positions at the school and also among faculty

Provide actionable projects for staff/faculty to work on with students to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Provide child care options to support students, faculty and staff. Use more authentic marketing material that represents larger diversity within the campus.

Put in place a serious DEI plan that shows a real commitment to Equity in hiring, campus climate, and programs. Students of color are being left behind and our staff diversity gets worse each year.

Table 1.

Reaching out to prospective students at local high schools and elsewhere to determine their needs and their perceptions of the college.

Recognizing their own biases and working to improve.

Recruiting more diverse employees and students.

Remove the barriers - financial - cultural with first generation students not deeming an education as vital to growth - provide opportunities for diverse/cultural enrichment in the arts - awareness in the media promoting

Staff to inform future students of specific requirements for idphIDPH class.

Stop making the top administration all white males. Hire a recruiter.

Student, faculty, staff recruitment

Support and celebrate the diversity we already represent - regional, Hispanic students and leaders, etc.

The administration should institute a program of DEI in which the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion are driven by students of all racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, rather than the militant variety of CRT/DEI currently being purveyed by the IVCC faculty and administration.

The only focus should be quality instruction to EVERYONE. One group, race or color should never be the focus. DEI is a racist ideology.

The top priority for DEI should be diversifying our administrative leadership and faculty, as well as providing continuing education on DEI in the classroom. To say we care about diversity while all admins and BOT members are white (and mostly male) seems a contradiction in terms.

Table 1.

The top priority should be to figure out a better way to compensate employees to keep the employees here. If you do not have good employees you will not be able to accomplish promoting diversity, equity and inclusion. Also, head administration should be more diverse, and it is in fact not diverse at all.

There seems to be a lot of talk about it but I am not sure what has actually been instituted to move in the right direction. Leadership needs to communicate what we are doing to help this.

Thinking outside the box both in what constitutes DEI and how to address it.

To actively recruit minority students and to actually hire minor faculty, staff, and administrators.

To limit gossip.

Top priority for diversity should be for obese individuals. The desks and chairs are too small for some. The sizes carried in the bookstore do not reflect the sizes of many at IVCC

Try to get students to attend with diverse backgrounds.

Understanding what diversity, equity, and inclusion really means.

Vaccine bias

We have a solid team in place for promoting diversity.

We have begun to take steps in the right direction. We have a long way to go but it is nice to see DEI moves us forward.

We just filled three of three available administrative positions with white middle class men. No one seems interested in the concept of diversity.

Table 1.

We need to hire a more diverse faculty and work to retain minority students at higher rates.

Working more closely with students to determine how we can create impactful programs they want to attend.

Working with the DEI team to create a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan for the entire college.

Table 2. Institutional Barriers Responses

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Qualitative Question 2: What are the barriers to improving issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion at your institution? (**n=93**)

Table 2.

A clear understanding of DEI beyond the typical and obvious.

A lack of a DEI officer or someone who truly understands the challenges and knows how best to address issues of DEI

A lack of interest in seeking input from prospective students, current students, faculty, staff, and lower level administrators and involving those groups in planning.

Administration and red tape.

administrations mindset

Alienation of individuals that do not have the exact box to check. Treat individuals as individuals and diversity, equity and inclusion will follow. Focusing on one group or another does not promote equity.

Awareness that biases exist. Explore process of hiring pool.

Barriers to improving the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion stem from inherent racism in this area of the state. Lack of collaborative planning, curriculum review, professional development opportunities (I could go on...) all contribute to the problems.

Biggest barrier is thinking in the box.

Closed minds

Close-minded people.

Current lack of diversity

Table 2.

Defund this socialist crap!

DEI at IVCC is not student centered. It is nothing more than hard-Left literature and racism training, used to berate and publicly demean faculty members who treat all IVCC students with the same level of respect and professional ethics, without regard for the student's intersectional status. And, to appease the Left-wing members of the IVCC faculty. In order to improve the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion at IVCC, a large group of diverse students need to be involved in the discussion which is taking place about them. Many, if not most of the IVCC student population would disagree with the conclusions made about them and policies imposed upon them by the IVCC faculty and administration.

District is roughly 90 percent white and pay isn't strong enough to lure individuals from the outside

Do not appear to actively promote or seek to diversify faculty, staff and student populations.

Don't know, wish I did

Everyone has their own singular perception of diversity, equity, and inclusion. They view it as how it affect them personally.

Faculty are allowed to force their leftist and other "political" views on staff and faculty. Anyone expressing a view in any other direction is not taken seriously, outrightly condemned, considered ignorant or worse yet - considered to be a racist.

Faculty that are too set in their ways.

financial and mental issues.

hyper sensitive faculty members

I am not aware of any barriers to diversity at IVCC.

Table 2.

I am unaware of any barriers.

I can't list all the barriers, but one major barrier is the lack of diversity in the leadership lends itself to a lack of understanding others, whoever those others might be. Because it is an institution, it is difficult to change beliefs, values, processes and procedures.

I don't see any.

I don't think there are any.

I personally believe that there is an aggressive approach being taken by some people to force these issues. This makes people defensive.

I see that as being a problem. we are a small rural area and I believe the college has a good amount of diversity.

I think the barriers are the lack of students with diverse backgrounds.

I think they are doing a good job.

If there isn't a diverse pool of applicants, that could be a barrier. If there is prejudice among the hiring team, that could be a barrier.

It's not a shiny toy administrators can point to, so its not clear how committed they are to its value.

IVCC is located in a rural community which makes it difficult to attract a diverse and talented workforce so I can't fault the administration for falling short at times. At least they keep trying.

Jerry Corcoran

Table 2.

Lack of administrative leadership in this area

Lack of full awareness and appreciation of the issues at some levels.

Lack of money spent recruiting.

Lack of topdown support needed to change the culture

Leadership doesn't think it's a problem or a priority.

Leadership, administration and DEI leadership -- specifically the ability communication with one another. This impedes all DEI initiatives, from planning to actually serving students.

Local community is predominantly white

Lots of talk and no action.

My barrier could just be my supervisor for my first position!

No comment

no opinion

none

None.

None.

Table 2.

Not applicable

Not aware of any.

not sure!

Not sure. Our area limits us, I feel, because we are predominantly white and therefore we don't meet the criteria for grant assistance, in order to help this population. Without additional funding assistance, we are limited on what we can do and who we can help

Nothing

nothing

Number of students enrolled.

Other than our rural location may be a factor in recruiting much diversity amongst candidates for teaching, administrative and staff positions, our employee demographics closely match the demographics of our students. Noel Levitz and CCSSE surveys are helpful in knowing more about student perceptions in this regard so we need to move on themes when recognized. We should probably highlight this area more in the way of campus/community updates going forward and the fact that our Student Services vice president is co-leading the DEI committee speaks volumes about our commitment to the cause.

Our culture

Our location is a barrier, but it might be helpful to look into more ways in advertising our job openings to more diverse areas.

overall diversity is low in the region

Table 2.

past history of disengagement

Region. It's a local community college in middle America. I'm sure that if there were more diverse folk in the area that they would be just as included as everyone else. I have faith that IVCC would be accepting of anyone who walked through their doors

Same as above.

Seems like there's too many discussions and not enough action to promote these areas.

Shoving DEI down our throats without listening to other's opinions.

Some in leadership positions are not themselves knowledgeable on the topics.

Some of the general public is wanting control over what is taught in the college to discourage diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Some students have language barrier.

The "old boy's network" is alive and well at IVCC, with institutionalized sexism and racism being serious problems.

The "upper" management is not with the times, very tunnel in their thinking.

The administration's lack of understanding of all the issues affected by DEI practices (or the lack of them) and how those issues influence campus culture and students' experience of the college.

The area is not that diverse.

Table 2.

The area that we live in (low diversity, conservative politicians, etc), money, and time to educate about the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The arrogant attitudes of some of the faculty who are pushing this.

The Board and president.

The chair of the DEI committee is a huge barrier. Not the VP co-chair, to be specific. DEI needs to be student-centered first so that we can then strategically plan how to implement student needs at the college level.

The college lacks a welcoming atmosphere.

the communities the college serve are what they are - not diverse and inclusive of those in their familial environment/neighborhood

The demographics of our district are mostly homogeneous

The fact that there are fewer and fewer full time positions each year. It's hard to get anyone to care about IVCC when they are part-time or adjunct.

The idea that we are a diverse institution

The lack of communication and care for the true concerns.

The leadership itself is the barrier as there has been no interest in engaging with DEI plan at this school. If the leadership continue to hire only white, cisgender men, they are signaling that they simply do not care about improving the current climate at this institution.

The location of our institution and the location in which we post our position openings.

Table 2.

The most significant barrier I personally have experienced is the lack of transparency and communication from administration. It has been typical to not receive any response whatsoever to emails, phone calls, etc. regarding important department issues. This creates an uncomfortable atmosphere of frustration and isolation which makes for a poor working environment.

The only barriers are the attitudes and beliefs of the past. We must persevere and improve our awareness and policies that will level the opportunities to learn and grow.

The Ottawa Center in my opinion is not seen as part of the main campus. In my opinion, we are a separate entity and not included as we should be. Again this is my opinion!

The steamrolling approach some of the DEI committee members are taking. People need to be brought along in expanding their thoughts and values, not bullied into believing one mindset.

The students need a huge depth of hand holding and taking care of after all the isolation of COVID- much more than ever realized

This area in general is not very diverse.

Upper Admin

Vaccine mandate

We are already overextended with the issues we face.