

# **Anti-Racism: A Student Plan of Action**

Adopted September 4, 2020 by the SSCCC Delegate Assembly

## Introduction

*The Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) represents students from the most diverse student population in the nation, California community colleges. After the unjust murder of George Floyd in May 2020, the SSCCC began to work actively within the higher education system to initiate change because we had seen too much of others talking about the issue without taking meaningful action. More resolutions of “commitment to students of color” will not make a difference; what is needed is action that can affect results. As students, we want change and understand it starts with education, in our classrooms with our teachers and our administrators. After forming an Institutional Success for People of Color Task Force, the SSCCC held two town hall meetings to hear from students about their experiences in California community colleges and to allow them to provide feedback on the work we were doing. The following action plan is the result of listening to the students’ stories.*

## CULTURAL AWARENESS AND RESPECT

*Create a climate of cultural awareness and respect to allow students of color to feel welcome, free to express their opinions, and safe in every collegiate environment.*

- Confront and address racial profiling and microaggression
- Appreciate contributions of Black Americans and other people of color to society
- Establish appropriate etiquette sensitive to cultural backgrounds
- Create an environment where students can thrive while being their authentic selves

## EQUITY TRAINING

*Provide adequate training for all employees and students to understand cultural diversity and address issues of racism, unconscious bias, and microaggressions in order to pursue racial equity that is conducive for student success.*

- Require onboarding and annual faculty training on cultural competency, conflict resolution, unconscious bias, microaggressions, workplace diversity, and other racial barriers
- Provide opportunities for students to be involved in equity training development
- Create a toolkit and other resource materials to accompany equity training
- Require student orientation to include anti-racism and microaggression training, student rights in the grievance process, and where to go to report instances of racism and microaggressions

## CURRICULUM CHANGES

*Ensure that the community college curriculum is responsive to all cultures in an effort to foster cultural appreciation, awareness, acceptance, and value.*

- Advocate that four-year universities accept Black, African American, Chicano, and Native American History and history courses from other cultures along with US and European History to fulfill history requirements
- Integrate Black history, contributions, and culture into all curriculum
- Add a cultural studies department or center on each campus
- Design a course or certificate program focused on social justice

## PEER MENTORS AND ALLIANCES

*Establish appropriate channels of communication for students to seek help and resources in addressing racism, microaggression, and other racial barriers to their education.*

- Facilitate communication between student groups -- Latinx, Black Student Union, Asian Pacific Islander, Native American, and others -- to connect and understand the points of view and what they go through. Where student groups do not exist, administrators should work with students to form such groups
- Form a participatory governance committee to address diversity, equity, and inclusion with representatives from the student body associations and faculty so students have a platform for policy recommendations and administrative remedies
- Create a peer mentor program or equity center with students from different backgrounds who are trained to resolve conflict, receive complaints, mentor others, and provide information to students struggling with racial barriers
- Provide opportunities where faculty can share, learn, and listen to other faculty experiences and provide or receive advice on how to handle specific situations in the classroom and on campus

## CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

*Create a classroom environment that is conducive to learning by ensuring that faculty are representative of the student population, providing students with an opportunity to give feedback to improve their learning experience, and including information on where to go to find resources on the syllabus.*

- Administer faculty evaluations each semester that include cultural competency and classroom management
- Hire more diverse faculty in all pathways
- Require anti-racism statements, information on where to find student grievance processes, and where to go to talk to someone when experiencing microaggression or other racial inequities in the classroom in each course syllabus

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

*During the town hall, students shared powerful stories of what they experienced on California community college campuses. Using these stories and the areas identified in this report, the SSCCC will actively work with our system partners such as the Chancellor's Office, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, the Faculty Association of the Community Colleges, the Classified Senate, and the Community College League of California as well as student organizations such as University of California Student Association and California State Student Association to break down the barriers of racism and racial inequities that are impacting the lives of students. We encourage all students, faculty, administrators, and community members to join us as we create change in the California community college system in the pursuit of student success and racial equity*

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