The Campaign for College Opportunity

affirming EQUITY
ensuring INCLUSION
empowering ACTION

Equity-Minded Faculty Hiring Practices

Promoting Fairness, Inclusion, and Faculty Diversity to Support Student Success in Higher Education

Authored by J. Luke Wood, Ph.D. and Frank Harris, III, Ph.D.
Series edited by Michele Siqueiros and Vikash Reddy, Ph.D.

The Campaign for College Opportunity **December 2023**

Preface

Over 50% of American students in our public schools are Latinx, Black, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI), or American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN). Tapping into their talent and ensuring their access to a college education is essential to our future economic power and the success of our multi-racial democracy. Despite the historical exclusion and current underrepresentation of many Americans in our colleges and universities, in June 2023, the Supreme Court of the United States severely curtailed the use of race in higher education admissions, prohibiting the consideration of an applicant's racial status as part of that process.

Race-conscious admissions helped ensure America's colleges and universities were more diverse. Without it, there is a greater urgency for college leaders and policy makers to review current practices for equity, and to identify solutions that provide a fairer approach to preparing students for college, admitting them, and supporting their success. Towards that aim, the Campaign for College Opportunity is releasing a series of briefs, including this one, as part of our Affirming Equity, Ensuring Inclusion and Empowering Action initiative. The series will elevate practices that support the college preparation, admission, affordability, and success of Latinx, Black, Asian American, NHPI, and AIAN students, ensuring America does not return to an era of exclusion in higher education.

Overview

This brief discusses equity-minded faculty practices and provides resources to support equity-minded faculty hiring. It focuses on the four hiring practices that have been proven to contribute in a positive way to faculty diversity, including: 1) developing equity-minded hiring criteria; 2) equity-themed cluster hiring; 3) equity-minded teaching evaluation; and 4) equity-minded interviews. Practices that can be enacted before, during, and after the search process are highlighted, including aligning institutional and departmental commitments, forming search committees that are representative of diverse constituencies, and ensuring an environment of success for new hires.

The political attacks on efforts that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in colleges and universities are both alarming and indicative of the need for higher education leaders to be more strategic and intentional in faculty hiring, with inclusive and equitable practices in place to help produce racial/ethnic diversity. Having the authority and capacity to assure robust faculty diversity to advance institutional DEI goals is an essential tool for colleges and universities that are committed to student success. In 2022, disproportionately impacted Latinx, Black, and AIAN students comprised nearly one-third of the country's college and university students. Yet, just over 10% of college and university faculty members were represented by these groups.

The benefits of faculty diversity are well-documented in published scholarship on student success in higher education.[1] A diverse faculty is better suited to prepare all students to live in a diverse society and to work in a global marketplace. These faculty members are also more likely to use a broader range of instructional strategies that are more conducive to student learning. Finally, Latinx, Black, Asian American, NHPI, and AIAN faculty members often take on the responsibility of building relationships with diverse students and creating affirming learning environments that lead to persistence, retention, and completion. And at predominately white institutions (PWIs), Latinx, Black, Asian American, NHPI, and AIAN faculty members assume this responsibility without recognition or compensation.

In June 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College* and *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. University of North Carolina* overruled 45 years of precedent by prohibiting race-conscious college admissions practices. Although the decision focused on college admissions, there are valid concerns that the ruling will have additional impacts beyond this limited scope, affecting college policies and practices far beyond admissions offices at selective colleges and universities. Such policies could include those that focus on hiring and on efforts to create welcoming and supportive environments for minoritized students. Campus, system, and state

legal advisers, general counsels, and risk managers may call for more conservative approaches to recognizing the importance of students' racial and ethnic backgrounds in all areas of college operations. Hiring practices that result in racial/ethnic faculty diversity may also be targeted. Given this context, we highlight four promising strategies and practices in this brief that can help increase faculty diversity, even with bans on affirmative action, and we emphasize ways in which these strategies align with efforts to promote success for Latinx, Black, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students.

Calls to diversify college and university faculties based on race/ethnicity are not new. For many years, college and university leaders have espoused a desire to diversify their faculties. This was particularly evident in 2020 after the murder of George Floyd, when institutions across the nation publicly expressed commitments to provide more support to Black students; to engage in initiatives to advance the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; and to increase their faculty diversity.[2] In spite of these calls, institutions face significant challenges in advancing outcomes related to recruiting and retaining diverse faculties.

According to The Chronicle of Higher Education, more than three out of four (76%) full-time instructional faculty members in colleges and universities nationwide are overwhelmingly white.[3] In contrast, minoritized faculty members continue to be underrepresented. For example, Black, Latinx, and Native American faculty members account for only 5.0%, 5.2%, and 0.4% of the country's faculty population, respectively (10.6% in all).[4] However, students from these same groups are represented at much higher proportions: 11.9% Black, 18.6% Latinx, and 0.6% Native American (31.1% in all).[5] Though Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students remain underrepresented among our nation's student bodies, a growing number of institutions have greater representations of diverse students within their student populations, as evidenced by the proliferation of institutions qualifying as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Asian American-, Native American-, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs). Notwithstanding, the lack of faculty members who are Latinx, Black, Asian American, NHPI, or AIAN is often egregious, compared to the racial diversity within student populations.

Black, Latinx, and Native American faculty members account for only 5.0%, 5.2%, and 0.4% of the country's faculty population, respectively.

Excuses for unsuccessful efforts to diversify faculty

Several excuses are commonly used to limit institutional efforts to diversify faculties or to explain the ineffectiveness of these efforts. One common excuse for not hiring candidates who are Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN is that they are less qualified, and, therefore, hiring them would lower a department's standards and expectations. This runs counter to the reality that thousands of Black, Latinx, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN scholars are earning doctoral degrees every year. Of the nearly 100,000 doctoral degrees conferred by California institutions between 2017-2021, over 58% were awarded to members of racial minorities.[6] **Often, the excuse for not hiring faculty members from these groups is rooted in stereotypes about the intellectual capabilities of Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN people.** This excuse contrasts with extensive research demonstrating that Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN faculty members are often among the highest quality instructors and are more invested in campus and community service than their colleagues.

Another common set of excuses assumes that, if hired, these candidates will not accept jobs at the institutions, and if they do, they will not stay long. Often, when Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN candidates do not take jobs or are not retained, it is because mistreatment during the search process stymied their interest in an institution, or because a campus provided them with inadequate support, hypertaxed them with service obligations, or was simply racist and unwelcoming. These issues are not a function of the candidates, but of institutional cultures.

Another excuse for not striving to diversify a faculty is that there is a lack of qualified Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN candidates available to hire. This argument is especially prevalent in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields, where the representation of diverse degree-holders is more limited. This argument, however, fails to acknowledge the lack of intentional recruitment of Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN candidates into the applicant pool and, as a result, their significant underrepresentation in the pool, compared to their availability in the market.

There also is a pervasive perception that institutions cannot afford Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN candidates because everyone is competing for them. This defeatist mentality results in innumerable minoritized candidates never being offered such career opportunities. Undoubtedly, candidates are interested in the tangible elements of compensation (e.g., salary, benefits, relocation costs), but they are even more interested in being in academic communities that are supportive, invested in their growth, and committed to diversity and inclusion.

Diversifying Faculty

Although this brief focuses on hiring, diversifying the faculty requires efforts that expand far beyond the hiring process. Turner's landmark book, *Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees*, noted that diversifying the faculty requires intentional and authentic actions before, during, and after the search.[7] The concept of "equity-mindedness" comes from the extensive work of Dr. Estela Mara Bensimon, university professor emerita at the University of Southern California and founding director of the Center for Urban Education.

Equity-mindedness is a mode of thinking and action exhibited by educators who:

1. Call attention to patterns of inequity;
2. Assume personal and institutional responsibility for doing what is necessary to eliminate inequities; and
3. Are race conscious and understand the history and legacy of exclusionary practices in American education[8]

Before the search, academic leaders must communicate the rationale for diversifying the faculty to ensure buy-in from faculty colleagues. Institutions must align institutional and departmental commitments to ensure the desire to hire and support faculty members of color is authentic and part of a genuine commitment to action. **A genuine commitment means the institution has efforts in place to proactively: create a welcoming academic environment; secure resources for incoming faculty members; and expand the institution's professional relationships to include diverse candidates and disciplinary associations intentionally**.

During the search, the campus must form a search committee committed to faculty diversity that contains committee members from diverse constituencies. **The institution should provide the committee with training and development on topics that will better prepare it to conduct the search, including implicit bias, racial microaggressions, inclusive job calls, recruiting diverse candidates, and debunking myths about Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN candidates** (discussed more in the next section). Committees also should be prepared to host campus visits by candidates in a manner that recognizes the candidates are interviewing the campus as much as the campus is interviewing the candidates.

After the search ends, the long-term work begins, including providing support for the new hire. **This can include onboarding the hired faculty member effectively, demonstrating a commitment to the individual personally and professionally, providing promised resources, and simply being good colleagues**. We strongly encourage that search committees review Turner's work, which offers practical strategies and steps for diversifying the faculty.[9]

In summary, the faculty search process should:

- ✓ **Demonstrate** a commitment to creating a welcoming environment for candidates.
- ✓ **Provide** resources to incoming faculty members.
- ✓ **Expand** professional relationships.
- ✓ **Require** training for the search committee.
- ✓ **Receive** support to successfully onboard selected candidates.

Institutions seeking to hire faculty members with a demonstrated record of success with Latinx, Black, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students should weigh input from students heavily and make sure students are part of the search process. Student feedback should be incorporated into assessments of a candidate's teaching ability, as well as into the larger interviewing process. Bargaining agreements and policies sometimes prevent students from serving on search committees in a formal (voting) capacity, but there remain numerous ways to engage students in an equity-minded hiring process and elicit their feedback on the candidates they believe address the search criteria.

Specific opportunities for engaging student feedback include:

- ✓ Conducting a discussion circle with students to gain feedback on the job description.
- ✓ Recruiting students to be on the search committee.
- ✓ Engaging students in committee discussions of a candidate's teaching demonstration.
- ✓ Allowing students, when permitted or allowed by policy, to interview or meet with candidates.
- ✓ Giving students access to a candidate's application materials (e.g., letter of intent, curriculum vita/resume).

Equity-Minded Hiring Practices

There are four hiring practices that can advance faculty diversification efforts. Collectively, these practices prioritize student success (e.g., learning, retention, graduation) and address racial equity gaps. The four hiring practices embed an intensive focus on hiring faculty members who will be most effective in supporting Black, Latinx, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students. Faculty members who are effective often come from these same communities; thus, the focus on student success and racial equity aligns with efforts for faculty diversification. These practices should be implemented in tandem with the steps from Turner's guidebook.[10]

The four equity-minded hiring practices are:

- **Equity-minded hiring criteria**
- **Equity-themed cluster hiring**
- **Equity-minded teaching evaluation**
- **Equity-minded interviews**

Before engaging these steps, we suggest campuses use the Equitable Hiring Practices Self-Assessment Checklist (see Table 1) to guide initial discussions about the institution's readiness to employ an equity-minded hiring process.

In addition, it is our expectation that base-level bias reduction strategies also are being integrated into the search process, including:

- ✓ Screening candidates without knowing their identities to reduce the likelihood of bias on the basis of a candidate's name or other identifiers.
- ✓ Providing training on implicit bias and racial microaggression in the search process.
- ✓ Certifying that applicant pools are based on whether the representation of diversity within the pool matches the availability in the marketplace.
- ✓ Including a representative on the search committee whose role is to ensure that processes and conversations avoid bias.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that identifying practices that can be effective in achieving faculty diversity should only be the beginning of an institution's efforts. Commitment and cooperation from key institutional constituents, like academic senates, faculty unions, governing boards, presidents, provosts, deans, and department chairs, are essential to meaningfully implement and sustain these practices — especially when there is political pressure and opposition to this goal. In some contexts, it may be necessary to garner support from external partners, like major donors, key legislators, foundations, and policy advocacy organizations.

Table 1. Equitable Hiring Practices Self-Assessment Checklist

		Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely
Hiring Criteria	The search has criteria requiring candidates to have a demonstrated record of success in teaching and supporting Latinx, Black, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students.			
	The search has criteria requiring candidates to have a demonstrated record of mentoring (e.g., advising, conducting research) that impacts Latinx, Black, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students and their communities.			
Cluster Hiring	The campus has conducted a cluster hire of faculty members focused on serving racially minoritized communities (e.g., Latinx therapists, Black/African American service emphasis, Native American/Indigenous scholarship).			
	The campus has provided the faculty cluster with intensive, ongoing coordination and onboarding support during the faculty members' first five to seven years.			
	The search has a secondary review committee to ensure accountability for department-based assessments for meeting the equity-minded search criteria.			
Teaching Demonstration	Candidates are assessed on the use of asset- based, non-deficit language about Latinx, Black, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students and communities.			
	Candidates are assessed on teaching strategies that have been shown to have an impact on inequities for Latinx, Black, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students.			
Interview Questions	Candidates have clear examples of how they have demonstrated their commitment to Latinx, Black, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students and communities.			
	Candidates for faculty positions can cite clear examples of how they have demonstrated their success in serving Latinx, Black, Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students.			

Equity-Minded Hiring Criteria

When a search concludes, the overarching evaluation of the process's effectiveness is the extent to which the new faculty member satisfies and exceeds the documented search criteria. Search criteria refer to the benchmarks a department sets to evaluate prospective candidates for a faculty position. There are usually different levels of search criteria: "required" or "minimum," and "preferred." Required or minimum criteria are mandatory factors that each candidate must meet for consideration, such as whether the applicant has a terminal degree, the discipline that degree is in, a record of relevant research and/or service, and/or demonstration of an ability to secure funding. In contrast, preferred criteria are those that are desired or preferred, regarding a candidate's years of experience, areas of specialty, or understanding of an institution or a department and its mission. Our focus here is on required or minimum criteria.

One strategy that promotes equity-minded student success, but also increases faculty diversity, is to **have *required* evaluation criteria focused on minoritized communities**. To identify the focus of the criteria, a campus should evaluate its outcomes data (e.g., persistence, graduation, achievement) to determine groups that experience disproportionate impact. Most commonly, institutions will find that Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students are underserved by the institution, compared to other groups. Then, the campus should select the group or groups to be the focus of the search. These criteria should appear prominently among the posted criteria. For example, in a search for a counseling/therapy faculty member, a campus could have search criteria focused on whether the candidate has demonstrated a commitment to serving Latinx populations or a history of effective work at a Hispanic-Serving Institution. Other examples could be requiring candidates to

demonstrate a record of success in teaching, service, and/or research focused on Black/African American populations or requiring candidates to have a record of research and scholarly activities focused on American Indian/Alaska Natives. **In all these examples, the search is focused on the potential contributions of the candidate as opposed to the candidate's individual characteristics** (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender). That said, more Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN candidates will typically be among the applicants because of the specialized search criteria.

Table 2 presents sample hiring criteria from two different institutions. The first is from Santa Barbara City College (SBCC), a public community college that engaged in a large cluster hire of faculty members (see next section on cluster hiring) and used criteria that evaluated a prospective faculty member's demonstrated commitment to serving Black and Brown students. These criteria were developed in response to equity gaps in student outcomes between Black and Brown students and their peers. The second example is from San Diego State University (SDSU), a large urban public institution with an emphasis on public-facing research. These equity-focused criteria, called Building on Inclusive Excellence (BIE), apply to all faculty searches in all disciplines. At SDSU, the definition of underrepresented students and populations is based on the Graduation Initiative 2025, which primarily targets equity gaps for Black/African American, Latinx, and Native American students. In the examples from SBCC and SDSU, the recurrent phrasing of the criteria is on faculty members' "demonstrated commitment," "demonstrated knowledge," "expertise" and "contribution" to Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students and communities.

Table 2. Sample Hiring Criteria

Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) Hiring Criteria
A candidate:
☐ Has experience in or has **demonstrated commitment** to teaching, mentoring and/or engaging in services for Black and Brown students.
☐ Has **demonstrated knowledge** of barriers for Black and Brown students and experience in addressing disproportionate impacts at an institution.
☐ Has experience in or has **demonstrated commitment** to helping Black and Brown students navigate a higher education institution.
☐ Has experience or has **demonstrated commitment** to integrating elements of culturally relevant and inclusive pedagogy.
☐ SBCC has reserved the following 24 tenure-track faculty positions to seek faculty members with the expertise to lead its institution in serving Black and Brown students.
San Diego State University Hiring Criteria
A candidate:
☐ Is **committed** to engaging in service with underrepresented populations within the discipline.
☐ Has **demonstrated knowledge** of barriers for underrepresented students and faculty members within the discipline.
☐ Has **experience** or has **demonstrated commitment** to teaching and mentoring underrepresented students.
☐ Has **experience** or has **demonstrated commitment** to integrating understanding of underrepresented populations and communities into research.
☐ Has **experience** in or has **demonstrated commitment** to extending knowledge of opportunities and challenges in achieving artistic/scholarly success to members of an underrepresented group.
☐ Has **experience** in or has **demonstrated commitment** to research that engages underrepresented communities.
☐ Has **expertise** or **demonstrated commitment** to developing expertise in cross-cultural communication and collaboration.
☐ Has research interests that **contribute** to diversity and equal opportunity in higher education.

In addition to required search criteria, required hiring criteria are only effective when mechanisms are in place for accountability. For instance, perhaps there is a department that has not fared well historically in the treatment of Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students and faculty members. If this department uses equity-minded hiring criteria without accountability from outside the department, it is unlikely the department will evaluate candidates meaningfully based on the criteria. Instead, semifinalists and finalists brought to campus will most likely mirror the identities and experiences of current faculty members in the department. Moreover, candidates considered will not be as effective in serving students who are experiencing disproportionate impacts in the department.

Some institutions combat this challenge by establishing a secondary committee at the institutional or college level that also evaluates candidates based on the criteria. The secondary committee must be formed in line with campus policies and collective bargaining agreements, if applicable, which often means the committee will need to be staffed by tenured/tenure-track faculty members. This committee could be responsible for reviewing the application materials (e.g., CV, letter of intent, teaching philosophy, diversity statement) of candidates who made the finalist round. Based on a rigorous evaluation of the candidate relative to the criteria, the secondary committee can then determine whether the candidate meets the criteria and can be advanced to a campus visit. If a candidate does not meet the criteria, the individual would be rejected from the pool, and the original committee could submit another candidate for consideration. A clear message should be that the secondary committee will only allow candidates to participate in a campus visit if they have a demonstrated record of success with Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students. But above all, departments with a history of not embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion would need to make a compelling case for why they are seeking to diversify their faculties and discuss their commitments to ensure that a new colleague would be entering a climate of support that is conducive to long-term success.

The recommendation to use equity-minded search criteria is foundational to efforts to improve student success, reduce equity gaps, and promote faculty diversity. Thus, this recommendation is an overarching one that can be highly effective when properly implemented. In the case of SDSU, these criteria are used for all searches; at SBCC, these criteria are employed with cluster hiring. Ideally, an institution would have equity-minded search criteria in place for all hires. These criteria could be more generally focused on underserved Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students. Then the campus could employ more targeted criteria in a cluster hire (e.g., Latinx, Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Southeast Asian).

Equity-Themed Cluster Hiring

Cluster hiring can serve as a key strategy for increasing faculty diversity. A cluster hire refers to hiring multiple faculty positions at the same time based on a thematic element (e.g., sustainability, social justice, big data, diversity, ethnic studies). Many colleges and universities have explored cluster hires to increase their faculty diversity. In some cases, this strategy has resulted in cluster hires focused on adding faculty members from historically underrepresented and underserved populations (e.g., Black, Latinx, American Indian/Alaska Native). However, institutions in many states are not permitted to consider candidates' racial diversity in the hiring process. For these states, **one strategy is to conduct a cluster hire focused on candidates' success with Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students**, as discussed previously. Our experience has shown Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN candidates for faculty positions are highly represented in searches when asked to demonstrate their record of success in serving Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students. Thus, what is good for student success also can be positive for hiring a diverse faculty cluster.

Where cluster hiring is explicitly focused on diversifying the faculty, we recommend the use of cluster hiring for searches targeted toward one racial/ethnic population, as opposed to searches more generally focused on multiple racial/ethnic groups. More targeted cluster criteria help position the cluster for being marketed to prospective candidates and are more likely to produce a cohort of new faculty members who can best support one another. To conduct a cluster hire, the campus could

announce a total of 10 to 20 tenure-track faculty positions that have been set aside for a search, with a theme for the cluster related to the targeted population. The overarching criteria for the cluster would be to hire faculty members with a demonstrated record of success in teaching students in the targeted population.

Academic departments should be given an opportunity to submit proposals to secure a new faculty line in the cluster. Tenure-track faculty positions are highly valued resources at most colleges and universities; thus, there is an inherent incentive for departments that want to maintain and grow faculty lines. Proposals could include faculty members who will work in a single department (e.g., counseling, biology, public health) or those who may have joint appointments. One strategy for conducting a cluster hire with no new resources is to use replacement lines. Every year, faculty members retire or move on to different institutions, which creates an opportunity to hire new employees using existing funding sources. Clear instructions on how to submit a request for a new faculty line that will be part of a cluster should be provided to academic departments.

The campus could implement a rigorous process to evaluate proposals based on their connection to the theme and to related plans for the recruitment and support of the candidates, if hired. **Institutions should consider a department's readiness to foster a healthy environment for Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN colleagues as a factor in hiring determinations**. One step toward doing so is to require the department to conduct a self-assessment that gets it to consider the status of its climate and what it needs to do to make sure it will be an environment where new colleagues thrive.

The campus should advertise the cluster search extensively, such as with diverse professional organizations and associations in the targeted discipline or field. Intentional emphasis should be placed on the cluster theme. From here, the search process could follow the normal search process procedures (e.g., review of applicants, semifinalist interviews, job talks).

Beyond this, the campus should have a **clear talent retention plan for how the cluster hires will be supported through tenure and promotion**. This plan should include orientation and onboarding, pre-identified support (e.g., research assistants, professional development dollars), intentional connections with campus leaders (e.g., president, vice presidents, chief diversity officer), and community building. The latter points are key. These individuals can support each other as they grow and develop in their careers at the institution. Again, they are best positioned to support one another when the criteria more narrowly target a specific racial community. Using equity-minded search criteria and cluster hires is only effective to the extent that the search process authentically honors the focus on racial equity.

Finally, to increase the likelihood of success for cluster hiring processes, institutions should include policies and strategies that allow for the hiring of spouses and other partners of desired candidates. This will likely require some additional resources, in the short term, for hiring units.

In summary, successful cluster hiring will:

- ✓ Target cluster hires for one racial/ethnic group of prospective candidates
- ✓ Highlight a track record of success in working with Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and/or AIAN students
- ✓ Prioritize hires across departments that are a part of the cluster
- ✓ Ensure that departments have supports in place to foster a healthy environment for recruited hires
- ✓ Advertise and engage in outreach for cluster faculty openings intentionally and beyond traditional approaches
- ✓ Have a plan of action for supporting these new faculty members' first several years on campus.

As a result, the next two recommendations focus on how to apply these criteria during candidate interviews in both the teaching evaluation and the assessment. We begin with the teaching evaluation.

Equity-Minded Teaching Evaluation

A common assessment used to make determinations about the "quality" of a faculty candidate is the teaching demonstration. The teaching demonstration provides applicants with an opportunity to make a presentation on a topic to provide the committee with insight on their teaching effectiveness. The presentation is often attended by faculty colleagues and a small group of students. That said, the **teaching demonstration is not often seen as a key evaluation tool for determining whether applicants have a demonstrated record of success in teaching and serving disproportionately impacted Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students**. If an analytic lens for teaching strategies and practices for students of color is employed, the teaching demonstration can be maximized for determining candidates' potential for success. In terms of key strategies and practices that can be used to evaluate candidates, decades of research on minoritized students can inform a department's approach. For instance, scholars have long discussed the importance of culturally relevant teaching, validation, relationship building, intrusive practices, and an understanding of racial microaggressions. These practices involve the following:

- ✓ **Culturally relevant teaching**. This practice refers to when educators intentionally connect the course content to their students' lives, experiences, and cultural contexts.[11] The approach centers diverse students in every aspect of the teaching and learning experience and can be accomplished by ensuring that the course content, learning objectives, perspectives, readings, illustrations, and examples are tied to the lived experiences of students of color. Culturally relevant teaching also acknowledges and leverages the cultural strengths and assets that students bring with them to the learning environment.
- ✓ **Validation**. This occurs when educators provide messages of encouragement that affirm

students' abilities and efforts. Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students are remarkably able to persist through significant external pressures (e.g., food insecurity, employment challenges) and hostile campus climates when they are exposed to educators who validate them. As noted by Rendón, "Validation is an enabling, confirming and supportive process initiated by in- and out-of-class agents that foster academic and interpersonal development".[12] We discuss positive and encouraging messages as being one way, among many, that educators can validate students. Validating messages are most impactful when they are positive and encouraging and received by students as authentic and supportive. Students need messages that encourage them in a range of different areas, including their expectations ("I know you are capable of great things"), degree utility ("This will create a better life for you and your family," "Your hard work is worth it"), resilience ("If you can overcome this, nothing can stop you," "No one has your drive"), intelligence ("You have the ability to do the work," "You can succeed"), and engagement ("I want to hear your perspective in the next class," "I can't wait to hear what you thought about the readings!").

- ✓ **Relationship building**. This occurs when educators build relationships with students as a precondition for effective teaching and learning. Positive relationships between Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students and their instructors have been shown to foster an environment conducive to success. As Wood et al.noted, educators should foster an environment where students can (a) trust or rely on them for support; (b) expect that they will be respected and that educators will be approachable and open; and (c) know their educators authentically care about them, both academically and personally.[13] Wood et al. assessed relationship building between faculty members and students of color by considering whether educators knew students' names, referred to them by their names, sought opportunities to talk or acknowledge their presence, and understood their personal and academic goals.[14]
- ✓ **Intrusive teaching**. This refers to strategies that build proactive assessment and interventions for students. For instance, if a faculty member recognizes that a student is experiencing a challenge, the faculty member can engage with the student directly to ask what is occurring and connect the student to relevant support services. In other words, intrusive teaching means intervening before a smaller issue with students (e.g.,

absenteeism, struggling with material, low exam scores) becomes a larger issue (e.g., a low grade, dropping out). One strategy for intrusive teaching is to require students to engage in practices known to lead to success in class. For instance, an instructor may know that the students most likely to succeed in the class are those who attend office hours and tutoring. An intrusive approach would be to build office hours and tutoring into the course.

- ✓ **Understanding racial microaggressions**. This refers to understanding statements that communicate racism in subtle ways, the underlying messages they convey, and how racial microaggressions affect student performance. Racial microaggressions refer to subtle messages that insult or invalidate the lives and experiences of minoritized people. Pierce developed the concept of microaggressions, which are the ways that subtle, everyday racism impacts the dignity of Black people.[15] Since then, Sue et al. expanded the concept of racial microaggressions to address the experiences of people of color (broadly defined) and other marginalized groups (e.g., women, people with disabilities, LGBTIAQ+ community).[16] Educators who are effective with students of color are familiar with the concept of microaggressions, can identify microaggressions when they occur, understand the underlying insults and invalidations hidden within speech and actions, embrace different conversations on race as a learning moment, and understand how microaggressions influence student success.

Selection committees should employ a list of strategies that are effective with Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students and rate prospective faculty members using a rubric that evaluates their use of these strategies.

Again, the focus here is on hiring faculty members who have a demonstrated record of success in serving disproportionately impacted Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students. Faculty members with a demonstrated record of success in teaching disproportionately impacted students are those whose yield course success rates for these students meet or surpass the

rates of their faculty peers. These faculty members also are among those with a reputation for creating a culturally relevant teaching and learning experience for students, as well as for building relationships with students that are intrusive and grounded in trust, mutual respect, and authentic care. These faculty members will be most readily available to help the institution address racial equity gaps and will be more representative of Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN faculty members. Thus, a focus on student success can also be a win for faculty diversity.

Appendix A presents a sample teaching evaluation rubric that can be used to assess a candidate's ability to foster a healthy learning environment for disproportionately impacted Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students. **The five-part rubric includes evaluation criteria for culturally relevant teaching, validating messages, relationship building, intrusive teaching, and racial microaggressions**. When a candidate participates in a teaching demonstration, the evaluation from faculty peers and students should be focused on the degree to which this candidate would resonate and be effective with Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students, based on the criteria offered. Feedback from Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students should be part of this evaluation strategy, which we address in the next section. Ultimately, candidates who do not exceed in these practices should not be advanced in the search process, as they will not be effective in reducing racial equity gaps. An authentic evaluation of candidates' teaching practices is essential to the effectiveness of an equity-minded teaching evaluation.

Although this recommendation focuses on teaching demonstrations, candidates for faculty positions at research institutions may deliver a research presentation in lieu of a teaching demonstration or in addition to the teaching demonstration. **We believe a research presentation could be evaluated similarly to determine candidates' demonstrated focus on minoritized communities**.

This evaluation would involve assessing candidates' research about communities of color to determine whether it:

- ✓ Is asset-based and not deficit framing;
- ✓ Uses a critical lens that critiques systems and policies;
- ✓ Connects to the lived sociocultural realities of Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and/or AIAN people; and
- ✓ Can be translated readily to improve the lives and conditions of Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN people.

Equity-Minded Interviews

Another major component of the faculty hiring process is the candidate interview. Candidates often are interviewed multiple times during a hiring cycle, including in a semifinalist interview, finalist interview, and community meetings or presentations (e.g., research presentation, teaching demonstration, community forum, meeting with students).

Each interview and engagement is an opportunity to evaluate whether candidates have a demonstrated record of success with Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students. When interviewing a candidate, educators should craft interview questions that are focused on the candidate's demonstrated record of success.

Too often, interview questions ask candidates about their exposure to diversity, not about actions that demonstrate their investment in advancing success for Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students. For example, one typical interview question asks, "Can you tell me about your experiences in working with diverse student populations?" This question gives panelists insight into a candidate's exposure to diversity, not the person's commitment to diversity. It may prompt an interviewee to talk about experiences in diverse settings, but will fail to demonstrate what the candidate did to meet students' needs in this environment.

It would be better to say, "Please share three examples of how you changed your teaching practices to meet the needs of Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and/or AIAN students," or "Please share and discuss an initiative that you carried out to address inequities for Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and/or AIAN people."

These prompts are meant to solicit insight into how the candidate has demonstrated success with Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students.

Another example might be an interview prompt stating, "Please tell us about any training or development you have received on diversity, equity, and inclusion." This is a poorly phrased request, because candidates can respond by offering examples of classes and trainings, they have taken without explaining how what they learned transformed what they do.

A more equity-minded prompt would be, "Please share a diversity, equity, and inclusion training that you participated in and found to be impactful. What did you learn from this training, and how have you incorporated the lessons learned into your teaching practices?"

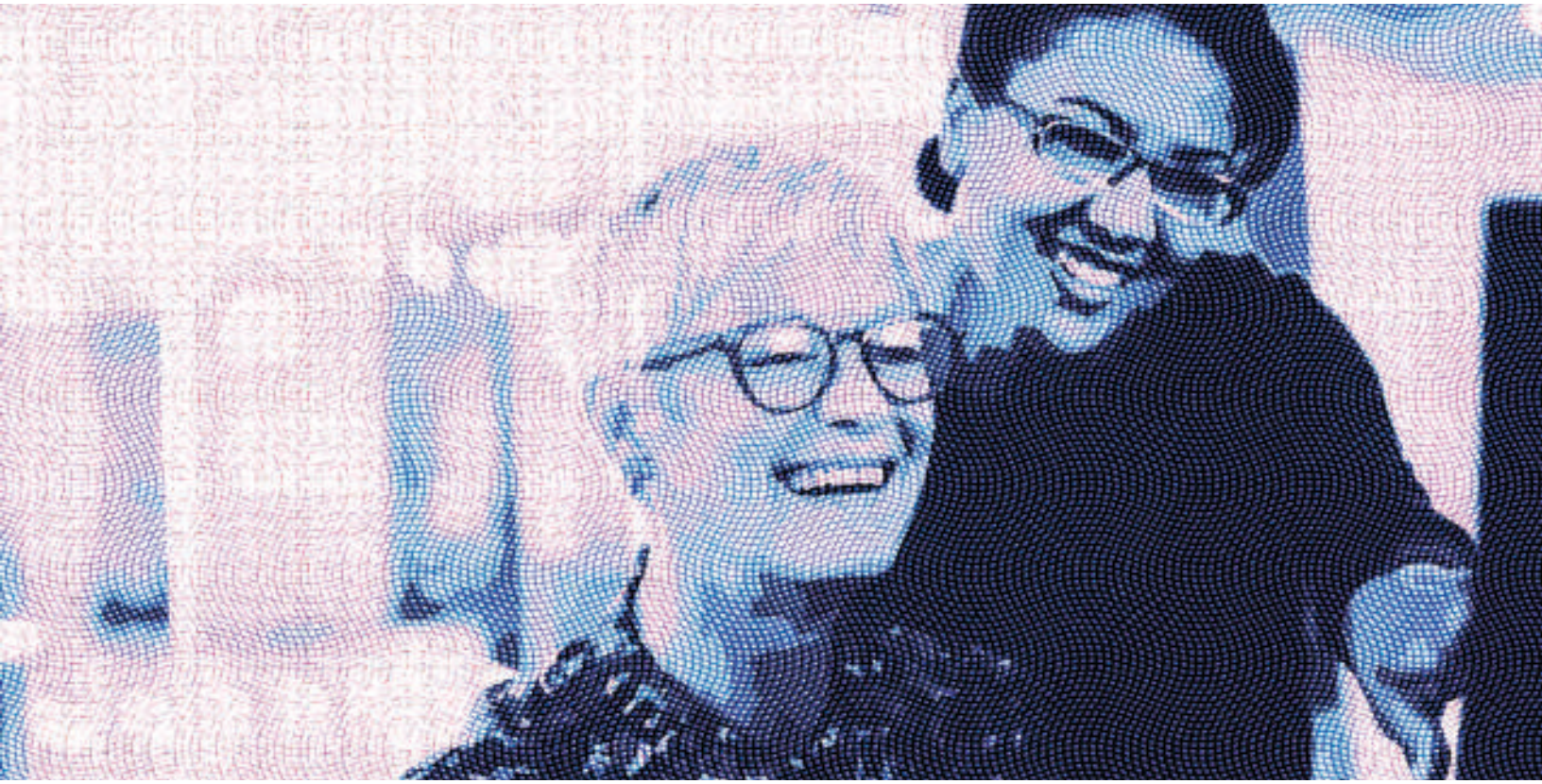
This question better addresses how candidates have employed what they learned to improve their practice, providing a better indication of their readiness to serve Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students and ameliorate racial equity gaps.

Another focus of any interview should be evaluating candidates on anti-deficit and institutional responsibility language).[17] Anti-deficit language refers to asset-based language that does not portray Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students through a deficit lens. A deficit lens blames students, their families, and their communities as the primary reasons for gaps in success. There are several common ideas often expressed through this lens, suggesting students are "lazy," "don't care about school," "come from bad communities," "have parents who do not value

education," and are "not committed to their studies." Similar language or ideas are detrimental to the success of underrepresented students. In addition, **committees should evaluate candidates on the use of language that demonstrates accountability and responsibility. This includes language that shows a candidate took personal responsibility for outcome gaps in student performance and for understanding the systemic barriers impeding student success**. The goal is to hire educators who first look "into the mirror" at what they are doing, or not doing, to improve their practices and student outcomes.

In summary, key equity-minded interview questions for prospective faculty members should include:

- ✓ Can you give me three examples of how you've changed your teaching practices to meet the needs of Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and/or AIAN students?"
- ✓ Can you give me an example of an initiative that you carried out to address inequities for Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and/or AIAN people?
- ✓ What training have you received about diversity, equity, and inclusion, and how have you implemented what you have learned?



Conclusion

As the nation seeks to maintain its standing in the global economy, there is a need to cultivate a culturally competent and diverse workforce. There are many benefits to diversifying the college and university faculty. Most commonly, arguments are made that Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN faculty members are well situated to prepare students, particularly white students, for a diverse, global marketplace.[18] This perspective ignores that parity of representation is an ethical imperative, and that faculty diversification serves to benefit Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN students by providing them with visible role models and mentors, thus leading to a more welcoming environment. Extensive research on Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN faculty members repeatedly shows that they are more effective instructors (on par) than their colleagues. They also are more likely to use a broader range of instructional strategies that help students develop their personal values, advance their socioemotional development, build their moral character, and provide an enhanced understanding of who they are. Moreover, diverse faculty are more likely to instill a commitment to public service and to advocating for the greater good.[19]

Indeed, our work has shown that Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN faculty members are more likely to engage in instructional practices that are critical to the success of underserved students. Specifically, Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN faculty members are more likely to build relationships with students by knowing their names, referring to them by name, and understanding their goals (e.g., academic, career, personal). They are also more likely to employ culturally relevant teaching strategies that address issues of bias and stereotypes; recognize the intellectual contributions of diverse people; and connect course content to the lives, issues, and experiences of students of color.[20] For all of these reasons and more, inclusive hiring is good for the campus, its students, and the future of our diverse and multi-racial higher education system across America.

To learn more about inclusive hiring, please visit www.coralearning.org

Rubric for Evaluating Faculty Candidates

5 = Always **4** = Often **3** = Sometimes **2** = Occasionally **1** = Rarely **0** = Not Relevant

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Culturally relevant teaching Evidence of the following: • Faculty candidate intentionally connects the course content to the lives, experiences, and cultural contexts of their students. • Faculty candidate centers diverse communities in course content, materials (e.g., slides, web), readings, examples, and other course products. • Faculty candidate actively demonstrates the contributions of diverse people to the field.						
Validating messages Example messages can include the following: • "I know you are capable of great things." • "This will create a better life for you and your family." • "If you can overcome this, nothing can stop you." • "You have the ability to do the work." • "I believe in you, I'm confident you will be successful." • "I can't wait to hear what you thought about the readings!"						

5 = Always **4** = Often **3** = Sometimes **2** = Occasionally **1** = Rarely **0** = Not Relevant

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Relationship Building Evidence of the following: • Making an intentional effort to learn all students' names in their classes (especially Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander students). • Asking a student's name and then referring to them by that name. • Knowing at least one academic or career goal the student has for the future and referencing that goal when speaking to them. • Knowing at least one personal factor (e.g., interests, siblings) about a student and referencing these factors when speaking to them.						
Intrusive Teaching Evidence of the following: • Requiring engagement and explaining why engagement that fosters an environment of success (e.g., tutoring, office hours) is a course expectation. • Monitoring students' performance (e.g., attendance, scores, disposition in class) on academic matters. • A strategy for intervening when student performance patterns indicate early warning signs for needed intervention(s). • Having a structured approach to regularly check-in with and meaningful feedback from students.						

5 = Always	**4** = Often	**3** = Sometimes	**2** = Occasionally	**1** = Rarely	**0** = Not Relevant

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Racial Microaggressions Evidence of the following: • Fosters an environment where Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander students feel like they can engage in the classroom. • Instructor uses asset-based (non-deficit) language to refer to Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander students. • Instructor uses examples involving Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander communities that are not stereotypical. • Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander are presented as positive people or resisting racial inequities and systemic oppression. • Instructor guides conversation to avoid stereotypes and insults towards Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander students. • The instructor intervenes and questions the thought process when issues of racial stereotypes emerge.						

SUGGESTED EQUITY-MINDED FACULTY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- [ ] What students in our university/college/department/program are disproportionately-impacted? On what student success metrics?
- [ ] As you are aware, we are intentionally seeking a colleague who can help us close racial/ethnic equity gaps in student success. What is it about this position that compelled you to apply?
- [ ] From your perspective, what are the reasons why racially diverse students are disproportionately-impacted in education?
- [ ] Please share one example of how you have redesigned a course and/or your teaching practices to meet the needs of racially diverse students.
- [ ] How have you incorporated a practice or lesson learned in an equity-focused professional learning experience into your teaching?
- [ ] What theories or perspectives inform your teaching practices?
- [ ] If you were to become a faculty member in our department, how can we best support you in building your capacity to serve disproportionately-impacted students?
- [ ] What can you learn/gain from teaching/working with racially minoritized students?
- [ ] What service commitments or other experiences have you been involved in at your current institution/organization/institute/etc. that reflect your commitment to advancing racial/ethnic diversity in our field?
- [ ] How do your lived experiences outside of your role as an educator reflect a commitment to racially diverse communities?
- [ ] What is diversity? What do you think are the challenges and responsibilities associated with teaching a diverse group of students while simultaneously maintaining rigorous academic standards? How do you meet those challenges and responsibilities?

Endnotes

1 Harper, S. R., & Hurtado, S. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. New directions for student services, 2007 (120), 7-24.; Hurtado, S. (2001). Linking diversity and educational purpose: How diversity affects the classroom environment and student development. In G. Orfield (Ed.). Diversity challenged: Evidence on the impact of affirmative action (pp. 187-203). Harvard Education Publishing Group; Hurtado, S., Milem, J. F., Clayton-Pedersen, A. R., & Allen, W. R. (1998). Enhancing campus climates for racial/ethnic diversity: Educational policy and practice. The review of higher education, 21(3), 279-302.

2 Wood, J. L. (2021, September 7). 5 ways to make a real improvement in hiring Black professors. The Chronicle of Higher Education. https://www.chronicle.com/article/5-ways-to-make-a-real-improvement-in-hiring-black-professors

3 Almanac. (2022a). Students' gender, race, and ethnicity, by sector and enrollment status, Fall 2020. The Chronicle of Higher Education.

4 ibid.

5 Almanac. (2022b). Full-time instructional faculty members by gender, rank, race and ethnicity, Fall 2020. The Chronicle of Higher Education.

6 IPEDS (2023)

7 Turner, C. S. V. (2002). Diversifying the faculty: A guidebook for search committees. Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

8 McNair, T. B., Bensimon, E. M., & Malcolm-Piqueux, L. (2020). From equity talk to equity walk: Expanding practitioner knowledge for racial justice in higher education. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

9 Turner, C. S. V. (2002). Diversifying the faculty: A guidebook for search committees. Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

10 ibid.

11 Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. American Educational Research Journal, 32(3), 465–491. https://doi.org/10.2307/1163320

12 Rendón, L. I. (1994). Validating culturally diverse students: Toward a new model of learning and student development. Innovative Higher Education, 19, 33–51. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01191156

13 Wood, J. L., & Harris III, F. (2017). Supporting men of color in the community college: A guidebook. Lawndale Hill.

14 Wood, J. L., Harris III, F., & White, K. (2015). Teaching men of color in the community college: A guidebook. Montezuma Publishing.

15 Pierce, C. M. (1970). Black psychiatry one year after Miami. Journal of the National Medical Association, 62(6), 471–473.

16 Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. American Psychologist, 62(4), 271–286. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.62.4.271 Turner, C. S. V. (2002). Diversifying the faculty: A guidebook for search committees. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

17 Bensimon, E. M., Rueda, R., Dowd, A. C., & Harris III, F. (2007). Accountability, equity, and practitioner learning, and change. Metropolitan Universities, 18(3), 28-45.

18 Turner, C. S. V. (2002). Diversifying the faculty: A guidebook for search committees. Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

19 Antonio, A.L. (2002). Faculty of color reconsidered: Reassessing contributions to scholarship. The Journal of Higher Education, 73(5), 582–602. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2002.11777169

20 Wood, J. L., Harris III, F., & White, K. (2015). Teaching men of color in the community college: A guidebook. Montezuma Publishing.

Acknowledgements

This brief was authored by J. Luke Wood, Ph.D., President of Sacramento State University, and Frank Harris, III, Ph.D., Interim Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at SDSU. The Campaign for College Opportunity and the authors thank Dr. Estela Bensimon, Dr. Francisco Rodriguez, and Dr. Joseph Castro for their review and thoughtful feedback on this paper. The authors also thank Dr. Tina M. King and Dr. Idara Essien for their support of our scholarship.

We are grateful to the funders who are supporting this Affirming Equity, Ensuring Inclusion, and Empowering Action series of briefs, including The College Futures Foundation, The Lumina Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, The Stuart Foundation, GPSN, and Eileen and Harold Brown.

Please visit our website for more resources to affirm equity, ensure inclusion, and empower action.
www.collegecampaign.org

facebook.com/**collegecampaign** @**CollegeOpp**

LOS ANGELES OFFICE
1149 S. Hill Street, Ste. 925
Los Angeles, CA 90015
Tel: (213) 744-9434
Fax: (877) 207-3560

SACRAMENTO OFFICE
1512 14th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: (916) 443-1681
Fax: (916) 443-1682

WASHINGTON, D.C. OFFICE
1016 16th Street NW, Suite 100
Washington, D.C. 20036
Tel: (202) 293-2828

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thomas A. Saenz, Chair
Edward C. Bush, Vice Chair
Maria Anguiano, Treasurer
J. Luke Wood, Secretary

Brooke Armour
Estela Mara Bensimon
Lena Carew
Mellissa E. Gallegos
Paul Granillo
Juan Sánchez Muñoz

Maria Ott
Julie Peller
Reshma Shamasunder
Joseph Villela
Andy Wong