

Block 6 AIP Forum Notes

Goal 6: Increase Compositional Diversity of CC Community

Facilitators: Alistaire Tallent, Peggy Daugherty, Peony Fhagen

Attendees: 5 faculty members, 5 staff members, 1 student

Goal 6 current commitments:

- 1). Extend admission efforts to high schools in major urban areas that draw from a range of races and ethnicities.*
- 2). Make changes in the allocation of aid resources to help address pervasive inequities present throughout much of higher education.*
- 3). Increase the hiring of faculty, staff and short term employees from underrepresented groups and enhance retention efforts to ensure that new hires succeed and thrive.*
- 4). Implement new hiring practices across the college to make diversity a priority and to minimize implicit bias.*
- 5. Ensure the college's changing demographics are reflected in the Board of Trustees and alumni and parent groups.*

I: Introduction to the meeting by Peony Phagen.

- 1). Set guidelines for engagement using the recommendations from the Butler Center. Reminded us of past notes for initiatives 1-5 can be found on the Crown Center website.
- 2). Introduced and reviewed aspects from the "Diversity Dashboard" under the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness website to compare our current compositional diversity (students, faculty, staff) with past information.
- 3). Reviewed major work on 3 aspects of increasing compositional diversity of our community. Specifically, most work was done on recruitment, hiring and retention, with most effort put on hiring and retention practices. She has introduced new programs that faculty are required to engage in for faculty hiring. On the staff side, Ersaleen Hope is working on introducing new programs for staff hiring. Mark Hatch and Rosalie Rodriguez are working on improved student recruitment strategies that include looking at our choices of schools that we recruit at.

II: Small group discussion on the following questions that were posed by moderators:

- 1). *What's going well? What progress have you seen?*
- 2). *What needs more attention?*
- 3). *What can we add to these initiatives? What would keep progress moving forward?*

Group feedback:

What's going well:

Faculty training practices have been beneficial in two ways for faculty hires: (1). They have resulted in very good pools, and (2) resulted in candidates having favorable perceptions of us.

What needs more attention:

What needs more attention?

We need to address the "CC experience for students". There is an inequity and strong negative feelings among BIPOC students about what the "CC experience" is. Discussions centered on how much of this arises from our tuition-dependent model. In brief, we rely on 51% of the student body being full pay, and who are predominantly white. As we look at the other end of the scale, the high financial aid need students are predominantly BIPOC. We have very small percentage of middle-income students at CC.

The main question we discussed was: Can we deconflate race and class? Current BIPOC students are not staying connected to CC after graduation, arising from having negative and hurtful experiences on campus. Work needed to done: an intentional intervention that will mitigate the hurtful dynamics that BIPOC students experience that arise from the distinctions of socio-economic class and race on campus.

Specific points of student intervention:

Create a community that BIPOC students want to stay connected to, after graduation. Create a community in which BIPOC students want to recruit other students to. Improve how we market CC to make it more intriguing for students of color (there was some emphasis on full-pay BIPOC students) to want to come here. This would involve, the following:

Improve communicating our ADEI progress with students. Many students perceive the campus efforts as being performative around ADEI issues. It was suggested to create forums to talk about the process, provide concrete evidence to students (i.e., budget lines, hires and new practices, successes as identified in these forums and work to be done). It was emphasized that we need to be unified in our commitment to ADEI work, but also be willing to be humble and admit where the deficiencies are being identified or remain.

Create space for conversations of privilege, entitlement, and the gap between experiences at CC (and outside). One idea that was brought up was that there is no

playbook for this, so we need to focus on what it will take to educate a predominantly white wealthy community on antiracism, and communicate the progress, as indicated in the above point. Our commitment was that it was everybody's work.

Create more equitable student experiences across campus. Specific suggestions were to (1). Evaluate block breaks (2). Evaluate NSO by asking, do all students have the resources to participate in the types of experiences offered? What are the programs that introduce our ADEI initiatives to the incoming students?

Create a clearer identity as to who/what the CC experience currently is, and be aware that it may be multiple experiences, based on our changing compositional diversity of students. The question that was asked was: Does someone with a lower socioeconomic resources have the same experience as a full-pay student? The ideas that arose were that we need to be clear about what our motivation for being here is, including what the value of a CC liberal arts education brings to our students. Additionally, we discussed what aspects of a students CC experience was out of our control – it was suggested that current students are less likely to take out loans, so this results in increased student employment, thus creating a disparate CC experiences. The conversation then discussed whether more funding for student support would be a means of improving experiences, and what that would look like.

Improve the number of middle-income students to CC.

Can we leverage Bridge Program by making connections with Strouds Scholars (leverage the Denver locality), to bring in students who may be more eligible for federal grants?

Can we find an pool of money for increasing financial aide to students? Where would this come from? Would could different departments on campus be able to contribute? How would this be applied, using an ADEI lens?

III: More questions from the moderators, posed as “Can we open a space for difficult questions?”.

- 1). *What do we do when there is a unit on campus that is not very diverse?*
- 2). *What are willing to do to recruit more underrepresented groups?*
- 3). *What are the benchmarks for progress? What percentages are we aiming for? Matching national demographics? To Colorado Springs? or CO state?*
- 4). *How can we use benchmarks as goals but not a finish line?*
- 5). *For groups that we are having a hard time retaining (like Black male faculty), how can we find information on why they leave (without violating confidentiality) to avoid making decisions and policies based on rumors?*

Most of the discussion focused on questions around 3-4:

Defining benchmarks as a percentage of compositional diversity is very uncomfortable for many in the group. We are predominantly white institution, and that would not change with creating benchmarks like that. We still would need to address ADEI issues on our campus.

Suggestions were:

For staff, can we nurture local communities in some way with partnerships, to increase pools of candidates (it was pointed out that we might not be the ones that benefit directly from this).

For students, can we increase the cities, and schools that we recruit from?

Increase student-alumni benchmarks for BIPOC students. Discussions returned to the idea of the necessity of doing more intentional work, in order to create a more welcoming campus environment for BIPOC students (specifically, addressing the idea that students feel segregated on campus). If we are successful, then perhaps students would feel more connected with the campus after graduation, and more likely to refer other BIPOC students.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:05.