



LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2027

INTRODUCTION

The following DEI Strategic Plan is a result of a months-long process including input and ongoing feedback from a vast array of stakeholders across the LCC campus community. Through surveys, listening sessions, and numerous conversations, we gained insight into the needs and goals of the LCC community with regards to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI).

DEI STRATEGIC PLAN

Overview

Washington State Senate Bill 5194 requires community and technical colleges (CTCs) to create diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategic plans. Beginning July 30, 2022, and every two years thereafter, CTCs must submit DEI strategic plans to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). Developing the DEI strategic plan must include students, faculty, and staff, and colleges are encouraged to utilize findings from their campus climate assessments to inform their DEI strategic plans.

Each CTC received an initial allocation of \$125,000 for FY21-22 to support the creation of the DEI strategic plans and other initiatives within SB 5194. Subsequent allocations will be disbursed every year in the amount of \$62,500.

LCC Mission of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Lower Columbia College celebrates and embraces diversity of all kinds, including differing beliefs, cultures, people, and experiences. We commit to institutional and individual changes that recognize, understand, and challenge patterns of social inequity and systemic disparities within our ever-changing world. As part of this commitment, we strive to strengthen practices involving student success, cultural enrichment, diversity education, curricular transformation, and employee development. We are dedicated to promoting an accessible, inclusive, and safe environment that fosters cultural competency, educational equity, and social justice for all students, staff, faculty, and our local and global communities.

Planning Process

LCC contracted with Revolution Lab, a DEI and Social Impact consulting collaborative who built their business model on the principles of Equity. Revolution Lab met with members of the college's Executive Leadership Team to understand the landscape and



needs, and then developed a comprehensive list of stakeholders to elicit feedback and input to develop the 2022 – 2027 DEI Strategic Plan. Revolution Lab also conducted a discovery process, where they reviewed key documents, previous campus climate assessments, CCSSE and PACE instruments, evaluation reports and other relevant information to include in, and inform the development of this strategic plan.

Revolution Lab then conducted **16 listening sessions** with a diverse array of stakeholders across LCC’s campus including faculty, staff, students and community stakeholders. During these sessions, participants were asked:

1. What should be the priority areas for DEI on LCC’s campus?
2. Are there specific actions, programs, or initiatives that stakeholders would like to see LCC take?
3. What actions can LCC take to “scale up” existing efforts in valuing diversity, ensuring equitable learning outcomes, and cultivating an inclusive campus environment?
4. What, if any barriers, exist to realizing DEI within LCC?
5. What evidence do stakeholders currently see that DEI is a priority at LCC?

Revolution Lab analyzed the data from these sessions to understand themes around **challenges, opportunities, and high priority areas**, and prioritized recommendations based on:

- a. **Effectiveness:** How can LCC best utilize college resources to achieve its DEI goals?
- b. **Critical first steps:** What will pave the way for future successes?
- c. **Impact and feasibility:** What ideas have high potential for success?

A draft strategic plan was developed, and an open feedback process was initiated. Over 100 staff, faculty, students and leaders provided feedback resulting in the final strategic plan below.

The below are critical components of this strategic plan:

- The best strategic plan is a living document; that is reviewed, revised and used often
- None of the goals, objectives or tactics should be prescriptive or define how the strategy will be *implemented*
- An annual report should be prepared that allows for assessment of completion, need to course correct, and adjusting to any environmental changes



Key DEI Definitions

Equity: The intentional practice of identifying and dismantling unjust structures, policies, and practices that perpetuate systemic oppression based on but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, language, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, economic status, and/or religion to establish corrective justice actions to realize students' academic and social mobility goals.

Diversity: Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals; including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning styles. A diverse group, community, or organization is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist. (The National Multicultural Institute)

Inclusion: The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. (UC Berkeley Initiative for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity). Inclusion also refers to the degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes within an organization or group. While a truly "inclusive" group is necessarily diverse, a "diverse" group may or may not be "inclusive."

PRIORITIES, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND SUCCESS METRICS

Priority Area 1: Develop a culture of safety and belonging for all

Goal A: By June 30th, 2026, there are no discernable disparities¹ in staff, student and faculty experience of belonging along race, gender, sexual orientation, and other dimensions of diversity.

Objective A. 1: Develop a foundational training program for staff, faculty and leadership (Goal B – from SB5194 – Peer Mentoring Strategies)

- **Tactic 1:** Beginning July 1, 2022, identify, develop, and deploy trainings to address any identified gaps and improve metrics of skills and knowledge among staff, faculty, and leadership. Every training will include an evaluation component to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities to inform identification of gaps in staff, faculty and leadership's skills, knowledge, and practices.

¹ As determined by identified disparities between disaggregated groups in established college KPI mission fulfillment and stretch goals.



- **Tactic 2:** Beginning July 1, 2022, utilize current HR systems for tracking participation in trainings to continue to support staff, faculty, and leadership in building DEI skill and knowledge.
- **Tactic 3:** By June 30, 2026, align DEI goals with institutional Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and annual priority development

Objective A. 2: Implement equitable practices in hiring and recruitment

- **Tactic 1:** By July 1, 2023, LCC continues process to train Search Advocates using Oregon State University's Search Advocate program of trained, external search committee members who promote equity, validity, and diversity on LCC searches².
- **Tactic 2:** By July 1, 2023, LCC leadership has developed mission fulfillment and stretch goals for diversity in hiring and recruitment and KPI is slated for Board of Trustees' approval Summer 2022.
- **Tactic 3:** By July 1 2024, LCC conducts outreach and education to increase participation in the Search Advocate program.
- **Tactic 4:** By July 1, 2025, LCC updates and disseminates a revised hiring and recruitment procedure based on research and best practices and makes it available to all teams.

Objective A. 3: Develop practices and policies to improve retention of diverse staff and faculty (Goal C from SB5194 – Faculty Diversity Program)

- **Tactic 1:** By July 1, 2023, LCC conducts a campus climate assessment to establish a benchmark for disparities in safety and belonging across different staff and faculty identities. Transparently share results of baseline assessment across the institution, identifying any disparities.
- **Tactic 2:** By July 1, 2026, LCC conducts a pay equity review with a plan to eliminate any identified disparities. LCC will use collective bargaining processes in efforts to eliminate any identified disparities if needed.
- **Tactic 3:** By July 1, 2027, LCC identifies and funds professional development opportunities specifically tailored to staff members from systemically marginalized groups and others where disparities have been identified.
 - **KPI:** Employee Safety and Belonging: By July 1, 2024, LCC has established mission fulfillment and stretch goals.

² Search Advocates play a vital role in position development, recruitment, screening, interviews, references, evaluation, and integration of the new faculty or staff member into the institution. Read more about the [Search Advocate Program](#) and [program evaluation](#).



Objective A. 4: Create physical and virtual spaces such that all students, faculty and staff see themselves reflected in the campus environment. (Goal D from SB5194 – DEI Definitions)

- **Tactic 1:** By July 30, 2022, LCC Publishes a Diversity Statement that includes DEI Definitions. The college will provide regular updates on the progress of achieving its DEI goals.
- **Tactic 2:** By July 1, 2023, LCC develops policy and funding recommendations for creating employee Affinity Groups³, identifying and dedicating physical and virtual spaces for students, staff, and faculty to participate and engage. Ensure that all stakeholders are represented in creation of these physical and virtual spaces.
 - **KPI:** Student Safety and Belonging: By June 30th, 2026, LCC has established mission fulfillment and stretch goals.

Priority Area 2: Invest in a campus experience where all succeed

Goal B: By June 30, 2027, there are no discernable disparities in staff, student and faculty across all Key Performance Indicators along race, gender, sexual orientation, and other dimensions of diversity.

Objective B. 1: Center equitable access in designing the student experience

- **Tactic 1:** Beginning July 30, 2022, LCC provides resources to support the most marginalized students in navigating crucial resources (i.e. financial aid, class registration, etc.)
- **Tactic 2:** By July 1, 2023, LCC ensures that resources (physical and virtual) are geared towards students in a way that prioritizes accessibility for systemically marginalized students.
 - **KPI:** Student Satisfaction with Support Services, Support for Learners Benchmark from the CCSSE Survey (from the Student Access, Support and Completion Monitoring Report, part of the college's institutional strategic plan)
- **Tactic 3:** By July 1, 2024, LCC develops a process to provide access to technology for students with barriers (i.e. access to wifi, computer/tech rentals,

³ Affinity groups as broad and flexible. Could be groups for many identities and intersections such as BIPOC, Neuro-divergent, Disabilities, Veterans, LGBTQI, etc. Affinity groups may not be groups that perpetuate hate speech, are identified with known terrorist organizations or any other group that goes against the development of a culture where all are safe and feel they belong.



support with internet bills, etc.).

- **Tactic 4:** By July 1, 2024, LCC conducts a regular review of course registration processes and course schedules to identify barriers to access and create a plan to implement necessary changes to remove barriers.
- **Tactic 5:** By July 1, 2025, LCC expands language accessibility for all students.

Objective B. 2: Create inclusive classroom environments

- **Tactic 1:** By July 1, 2023, LCC provides faculty with a resource and best practice guide to create inclusive classroom environments.
- **Tactic 2:** By July 1, 2024, LCC develops standards of inclusion in faculty evaluations, including learning outcomes that help to create a culture of learning, respect, and belonging⁴.
- **Tactic 3:** By July 1, 2026, LCC conducts an audit of faculty diversity and equity action plans in Section A of the curriculum and program review template and implements recommended changes.

Objective B. 3: Build pathways for student retention and student success (Goal A from SB5194 – Culturally Appropriate Student Outreach Program)

- **Tactic 1:** Beginning July 30, 2022, LCC identifies and bridges gaps for students experiencing systemic barriers such as providing an equity fund/scholarship for financial hardship, technology assistance, or providing low-cost or no cost learning resources instead of textbooks.
- **Tactic 2:** By July 1, 2023, LCC will provide each faculty member an outcomes report on the success of their students stratified by socio-demographic data benchmarked to the institutional average.
 - **KPI:** Student Performance (exists in our Academic Transfer and Workforce & Economic Development Monitoring Reports) Related to Section A: Diversity and Equity of the existing Curriculum and Program Review
- **Tactic 3:** By July 1, 2023, LCC develops and recommends a comprehensive student retention and success plan that may include advising, programming, mentoring, mental health and basic needs resources to improve student development and learning outcomes.

⁴ LCC will need to engage in a collective bargaining process in order to implement tactics relating to faculty evaluations.



Priority Area 3: Create a sustainable infrastructure to bolster continued DEI success

Goal C: By June 30th, 2026, there are tools, resources and engagement from leadership, staff and faculty for the discovering and dismantling practices and behaviors that impact systemically marginalized members of our community.

Objective C. 1: Ensure adequate capacity and support to advance DEI

- **Tactic 1:** By July 1, 2022, LCC's Executive Leadership Team assumes accountability for successful implementation of DEI strategic plan.
- **Tactic 2:** By July 1, 2023, LCC allocates FTE and funding to advance DEI efforts detailed in this plan [this could be the Diversity Committee, Student groups, etc.].

Objective C. 2: Develop bi-directional, transparent communication around LCC DEI efforts

- **Tactic 1:** By July 1, 2023, DEI committee creates communication channels⁵ for faculty, staff, and students and the wider community to be aware of DEI efforts.
- **Tactic 2:** By July 1, 2024, DEI Committee creates communication channels⁶ for faculty, staff, and students to give feedback, input, and ideas on their work.
- **Tactic 3:** By July 1, 2024, DEI Committee develops opportunities⁷ for faculty, staff, and students doing DEI work to connect, support, and learn from each other.

⁵ Quarterly DEI share outs, diversity and equity page, regular newsletter or communication, publicly facing dashboard, etc.

⁶ Regular surveys, DEI committee engagement of other departments in their work, student and community feedback on program offerings, etc.

⁷ Quarterly community of practice, yearly in-person event, etc.