

# Advancing Equity Through Guided Pathways Series Discussion Guide #11:

## *Institutional Self-Assessment for Equity*

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### SERIES OVERVIEW

*The Advancing Equity through Guided Pathways series aims to foster critical campus conversations about how to close persistent gaps for historically marginalized students. Developed by the National Center for Inquiry & Improvement for the California Guided Pathways Project, the series was generously supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, and the Foundation for California Community Colleges.*



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# Institutional Self-Assessment for Equity

## Advancing Equity through Guided Pathways

*Developed by Nadrea Njoku and Deshawn Preston, Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute, United Negro College Fund & Rob Johnstone, National Center for Inquiry and Improvement*

### Introduction

The Community College Research Center (CCRC) defines Guided Pathways as “an integrated, institution-wide approach to student success based on intentionally designed, clear, coherent, and structured educational experiences...”<sup>i</sup> These activities include preparing students “for good jobs and further education;” helping students explore careers through experiential and classroom learning that is efficient and affordable; and creating partnerships with employers, postsecondary institutions, K-12 schools, and community groups to build career pathways important regionally. Most importantly, the elements of the Guided Pathways framework are all accomplished by influencing institutional change. However, this transformation cannot ignore the inequitable issues that face historically marginalized students—especially when they go unnamed. Doing so only creates a greater disparity among race and class across all communities.

When beginning an institutional change movement, equity (e.g., racial, class, gender) must be addressed in concert with our efforts to shift student success. The permanence of race, the impact of institutional racism, and the influence of white supremacy through institutional, state, and national educational policies, cannot be ignored or addressed at a later date.<sup>ii iii</sup> If attention to equitable strategies is postponed or unaddressed, institutions of higher education risk inadvertently marginalizing students through well intended institutional policies and practices and causing harm.

Therefore, the Frederick D. Patterson Research Center, UNCF (United Negro College Fund), and the California Guided Pathways Project partners have devised a brief self-assessment that institutions, faculty, staff, and administrators can review and use to measure their efforts to advance equity through Guided Pathways, based on adoption of key practices. These 11 equitable practices can allow individual stakeholders to review where they are personally and/or help teams introduce a necessary conversation on how to start to name and address equity gaps within their organization.

### How to Use this Self-Assessment...

The Advancing Equity through Guided Pathways series aims to foster critical campus conversations about increasing student equity under a Guided Pathways umbrella.

This self-assessment is a companion resource to these guides to help institutional redesign teams consider their own work to adopt equitable policies, programs, approaches, and processes as part of Guided Pathways implementation. Individual team members can:

- Review the equitable practices outlined in the self-assessment and score them from 1 to 5
- Reflect and take notes on your own reactions, instances of where you have seen these practices, and, where applicable, noticed they are absent but should be present
- Utilize the scoring to inform discussions with your colleagues

For all guides and additional information on the series, visit [www.ncii-improve.com](http://www.ncii-improve.com).

## Self-Assessment

Scale	
1	Practice not present, and there is no discussion on its impact
2	Practice is emerging, and we are discussing its role in the institution
3	Practice is frequently mentioned; however, it is sporadically acted upon
4	Practice is consistently mentioned and acted upon
5	Practice is embedded within institutional actions and policy-making

Equitable Practices	Score	Notes and Examples:
1. A clear definition of equity is widely shared, implemented, and used consistently at my institution.		
2. The institution distinguishes between racial, class, and gender equity.		
3. Student outcome data is disaggregated (by race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender, first generation) to inform institutional policies, practices, teaching, and support.		

Equitable Practices	Score	Notes and Examples:
<p>4. Faculty, staff, and administrators at my institution proportionately reflect the historically marginalized population(s) on campus.</p>		
<p>5. There is mandatory equity training for faculty, staff, and administration, annually.</p>		
<p>6. The institution consistently and continually engages in a process of learning, disaggregating data, and questioning assumptions in terms of equity.</p>		
<p>7. There are established and consistent partnerships designed to strengthen the college pipeline for underserved students. These partnerships include K-12 schools, community colleges, and universities.</p>		
<p>8. The institution ensures that all students, with a focus on students from historically marginalized populations, explore their educational and career options and understand the cost of their programs in higher education and the likely wages they will earn after completion.</p>		

Equitable Practices	Score	Notes and Examples:
<p><b>9. There is an annual assessment and report of the racial/ethnic participation in various academic programs (e.g., STEM, internships, honor programs, undergraduate research, etc.).</b></p>		
<p><b>10. The institution views students as unique and acknowledges they learn differently. Therefore, it has established equitable practices and policies designed to accommodate the differences in the contexts of students' learning.</b></p>		
<p><b>11. Culturally responsive pedagogy and practices are consistent throughout the student experience.</b></p>		

## Discussion Questions

1. Where can the college build on some already existing strengths that are evidenced by this self-assessment or other college efforts to advance equity through Guided Pathways?
2. What are the 2-3 gaps you want to address first after completing the self-assessment?
3. How will you move from discussion of these topics (a necessary step) to strategizing, developing a plan, and taking action to advance equity through Guided Pathways at your college?
4. How might the 10 *Advancing Equity Through Guided Pathways* discussion guides in this series be used to advance your engagement strategies around these key equity topics?

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.pathwaysresources.org/why-pathways/>

<sup>ii</sup> Bell, D. (1992). *Faces at the bottom of the well: The permanence of racism*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

<sup>iii</sup> Gillborn, D. (2005). Education policy as an act of white supremacy: Whiteness, critical race theory and education reform. *Journal of Education Policy*, 20(4), 485–505.