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PACE CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY

An initiative of the Belk Center at NC State

706 Hillsborough Street | Raleigh, NC 27603

Barton County Community College

Great Bend, Kansas

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 244 Barton County Community College (BCCC) employees who completed the PACE Climate Survey for Community Colleges (PACE Climate Survey), 79 (32.4%) 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*. <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=77)

Table 1.

All important information, including promotional materials, should be provided to the community in English and Spanish

At this point, in the current political climate, simply maintaining what we are doing and not getting rid of or curtailing our DEI efforts would be great.

Barton does just fine when it comes to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Communication downwards

Communication is a big part of knowing how to get to the second step.

Consider going beyond race and nationality. For example, extrovert vs introvert; judging vs feeling; sensing vs intuitive, etc... This helps people understand specifically how people are different on the inside vs the surface.

Continue to build strong communication and inclusion campus wide.

continue work on it

Table 1.

Creating a better awareness of cultural norms to faculty and staff.

Due to recent federal decisions, diversity, equity, and inclusion has lost focus for fear of funding loss. Training offered in these areas is no longer allowed. For faculty with diverse classrooms, this is a letdown.

Fairness and equality for all.

For the short time I have been at Barton I feel like there are many opportunities for students to be involved with as many activities as they would like. I also feel like Barton is great at giving students of any age or background the opportunity to get a College degree.

Get rid of DEI. It's stupid.

Hire individuals that are qualified for the job!

Hire those who are qualified.

Hiring diverse professionals within administrative, full time faculty, and leadership roles

I am not sure. The institution seems committed to diversity, etc.

Table 1.

I believe most of this will be reflected in the existing initiatives across the college and can be linked back to the ongoing development of the strategic plan.

I believe that a priority should be including all in the office on what is going on and what tasks we have that need to be completed. It should be talked about among all staff on what events and programs we have coming up and what our expectations are on them.

I believe this college tries to continue to focus on the students and what they need and that is what we need to do continue to do.

I cannot think of a top priority especially with DEI considering the major changes nationwide within that area. I would consider supportive programming, orientation etc for international or non native speakers with an intention to actively recruit non-athlete international and non-native speakers.

I do not have enough involvement or information to effectively answer this question.

I do not.

I dont know

I don't think there is a problem here.

I feel the college is pretty good in these areas.

Table 1.

I have no thoughts on this.

I see a very diverse group of students on campus so to me, it means that they are effective in their approach

I think a person's sexual orientation/preference should be their own business. I don't know why there has to be so much attention placed on someone's preference or identity. I don't believe in all the extra pronouns, so shouldn't be forced to conform. I call it how I see it, if they have a different belief, I will respect that, but shouldn't be forced to believe as well.

I think our institution does well with all of these.

I think that it would be helpful for the college to employ a more diverse group of employees. More bilingual employees would also be helpful. I am not familiar with the clubs on campus, but perhaps more clubs that are geared toward hobbies and interests, rather than religion, gender, sexuality, etc. would be helpful for those that do not wish to be singled out by their religion, race, sexuality, etc.

I think the college is heading in a great direction. Keep doing what has been done.

I think the institution is doing good work

I think they are doing a good job now.

I think they do a lot considering that we are in rural midwest.

Table 1.

I think they do a nice job in this area.

I think we are already doing plenty in the area of diversity already.

We promote diversity and have quite diverse of student population on campus. I am not aware of many problems where students have run into problems. In most cases if they do, it is their own fault. We have many counseling services available and make students and staff aware of those.

Inclusion.

Increasing activities budget

It would be very nice to have some trainings in expectations for international students, student athletes, and first generation students. By doing this, we can support those students even more.

Just continuing to send out information and invites to staff and student happenings!

Keep recruiting students from all backgrounds

Last year's mandatory online training was horrible. It advocated radical principles that could open Barton to potential lawsuits from preventing First Amendment protections on campus and online classes. Find a new program that focuses on dignity and respect instead of pushing progressive agendas.

Table 1.

Lets have a clear policy that states that we do not discriminate against anyone. In fact, everyone is welcome at Barton. We value diverse voices, including viewpoint diversity.

Let's not focus so much on what type of people we include in our institution but let's focus on the quality of the people we surround ourselves with and the "flavor" they might add to our mix.

Making sure that even if they are succeeding in this endeavor according to the numbers that the community also feels they are succeeding.

More diverse raced instructors.

More full time online hires with benefits

N/A

N/A

N/A

Na

Table 1.

No opinion

no real opinion

None

Nothing, there is sufficient diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Other than the recruitment from the Great Bend, I do not know how the college can bring in a more diverse population.

Our community has a high Hispanic population. I hope we see more faculty from that ethnic group. I think it would be good for the local students and the local economy.

Our institution does not work towards this, and actively looks for ways to remove it from our existing processes, mostly due to legislative pressure. We should be promoting a sense of community and making sure that folks know they are welcome to join with us to improve Barton.

Persons that put themselves in special groups are fooling themselves into thinking that they are special, and society must treat the differently than everyone else, rather than normal or the same for all. Diversity, equity and inclusion cannot compete on the same standard as others. They do not want to be judge by what they can do, rather want to be judge by how different they are than others. They want to have an excuse because they don't want to work harder than others to be the person that is the best rather than at the back of the pack. They are living in a "make believe word full or unicorns and rainbows". It's time they work up and smelled the coffee.

Table 1.

Prioritize a broader range of issues that are relevant, rather than concentrating solely on DEI-related matters.

Promoting acceptance and increasing an over all feeling of love and belonging for the students.

retention

Stop focusing on it, because it is a non-issue

Stop trying to remake the past and embrace the future. Expand recruitment of employees and students from outside traditional avenues and develop mechanisms to support and retain diversification.

Supporting faculty

The college already does a great job addressing diversity, equity and inclusion.

The institution needs to spend less time focusing on the academic language used to promote DEI and more time actually showing how we encourage it.

The leadership's top priority should be bringing in more diversity in staff and student population.

Table 1.

They do a great job with this; I am not sure this is the highest priority.

They make it possible and help explain everything that way we are all included.

This is a tough question due to state statutes. I don't think I have a valid answer.

To try and decrease the rhetoric that happens on campus due to the elevated climate and tensions in the political area. Need to make sure everyone feels welcome on our campus. We do well with this in regards to international students attending campus.

unsure

Verbal student disrespect seems targeted more to women than men. Additionally, some students struggle to adapt to having teammates, friends, romantic partners, and roommates from other cultures, walks of life, and social/political perspectives.

White Christian males.

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=70**)

Table 2.

Being open

Comfort in doing what is an employees social norms and assuming those norms relate to all cultures.

Demographics of the area. Very hard to try diverse faculty to a community like Great Bend

Don't know.

don't see any barriers, everyone is treated the same

Focus less on DEI issues, these are not an issue. IF they are, then address it on a case by case basis.

Forcing students to interact rarely ends well. The ones most resistant to learning about/reconciling differences with other cultures tend to be the ones who could benefit the most. Disrespect is a difficult obstacle to tackle, as direct challenges seem to only more deeply entrench negative views towards the individual or culture.

Hire those who are qualified.

Table 2.

I am not aware of any barriers. If there are any it may be related to language and speech differences. We have a lot of options in terms of distance and live learning. We try to make students aware if they need special accommodations.

I am not familiar with the barriers. I think that the college does the best it can, however, the pool of possible applicants in this area is not nearly as diverse as those students that come from all over the world to attend Barton.

I am not sure.

I am not sure.

I do not have enough involvement or information to effectively answer this question.

I do not recognize any barriers

I do not see any barriers.

I don't know

I don't believe there are any barriers.

Table 2.

I don't want to improve issues of DEI. I want to get rid of all that crap (and so do a lot of people but they're scared to talk about it).

I don't want to say there aren't any barriers of that sort but I believe our institution does a great job of including all departments and students in letting us all know of events and gatherings for those opportunities of inclusion.

I feel communication is not always there.

I feel the college does a great job with inclusion - however, there should be a limit to what to accept.

I have no knowledge of barriers regarding diversity, equity and inclusion here.

I think are institution is doing fine for now

I think the climate that goes along with a rural and concervative community creates. There isn't a lot of room for change without making someone upset.

I think this comes to the lack of confidence in each team member and at times we feel only a few need to be included on what happening.

I would say the language barrier with students can be difficult when trying to assess their work.

Table 2.

I'm unaware of any issues

I'm not familiar with the people who would handle issues such as this, but having someone who can related through experience, dealing with solutions to these issues makes sense to me.

I'm not sure about barriers but it's probably because white leadership and faculty has always been at Barton. What has been in the past usually continues to be.

I'm really not sure.

Legislative pressure against DEI initiatives and our unwillingness to do what is right, even in the face of that pressure.

Local community outside of the institution.

Location and nationwide changes in DEI.

low funds

Mindsets

Table 2.

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A

n/a

Na

NA

No barriers seen.

None

None

Table 2.

None.

None.

None. Hire people that are qualified to do the job!

our rural location makes recruitment difficult. There is a limited supply of individuals with masters degrees that live within commuting distance of the great bend campus.

Partly where we are located. Partly just needing to find better ways to engage diverse communities.

Senior leadership stifles it at every opportunity. You have to be a favorite to get promoted or even keep your job. Never disagree or even try to offer a different view for how to move forward. You have to dress, look, act, and think like them or they work to drive you out through policies, management, and pressure. Fix the toxicity of that environment and watch diversity, inclusion, and equity grow. Allow senior leadership to micromanage, oppress, and play favorites and continue to kill it.

Small area and not many diverse races in the area that have the degrees needed.

Small town America in the Midwest is not always the most diverse or accepting environment.

stereotypes

Table 2.

The barriers exist because not everyone at Barton is on board with improving DEI, or some simply don't understand its importance.

The barriers would be finding additional population.

The institution does not need to diversity, equity, inclusion. It needs to judge people based on their abilities and the contributions they make to the society, the students and school.

The lack of diversity here would cause someone to consider other places for employment if that was an important issue for them. Not sure how the college can overcome that.

The location of the college is probably the biggest barrier to improving issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The percentage of the population that are people of color is small.

The political climate at this time.

The state of Kansas.

There are no specific recruitment activities or programs that seek to find ethnically diverse professionals

There isnt. Everyone helps out the best way they can.

Table 2.

These needs to be discussed. Especially at the faculty level. We have students from countless countries.

This shouldn't be a worry. We are here to work/learn. Sexual preference and identities should not be a focus. Live and let live.

unsure

We are a rule school diversity is always a challenge but we bring in people from all over the world to go to school year. This college has been the most diverse experience of my live other than traveling.

We are in central / western Kansas. The culture in this area is not diverse and I believe this can create a barrier.

We can always learn and grow