

Dear Members of the Executive Leadership Team:

The American River College ESL Program is committed to preparing English Language Learners with the requisite language skills to be successful in their academic and career pursuits. In reviewing the Student Equity Achievement Plan (SEA), it has come to the attention of the ESL Department that our program and students are conspicuously absent from the report. Traditionally, ESL has been one of the metrics used in equity plans/reports as language proficiency in the medium of instruction is clearly an equity issue. In the past, this has revealed disproportionate impact among Hispanic/Latino and male ESL learners at ARC. Perplexingly, these students are not included in the report, as well as others served by our program. While we understand that the new report template uses data and metrics required by the CCC Chancellor's Office, our concern is that the source of the data (CCC Apply) overlooks and excludes a significant number of disproportionately impacted students. First, the listed categories do not accurately capture Middle Eastern learners, a key population at ARC. These students are often categorized as "White" even though they do not identify as such nor benefit from white privilege. Additionally, a good number of these students, as well as other minority groups in our program, also fall under DSPS and low income. Taken together, these examples underscore an ongoing struggle for our department: obtaining targeted and accurate data. If the data is appropriately categorized and disaggregated, it's clear that ESL students check several boxes related to equity. Finally, our department also takes issue with the exclusion of the ESL Center from the SEA report. Nearing its third decade of operation and serving 450-500 of our 1,966 ESL students every semester, it is a productive campus-based program that relates directly to equity as it serves some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged within our population.

On behalf of our students, the ESL Department appreciates the Executive Leadership Team taking our concerns into consideration. Moving forward, we would like to see the shortcomings of the categories and data that inform the SEA report addressed in order to create a more equitable experience for English Language Learners and validate their contributions to our vibrant community.

Respectfully,
The ESL Department