

# PIERCE COLLEGE

## BIENNIAL EQUITY STRATEGIC PLAN

2022

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### INTRODUCTION

In 2020, Pierce College set forth a bold goal to improve equitable student success: Build an anti-racist institution through bravery, care, and purpose. The goal is at the heart of Pierce’s [mission](#) to create quality educational opportunities for a diverse community of learners to thrive in an evolving world. The impetus behind this goal starts with the [Board of Trustees](#).

The purpose of this Equity Strategic Plan is to organize and coordinate Pierce College’s equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) activities and endeavors with the directives outlined in WA Senate Bills 5194 and 5227. This Equity Strategic Plan aligns with the district’s overall [strategic plan](#), which represents the college’s integrated Institutional Effectiveness and budget processes, and guides the college’s continued efforts toward mission. Five measurable core themes are integral to the strategic plan: Access; Excellence; Contribution to Community; Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and Student Learning and Success.

This Equity Strategic Plan is structured within the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education’s (NADOHE) [Framework for Advancing Anti-Racism Strategy on Campus](#). The framework emphasizes “ten (10) priority areas where anti-racism strategies would significantly improve conditions for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) students, faculty, and staff.” The 10 priority areas are as follows:

1. Institutional Structure
2. Policies and Procedures
3. Resource Allocation
4. Academic Equity and Student Success
5. Curriculum and Pedagogy
6. Hiring, Retention, and Promotion
7. Institutional Programming
8. Education/Training/Employee Development
9. Campus Climate/Culture
10. Admissions and Access

The directives outlined in WA Senate Bills [5194](#) and [5227](#) provide for equity and access in the community and technical colleges, and require diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism training and assessments at institutions of higher education, respectively. This Equity Strategic Plan was developed via an inclusive process of stakeholders including classified staff, faculty, administrative exempt staff, students, and community organizations. This plan will be updated on a biennial basis.

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### PRIORITY AREAS:

#### 1. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

*Purpose:* To create equitable systems by identifying and eliminating structural barriers within the higher education organization that prevent access to education.

- A. As also noted in priority area 10, “The community Pierce College serves will have access to comprehensive educational offerings and support services.” At Pierce College, Access is a core theme that is measured biennially in the Institutional Effectiveness Report and Scorecard. Multiple metrics inform indicators of achievement measuring each core theme. Learning opportunities, support services, and equitable enrollment are key objectives within the Access core theme.
- B. Pierce College will provide in its diversity program opportunities for students from historically marginalized communities to form student-based organizations, and to use community-based organizations, that permit students to work together to mentor and assist one another in navigating the educational system and to access trained mentors using evidence-based mentoring strategies. (Bill 5194, Sec. 3)
- C. All students receiving Washington college grants, college bound scholarships, or federal Pell grants should receive the supports, including mentoring, that have been proven to increase completion rates. (Bill 5194, Sec. 1)

#### 2. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

*Purpose:* To replace structural and systemic policies and practices that impede the success of BIPOC and historically marginalized groups with anti-racism policies and practices.

- A. As also noted in priority area 9, Pierce College will conduct a campus climate assessment to understand the current state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the learning, working, and living environment on campus for students, faculty, and staff. The assessment will occur, at minimum, every five years. Pierce College will use the results of the campus climate assessment to inform professional development. Pierce College may use an existing campus climate assessment to meet this requirement. The design of an existing or new campus climate assessment will involve, at minimum, students, college diversity officers, faculty, and staff. The campus climate assessment may also include questions evaluating the prevalence of discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, and retaliation on and off campus, in addition to student, faculty, and staff

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- knowledge of campus policies and procedures addressing discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, and retaliation. College diversity officers and students will be consulted in the development of recommendations. (Bill 5227, Sec. 3)
- B. Pierce College will, at minimum, conduct annual listening and feedback sessions for diversity, equity, and inclusion for the entire campus community during periods between campus climate assessments. Pierce will, to the maximum extent practicable, compensate students for their participation in the annual listening and feedback sessions. (Bill 5227, Sec. 3)
  - C. Beginning July 1, 2022, Pierce College will report findings or progress in completing its campus climate assessment and, when applicable, information on its listening and feedback sessions annually to the state board for community and technical colleges. Pierce College will also publish annually on its public website the results of either the campus climate assessment or listening and feedback sessions. (Bill 5227, Sec. 3)

### 3. RESOURCE ALLOCATION

*Purpose:* To require the institution to audit its allocation of resources with an equity lens to fund diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts appropriately and ensure that the overall spend is in alignment with anti-racism practices.

- A. Although directives regarding resource allocation are not specifically outlined in WA Senate Bills 5194 and 5227, it is noteworthy to mention that Pierce College allocates its resources through an open, collaborative, and transparent budget process. Through the realignment of resources, Pierce incentivizes new efforts that lead to a more equitable college to advance student success. All of these efforts are supported and sustained by a budget process that prioritizes mission fulfillment and student success, as well as the district goal to become an anti-racist institution.

### 4. ACADEMIC EQUITY AND STUDENT SUCCESS

*Purpose:* To create equitable systems that promote academic equity and student success for BIPOC students inside and outside of the classroom in any higher education organization.

- A. “Students will experience quality, relevant learning that maximizes their potential for success.” At Pierce College, Student Learning and Success is a core theme that is measured biennially in the Institutional Effectiveness Report and Scorecard. Multiple

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metrics inform indicators of achievement measuring each core theme. Educational momentum, learning outcomes, and transfer and employment success are key objectives within the Student Learning and Success core theme.

- B. Pierce College will continue to provide data analysis of student learning as well as program and service outcomes. Data will be used to inform program development, the creation and further refinement of student pathways, and to provide opportunities for early intervention to help students succeed. (Bill 5194, Sec. 4)

### 5. CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY

*Purpose:* To ensure curriculum and pedagogy are used to design the classroom experience for academic equity.

- A. Pierce College will provide a program, either existing or new, on diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism to students beginning with the 2024-25 academic year. Pierce College may expand the focus of its program to reflect the needs of the campus community. This program will be developed in partnership with the institution's administration, faculty, staff, and student leadership groups. Efforts will be made to ensure the program is developed and delivered by individuals with innate and acquired experience and expertise in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The content framework for each program will be posted on Pierce's public website for parents and community members. (Bill 5227, Sec. 4)
- B. Pierce College will create an evaluation for program participants. The evaluation will, at minimum, capture a participant's level of satisfaction with the program and how they will apply the program to their education. (Bill 5227, Sec. 4)
- C. The purpose of each program will be rooted in eliminating structural racism against all races and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion while improving outcomes for students from historically marginalized communities. The program will also include elements that focus on commonalities and humanity. Pierce may further develop a curriculum that is reflective of the needs of the campus community. (Bill 5227, Sec. 4)
- D. During the 2024-25 academic year, all degree-seeking students at Pierce College will participate in the program, regardless of whether they are a full-time or part-time student. Beginning with the 2025-26 academic year, the program is only required for degree-seeking students who are new or have transferred to the institution and have not yet participated in a required diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism program at an institution of higher education. Students will be allowed to opt out of participation in the program if they self-attest to taking a diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism training at an institution of higher education within the previous five years. (Bill 5227, Sec. 4)

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### 6. HIRING, RETENTION, AND PROMOTION

*Purpose:* To implement safeguards within institutions of higher education that promote equitable processes and to eliminate racist practices in hiring, retention, and promotion decisions.

- A. Pierce College recognizes that students from underrepresented minorities are far more likely to complete degrees or workforce training certification programs if the faculty and staff of the college reflect the diversity of the student body. Therefore, Pierce will develop and implement plans to increase faculty and staff diversity. (Bill 5194, Sec. 1)
- B. Funding provided, Pierce College will increase the number of full-time tenured positions in the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium. Pierce recognizes the legislature's goal is that community and technical colleges increase the numbers of full-time tenured positions by adding 200 new full-time tenure-track positions in the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium. Pierce acknowledges that the legislature considers that this goal is best accomplished through converting part-time faculty positions to full-time tenure-track positions and by hiring new full-time faculty through processes identified in each college's diversity, equity, and inclusion of all races strategic plan. If specific funding for the purpose of conversion assignments proposed in this section is not provided in the omnibus appropriations act, the conversion assignments proposed must be delayed until such time as specific funding is provided. (Bill 5194, Sec. 5)

### 7. INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMMING

*Purpose:* To provide essential knowledge and the necessary tools to act towards repairing historical wrongdoings along with restoring autonomy based on pride, territoriality, self-determination, and self-defense.

- A. The diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism student programming noted in priority area 5, and the diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism professional development for faculty and staff noted in priority area 8, will help support areas of concern within this priority area.

### 8. EDUCATION/TRAINING/EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

*Purpose:* To provide anti-racism training and professional development opportunities to the students, faculty, staff, and the broader community.

- A. "Pierce College will assure quality and continuous improvement in all endeavors." At Pierce College, Excellence is a core theme that is measured biennially in the Institutional Effectiveness Report and Scorecard. Multiple metrics inform indicators of achievement

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measuring each core theme. Department and program outcomes, institutional viability, and employee learning and development are key objectives within the Excellence core theme.

- B. On its website and in its strategic plans, programs, and reports, Pierce College will include [definitions](#) for key terms including: diversity, equity, inclusion, culturally competent, culturally appropriate, historically marginalized communities, communities of color, low-income communities, and community organizations. (Bill 5194, Sec. 3)
- C. On its website and included in the guided pathways program documentation and reports, Pierce College will include [definitions](#) for the following key terms: diversity, equity, inclusion, culturally competent, culturally appropriate, historically marginalized communities, communities of color, low-income communities, and community organizations. (Bill 5194, Sec. 4)
- D. Pierce College will continue to provide professional development focused on diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism for faculty and staff. Development of the program will be in partnership with Pierce's administration, faculty, staff, and student leadership groups. Efforts will be made to ensure the program is developed and delivered by individuals with innate and acquired experience and expertise in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The content framework for professional development will be posted on Pierce's website for parents and community members. The strengthened professional development will begin in the 2022-23 academic year. (Bill 5227, Sec. 2)
- E. Pierce College will create an evaluation for professional development participants. The evaluations will, at minimum, capture a participant's level of satisfaction with the professional development opportunity, the degree to which the learning objectives were achieved, and how the knowledge gained may be applied to their work. The completed evaluations will be shared annually with the state board for community and technical colleges. (Bill 5227, Sec. 2)
- F. The curriculum and other pertinent information regarding the program will be submitted beginning July 1, 2023, and, subsequently, if there is a meaningful change or by request of the reporting entity. The purpose of each professional development program curriculum will be rooted in eliminating structural racism against all races and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion while improving academic, social, and health and wellness outcomes for students from historically marginalized communities. The program will also include elements that focus on commonalities and humanity. Pierce College may further develop a curriculum that is reflective of the needs of the campus community. (Bill 5227, Sec. 2)
- G. Beginning with the 2022-23 academic year, every new faculty and staff member at Pierce College will participate in the program, regardless of whether they are a full-time or part-time employee. All faculty and staff participating in the professional development program will complete an evaluation. Other faculty and staff may participate in the professional development program as needed or required. Pierce will

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develop a goal of at least 80 percent total faculty and staff completing the professional development program every two years and will report on their goal's progress. Pierce will determine how best to show progress towards this goal. Part-time faculty and staff who are employed at more than one institution of higher education will only be required to complete the professional development program at one institution if they provide proof of completion to their other institution of higher education employers to receive credit for participation. (Bill 5227, Sec. 2)

- H. Beginning with the 2024-25 academic year, 35 percent of tenured faculty and 35 percent of administrators at Pierce College will complete the professional development program every two years, regardless of whether they are a full-time or part-time employee. (Bill 5227, Sec. 2)

### 9. CAMPUS CLIMATE/CULTURE

*Purpose:* To gauge the institution's racialized temperature to illuminate and address inequitable conditions (policies and practices relating to both institutional and interpersonal interactions) that affect the well-being of all members of the campus community, including BIPOC students, staff, and faculty.

- A. "Pierce College will promote an equitable, diverse environment for teaching, learning, and working, with collaborative decision-making and mutual respect." At Pierce College, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is a core theme that is measured biennially in the Institutional Effectiveness Report and Scorecard. Multiple metrics inform indicators of achievement measuring each core theme. Infrastructure, shared governance, and inclusive engagement are key objectives within the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion core theme.
- B. Pierce College will establish a culturally appropriate outreach program that may include communities of color, students with disabilities, neurodiverse communities, and low-income communities, and be designed to assist potential students to understand the opportunities available in the community and technical college system. The outreach program may assist students with navigating the student aid system. The outreach program may include partnerships with appropriate community-based organizations and use research and supports from the student achievement council. (Bill 5194, Sec. 3)
- C. As also noted in priority area 2, Pierce College will conduct a campus climate assessment to understand the current state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the learning, working, and living environment on campus for students, faculty, and staff. The assessment will occur, at minimum, every five years. Pierce College will use the results of the campus climate assessment to inform professional development. Pierce College may use an existing campus climate assessment to meet this requirement. The design of an existing or new campus climate assessment will involve, at minimum, students,

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- college diversity officers, faculty, and staff. The campus climate assessment may also include questions evaluating the prevalence of discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, and retaliation on and off campus, in addition to student, faculty, and staff knowledge of campus policies and procedures addressing discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, and retaliation. College diversity officers and students will be consulted in the development of recommendations. (Bill 5227, Sec. 3)
- D. Pierce College will, at minimum, conduct annual listening and feedback sessions for diversity, equity, and inclusion for the entire campus community during periods between campus climate assessments. Pierce will, to the maximum extent practicable, compensate students for their participation in the annual listening and feedback sessions. (Bill 5227, Sec. 3)
  - E. Beginning July 1, 2022, Pierce College will report findings or progress in completing its campus climate assessment and, when applicable, information on its listening and feedback sessions annually to the state board for community and technical colleges. Pierce College will also publish annually on its public website the results of either the campus climate assessment or listening and feedback sessions. (Bill 5227, Sec. 3)

### 10. ADMISSIONS AND ACCESS

*Purpose:* To use anti-racism strategies to increase admission and access of BIPOC students to institutions of higher education.

- A. As also noted in priority area 1, “The community Pierce College serves will have access to comprehensive educational offerings and support services.” At Pierce College, Access is a core theme that is measured biennially in the Institutional Effectiveness Report and Scorecard.
- B. “Pierce College will be a recognized leader in building and sustaining academic, industry, and broad-based community partnerships to advance educational opportunities and align with economic development.” At Pierce College, Contribution to Community is a core theme that is measured biennially in the Institutional Effectiveness Report and Scorecard. Multiple metrics inform indicators of achievement measuring each core theme. Partnerships and collaboration, recognition of value, and economic development are key objectives within the Contribution to Community core theme.
- C. Pierce College will continue to fully implement its Guided Pathways structure including comprehensive mapping of student educational pathways with student end goals in mind. These will include transparent and clear career paths that are tightly aligned to the skills sought by employers. Pathways will align course sequences to show clear paths for students, alignment with K-12 and university curriculum, and skill sets needed to enter the workforce. (Bill 5194, Sec. 4)



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- D. Pierce College will provide dedicated advising and career counseling that helps students make informed program choices and develop completion plans. Advising services may include processes that help students explore possible career and educational choices while also emphasizing early planning. Advising will be culturally competent and with an emphasis on helping historically underserved, low-income, and students of color navigate their education. (Bill 5194, Sec. 4)
- E. Pierce College will provide a student success support infrastructure using programs that the state board for community and technical colleges finds have been effective in closing equity gaps among historically underserved student populations and improve student completion rates. In tandem with guided pathways implementation, student success support programs may include evidence-based elements such as: equity competent academic advising services; equity competent career development programming; clear information regarding financial aid and financial literacy; and inclusive curriculum and teaching practices. (Bill 5194, Sec. 4)