



**Equity and Inclusion
Interim Plan, 2020-2021**

At the start of academic year 2020-2021, Minnesota State College Southeast finds itself in the middle of two critical transitions. As of fall 2020, a national search for the next president of the institution will be launched. Interim President Lundblad will complete his term of service on June 30, and the college will move into new leadership on July 1. In addition, with the retirement of the previous campus diversity officer, Southeast has taken the opportunity to re-envision this role and, in September 2020, posted a search for a director of equity and inclusion. This is the first full-time, stand-alone equity position for the college, and it represents a renewed focus on issues of inclusion at the institution. The search is slated to be completed by the end of 2020.

Given these significant transitions, and in the absence of a current multi-year equity plan, the college has decided to assemble this one year, interim plan for equity and inclusion.

This plan represents the primary goals for academic year 2020-2021, and provides a roadmap for the college to prepare for new presidential leadership in July. The intent is that a new, multi-year equity and inclusion plan will be created over the summer and early fall of 2021 once the new president and the new director of equity and inclusion are both in place.

This plan is divided into three areas of responsibility: Those items that are college-wide, those that the new director of equity and inclusion will take on, and those that will be delegated to the equity and inclusion committee.

I. College Initiatives

- **Equity 2030**

The college is continuing its work in the system-wide [Equity 2030 initiative](#). College leaders will participate in Minnesota State trainings, planning sessions, and related projects to undertake these efforts. In addition, the spirit of Equity 2030 is being applied to a number of internal initiatives as the college moves its own work forward to reduce barriers and increase success for underserved students.

- **Equity by Design**

The most concrete work that Southeast is undertaking this year as a subset of Equity 2030 is the system-wide [Equity by Design project](#). Under the leadership of the vice president of academic affairs, a cross-functional team is working to undertake the work of this initiative to reduce the student academic success gap, in line with system timelines and targets.

- **Guided Learning Pathways**

As the Minnesota State system continues its work on instituting Guided Learning Pathways, the college will lead related initiatives on our campus. Southeast is already engaging in conversations looking at enhanced basic needs support for students, and ways to create stronger, more integrated student support structures inside and outside the classroom.

- **Student Success Committee**

Beginning in fall 2020, MSCS launched the Student Success Committee. The committee's focus is student retention, and includes staff from academic affairs, student affairs, and institutional effectiveness. The group's work is focused on the creation, implementation, and ongoing review of services, programs, policies, and practices that increase success and reduce barriers for all students. The committee will focus particular efforts on closing the achievement gap for historically underserved students.

- **Strategic Enrollment Planning**

In November 2020 the college will complete the Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) process that began last December. This process, guided by a model developed by Ruffalo-Noel-Levitz (a national enrollment firm), takes a data-driven approach to developing enrollment interventions for the next three to five years. A major theme that has developed through this work is a priority focus on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus, both for students and for employees. Initiatives coming out of this project will begin in spring 2021, and will drive major equity priorities and targets for the institution.

- **Director of Equity and Inclusion**

The college is conducting a search for a full time director of equity and inclusion. This position was previously only a quarter time, so this represents a significant step forward for MSCS. This person will begin in January 2021, and will have broad responsibility for equity and inclusion strategy, policy, programming, and direct student and community outreach. They will report to the VP of Student Affairs but will also have significant responsibility and influence in Academic Affairs and Human Resources. The director will serve as an advisor to the college president on issues of equity and inclusion.

II. Director of Equity and Inclusion

Beginning in January 2021, the new director of equity and inclusion will have a number of priority responsibilities to take on:

- **Diversity & Inclusion Committee**

The director will chair this committee, and will facilitate the development of committee priorities in collaboration with the group. They will also update and increase membership as needed.

- **Strategic Planning**

This individual will consult with the President, the Cabinet, and college committees on the Equity 2030 initiative, diversity issues within the college's continued strategic planning, and other issues of equity and inclusion on campus.

- **Disaggregation of Data**

Continuing work began by the previous campus diversity officer, the director will move forward efforts to disaggregate student success data specifically focused on students of color, Pell eligible students, and first generation students. Specifically they will:

- Identify underserved populations by program/degree option
- Identify service gaps and resource needs for underserved populations
- Collaborate with the Enrollment Team and the Student Success Team to develop improvement plans and strategic interventions

- **Create Community Connections**

The director will begin work to identify key underrepresented populations in the region and to begin to build connections within those communities.

- **Title III**

The college is in the process of preparing a Title III grant proposal for spring 2021, and the director will participate in the final stages of that planning/writing.

- **Programming**

The development and coordination of diversity and inclusion related events, educational opportunities, and campaigns will be a key goal for spring 2021. These will be programs targeted specifically for MSCS students.

- **Training**

The director will be responsible for facilitating, organizing, and supporting training for employees. This will include their participation on both the faculty and staff training committees, as well as creating other opportunities for employees throughout the year.

In addition they will coordinate the development of an equity and inclusion training series for the following academic year for college employees to participate in. The goal is the improving of campus cultural awareness and understanding of students and employees from groups other than one's own.

- **COVID-19**

The director will assist campus leaders, faculty, students and staff in providing suggestions for areas of priority during the COVID-19 crisis to advance a supportive, positive, and inclusive campus climate, and to ensure that the college is responding in real time to issues resulting from COVID-19 that are disproportionately affecting historically underserved students.

- **Affirmative Action Plan**

Together with the affirmative action officer, the director will begin work to build an MSCS Affirmative Action Plan in alignment with the system Equity 2030 initiative. The

plan will develop and prioritize strategic processes for hiring a more diverse workforce and develop and prioritize strategic processes for retention of diverse faculty and staff.

- **Supplier Diversity**

Together with the vice president of finance and administration, the director will work to develop a list of local underrepresented/minority/women-owned businesses to prioritize working with on campus when purchasing.

- **Three-year Strategic Plan**

The director will set the groundwork to begin creating a three-year strategic equity and inclusion plan for the college. This work will continue into the summer of 2021 to allow the new president to participate in the planning process, with a goal of finalizing a plan by the end of the calendar year.

III. Equity and Inclusion Committee

The equity and inclusion committee will resume meeting upon the hiring of a director of equity and inclusion. The committee will support the work of the college's strategic plan by collaborating and consulting on initiatives related to equity and inclusion within the plan. In addition, the committee will focus on the specific items below.

- **Policy Review**

The committee will be trained to conduct policy review through an equity lens and will begin the work of reviewing all campus policies through this tool. The committee will make improvement recommendations to campus policy owners in spring 2021 and into fall 2021. This will be the major work of the committee in 2021.

- **Training**

Consult on training plans for faculty and staff, as well as related training and educational opportunities/programming for students.

- **Programming**

The committee will organize between one and three additional campus events in the spring semester that further the college's work to promote equity and inclusion.