Equity and Inclusion Plan: Focus on Students

October 2016
Message from the President

Every student succeeds reaching their full potential. Everyone who comes to our campus feels welcomed and respected. Our community looks to Madison College to lead and contribute to the fabric of our district. These statements reflect the mission, vision and values of Madison College. Madison College has in its 100 year history made significant strides in being an open access institution of higher education. We look to the next 100 years to make a mark on educational equity for ALL students and on creating an inclusive Madison College for our students, employees, and community.

How we accomplish this is to advance an Equity and Inclusion Plan with a focus on access and students that outlines clear goals and actionable strategies. We need a detailed roadmap in order to create the equity-minded institution that will have an impact on employment and on the stable and sustainable economic well-being of our community. We know the contributions technical colleges make in terms of higher paying jobs and the layers of benefits for the individual and their families. But there is an urgency and imperative guiding our work now to take the College to another level of success. We need to critically look at our numbers of graduates and ask difficult questions to understand why some of our students are not graduating. We also need to carefully analyze gatekeeper classes to determine who doesn’t achieve academically and see where improvements can and should be made. All of our students deserve this critical analysis, our employees welcome the continuous improvement, and our community expects the best.

The Equity and Inclusion Plan cannot sit on a shelf collecting dust but rather needs to be embedded at all levels of the College and be a living and action document that guides discussions about policy at the College Assembly, shapes recruiting and hiring decisions, and fills our classrooms with innovations in teaching methods and materials.

We’ve heard the expression—it takes a village to raise a child—Madison College as part of the village plays a critical role not just in the life of the child but also for the adults. We have to partner with schools and families to address the critical issues facing our communities such as poverty and diligently work to extend success for all of our students, one class at a time.

Dr. Jack E. Daniels, III
President
Executive Summary

A solid commitment to the success of our students and our community serves as the impetus to become an equity-minded institution in this Equity and Inclusion Plan. Madison College has made great strides to ensure access for our students. One example is the Scholars of Promise Program, which attempts to eliminate the financial barriers many students face. But there are other barriers that need to be addressed and this Plan is a beginning for Madison College to lead in eliminating the achievement and skills gaps that exists.

Four major goals are outlined in this plan:

- Every student and employee experiences a welcoming and inclusive Madison College.
- Madison College strives to have its employee demographics minimally reflect the student body and the communities we serve.
- Every student persists and succeeds at Madison College.
- Madison College engages the community in meaningful and authentic ways.

It is not simply the goals that will move the needle on student success. For Madison College to live truly to its mission and vision, a pledge and commitment to equity and inclusion by ALL is essential. This is not the work of one department or individual. Everyone at the College needs to be on board for the Plan to work. The work to become an equity-minded institution will be challenging, requiring honest and difficult conversations when we look at data. We will need to create innovative solutions to address disparities that are revealed in the data.

Too many institutions simply say, it isn’t our fault that students are not prepared, the schools failed them. That is easy. OUR students are members of our community so, therefore, their failure rests on our collective shoulders. A greater challenge will be to ask: our students need to succeed, so what can we do to ensure that they do? Their success—getting an education and landing sustainable employment—benefits us all. It is not just a social justice imperative, but an economic one as well.

Mission Madison College provides open access to quality higher education that fosters lifelong learning and success within our communities.

Vision To be the leader in accessible, affordable education that meets the evolving needs of our diverse communities.

Values
- Excellence
- Respect
- Commitment to students and diverse communities
- Making higher education available to all

Five key principles applied by Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) institutions:

- Redefine issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as fundamental to the organization’s bottom line of mission fulfillment and institutional excellence.
- Focus on creating systems that enable all students, faculty and staff to thrive and achieve their maximum potential.
- Achieve a more robust and integrated diversity approach that builds on prior diversity models and operates in a strategic, evidence-based, and data-driven manner in which accountability is of paramount importance.
- Focus on diversity-related efforts that innovate and transform the institutional culture, rather than merely tactical moves that lead to poorly integrated efforts and symbolic implementation.
- Lead with a high degree of cultural intelligence and awareness of different identities and their significance in higher education.

Dr. Damon A. Williams,
The INSIGHT Into Diversity - The 2015-2016 HEED Award Benchmarking Report
Introduction

The Madison College Equity and Inclusion Plan builds on the vision of the Board of Trustees, the directives from strategic planning process, and the tireless work of key students and the employees who have been striving to become an equity-minded institution for many years. Over the course of its history, Madison College has been engaged in building on the foundation of the College’s core values to impact every member, and potential member, of the Madison College community. This Plan will guide the College’s efforts to ensure students and employees are valued and respected for their unique contributions to college life.

The history of efforts towards equity center around Madison College’s core value of being an open-access institution of higher learning; “Access” is a fundamental building block of equity and inclusion. Madison College has been at the forefront of creating access in its 100 year plus history—ensuring access to education in rural communities, leveling out the playing field for women in non-traditional occupations, and providing accommodations to students with disabilities. The Board of Trustees’ End Statement—leaders are proactive in promoting access and eliminating achievement and skills gaps based on diverse backgrounds and income—serves as a central tenet of this Equity and Inclusion Plan. It is the hope of Madison College to continue to lead the charge with this Plan, and most importantly, to implement the Plan.

Efforts in recent years to create inclusion merit mentioning, as this Plan includes some of those ideas and design. As early as 2001, a group of employees developed clear, specific strategies for underserved students, to ensure accountability and continuous improvement, specifically with the development of an equity scorecard. In 2013, the Equity Leadership Group concentrated specifically on gender equity and non-traditional careers, recommending that the College create visible messages to promote gender equity and ensure that equity was a critical dimension of educational and employment programs. In February 2014, Madison College formed a Diversity Taskforce with the charge to develop an actionable plan to position it as an institution that celebrates and honors diversity; the work of this group led the College through its Shared Governance process to adopt a formal definition of diversity.

In recent years, with the advent of Shared Governance, the Diversity and Community Relations Council (DCRC) has become a champion of infusing equity into all levels of the college. The DCRC recommends policies and solutions conducive to creating a more hospitable, inclusive, and diverse environment for students, faculty, staff and administrators throughout the college and surrounding communities. In academic year 2015–2016, DCRC members, Dr. Carolina Bailey and Jimmy Cheffen, proposed and conducted focus groups of employees and of students. The Davis Group added to this DCRC initiative by increasing the number of focus groups as well as conducting individual interviews with numerous members of the Madison College community.

To articulate how the College will live the definition of diversity, the DCRC prepared a Statement of Diversity, approved by the College Assembly and President Daniels in 2016. The statement highlights three principles:

♦ Diversity is a resource that enhances education, by bringing a richness of perspective that is only possible when people are able to share differing views, ways of solving problems, and innovative ideas.

♦ In order to foster an environment that supports equity, inclusion and respect for all, we must individually and collectively cultivate cultural awareness and sensitivity, and practice integrity and justice.

♦ A diverse and culturally proficient College staff and faculty are essential connecting with and supporting diverse student success. Therefore, the College is committed to hiring, employee support and training that are integral to a diverse and culturally competent workforce.
The demographic changes at the local and national level are powerful drivers for determining how Madison College recruits and serves students. In addition, these changes also need to be kept in mind with how the College engages all of its communities in our District. At the regional campuses, Madison College is experiencing changing demographics with increasing numbers of Latinos. The increase of students of color in local high schools present a great opportunity for the College in redefining recruitment efforts and crafting innovative ways to engage all students. Our District workforce is ever changing as economic forces and technological advances impact them. The chart below looks at our district population by race and ethnicity. Madison College also needs to plan for social and gender identity diversity not as easily captured by census data or other traditional methods of tracking. The College must continually understand the needs of potential students to maintain enrollment numbers, adding to the long-term financial sustainability of the College.

Madison College is preparing and graduating students who thrive in an ever-changing, complex society—domestically and globally. Employers are seeking individuals who are culturally proficient and informed global citizens because employers expect employees to effectively engage customers, suppliers, and collaborators from around the world.

Surveys of higher education literature reveal critical ways college students grow and mature cognitively as a result of living and learning in environments that include some measure of diversity. In these environments, individuals experience enhanced critical and complex thinking, greater racial and intercultural awareness, higher rates of persistence, and greater satisfaction with the overall college experience. Some examples of best practices from around the country are included throughout this document.

To better serve students and prepare them for success in our increasingly diverse communities, Madison College has to examine each level of touch and interaction with students—from the recruitment phase to graduation. Madison College needs to examine its data identifying where there are disparities, and engage in deep analysis to determine the root causes of those disparities in achievement. The College has an opportunity to scan what is taught and how it is taught, and examine programs and activities that involve engaging students. By better understanding the barriers to student achievement and success, the College can look for ways to address these and modify and create programs that work to support students.

### Madison College District Population Composition by Race/Ethnicity

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<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Projected 2021</th>
<th>2016%</th>
<th>Projected 2021%</th>
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<td>White Alone</td>
<td>656,894</td>
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<td>Two or More Races</td>
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<td>Hispanic Origin (Any Race)</td>
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<td>847,977</td>
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</table>
Madison College Pillars of Promise

- Providing students with tools and skills to create personalized student plans capturing each student’s needs and pathways to success.
- Creating avenues for students to obtain information necessary to make responsible choices that achieve desired outcomes for college and life.
- Cultivating opportunities for collaboration with our external and internal partners that foster the exchange of knowledge, resources and expertise.
- Cultivating a campus climate that is respectful, engaging, inclusive and reflective of all members of the community.
- Fostering and implementing a culture of innovations and quality improvement to deliver flexible and creative teaching and service strategies.
- Providing exceptional services to support all Madison College students.
- Fostering an environment that is secure, accessible and comfortable for students and employees of all cultures.

Themes for Madison College

**Academic Technology** Highlights the ever-changing world of technology and offers insights for what it could mean for classrooms, instructional delivery, programming and more

**Changing Credentials** Affirms the power and need for associate degrees, robust transfer paths to baccalaureate degrees and beyond and previews innovative credentialing models and postsecondary training to compete in the new reality

**Flexible Delivery** Offers trends linked to the need for flexible and innovative instructional formats and scheduling that best meets students’ need to balance their busy and complex lives;

**Workforce Skills** Summarizes the core skills that employers deem critical to tomorrow’s workforce and validate our commitment to helping students lead informed and principled lives

**Jobs of Tomorrow** Dives into the new and developing programming Madison College needs to connect our students to the emerging industries and jobs of the future.

Madison College Academic Plan 2014-2017
https://madisoncollege.edu/impact/#p0
Guiding Principles

Madison College strives to achieve institutional change by embedding the principles of equity and inclusion throughout the college, and fostering shared responsibility and increasing accountability for results. Through this Plan, it acknowledges the central role equity, inclusion, and academic excellence play in its teaching and learning mission. True ownership must be broadly shared among all stakeholders. To achieve the desired results, Madison College commits to ensuring that every student and employee understands how this Equity and Inclusion Plan relates to them. The following principles should inform and guide every aspect of the Madison College’s academics and operations:

Equity

Equity is the just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can prosper and reach their full potential—education is one of the ways to reach one’s full potential. Equity-mindedness is maintaining a high level of awareness and mindfulness to assure equitable treatment, practices and outcomes. Vigilant attention to differences and barriers that prevent the full participation and success for certain individuals is key. Then identifying and eliminating these barriers completes the equation of equity-mindedness. Inherent in this principle is the understanding and acknowledgment that members of historically underrepresented and underserved groups experience uneven access to opportunities.

Excellence

Madison College will leverage the full range of talent needed to deliver on its educational mission of developing well-prepared, culturally proficient, and civic-minded students. Achieving the highest levels of academic excellence in teaching, learning, and service incorporates the diverse perspectives of all members of its community. Diversity is integral to academic excellence.

Inclusion

Creating welcoming environments where all students and employees feel respected, valued, and supported to perform at their highest capabilities. The environments embrace the inherent value in differences to enable all members of the College community to reach their fullest potential and participate in the highest level of opportunities the College offers.

Shared Responsibility

This Equity and Inclusion Plan requires the individual and collective investment of ideas and energy by all members of the campus community. The leadership of each area must be expected to invest the energy, time, and resources into defining goals and measurements for their respective areas. Everyone—students and employees—all have a role to play in the success of this Plan.

Community Engagement

Strategic investment in community partnerships and collaborations, and active engagement with diverse communities and individuals is an essential aspect of assuring success with the College’s equity and inclusion goals.

Accountability

Transformation is made possible through a continuous process of reflection, evaluation, and a recalibration of strategies. Also key is the willingness to acknowledge and take responsibility for actions, decisions, products, or results.
Assessment of Climate and Culture

Along with community colleges nationwide, Madison College participates in two separate assessment processes—the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) survey of students and the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey of employees. These are valuable in that they compare Madison College with other like institutions around the country. In 2014, the national organization that manages the PACE survey developed a second set of questions related to the assessing the racial and ethnic dimensions of the work environment of community colleges.

The initial focus groups conducted by members of the DCRC team identified trends as important to the climate and culture of the college—a sense of community, stereotypes, discrimination, and micro-aggressions. To deepen this initial assessment that was conducted and to build on what the DCRC initiated last year, Madison College hired the Davis Group, a local minority-owned consulting firm in order to conduct more focus groups as well as individual interviews, and compile the information gathered. The Davis Group led a team that conducted focus groups and individual interviews asking questions of students and employees to determine what were the sentiments, observations and experiences on issues of equity and inclusion.

DCRC dedicated a number of meetings to discussing student and employee recruitment and retention; meeting with the Davis Group to share their work on assessing the climate and culture; and conferring what elements needed to be included in an Equity and Inclusion Plan. Accountability, measures and indicators, monitoring and evaluating programs, inclusion of actionable strategies and tactics were some of the elements the group deemed important to a viable Equity and Inclusion Plan. Consistently, regardless of the group, making certain the Plan was actionable was a theme.

The Davis Group conducted additional focus groups including 16 groups with Madison College students of diverse backgrounds and 10 groups with staff at various levels of the college. Individual interviews with key stakeholders were conducted. The consultant also reviewed the survey results of the PACE and SSI they evaluated regional demographics versus internal data.

“...if I feel welcome, I'm more successful. If I feel accepted, I'm more successful... I'm able to ask more questions, which leads me to get more knowledge, which leads for me to do something with that knowledge so I can, you know, achieve the goal or whatever I need to achieve. And I think the first step is simple, to see more of us around here. And I'm not talking about students. I'm talking about people that are in a position of power.”

—African American Student
Equity and Inclusion Goals and Strategies

Utilizing a data-informed decision-making framework to close achievement gaps and improve student outcomes guides the development of the goals and strategies for this Plan. All students cannot be treated in the same manner so accommodating differences in the context of students’ learning is key. The goals and corresponding strategies articulated in the Plan are carefully chosen to help all students succeed at the highest level possible and to use data to discover strengths and opportunities for improvement. Resurrecting the equity scorecard developed some years ago will allow a continuous process of analyzing the data, acting on the findings and adjusting or repeating the process to improve performance.

Addressing areas where equity and inclusion are deficient is not easy but participation of all stakeholders in the process is as significant a goal as developing measurable outcomes for change. Everyone has much to learn, both individually and collaboratively. This process is not just for the few, but an opportunity for individuals throughout the College to participate together in creating change. That requires professional development, professional guidance, sustained effort and accountability. Leaders will need safe spaces to explore issues and engage in difficult dialogues and interactions to create the desired changes.

Five Principles for Enacting Equity by Design

1. Clarity in language, goals, and measures is vital to effective equitable practices.

2. Equity-mindedness should be the guiding paradigm for language and action.

3. Equitable practice and policies are designed to accommodate differences in the contexts of students’ learning—not to treat all students the same.

4. Enacting equity requires a continual process of learning, disaggregating data, and questioning assumptions about relevance and effectiveness.

5. Equity must be enacted as pervasive institution- and system-wide principle.

—“Savage Bardowski” Equality Vs. Equity
https://www.emaze.com/@ACQTQOIL/Presentation-Name

Estela Mara Bensimon, Alicia Dowd, & Keith Witham
Diversity & Democracy, Winter 2016
Goal 1
Every student and employee experiences a welcoming and inclusive Madison College.

Strategy A: Review all existing professional development and training opportunities to incorporate equity and inclusion concepts.

Partners: Human Resources, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Center for International Education, Student Life

Timeframe:
- Year One review and recommend equity-minded curriculum.
- Year Two offer trainings with equity and inclusion concepts.
- Year Three assess progress and make modifications.

Strategy B: Develop an “Inclusive Madison College” campaign for internal and external audiences to recruit, increase, and welcome potential diverse students, employees, and community members.

Partners: Communications and Strategic Marketing, The Clarion, local community-based print and news outlets, Human Resources

Timeframe:
- Year One review what has been previously done, develop, and launch campaign.
- Year Two assess.
- Year Three review and modify.

Strategy C: Establish employee affinity groups to create a space for employees to organize activities, welcome new employees, and connect employees with student clubs and groups.

Partners: Human Resources, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Center for International Education, Student Life, United Common Ground, Street Team

Timeframe:
- Year One establish 1 to 2 groups.
- Year Two expand groups and launch inter-group meetings.
- Year Three assess and evaluate.
**Goal 2**

Madison College strives to have its employee demographics minimally reflect the student body and the communities we serve.

**Strategy A:** Create a system of regularly tracking employee demographics and monitoring underrepresentation as part of an Executive Dashboard.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Vice Presidents, Deans, Institutional Research and Effectiveness

**Timeframe:**
- **Year One** research best practices for how we collect identification data, and increase the number of employees who self-disclose.
- **Year Two** create a dashboard to inform action, process improvement, and results.
- **Year Three** train decision-makers on how to use the data to drive hiring decisions.

**Strategy B:** Increase the hiring of employees that reflect our student body and communities through pilot programs such as the Faculty Fellows Program for increasing faculty of color especially in areas that have low to no representation of racial/ethnic or gender.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Deans, Institutional Research and Effectiveness

**Timeframe:**
- **Year One** develop strategies and pilot Fellows Program;
- **Year Two** collect data to monitor progress and scale up the Fellows Program;
- **Year Three** explore creating parallel pilot for administrators.

**Strategy C:** Create customized recruitment strategies including more intentional outreach efforts to academic and professional associations aimed at racial/ethnic and gender groups.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Vice Presidents, Deans

**Timeframe:**
- **Year One** identify employees in professional organizations and academic societies and involve them in recruitment efforts at national and regional conferences and meetings.
- **Year Two** plan outreach strategies for prospective employees including marketing materials about Madison College.
- **Year Three** assess and monitor candidates applying and getting hired.
Goal 3
Every student persists and succeeds at Madison College.

Strategy A: Assess the demographics of prospective students in the communities in our District to determine if the College is meeting the potential market penetration rate.

Partners: Provost, Student Development and Success, Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Communications and Strategic Marketing, Deans

Timeframe:
Year One assess enrollment data and create dashboard.
Year Two develop strategies for increasing market penetration rate and launch.
Year Three assess and address shifting demographics.

Strategy B: Examine key gateway and high enrollment courses to analyze the breakdown of students by racial/ethnic, gender, and socio-economic status and educational outcomes.

Partners: Provost, Student Development and Success, Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Faculty

Timeframe:
Year One assess the data and scan the environment.
Year Two create a dashboard, put together Achievement Impact Teams in each school, and create interventions to increase course success rates.
Year Three implement interventions and assess.

Strategy C: Create an Impact Team to inventory and evaluate support programs, analyze successful interventions and scale those appropriately to enhance persistence and success.

Partners: Provost, Student Development and Success, Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Deans

Timeframe:
Year One create team, assess the data, and develop initial strategies.
Year Two evaluate which programs are working and implement with a goal towards sustainability.
Year Three scale them to areas with gaps.
Goal 4
Madison College engages the community in meaningful and authentic ways.

**Strategy A:** Identify opportunities around each campus to increase collaborations and connections to the college by leveraging partnerships with community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses, schools, and community centers.

**Partners:** Community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations, schools, community centers, and businesses

**Timeframe:**
- **Year One** create a team to inventory existing community partners and review existing survey instruments to understand how the public perceives and what the public knows about Madison College.
- **Year Two** leverage and build new synergies around partnerships and collaborations.
- **Year Three** develop marketing and outreach strategies.

**Strategy B:** Create a pipeline from middle school to Madison College through career exploration, mentorships, and academic readiness.

**Partners:** Continuing Education, Community-based organizations, Faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations, high schools, community centers, businesses, and Faculty

**Timeframe:**
- **Year One** review existing partnerships and opportunities for middle school students such as “boot camps”.
- **Year Two** develop marketing and outreach strategies.
- **Year Three** enhance the accessibility of these opportunities for working families.

**Strategy C:** Strengthen the pipeline from high schools to Madison College through career exploration, mentorships, and academic readiness including application and assistance with Scholars of Promise Program.

**Partners:** Gateway to College, Scholars of Promise Program staff, CBOs, FBOs, neighborhood associations, schools, community centers, businesses, and School of Workforce & Economic Development

**Timeframe:**
- **Year One** review programs for high school students and expand educational opportunities for parents to learn about programs at Madison College.
- **Year Two** market the Scholars of Promise Program to sophomores.
- **Year Three** increase application of juniors to Scholars of Promise.
Achieving the Dream is a national community college network focused on supporting the practice of using data and assessment to support student achievement. Achieving the Dream believes it is necessary to apply an equity lens to data analysis to understand how students of different racial and ethnic groups succeed at colleges. With those understandings, colleges can implement evidence-based policies and practices that address equity gaps and support the success of all students. To assess an institution’s preparedness to engage in these efforts, Achieving the Dream developed a model for assessing a college’s capacity to create a student success culture that recognizes equity issues. The capacity areas are: teaching and learning; engagement and communication; strategy and planning; policies and practices; leadership and vision; data and technology; and equity.

“As the country witnesses the emergence of a new racial and ethnic majority, equity—long a matter of social justice and morality—is now also an economic imperative. The nation can only achieve and sustain growth and prosperity by integrating all into the economy, including those who have too often been left behind.”

—Sarah Treuhaft, Angela Glover Blackwell and Manual Pastor

PolicyLink