



NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR LEADERSHIP
& INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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

Lead Researchers

Emily R. VanZoest &
Greyson A. B. Norcross

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Research Team

Audrey J. Jaeger, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Andrea L. DeSantis
Assistant Director of Research

Greyson A. B. Norcross
Research Associate

Daniel R. West
Research Associate

Emily R. VanZoest
Research Associate

Additional Report Editors

Renee Barger
Research Associate

Monique Colclough, Ph.D.
Senior Research Associate

Melissa Whatley, Ph.D.
Senior Research Associate

Phone
(919)515-8567

Web
nilie.ncsu.edu

North Carolina State University
706 Hillsborough Street
Raleigh, NC 27603

Fax
(919)515-6305

Email
pace_survey@ncsu.edu

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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Qualitative Analysis

Racial injustice continues to be embedded in systems across the United States and 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 portrayed on the University of Southern California Center for Urban Education website (see Figure 1).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).² Community college leaders need to improve practice, inform policy, and extend theory to address 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 248 Barton County Community College (BCCC) employees who completed the PACE Climate Survey for Community Colleges (PACE), 101 (40.7%) provided open-ended comments for these two questions.

Please refer to Tables 1 and 2 for the set of qualitative data to the two DEI open-ended questions. Please note that responses to open-ended responses 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 Equity Mindedness | Center for Urban Education | USC. (n.d.). Retrieved September 28, 2020, from <https://cue.usc.edu/about/equity/equity-mindedness/>

² Dowd, Alicia C., and Estela Mara Bensimon. 2015. *Engaging the “Race Question”*: Accountability and Equity in U.S. Higher Education. New York: Teachers College Press.

Table 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?

A larger number of minority instructors, coaches, and staff.

Again, we are a primary “white” institution and our area of employment is primarily white. It’s difficult for this institution to be diverse.

All good.

assist and promote minorities

Attracting staff of diverse backgrounds is tricky in middle America. There’s really nothing they can do except to offer more money. But obviously, they cannot offer more money only to candidates with diverse ethnicity.

Barton is doing a great job creating a more diverse workforce.

Barton should partner with HBUs to create better understanding of how to attract and retain diverse faculty and staff. Funding and directed personnel efforts must be made to improve.

Be fair across the board.

Continue posting job opportunities nation wide

Continue to promote based on quality of person and not based on any other superficial characteristics.

Declare an official language to use on campus for everyone. One that no one is likely to be fluent in. Then, everyone would be clumsy in trying to communicate making all at ease with the challenge faced by everyone.

Diverse faculty

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are just ways to promote liberal/progressive/socialist/communist propaganda.

Education and training on systematic racism and efforts to curb stereotypes and non factual assumptions about non-white populations.

Employee qualified people and stop worrying about race.

entice new diversity in administration

Expand job listings to sites with diverse applications.

Expanding the diversity among faculty and staff.

Hire black and brown people in all roles, but especially decision-making and instructional roles. This institution is VERY homogeneous, which is harmful to black and brown students.

Hire more minorities and those with diverse backgrounds among the instructors and staff. We need more diverse backgrounds among the higher level at Barton and BOT.

Hiring more diverse faculty and staff

I am not familiar enough with what is being done now.

Table 1. Continued

I am not sure. Current policy seems effective.

I believe Barton has addressed this topic well and I'm not sure how they would improve from what has already been discussed.

I believe that a lot of things start [f]rom the top and leading by example. Whether that be hiring diverse instructors, or advisors, or staff in general. Many people happen to be the first in their family to go to college, and they made that decision because they might have seen someone that they could relate to made it. If that is shown through out the college it would definitely improve diversity and even grade levels all around.

I believe that Barton is proactive in the recruitment of a diverse administration and faculty. Compared to other institutions, however, we may appear to be less diverse. The pool of local, credentialed individuals is for the most part not diverse. Recruitment of diverse individuals is attempted, but we cannot force them to move to the "middle of nowhere."

I believe the best place to start is reorganizing the DEI team using an assigned team that will work with strengths and knowledge. I believe this team needs to have the opportunity to professional development about diversity in higher education and then provide speakers, trainings, and celebrate diversity with all college students employees across campuses.

I don't have any ideas on this-

I feel like everyone does a great job in these areas. I'm so glad that the College decided to keep up the Zoom and other ways to attend class because I feel that works for all the above mentioned. Some people can't come to classes because of many reasons, maybe they don't have transportation and can't afford it but want to attend classes, having the other forms available to students can fix that problem for them so they too can succeed. Top priority should be their students and ways to get more students and keep them.

I feel like there should be more diversity among staff.

I haven't been around long enough to know.

I honestly don't know. I'd like to suggest that we hire more teachers who could add some diversity, but I'm working overtime to feed my family and almost lost my job because of budget cuts. I don't have enough classes to pay the bills and the school doesn't have enough classes to pay its teachers.

I honestly have no idea at this time

I just hope they don't let the drive to promote diversity, equity and inclusion overshadow the need to provide a quality education to our students. I feel that all of these things are important to maintain but it's our job to provide an education over all other things.

I think inclusion should be a top priority.

I think Leadership is doing well here.

I think the administration is well aware that promoting diversity, equity and inclusion should be at the forefront of their minds.

Table 1. Continued

I think there could be much more diversity on the faculty, including race, religion. and cultural background.

I think there is diversity in the courses I am associated with.

I think they are doing an awesome job and I hope they keep it up.

I would like to see more community recruitment for all campuses. I know things are difficult in some areas right now because of COVID19, but I think an overall recruiting strategy would be helpful.

ignore race and gender; hire the best candidate not the one that fits the quota

Implement practices and programs that are integral to BCC. Do not implement anything due to jumping a political correct bandwagon as this does not help anyone.

Include students in the committee. See what they need and how they feel. Include more diverse individuals on the committee itself. See what other institutions are doing and what they are focusing on to increase awareness about this issue.

Incorporating diversity in lesson plans for students and offering events for faculty/staff/students/community with diverse roots/backgrounds

increasing expectations for all students

Involving students in planning.

Just do what's best for students. Stop trying to appease the public image of our diversity and serve our students, as best we can, with what we have.

Keep on the path we are on

Looking for ways to facilitate guided conversations over equity and respect for others who are different than ourselves.

Maintaining campus

Make meeting more available to those who don't work on campus hours. Make recordings of the meeting available for those who couldn't make it.

Make sure student athletes who are recruited from other countries have the means for finishing their education at Barton and that they have housing and food.

Making sure the student gets the best education they can

n/a

N/A

NA

NA

na

NA

Table 1. Continued

no changes

no clue

no ideas

No response

No. I do not see a problem, but I work in a very small circle.

Not Applicable

not dying from Covid

Not one topic should supersede another. Equal is equal.

not sure

not sure

Nothing - we are good

Offer one or two F2F classes in the evening, to help out people who work during the day. This would make education a more practical opportunity for people in low-income/single parent categories

Plenty of diversity here.

Putting a more diverse population into leadership roles.

Safety

Stay on course. Barton does a great job of promoting and practicing diversity, equity, etc

Stop calling it Christmas and Easter Break.

Stop congratulating itself. Start having a serious administrative presence.

Student success. Educating faculty on how to assist ESL students succeed when translation is a barrier.

The same expectation within the institution, not just for students.

There is a lot of diversity among the students here. Barton needs to improve on more diversity with their employees.

This is a good questions, but I honestly do not know. I've thought a lot over the years about this, but no answer comes to me.

To continue to support the Diversity and Inclusion team in their efforts.

To provide equal access to education with considerations to online and remote learning due to covid-19

Treat people as individuals and fairly.

We have a diverse student population and a reasonably diverse faculty for rural Kansas. I would work to maintain or increase this level of diversity.

Table 1. Continued

We have no female head coaches at our institution.

We need a well defined DEI committee with goals. One that is active and engaged in working with students and employees.

Whenever I am in meetings I do not see too ma[n]y people of color, I think to improve diversity we can hire a few more people of color.

With the current pandemic we need to be aware of how our new/temporary policies will affect people of all backgrounds and situations.

With the pandemic it is really hard to say. I believe that our priority should be promoting online learning and having student adjust to that. Our lives will never be the same again with this pandemic taking over the world.

Table 2. What are the barriers to improving issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion at your institution?

Administration's utter lack of sensitivity to others who don't fit their preconceived notions of the perfect employee.

At the location where I teach, most of the students are military dependents, so the diversity of the student population is determined by the families that move into the area.

Central Kansas demographic.

Central Kansas does not have a lot of diversity because of the area. Our student population is very diverse.

COVID-19

desire to be PC. We'll stop seeing race when we start seeing people.

Diversity of applicants

Equity is a big issue within the institution. I think more polling and discussions need to be had to identify the problem. The barrier is the contentment of specific areas or people. Specific areas are deemed more important or valued causing people to not interact or participate.

Focused attention - we rely on the excuse of lack of applicants and lack of interest in small town/rural life. We aren't putting in the hard work up front. We could also benefit from recruiting from our student population - begin making connections for future employees. And finally, we should really get students involved in the conversations around this topic. Has anyone asked them about their perspectives?

From population standpoint, this area has very little diversity. There is a large Hispanic population, but other than that, it is mostly white so diversity is a little harder to come by in terms of employees just based on who lives in this area.

Geographic location

Geographic Location and diversity within that area is low.

Given the diverse student population of Barton, possibly offering free computer literacy workshops or classes that assist non-traditional and foreign students in the use of modern computer technology.

Great Bend is a smaller community compared to most cities in the U.S. The biggest challenge is not a lot of people want to live in a smaller community. Additionally, there are not a lot of job opportunities for the area. Barton offers a variety of programs, but if a student does not want to move they are going to have a hard time finding work in this area.

Table 2. Continued

Having our main campus located in a rural area, it is challenging to draw diverse candidates for some of our lower-level positions because typically these candidates are drawn from the surrounding area, which doesn't include a lot of diversity.

Hiring people who grew up in diverse areas. Maybe a good portion of the "higher ups" have not grown up around diversity, equity and inclusion because they are either an only child or the youngest child in their family as well as growing up in an all white community. It doesn't make them bad people, but it also shows they did not have to treat others equally or show inclusion because it was only them. It makes a difference on how people were raised as well as their birth order.

I am not so sure about the specific barriers preventing an expansion of diversity. Budget? Applicant Pool? Willingness/Openness?

I do not know of any. I do not consider our program large enough to have an issue. We also have very low turnover to demonstrate that we have issues.

I do not know.

I don't believe there are any specifically barriers. I do believe that our staff should try to target at need individuals (general minorities) and inform them about educational opportunities specific to Barton.

I don't know of any.

I feel the barriers would be non communication with others in these issues. Everyone should be involved and get opinions and discuss what is best for others.

I honestly have no idea at this time

I would guess we don't get a lot of diversity in job applications for this part of the country.

Ignorance/apathy on the part of instructors, administration and staff.

I'm not sure how many POC apply for positions, but they are not well-represented in the faculty and staff.

I'm not sure what the barriers are. It is possible that the only qualified persons applying happen to be white. Barton County is a predominantly white area. It could be that some supervisors are silently prejudiced. I just don't know why there isn't more diversity in the staff.

In general, it is such a hard topic to approach. There needs to be communication with all the right people.

Including celebrations of different holidays. Not necessarily days off but even an email about it, facebook posts even.

Investigations. Comments being made after the recording stops.

It is not seen much in this department and refreshers are needed.

It's hard to improve on issues when we're a predominantly Caucasian population due to our geographic area. But the Main Campus seems to have a good handle on that situation and the steps needed to maintain status quo at a minimum.

Table 2. Continued

its not a focus of anyone or ant department at the college.

Lack of diversity in faculty.

lack of diversity in this county

Lack of diversity within the community itself.

lack of opportunities in the community, religion, foods, etc..

Lack of willingness, conservative/white administration

Local service area has a homogenous population

Location

Location

Middle America. Small town. Regional lack of cultural and ethnic diversity.

More communication with students addressing their needs.

N/A

n/a

N/A

NA

NA

NA

na

NA

NA

NA

no changes

no clue

no idea

No opinion or thoughts on this

No response

None

none

none

None

None that I know of.

Table 2. Continued

None that I see

Not Applicable

not sure

Nothing - we are good

One of the barriers is feeling like your objective is not within reach, for many reasons. Maybe it is because you never had a real life example of someone who accomplished their goals, or maybe because you think only people that have money can be successful, so you just have to settle. I believe having financial literacy is a great skill for anyone to have. Once people realize that money is not an enemy, instead it is a tool, people can get very far and accomplish many things.

Online students are included and welcome but may need some personal encouragement or assistance with costs or alternative assignments.

only barrier I can see is questions like these that keep pressing the race issue.

our area of employment is primarily white

Our area. It's challenging to bring diverse groups of students to campus outside of athletics.

People who make excuses for racist and bigoted comments (they come from a place where that's normal, that's just how their generation was raised, they don't know any better)

Perhaps the biggest area is our geographical location.

Perhaps, not knowing how to start???

population is not diverse

Possibly hiring advertisements. The majority of our faculty/staff come from around the area or from people already familiar with Barton. This may be part of why our campus is less diverse.

Provincial thinking in an agricultural, oil and gas economy dominated by Republican politicians.

Responsibility for standing up and out.

Rural area Many don't see the existing inequalities Fear of offending certain groups

rural kansas has less diversity within the communities.

see above statement

Shut up about all the diversity crap.

Small sample size. It is difficult to have diversity when you don't have enough numbers to declare "diversity".

Sometimes the attitude of the communities we server

Table 2. Continued

The diversity of our institution is in our student body, not in our faculty and staff. This is situational based on location, likely, but because of this, it makes it hard for anyone to speak openly or correctly about issues and what we need to be doing to foster a better environment for our diverse student body. The committee is fairly monochromatic in its make-up.

The largest barrier I see to improvement is Barton's location in rural Kansas.

The president's feigned interest.

The proper leaders willing to complete the processes and progress of the "issues" at our institution.

There are none that I can identify at this time.

there is not a very diverse ethnic-religious population to draw true diversity from

This can't be a politically led conversation. Start at the base of understanding our own personal privilege and biases and work to provide opportunities to see/experience live with a different set of circumstances. I appreciate that we don't have a politically charged campus and I don't want us to create one.

Those who are employed at Barton also need to speak English well in addition to their native language, especially in the cafeteria.

Where to begin? The defunding of Education was a huge mistake. Shifting the tax burden onto student tuition was a terrible idea. Enabling students to take on crushing debt was a disaster. Discouraging faculty from unionizing is super problematic. A 30-credit workload has never made sense to me especially since it has never been enough to feed my family. The barriers are huge and often seem insurmountable. I find it especially frustrating that each year the administrators and their friends all take turns telling each other what a great job they are doing. Maybe it's true. Maybe they are doing a great job. I'm confident that their jobs are largely unpleasant, but it is tiring to hear them talk about how great it is to work here when I took the job because they were going to offer to pay for dental checkups.
