



EXPLORING DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT: AFRICAN AMERICAN

FULL REPORT



OUR COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

American River College strives to uphold the dignity and humanity of every student and employee. We are committed to equity and social justice through equity-minded education, transformative leadership, and community engagement. We believe this commitment is essential to achieving our mission and enhancing our community.

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Cover Photo: Celebration of Excellence and Achievement for Students of African Descent (Source: ARC Website)

INTRODUCTION: FRAMING THE PROCESS

This Disproportionate Impact Report focuses on Black and African American students attending American River College (ARC). The report seeks to synthesize a historical perspective of African Americans in the United States with relevant literature and data analysis to provide the college with the basis of providing services to increase African American student success. Several theories are highlighted in the review of the literature which underscore high impact practices that would best serve African American students. Marginality and Mattering theory, Racial Identity Development theory as well as Critical Race theory (CRT) all provide a foundation for examining the institutional barriers that contribute to equity gaps and perpetuate the current system of power and privilege for Whites in the United States. Microaggressions and racial stereotype threat are just two salient examples of the institutional barriers which can derail African American students in their quest to achieve their educational goals.

This report also highlights research studies that demonstrate personal motivators that inspire, increase self-efficacy, and produce positive outcomes for African American students. Positive interactions with faculty, financial support, and culturally relevant curriculum are important factors in increasing success among African American students. A methodological framework for establishing a clear curricular pathway with equity-minded practices is also outlined. This framework includes an integrated student success team as well as an intrusive case management approach to ensure students take advantage of academic and student support services. A comprehensive list of recommended practices is provided and is based on relevant research studies as well as an analysis of local data. This plan is considered a living document that should be regularly revisited, evaluated and adapted based on new research and models of success.

AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE AFRICAN AMERICAN DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT PROJECT TEAM

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PURPOSE AND APPROACH

There currently exists an established achievement gap between African American students at ARC when compared to the aggregated or overall success rate of the entire college population. This gap is symptomatic of the many systemic barriers and societal conditions experienced by Black and African Americans in the United States. The purpose of this report is to investigate the experiences of Black and African American students attending ARC. This important work is intended to result in practical strategies to equitize student success and realize the institution's commitment to social justice and equity.

The observations, analysis, and recommendations in this document are reflective of an integrated team that was intentionally designed to draw from the collective wisdom of the African American community on campus as well as in the local area. The team assembled to do this work consisted of both full-time and part-time faculty, classified staff, students, administrators, and community members carefully selected for their knowledge and experience as well as their personal perspectives with regards to speaking to the challenges and needs of the targeted population.

The team was charged with considering the following:

- historical context of the education of African Americans in the United States
- research and literature in the field which outlines high impact practices that would best serve Black and African American students
- institutional barriers (historical and current) that perpetuate systems of power and privilege that contribute to the equity gap and impact the experiences of Black and African American students at ARC
- motivators (academic, personal, spiritual, cultural, etc.) that inspire and produce positive outcomes for Black and African American students as well as increase self-efficacy

From this foundation of knowledge and considering the college's existing efforts in Achieve and Guided Pathways, an appropriate methodological framework is presented along with actionable recommendations by which the college can move forward to affect change.

“Until the lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter.”

— *African Proverb*

Non-existence are the words that best describe the African American influence in the establishment of public education in colonial America. The fact that the framework of public education was birthed in an aristocracy with no concern for the welfare, dignity or education of Africans living in colonial America or even after the formal abolishment of slavery, it stands to reason that as a group, African Americans experience disproportionate impact. In the California Community College system, the term disproportionate impact is used to describe student groups that do not achieve equal outcomes on indicators of success when compared to the highest performing group or the college as a whole (California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, 2013, p. 4).

Beginning in the early 1600’s, education was available to White children in Colonial America although it was generally only accessible to those whose families had the knowledge to teach their own children or could afford to hire a tutor. Puritans, also known as English Protestants or Pilgrims, were the first noted to suggest the need for public education and began by teaching religious core values, writing and math (Nasaw, 1981). The first free public school supported by taxes was established in 1635 as the Boston Latin School which was designed to serve boys only (Cremin, 1970).

In 1775, the thirteen colonies in North America joined forces to fight for independence from the British Empire in what would become known as the Revolutionary War. The end of the war in 1783 officially established the formation of the United States. It also ushered in a new era in public education known as Common Schools. In the mid-1800s, Horace Mann, a politician and educator, was one of the first Americans to politically advocate for public common school education. Mann believed that in a democratic society, education should be free, universal and nonsectarian. John Locke, another early educator who despite being an aristocrat, as well as Noah Webster who developed and advocated for the American spelling book in education (i.e. Webster’s Dictionary), believed in educating the poor who were at that time, Whites and immigrants. Their ideas were the cornerstones of America’s 18th century enlightenment period of education (Nasaw, 1981).

Mann, Locke and Webster gained the influence of America’s political figures Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin and with them, were instrumental in shaping public education in the Northern states. Mann’s notable success was the overhaul of Massachusetts’ public education which he based on the system of education in Prussia (present day Germany). This model was also endorsed by Locke. Mann also established a series of schools to train teachers which earned him the distinction of being known as the father of public education. There were only a handful of schools in the Northern states open to Blacks, such as the African Free School in New York and the Abiel Smith School in Boston. However, public education for Blacks was not the common practice. Proposals to Northern states to establish "colored" colleges often resulted in violent reactions from Whites and these projects were abandoned. In Connecticut and New Hampshire, schools where Black and White children studied together were destroyed by mobs. Thus, White children had the opportunity to take advantage of and learn the value of education. It should be noted, however, that girls were not required to attend school. Common schools or compulsory education were primarily designed for White Anglo-Saxon, Protestant males (Nasaw, 1981).

While Northern states embraced the philosophical belief of knowledge as power and continued to foster common school education, Southern states vehemently opposed public education. Education was considered a private matter and not a concern for the Southern states. Southerners were plantation owners who owned slaves and the rural

communities made it difficult to justify local schools for children who were often several miles apart. Also, the Anglican religion of the South did not put quite as much emphasis on religious indoctrination through schooling as did Puritan New England. The southern way of life saw education as a threat to the institution of slavery (Nasaw, 1981).

SLAVERY IN THE AMERICAS

The story for African Americans in the U.S. began in 1619 in Jamestown, Virginia when approximately 20 captive Africans were sold into slavery to the Northern British American colonies. This practice of subjugation would last formally for nearly 250 years which is the span of nearly 10 generations. In 1641, Massachusetts was the first colony to legalize slavery and several other colonies soon followed. Slaves outnumbered many of their White slave masters. In some areas like Stono, South Carolina, slaves tried to escape slavery and rebelled by killing Whites and burning armory. Shortly after that rebellion, the Negro Act of 1740 was passed in response to a slave uprising. In practice, slaves were already being punished for attempting to learn to read but the act now made it legal to punish them. Slaves were also restricted from gathering in groups, moving freely, earning wages, and growing their own food. Schooling for African Americans, whether freed or enslaved, was not permitted by law and one could be fined or imprisoned if it was discovered that they were being schooled or educated (Anderson, 1988).

“Some know the value of education by having it. I know it’s value by not having it.”

— Frederick Douglas

It should be noted that by the early 1700s slaves made up one third of the population in the South; however, after the American Revolution ended and by the early 1800s, there were approximately 1.1 million slaves and over 3.9 million by 1860. In the early 1800’s, several slaves successfully escaped the Southern Colonies and traveled to the North where slaves were free (Fogel, 1974). The threat of continuing to lose their valuable slave labor which would impact the economy resulted in the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law. This law which was passed by Congress on September 18, 1850 required that escaped slaves be returned to their owners. Slave abolitionist often referred to the law as the “Bloodhound Bill” because dogs were used to track down and capture runaway slaves (Asante, 2002).

On January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. This proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln, freed all slaves in states that were rebelling against the North. The proclamation declared that slaves fleeing the Southern states and arriving in Union territory were permanently free. The war would not end until 1865 and there are estimates that over 100,000 freed slaves joined the Union army and helped ensure the North’s victory (Woodward, 2014). Thus, it was not until after the American Civil War and the subsequent Reconstruction Era in the late 1860’s, over 250 years since the first Africans were brought to the Americas, that the Republican government would finally allow African Americans the opportunity to be educated. Blacks would be allowed to attend schools, but it was with the intention to colonize, remove and/or wipe out any original languages, traditions or practices that may have been passed down and to instill the values, beliefs and practices of the dominant White culture (Anderson, 1988).

As part of the Reconstruction Era, President Lincoln also initiated the Freedman’s Bureau Bill in March of 1865 which established a mechanism for African Americans to become educated but was truly designed to offer immediate shelter after the Civil War to refugees, freedmen, their wives and children. The Freedmen’s Bureau eventually expanded to teach African Americans who were separated from their families during the war to learn how to read and write. The Freedmen’s Bureau was headed by Union Army General Oliver O. Howard who was later assigned to ensure that the Southern States were complying with the new bill (Anderson, 1988). As a result, Congress allocated funds to operate Freedmen schools in the south. It later merged with the Northern missionary and aid societies to provide education to former slaves. The law also provided funding to manage the school’s everyday operations and to pay teachers, many of whom came from the North (Butchart, 2010). The Freedman’s Bureau continued to grow and evolve enrolling

approximately 90,000 former slaves, and eventually led to the creation of Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in 1868 in Virginia, now known as Hampton University (Anderson, 1988).



Figure 1. The Freedman's Bureau! An agency to keep the Negro in idleness at the expense of the white man. Reprinted from *Library of Congress*, 1866. Retrieved from Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2008661698/>.

Beginning in the 1870s, Southern states also began enacting Jim Crow laws. Jim Crow laws mandated racial segregation of schools and public facilities including transportation (i.e., streetcars, busses, and trains). In 1896, Jim Crow laws were upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark case of *Plessy vs. Ferguson*. In its decision, the court established the legal principle of “separate but equal” which gave Southern states the right to legally discriminate against African Americans in public facilities including educational institutions. The court declared that it was not a violation of the 14th Amendment to have separate carriages on railways and that the 14th Amendment only applied to political and civil rights like voting and jury service, not social rights like riding in the railroad car of choice (McBride, 2006).

POST CIVIL WAR

Although African Americans were freed and allowed to pursue their own destiny, major obstacles would be put in their way to ensure further subjugation for another 100 plus years. White Southerners opposed the purpose of the Freedman’s Bureau and took steps to prevent it from fulfilling its purpose. They infiltrated the administration and circumvented its purpose. This began a legacy of maneuvers that on the surface appeared to help the plight of African Americans but were subsequently subverted through both legal and illegal tactics. Now that it was legal for African Americans to be educated, the fear and the fight against an educated African American began in earnest with the passage of the Black Codes laws in 1865. Though slaves had been freed, these laws were established to govern their conduct and restrict African Americans from gaining true economic freedom. For example, though freed slaves could work, they were required to work for lower wages and could not exercise their political rights. The Freedman’s Bureau was eventually eradicated in 1872 after Democrats regained power in the South. Southern Democrats reduced funding for public schools serving African Americans and also worked quickly to disenfranchise the political rights of African Americans (Foner, 1988).

Thus, although, the period known as Reconstruction was filled with hope and expectations of a better future for African Americans, it lasted for only a relatively short period of time (1865-1877). Twelve years after it began, Reconstruction was over. The rights and privileges given to African Americans were quickly dismantled. In the Time's article, *How Reconstruction Still Shapes American Racism*, Gates (2019) refers to Eric Foner's key lesson of the period following Reconstruction was "that achievements thought permanent can be overturned and rights can never be taken for granted" (para. 5). An all-out assault began on African Americans and blatant discrimination tactics committed by Southern Whites ensured that Blacks knew their place. This included "literacy tests" that were designed so that no one but Whites could pass them as well as other barriers to keep African Americans from voting and having a say in their government. The post-Reconstruction era saw the rise of the white-supremacy movement and the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a White nationalist hate group, which set out to reclaim the South and reestablish the order in place before the Civil War. The era was also marked by the aggressive slandering of African Americans with the usage of negative stereotypes to instill fear and hatred (Foner, 1988).

STEREOTYPES IN POPULAR CULTURE

Minstrel shows, which became popular in the 1830s and lasted until the early 1900s, were probably the most notable for characterizing African Americans in negative stereotypical ways. Minstrel shows were live theatre productions where White actors appeared in blackface and performed skits that mocked African Americans. Characters in the shows portrayed Blacks as lazy, dim witted, ignorant, and hypersexualized thieves and cowards. An archetypical image coined during this era includes the Mammy—the portrayal of African American women as obese, dark-skinned, matronly or grandmotherly figures who served as domestic servants for Whites and who cared for their children better than she cared for her own. The Sambo archetype portrayed Black men as boisterous and carefree, but also lazy and irresponsible. Black males in general were also characterized as unintelligent and reliant on their master or White men to assist them with making decisions or knowing what to do in particular situations. Those not portrayed as lazy, shiftless, and dumb were seen as savages or beasts in need of being controlled (Jewell, 1993). These images were portrayed in theater, newsprint, on product labels and would eventually be portrayed on the big screen through major motion pictures in the early 20th century. A poignant example that truly served to reinforce negative images and incite fear in Whites was the 1915 silent film, *Birth of a Nation*. In this film, the Ku Klux Klan are portrayed as the heroes who save White women through conquering the savage African American male by lynching him.

The Amos n' Andy show is an example of how the stereotypical images were also projected through radio broadcasts. This show began in the late 1920's and was written and voiced with White actors portraying Black characters. Their racial dialect along with their storylines reinforced the stereotypical images of Blacks through the airwaves. When the show was eventually moved to television in the early 1950s, Blacks portrayed the main characters (Niemann, 2006). While the character Stepin-Fetchit played the dim witted, lazy Black male, the stereotypical image of the Black woman as the strong and domineering female who emasculates Black men emerged. This image served to further undermine the Black family in the post-slavery society. All of the stereotypical images whether portrayed on radio, in print, film, or television settled into the psyches of all Americans, including Blacks, and set the stage for the oppressive conditions that still plague African Americans today (Harris-Perry, 2011).

OPPRESSION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS

Redlining was an insidious practice, prompted by the National Housing Act of 1934, that was utilized to segregate communities, limit political clout, and keep poor neighborhoods poor. This practice involved designating local neighborhoods as either desirable or non-desirable based on biased assumptions. The NS-Form 8 Disclosure that was used at the time specifically stipulates whether there were “Negro” inhabitants in the community, although no other group was identified in such a manner. Once the designation was determined, the lines were documented on “residential security maps” that indicated the desirability (or security) of investments in that area. These designations were then enforced through business practices and procedures that maintained the status quo of neighborhoods in terms of race and socio-economic factors. For example, banks and insurance companies would refuse to lend to people of color or charge exorbitant rates for mortgages in order to keep individuals out of neighborhoods based on the ethnic or racial composition (Zenou and Bocard, 2000).

“Housing discrimination has a long history in our country. There have been many players. And problems still persist.”

— Lisa Price

In effect, redlining built impermeable boundaries around White neighborhoods. City maps were literally color coded and reflected the least desirable neighborhoods as red, neutral areas appeared in yellow, favorable neighborhoods were coded blue and the most favorable areas appeared in green. Even today, visitors to Oakland, California will see the impact of redlining and its influence on neighborhoods throughout the city. Access to quality education was also determined by redlining because it ensured that the necessary support for education would be very limited in “red” neighborhoods. Until the 1978 passage of Proposition 13 in California which limited the tax rate on properties, the primary funding of California schools came from local property taxes (Green, 2016). Because more affluent neighborhoods had a higher tax base, those schools received substantially more funding than public schools in less affluent communities of color. While the redlining practice is now illegal in its overt form, a similar effect occurs when the state funding formula is not based on the total cost of educating each student or fails to take into account local resources. Poor districts simply cannot match the opportunities and quality of education that are available in more affluent areas. Therefore, the opportunity gap continues to widen.

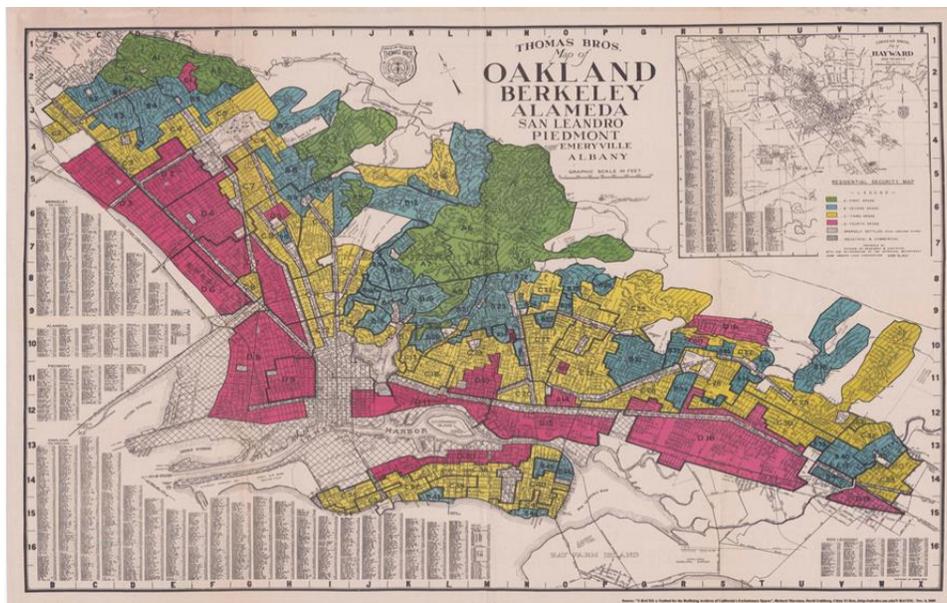


Figure 2. 1937 “Residential security map” of San Francisco that was used to redline communities. Reprinted from *How government redlining maps pushed segregation in California cities* by M. Green, 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.kqed.org/lowdown/30833/kqeds-youth-takeover>. Copyright 2020 by KQED, Inc.

“The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.”

— **W.E.B. Du Bois**

EDUCATION AND THE FIGHT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

With the passage of the 13th Amendment in 1865 which formally abolished slavery following the end of Civil War, Blacks were finally allowed the privilege of receiving an education. Thus, in spite of violence and intimidation by Whites, freed slaves began establishing their own schools and colleges. In the South which had the largest concentration of Blacks, most were started in churches or one room schoolhouses with public funds and were by far inferior to the schools for Whites that were also being established at the time (Williams, et al., 2004).

The Morrill Act of 1862 sponsored by U.S. Senator Justin Morrill, provided land grants to states to establish colleges to teach agriculture and mechanical sciences. Most institutions in the North and the West were open to Blacks; however, those in the South excluded Blacks. Consequently, 25 years later, the Morrill Act of 1890 was passed which required states to establish separate land grant colleges if Blacks were excluded from the existing land grant colleges. Thus, institutions of higher learning established after the Civil War and prior to 1964 and whose principle mission was to serve Blacks that were excluded from attending White colleges in the former slave states, are known today as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). During the early 20th century, HBCUs became the principal means for providing postsecondary education to Black Americans (Williams, et al., 2004).

Schools in the South would remain segregated for many years to come. It was not until the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision that desegregation laws changed. *Brown vs. Board of Education* is still the most monumental ruling to impact the educational system for African Americans. It was over 60 years ago that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that racial segregation in public schools violated the 14th Amendment’s mandate of equal protection of the laws of the U.S. Constitution and reversed the ruling of *Plessy vs. Ferguson* which declared that segregation in public places was legal as long as facilities for Whites and Blacks were equal. *Brown vs. Board of Education* was a lawsuit filed in 1951 in Topeka, Kansas that challenged the notion of separate but equal and claimed that Topeka’s Black schools were not equal to White schools. It consolidated other racial segregation claims in other states and was filed as a class action lawsuit by Thurgood Marshall on behalf of Oliver Brown whose daughter was denied entrance to Topeka’s all White elementary school. It was obvious to anyone at the time that public schools for Black children were not equal to the schools that Whites attended. They were often unkempt due to the unequal funding and lacked the same resources and services (McBride, 2006).

Sadly, the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling that racial segregation in public schools was indeed illegal, did not fully achieve true desegregation in the South. An infamous example of the resistance to the ruling occurred in the state of Arkansas in 1957 when nine Black children were denied entrance to Central High School in the city of Little Rock. Orval Faubus, then Governor of Arkansas, sent the state’s National Guard to prevent the nine Black students from entering the school. President Dwight Eisenhower responded to the situation by deploying federal troops to personally escort the nine students into the school. Now known as the “Little Rock Nine,” the students were called racial epithets, spat on, and endured physical assaults as they attempted to enter the school and similar treatment continued throughout the school year. Resistance occurred in various forms all over the south. Some states created their own ordinances to circumvent the law and some even closed down schools altogether (Encyclopedia of Arkansas, 2010).

The *Brown vs. Board of Education* ruling served to intensify the civil rights movement that was already underway and ultimately led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Civil Rights Act, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964, outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (McBride, n.d.). One year later, President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law on August 5, 1965; this law prohibited racial discrimination in voting. The Voting Rights Act has since been amended at least five times and is seen to be one of the most effective pieces of federal civil rights legislation (Behlar as cited in Stooksbury, et al).

IMPLICATIONS OF MODERN LEGAL CASES ON AFRICAN AMERICANS

In the years that followed the Civil Rights Movement, important events and legal battles continued to impact African Americans. In 1971, for example, in an effort to uphold the 1954 ruling in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, districts began busing students as a way of achieving desegregation of schools. The intent was to transport students to schools that were still predominately White and segregated due to housing inequalities. School busing was met with much resistance in various parts of the country, not just the South. As an example, in Boston, Massachusetts only 10 out of 525 students attended school in an affluent White community on the first day after busing was court ordered. Even more alarming, stones were thrown at the bus carrying the 56 Black children who were to begin school that day (Stooksbury, 2017).

The concept of affirmative action was introduced by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 as a way to mitigate the effects of racial and other forms of discrimination. After signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson then issued an executive order which created the means for states to enforce affirmative action policies. To address the inequalities in education, employment, pay, and housing, California became one of the states to adopt affirmative action policies (Feinberg, 2005). In 1978, those policies were challenged by Allan Bakke who had been denied admission to several medical schools and filed a lawsuit against the Regents of the University of California claiming reverse discrimination. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that California's use of racial quotas for determining admission, in this case setting aside 16% of their 100 spots at University of California, Davis Medical School for Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American students to increase diversity in the program, was unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause (Moreno, 2003).

The year 1978 would not be the last year that California's affirmative action policies would be challenged. In 1996, an amendment to disallow state agencies from considering race, sex, or ethnicity in public employment, public contracting, and public education, known as Proposition 209, was placed on the November ballot. The law passed by a slim margin and effectively abolished affirmative action programs in state employment, contracting, and education. The impact of this law is ongoing with regards to higher education in California. Race can no longer be a consideration in the admissions process and schools are no longer permitted to set quotas. This has resulted in a drastic decline in the number of African Americans and other underrepresented minorities being admitted to the University of California. At the flagship campuses of the

“The great evil of American slavery wasn’t involuntary servitude. It wasn’t forced labor. It was this idea, this narrative, that black people aren’t as good as white people, that black people aren’t fully human. [That] black people aren’t evolved. [That] they can’t do this, they can’t do that. And that narrative created an ideology of white supremacy. And for me, that was the true evil of American slavery.”

— Bryan Stevenson

University of California, Berkeley and Los Angeles, the admit rate of underrepresented minorities dropped most dramatically. Before Proposition 209, the admit rate for underrepresented minorities at Berkeley was 54%; after Proposition 209, the rate dropped to 20%; at Los Angeles, the admit rate dropped from 52% to 24% (Arcidiacono, et. al. 2011).

INFLUENCE ON MODERN EDUCATION

Disproportionate impact of African Americans can be traced to the earliest efforts to cultivate a public education system in Colonial America. Disturbingly, there are still many barriers that prevent African Americans from achieving positive educational outcomes at the same rates as other groups in California and across the United States. A major barrier is the fact that African Americans are ranked disproportionately higher when it comes to school suspensions and expulsions. These types of stringent behavioral disciplinary tactics and the frequency at which they occur in public schools conveys the message to African American students, especially Black males that “you don’t belong here,” “you are worthless” and “education is not for you”. These actions have a devastating effect when it comes to student success and perseverance in school (Wood, et. al., 2018).

African Americans have the additional hurdle of being forced to manage the damage done to their collective psyche as a result of chattel slavery. After generations of negative stereotypes, lack of mattering, and a sense that one does not belong, the damage can be devastating and often so ingrained that one does not even realize the depth of its impact. Since arriving to the shores of this country, African Americans have endured the trauma of being whipped, beaten to death, raped, and demoralized while enslaved. They have been lynched, murdered, and executed in a myriad of other ways, sometimes for the simple crime of being Black. They have been deemed worthless except for the value that they brought in labor. They have been treated with contempt and told that the nation that was built on their backs was not for them. In essence, African Americans are still healing from the soul wounds and intergenerational trauma created by their tumultuous past. The impact of these actions that have occurred over ten generations cannot be easily or quickly undone (DeGruy, 2005).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

The African American Disproportionate Impact Report Team applied the constructs of Critical Race Theory (CRT), Racial Identity Development (RI), and Marginality and Mattering (MM) theories to understand the experiences of Black and African American students attending American River College. These theories provide the essential framework for examining both the psychological (i.e., cognitive) and sociological context of their educational experiences in order to critically assess how these experiences relate to disproportionate impact. The theories are used to identify the needs of Black and African American students and also to examine, through research, better ways to help them achieve success.

MARGINALITY AND MATTERING

Marginality and Mattering theory developed from a study of significant others introduced by Harry Stack Sullivan and Patrick Mullahy in 1947. Sullivan and Mullahy defined significant others as people who are important to us (1947). Mattering, on the other hand, is the belief that we are important to others. Thus, the relationship between significance and mattering is reciprocal (Schlossberg, 1989). At the time, much research had focused on examining the concept of significant-other, little research was conducted to explore concepts of mattering (Rosenberg, 1981). Rosenberg applied marginality and mattering concepts to research on mental health issues among adolescents to understand how feelings of mattering influenced people’s actions and behaviors (1981).

Schlossberg defined marginality as a temporary condition, or permanent condition. She describes marginality as a condition that all might experience during their transition into a college environment (1989). “Every time an individual

changes roles or experiences a transition, the potential for feeling marginal arises. The larger the difference between the former role and the new role, the more marginal the person may feel, especially if there are no norms for the new roles. Feelings of marginality elicit feelings of mattering” (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 7).

Mattering on the other hand is described by Rosenberg “as a motive, a feeling that others depend on us, are interested in us, are concerned with our fate, or experience us as an ego-extension exercises a powerful influence on our actions” (Rosenberg and McCullough, 1981, p 165). Tovar differentiates between feelings of mattering and those of self- esteem. Mattering is derived when others validate your importance. Self-esteem on the other hand, is when you validate your own importance (Tovar, 2013). Schlossberg (1989) states that mattering refers to “our belief, whether right or wrong, that we matter to someone else. This belief or perception acts as a motivator. The motivator can influence our thoughts, actions, or behaviors” (p. 9). Our perception that we are the object of attention by others, or that we are important to them, is what influences our actions (Rosenberg, 1981). Durkeim’s (1951) research supported the theory of mattering through evidence of the lower suicide rates among married people with children. His research suggested that the child’s dependence on his/her parents influenced the parent’s actions which accounted for lower suicide rates among parents with children. Similarly, racial identity theorists say that our ethnic identity is constructed by the perceptions that others have of us. It is easy to see how our perceptions play a role in shaping our identity and our feelings of importance to others. Our perception of who we are, in relation to those with similarities or differences, helps formulate constructs by which we see society and our place within it.

The four aspects of mattering identified by Rosenberg and McCullough are: attention, importance, ego-extension, and dependence. A fifth aspect, appreciation, was added through later studies by Schlossberg. These five dimensions are described by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) and Schlossberg (1989) include:

- 1) Attention - drawing interest from another person
- 2) Importance - another individual cares about my thoughts, actions, or deeds
- 3) Ego-extension - others are proud of my accomplishments and disappointed with my failures
- 4) Dependence - our behavior is influenced by others; we feel needed by others
- 5) Appreciation - the feeling that our efforts, work contributions, and life are noticed and valued by others

RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Although Racial Identity (RI) has multiple meanings depending on the disciplines used, in the context of educational theory, Racial Identity is characterized as one’s self concept in relation to an ethnic group or culture. Researchers Phinney and Ong (2007) define ethnic identity as a multidimensional construct that consists of a sense of belonging or connectedness to an ethnic group defined by one’s cultural heritage including values, traditions, customs, norms, beliefs, and language. One’s ethnic identity develops over time but typically occurs during adolescence when one begins to gain an understanding of culture, race, and language (Phinney, 1988). Phinney’s work involved interviewing American born high school students from diverse urban schools regarding issues related to their identity, and he describes the process of developing ethnic identity in three stages: 1) Unexamined Ethnic Identity, 2) Ethnic Identity Search/Moratorium, and 3) Ethnic Identity Achievement (Phinney, 1989).

Unexamined ethnic identity is described as the lack of exploration of ethnicity. Many minorities initially accept the values and attitudes of the dominant culture including the negative views about their own culture (Phinney, 1989). Cross (1978) refers to this stage as pre-encounter—the person’s worldview is dominated by the lens of Euro-Americans (1978). This stage of minority identity development can be compared to the concept of identity foreclosure described by Marcia (1966). Foreclosure is the absence of exploration of issues based on internalized ideas adopted from societal values and not the family or parents. Phinney found limited evidence of internalized negative stereotypes amongst the students he interviewed; however, his research did reveal that some students expressed a preference for the dominant culture and values.

Phinney's second stage of racial identity development, ethnic identity search/moratorium, happens when one encounters an issue that causes or influences ethnic identity examination (1989). Erikson (1968) calls this identity crisis, "a necessary turning point or crucial moment when development must move one way or another" (p. 16). Dissonance as described by Atkinson (1983) was evident in the student's behavior in this stage. Phinney noted that during this stage, minority students become aware that not all of the dominant cultural values are beneficial to them. This growing awareness is ultimately the basis of their ethnic identity search. This stage can also be emotionally charged and fueled with anger and rage towards White people and White culture (Phinney, 1989).

According to Phinney, stage three, ethnic identity achievement, is characterized by self-confidence and recognition of one's ethnicity (Phinney, 1989). Cross (1978), describes this stage as the internalization stage where "tension, emotionality and defensiveness are replaced by a calm secure demeanor. Ideological flexibility, psychological openness, and self-confidence about one's blackness are evident" (p. 18).

Most recent models of ethnic identity development view the psychosocial process of defining the self and stages of growth as a linear process. Newer models discuss racial and ethnic identity as a lifetime process. Ethnic identity as it relates to social psychology is connected to social identity theory which focuses on belonging to social groups such as religious and organizational groups as a critical component for one's identity (Phinney, 1990).

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a framework to help us examine societal institutions such as law, politics, and education in relation to race. CRT emerged in the late 1970s and was developed by several legal scholars of color out of their dissatisfaction with the lack of true systemic reform following the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s through the early 1970s. The critical examination of race in the justice system was developed with the goal of transforming the system through exposing and unmasking the myriad of ways in which racism still exists. Although lynching and other forms of explicit White racism in the South had subsided and legal rights (e.g., voting rights and Affirmative Action) were enacted, it became apparent to these scholars that the reforms had done little to dismantle the inherent privileges of being White in America. Racism had been associated with only explicit acts that were committed based on skin color. This limited view of racism allowed society and the justice system to avoid critically examining how all of its structures and institutions actively served to privilege Whites while simultaneously marginalizing people of color.

Through a careful examination of laws and the justice system, the legal scholars putting forth the theory saw clearly the role that our legal system plays in maintaining a system of white supremacy in the United States. Hence, CRT views racism as a norm of this society. It is something that is so entrenched that even when exposed many legal scholars have justified it with arguments based on race neutrality (Crenshaw, 1995). In other words, the society operates from a rationale that laws are written and interpreted as "colorblind" in that they apply equally to everyone. Therefore, CRT seeks to peel back the layers of what is deemed as "institutional racism" which is often more subtle but no less impactful in causing harm to people of color (Crenshaw, 1995).

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Rather than engaging in a broad-scale inquiry into why jobs, wealth, education, and power are distributed as they are, mainstream civil rights discourse suggests that once the irrational biases of race-consciousness are eradicated, everyone will be treated fairly as equal competitors in a regime of equal opportunity. The lens of CRT provides a basis for understanding society in general. Consequently, other disciplines and other groups also began to apply the theory as a way to examine inherent inequities—most notably in the field of education.

THE THEORIES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN EDUCATION

The application of CRT in education is important because it serves as a construct to help us understand how the myriad of laws, policies, and practices, when upheld, serve to benefit some and disadvantage others. As well, the examination of the relationships between race, power, and wealth in the context of educational systems helps us to see how Whites have benefited while others have been disproportionately impacted. The cumulative impact of the laws, policies, and practices have been detrimental and may explain the existence of the achievement gaps in education for Black and African American students.

Mattering and Racial Identity theories both emphasize our connectedness to others as a way to define ourselves. Our connections to others allow us to form interpersonal relationships. These relationships help to define who we are by allowing us to examine our similarities and differences to others. The relationships also help us understand our value, place in a group, community, or society. When the concepts of CRT, RI, and Marginality and Mattering are blended together, the picture of how Black and African American students experience American River College and society in general begins to emerge. Think of CRT as a wide-angle lens that helps us look broadly at the dynamics of race, power, and laws in social systems like education. Whereas, RI and Marginality and Mattering theories are the telephoto lenses that allow us to look closely at ourselves (individual importance and identity) compared to others in society.

The concepts of marginality and mattering are defined by Nancy Schlossberg in the context of transitional events that change our lives. “Schlossberg contends that people in transition often feel marginal and that they do not matter” (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 6). She applies Marginality and Mattering in research to understand how students’ involvement in

college affects their academic success (Schlossberg, 1989). “Involvement creates connections between students, staff and faculty that allow individuals to believe in their own personal worth. This involvement creates an awareness of our mutual relatedness and the fact that the condition of community is not only desirable, but essential to our human survival” (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 5).

Schlossberg’s work examined how adult-learners’ feelings of marginality and mattering were influenced by the occurrence of transitions in their lives. In a later study, Schlossberg applied the concepts of mattering to student involvement theories for adult learners in college. She applied the theory of marginality to adult learners to understand if feelings of mattering affect academic success and persistence toward graduation (Schlossberg, 1989).

Research supports that “concepts of mattering emphasizes a powerful source of social integration; we are bonded to society not only by virtue of our dependence on others but by their dependence on us” (Rosenberg and McCullough, 1981, p.165). Rosenberg asserts that when others

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— Nancy Schlossberg

depend on us, we are more likely to “experience us as an ego-extension which exercises a powerful influence on our actions” (Rosenberg and McCullough, 1981, p. 165). One could surmise that feelings of mattering can serve to influence (i.e. motivate or deter) individual actions (Rosenberg and McCullough, 1981). When applied to education, Mattering theory suggests that if students perceive that others depend on them and that they are important to others, they are more likely to take actions which benefit themselves and those who depend on them. Likewise, “The creation of environments that clearly indicate to all students that they matter will urge them to greater involvement” (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 14).

Based on this theoretical framework, one can surmise that Black and African American students will feel that they matter to the institution when they see their values, beliefs, culture, and worldviews reflected in college policies, curriculum, and programs. They are more likely to feel an obligation to succeed for the people to which they feel connected. In an educational setting, Black and African American college students develop connections to instructors, coaches, maintenance staff, food service staff, tutors, counselors, librarians, and classmates among many others. These connections act as a motivator to succeed academically, because these students do not want others to be disappointed in their efforts. Successes, as well as perceived failures, are shared by those who support them. Their determination to succeed, or their fear of failure, act as a catalyst which influences their behaviors and actions. The belief that students matter to faculty, staff, and other students can become an important motivator for African American students to succeed. “Institutions that focus on mattering and greater student involvement will be more successful in creating campuses where students are motivated to learn, where their retention is high, and ultimately, where their institutional loyalty for the short and long term future is ensured.” (Schlossberg 1989, p. 14).

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Affirming racial identity for Black and African Americans and other minoritized students is important because it reinforces and assures that the customs, language, and culture of non-White students is important. Providing an inclusive environment that validates the contributions of other groups inside and outside of the classroom environment fosters positive racial/ethnic identity and increases self-worth among African American and other non-White students. Knowing who these students are, as well as the contributions of their ancestors to society, can also increase self-efficacy. No longer is their identity defined in comparison to the dominant culture. Instead, their identity is reinforced by the understanding of their beliefs, values, and customs as they pertain to their ancestors and their contributions to society. This validation of culture and worth acts as a fortifier for African American students to withstand potentially hostile environments and affirms their shared experiences which enhance the college culture and society.

Mattering is emphasized in students’ connections to others; thus, the faculty-student relationship is an important element to consider when examining ways to help Black and African American students succeed. Researchers Wood, et.al., (2016) emphasize the importance of faculty-student interactions as a positive academic factor that impacts student success. Unlike other student populations, Black males are much less likely to initiate contact with their instructors (Bush and Bush, 2010). But, when they do initiate contact with faculty, Wood (2012) found that Black male students were 283% more likely to persist than those who did not. Colleges can create opportunities to cultivate faculty-student connection in and out of class by creating spaces, providing time, and offering resources for these

connections to occur. The faculty-student relationship is paramount in the success of the Black and African American student, because the most significant value (in the Afrocentric worldview), is the interpersonal relationship (Schiele, 1990). Thus, enhancing the relationships between student and faculty are critical factors which may improve persistence and completion rates of Black and African American students.

Since most faculty-student interactions occur in the classroom, the classroom environment is the ideal place to strengthen the connections and foster mattering. Embedding instructional assistants, tutors, peer-mentors and technology assistants in classes can build academic learning communities which provide support and aid in communications with students. The connections to faculty, and staff, can provide support for students beyond the classroom and create opportunities to maximize a student's time spent engaged in academic-related activities on campus. Furthermore, research indicates that when students develop college friendships that are related to academic activities such as studying, tutoring, discussing course materials, etc. they increase their capacity to achieve success (Wood et. al., 2016). Programs designed to foster not only social activities, but academically focused activities can provide the necessary academic support through the use of instructional assistants, peer mentors or tutors. Placing Black and African American students in leadership roles in the classroom is another way to promote their academic success, provide counter-narratives, and increase employment and other leadership opportunities.

What Hammond (2015) describes as learning partnerships is a good example of faculty-student connections that cultivate mattering in classrooms. "A learning partnership is a teacher-student relationship in which the teacher builds trust and becomes the student's ally in order to help the student reach a higher level of achievement" (p. 157). The foundation of the relationship is the belief that marginalized students will succeed. "The equation for a learning partnership is rapport + alliance = cognitive insight" (Hammond, 2015, p. 75). This is significant because cognitive insight prepares students to become independent learners who have the ability to attempt new tasks and integrate information in new ways (Hammond, 2015). Similarly, Rosenberg's concept of ego-extension (1981), an aspect of mattering, also emphasizes the interdependence between faculty and student. Feelings of mattering are reinforced through learning partnerships because the student believes that others are depending on them to succeed, thereby serving to influence their actions. Feelings of mattering can act as a powerful motivator for students when they believe their professors depend on them to succeed.

In addition to interactions with instructors, Wood's research (2012), asserts that advising and counseling services are other factors that influence Black student success in college and can reinforce student success and promote feelings of mattering. Young Black men who used academic counseling services had significantly higher odds of persisting in college. The academic advisor or counselor also plays a pivotal role in helping students clarify their career/education goals, create a plan and identify relevant courses needed to accomplish the goal (Wood, 2012). Counselors and advisors develop rapport, build trust, advocate for and serve as allies for students when they are in need. As well, Counselors play an important role in helping students identify psychological or emotional barriers that prevent them from succeeding and self-actualizing. Counseling offices can also serve as safe havens where Black and African students share their thoughts about difficult experiences encountered on college campuses such as microaggressions and other racist acts.

In the book, *Black Minds Matter*, Wood (2019) discusses the importance of "extolling the brilliance of Black minds" in the classroom where they often feel marginalized. According to Wood, one way educators can accomplish this is by providing Black males with leadership opportunities. Leadership opportunities may occur in and out of the classroom setting. Instructors can provide opportunities for Black and African American students to co-facilitate teaching, offer tutoring, lead group discussions, create lesson plans, demonstrate technology, and give feedback about course curriculum and pedagogy. Creating opportunities to express students' viewpoints, values and culture, confirms their belonging and importance to classmates, staff, and faculty. Providing classroom leadership opportunities also highlights their knowledge, culture, life experience and skills. Leadership opportunities give Black and African American students a

chance to tell their stories and be valued for their intellect and creativity. Holding them in high esteem publicly, reinforces their sense of belonging and mattering. Placing Black and African American students in prominent leadership positions also creates a counter-narrative to the negative depiction of them in the media, and society. Wood states that extolling their brilliance in the classroom environment is critical because too often it is the space where many Black and African American students have felt disempowered, especially males. Creating spaces where Black and African American students are validated for their culture, experience, and perspectives in the classroom and other places on campus allows them to reclaim their power and fortify their identity (Wood, 2019).

BRIEF REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Using the lens of Critical Race Theory one can quickly ascertain that everything about our educational institutions from kindergarten through post-secondary education has been constructed to advantage Whites while ensuring that students of color are challenged in getting through the system. For African Americans in particular, the impacts are extremely severe. According to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (2014), African Americans in K-12 are more likely to attend schools with teachers who are less qualified and earn lower salaries. They are also more likely to attend schools with fewer resources to support their learning and are less likely than Whites to have access to courses which prepare them for college. A separate report from the U.S. Department of Education, entitled Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States (2014), indicated that 87 percent of Whites were able to finish high school within four years while only 73 percent of African Americans completed their high school education within that four-year window. It also revealed that the dropout rates were 4.7 percent for Whites, but 5.7 for African Americans. At the state level, one in every five African American students in California drops out of high school (California Department of Education).

Upon taking a closer look at our educational system, other research may provide a basis for understanding some of these trends. In California, African American children are less likely to attend preschool than Whites and Asians. Both nationally and locally African American students are suspended at a much higher rate than Whites. The U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights reports that African Americans are three times more likely to be suspended. In a 2018 brief based on data from the California Department of Education, Wood, Harris III, and Howard revealed some startling statistics regarding Sacramento County:

- Black males are 5.4 times more likely to be suspended in Sacramento County than the statewide average.
- Nearly 18 Black males were suspended, per day, in the county.
- Sacramento County has four school districts in the top 20 suspension districts for Black males in the State of California.
- Sacramento City Unified is the most egregious suspension district for Black males in the State of California.
- Black males in early childhood education (kindergarten through third grade) are 9.9 times more likely to be suspended than their peers (statewide).
- One third of all Black male foster youth are suspended in Sacramento County.

Suspensions remove students from the educational environment, create gaps in learning, and send a message that the student does not belong in the school setting. Many of these students end up in alternative or continuation schools which are more loosely structured and have less rigorous standards. According Wood, Harris III, (2018) and Howard a pattern of suspensions and expulsions from school can lead to limited future job prospects and behavior which can result in serving time in jail or prison.

Implicit bias, defined as any unconsciously held set of associations about a social group, is another issue impacting African Americans in the school environment. Numerous studies have shown that non-Black teachers have lower expectations for African American students (Gershenson, et. al. 2015). Additionally, African Americans are not well represented in the faculty ranks. Nationwide, the U.S. Department of Education reports that 82 percent of public-school teachers are White. In 2017-2018, the most recent year in which data are available, the percentage of White public school teachers in California is much lower at 63 percent according to the California Department of Education; however, the number of African American public-school teachers is a mere 3.9% (2019).

The K-12 data presented here show that the issues affecting African Americans in the educational system in the United States are systemic and begin at the onset of formal education. The trends for African Americans in higher education are similar.

In a 2016 report on the Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups, the U.S. Department of Education revealed that while the number of 18 to 24-year old students who enroll in 2- or 4-year colleges has steadily increased over the last two decades, the total enrollment rate in 2013 for Whites was 42 percent compared to only 34 percent for both Blacks and Hispanics. In California, data show that African Americans are overrepresented at private for-profit institutions (11%) compared to all other systems of higher education (California Community Colleges = 7%, California State Universities = 5%, Universities of California = 3% and private nonprofit = 7%). This is cause for great concern because students who attend for profit institutions leave with high debt and are prepared for jobs that do not provide enough income to repay their debt.

A national report published by Education Trust (2017) on degree attainment for African American adults shows that while degree completion has increased overall for African Americans over the last 25 years, there is still a significant gap when compared to degree attainment among Whites. The national data indicates that 30.8 percent of African Americans have earned at least an associate degree or higher; however, the rate for Whites is much higher at 47.1 percent. Also significant is that the largest gap exists in the percentage of African Americans who have earned a bachelor's degree. Only 14 percent of African Americans have attained a four-year degree compared to 23.7 percent of Whites.

In California, data compiled by the various public segments of higher education show that 37 percent of African Americans enrolling in California State Universities (CSUs) as freshmen complete a bachelor's degree within six years compared to 67 percent for Whites. The graduation rate for Black and African Americans attending Universities of California (UCs) is much higher than the CSU at 73 percent; however, Whites also have a much higher graduation rate. Eighty-seven percent of Whites complete a degree within six years of enrolling in the UC system. California Community Colleges mirror the CSU in terms of completion rates for African Americans; only 37 percent were awarded a certificate, degree or transferred to a four-year institution within six years of enrolling while 65 percent of Whites do so.

These data are not new and have been shown to be consistent over time. Critical Race Theory provides a solid foundation for examining why the data for African Americans is dismal and also systemic. A major way in which our educational system maintains the construct of white supremacy is through the curriculum. Ellen Swartz (1992) in her article, *Emancipatory Narratives: Rewriting the Master Script in the School Curriculum*, defines the process of master scripting:

In education, the master script refers to classroom practices, pedagogy, and instructional materials, as well as to the theoretical paradigms from which these aspects are constructed, that are grounded in Eurocentric and White

supremacist ideologies. Master scripting silences multiple voices and perspectives, primarily by legitimizing dominant, White, upper-class, male voicings as the "standard" knowledge students need to know. All other accounts and perspectives are omitted from the master script unless they can be disempowered through misrepresentation. Thus, content that does not reflect the dominant voice must be brought under control, mastered, and then reshaped before it can become part of the master script (p. 341).

The blatant disregard of and white washing of the contributions of people of color in the school curriculum serves to damage the psychosocial development of non-White students who then receive subconscious messages that they are different and unworthy. On the other hand, it has been demonstrated through research that Black Studies courses have the opposite impact on African American students; the result has even been referred to as the Black Studies effect. Chapman-Hilliard and Beasley (2018) found that students taking Black Studies courses (BSCs) at a predominantly White institution (PWI) in the Southwestern United States experienced psychological empowerment (i.e., increased feelings of agency, autonomy, motivation, and competence) as well as feelings of self-determination, that is, the ability to re-define themselves in their own terms. BSCs were also shown to provide a safe space for African American students to challenge the negative narratives associated with being Black. The authors thus concluded that the “BSCs had a profound and varied impact on the participants in domains ranging from personal to collective development” (p. 142).

Using the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT), it is also easy to see how various assessments and standardized exams have been used to perpetuate myths about the lack of intelligence among African Americans while at the same time validating the superiority of Whites. In *Racism and Education: Conspiracy or Coincidence?*, David Gillborn uses CRT to examine many different areas of education and concludes that educational tests are actually part of the conspiracy to manipulate Black and Brown people into believing that they are intellectually inferior to Whites. Standardized assessments provide the basis and rationale for tracking or grouping students based on ability which serves to limit the number of Black and Brown students in programs such as gifted and talented or Advanced Placement courses while at the same time creating overrepresentation in special education classes. When data for Whites is used as the measuring stick, it only stands to reason that educational policies and practices will be manipulated to favor White students including how school programs are funded and the admission criteria used to gain entry into elite universities.

“African American students come to campus with a cultural identity that should be taken into consideration when attempting to assist them.”

— V.D. Johnson

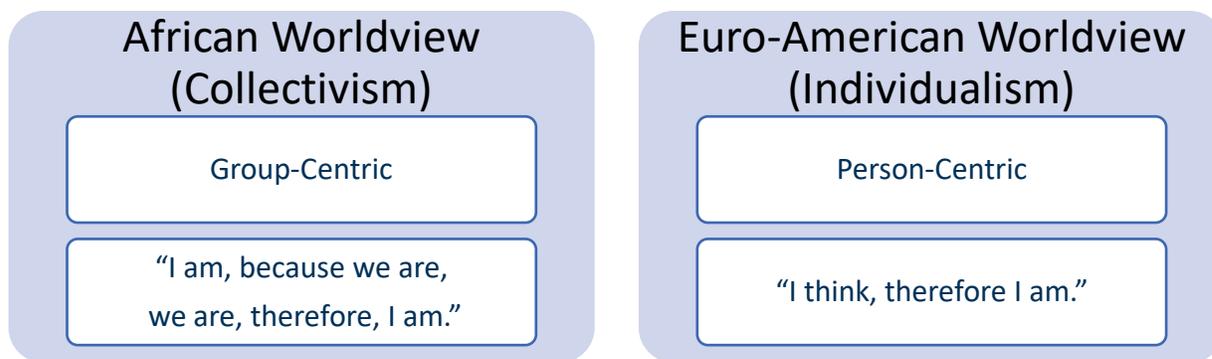
The systemic issues of White privilege and power have impacted Black and African American students in educational environments in relation to mattering as well. “African American students come to campus with a cultural identity that should be taken into consideration when attempting to assist them” (Johnson, 2003, p. 819). When the language, place of origin, contributions to society, history, and culture are affirmed, students feel important and initiate relationships needed to survive. This acknowledgment, however, must extend beyond what Hammond (2015) calls surface culture. Hammond (2015)

considers foods, dress, holidays, heroes, and similar superficial aspects as representations of the surface culture. She believes that institutions can be more effective when they instead address deeper levels of culture by attempting to understand the students’ worldview, core beliefs, and values.

COLLECTIVISM VS. INDIVIDUALISM

Hammond (2015) contends that most people adopt a worldview that is based on either collectivism or individualism. These worldviews as defined by Wade Nobles (1992) are characterized by distinct beliefs in one's relationship to others. According to Nobles, the collectivist, which he calls the African worldview, is based on cooperation, interdependence, and collective responsibility. According to Nobles, the collective worldview places more importance on a group versus an individual orientation. In the African worldview, connectedness to a community is both practical and necessary. Thus, belonging to a group is not viewed as simply a social activity, but instead an essential action required for survival. On the other hand, individualism or what Nobles refers to as the Euro-American worldview, places more importance on competition, control over nature versus respect for nature, independence versus interdependence and the rights of individuals (Nobles, 1992). According to Hammond (2015), this is the worldview that dominates our educational system and its pedagogy. Opportunities to validate both worldviews exist and can be infused into campus programming, services, and the curriculum which would increase the sense of belonging for Black and African American students as well as other groups with a more collectivist worldview, in the classroom and the overall college environment.

Rosenberg and McCullough's (1981) concept of ego-extension as an aspect of mattering further underscores the importance of worldviews in a college setting. "Ego-extension refers to the feeling that other people will be proud of our accomplishments or saddened by our failures" (Rosenberg and McCullough, 1981, p. 165). As stated earlier in this report, our successes and failures are tied to others who care about us. When we succeed, they succeed. The responsibility to succeed by some Black and African American students is not just their own; many feel the pressure to succeed for their families, their community, and the entire race. Rosenberg's concept of ego-extension is also understood based on the differences in the Euro-American and African worldviews described above. The Euro-American worldview reflects the philosophical belief of well-known philosopher: Immanuel Kant (originally from philosopher Rene Descartes), "I think, therefore I am." In contrast is the African philosophical statement, "I am, because we are, we are, therefore, I am" (Warfield-Coppock and Coppock, 1990, p.13).



According to Warfield-Coppock and Coppock (1990), the former statement represents the concept of the individual's existence, whereas the latter implies that the individual exists only because of the group or community. It is these worldviews that define our psychological frameworks which are used to understand human behavior and create social systems (Johnson, 2003).

COUNTER-NARRATIVES

If mattering is rooted in our connection to others, then building relationships and developing community for Black and African American students in the educational environment is essential. To thrive in an educational setting, Black and African American students must feel that they belong and they must feel a sense of community. It is also essential that "student development programs focused on Black and African American students reinforce these values. This reinforcement serves to validate their sense of responsibility to the whole and that their individual decisions must be for

the good of the collective and not just the individual” (Jones, 2017, p. 826). According to Johnson (2017), it is also important to provide space, both physical and virtual, for Black and African American students to share their beliefs, viewpoints, and experiences that reflect a counter-narrative to the perception of them projected in media, justice systems, and society in general. Simply put, Black and African American students need opportunities to construct counter-narratives that combat the negative portrayal of themselves and their people and communities in history, the media, and society.

Interestingly, the counter-narrative is also a tenet of CRT. Here, critical race scholars emphasize the importance of people of color having the opportunity to share their stories. The personal lived experiences of non-White people are often starkly different from that of the dominant group and having the opportunity to voice that experience serves several purposes. The tendency of the dominant group is to not trust or to discount a worldview that is contrary to their own. Thus, one purpose of counter-storytelling is to provide a contextual understanding (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Offering a larger picture that illustrates the conditions and history of oppression can cause others to rethink their ideas and conclusions in a particular situation. Ladson-Billings also uses the phrase “psychic preservation” as an important function of the counter-narrative. Historically, storytelling has been a kind of medicine to heal the wounds of pain caused by racial oppression. The story of one’s condition leads to the realization of how one came to be oppressed and subjugated, thus allowing one to stop inflicting mental violence on oneself (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

A powerful counter-narrative can also impact those who are oppressors by causing something Dr. Joy DeGruy terms as cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance describes the process whereby a perpetrator comes up with an explanation or a justification for an egregious act (DeGruy, 2005). Over time, the voices of people of color can serve to disrupt the pattern of cognitive dissonance. The obvious overall premise of Critical Race Theory, in this society and many others, is that race does matter.

SOCIAL BELONGING

In an educational environment, social belonging happens when students feel safe in a non-threatening setting (Hammond, 2015). Hammond (2015) describes in detail how the brain functions and responds in various situations. According to Hammond, “the brain seeks to minimize social threats and maximize opportunities to connect with others. However, the brain will not seek to connect with others if it perceives them to be threatening to its social or psychological well-being based on what they say and do. Consequently, if students perceive an environment as unsafe psychologically or socially, they are not likely to make connections” (Hammond, 2015, p. 47). Given that Black and African American students must feel a connection to others to feel that they matter and belong, communication holds particular importance. A seemingly innocent gesture or comment by staff or faculty could be interpreted as threatening to Black and African American students. As a result, the brain stays on alert trying to detect other signals which are perceived as threatening or as microaggressions. “Microaggressions are the subtle everyday verbal or nonverbal slights, snubs or insults which communicate hostile, derogatory or negative messages to people of color based solely on their

marginalized group membership” (Hammond, 2015, p. 47). Thus, when students feel unsafe in classrooms, offices, and spaces on campus, they are less likely to feel motivated to learn and to want to be in the educational environment.

“It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, —an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.”

— ***W.E.B. DuBois***

Both RI and Mattering theories emphasize an individual’s self-concept in relation to others. Schlossberg asserts “the institution’s programs, policies and services must encourage involvement in all aspects of the institution and indicate that each student is unique and important to the institution” (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 14). One could conclude that integrating racial identity development as part of a college curriculum could have positive social influences on African American students because doing so could affirm their beliefs, viewpoints, customs, and traditions. Doing so would also help foster feelings of inclusion and belonging in the college environment. Ross, Powell and Henriksen (2016) assert that when African American students have a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage and its strengths, they will experience an increase in their self-esteem and will be more academically motivated. Black and African American students who progress to the identity achievement stage, as defined by Phinney (1989), will generally have positive attitudes and are more likely to engage in behaviors which can benefit their academic outcomes. This demonstrates that racial identity development and mattering theories are intricately linked when applied to the experience of African American students and have some commonalities. The notion of motivation is emphasized in both.

Through his research in the field of ethnic identity, Phinney outlines two different models. In the linear model, ethnic identity is seen on a continuum with strong ties to one’s ethnic identity as well as strong ties to mainstream society. This model says that one cannot achieve both equally. The alternate model asserts that strong identification with both one’s ethnic identity and mainstream dominant culture can exist equally and concurrently. Strong identification to both is known as biculturalism. Whereas identification with neither group suggests marginality (Phinney, 1989).

Schlossberg also discusses the concept of biculturalism. She states “marginality can also refer to a permanent condition for bicultural individuals, marginality is a way of life. A bicultural person feels permanently locked between two worlds” (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 7). This individual identifies with two cultures simultaneously. W.E.B DuBois describes a similar affliction experienced by African Americans in his book, the Souls of Black Folks (DuBois, 1903). DuBois sheds light on the concept of two-ness or double consciousness:

“It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, —an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (DuBois, 1903, p.9).

In this state, DuBois describes a form of biculturalism whereby African Americans experience more than one social identity, one as Black folks and the other as Americans: and hence, a feeling of permanent marginalization and a barrier to developing positive racial identity.

PROFILE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS: AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE

In 2018-19, there were 3,117 African American students in attendance at ARC. These students represented close to 8.7% of the total student population (excluding Apprenticeship and Public Safety) in that academic year. The following data indicates differences in key metrics. It is apparent that there are significant gaps for African Americans when compared to the overall student population.

Fall 2018 Metrics (excluding Apprenticeship and Public Safety)

Population	Fall-to-Fall Retention	Course Success (Successful Completion)	Course Mastery (A and B Grades)	Course Withdrawal
African American	40%	58%	38%	20%
All ARC Students	45%	71%	53%	14%

Source: ARC Data on Demand (April 2020)

Disproportionate Impact: 2018-19 Course Completion Comparison

The following data depicts disproportionate impact in course completion among African American students. In addition to overall course completion, English and mathematics completion rates are highlighted as they are gateway courses necessary for degree completion (competency requirements).

ALL COURSES

Target Population(s)	Percentage of Courses Passed ¹	Point comparison to the all student average ²
All Students	77%	
African American	64%	-13

ENGLISH

Target Population(s)	Percentage of Courses Passed ¹	Point comparison to the all student average ²
All Students	72%	
African American	65%	-7

MATHEMATICS

Target Population(s)	Percentage of Courses Passed ¹	Point comparison to the all student average ²
All Students	64%	
African American	51%	-13

¹ The percentage of courses passed (earned A, B, C, or credit) out of the credit courses students enrolled in & were present in on census day

² Percentage point difference between target population and all student with +/- added

Source: ARC Data on Demand (March 2020)

This section discusses the DI project timeline, key findings from the Student Experience Survey (SES), recommendations based on the data analysis, and project limitations.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Three DI leadership teams representing African American, Latinx, and Native American populations were convened in October 2019. The teams consisted of representatives from each campus constituent group as well as community members. From October 2019 to February 2020, each DI team examined historical data, combed through student development theories, and read academic studies in response to its project objectives. Building on existing literature, the DI teams relied on theoretical frameworks of student belonging, identity development, and inequities in social or academic environments. An extensive literature review laid the foundation for the Student Experience Survey (SES), the DI team's primary tool for collecting and analyzing local data from American River College (ARC) students. The SES was administered for data collection and analysis from March to early April 2020. Results from the SES were used to inform recommendations made to the Student Success Council and ARC's executive leadership team by end of spring 2020.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The SES was informed by works from authors who examined similar phenomena with student experiences in higher education (American River College, 2019; Durham, 2008; Ingram, 2012; Schlossberg et al., 1990). The Student Experience Survey (SES) is largely based on question items from existing questionnaires but was edited to reflect the specific context at American River College (ARC). In February 2020, a paper version of the SES was given to three ARC students soliciting feedback about format, vocabulary, and general question design. Based on their comments, questions were modified to promote greater clarity of interpretation and comprehension. Students from the pilot study positively commented on the SES, noting that its general inquiry pertained to their experiences.

DATA COLLECTION

In mid-March 2020, the SES was converted into an electronic format with 34 five-point Likert scale questions, 18 multiple or single choice options, and three open-ended inquiries. E-mails with survey links were sent to all students who enrolled in spring 2020 and self-identified as having African American, Latinx, and Native American ancestry. Demographic data on students' racial, ethnic, and/or, cultural identities were drawn from their California Community College (CCC) applications. The initial email soliciting survey participation included a specific link granting access to the SES and was sent to each student's college email account. A second email reminding students to complete the SES was sent out about one week after the initial email. Informal email reminders drafted by staff were also sent to certain students to encourage survey participants. A few days before closing data collection, members of the DI team made a short video and sent it via email to students asking them to complete the SES. Aside from the initial email to all eligible survey participants, subsequent email communications encouraging participation were only sent to students who had not completed the SES at that time. Incentives for completing the SES included ARC bookstore gift cards, food vouchers for the campus pantry, and miscellaneous school or personal items given through prize drawings based on when students completed their surveys.

To prevent possible duplication of survey participation, specific survey links were electronically connected to students' school identification numbers and became inactive once students submitted survey results. The SES was made available to students for two and a half weeks. A total of 8699 students from African American, Latinx, Native American, and Multi-racial backgrounds were invited to complete the SES. Table 1 shows the demographic composition of survey participants as organized by racial, ethnic, and/or, cultural identities.

Table 1

Survey response rates per racial, ethnic, and/or cultural groups enrolled in spring 2020.

Racial, ethnic, and/or cultural group	Survey invitations (n= 8699)	Survey Responses	Response Rates
African American (AA)	1858	229	12.3%
Native American (NA)	119	21	17.6%
Latinx	5842	558	9.6%
Multiracial American *	880	77	8.8%

*Students who identify as Multiracial American where at least one racial/ethnic identity consists of AA, NA, or Latinx ancestry.

SURVEY RESULTS

In this section, survey results include perceptions of campus, barriers or challenges, motivators for attending ARC, motivators for working hard, and contributors to future success in classrooms.

PERCEPTIONS OF CAMPUS

Using five-point Likert scale questions, the SES inquired about perceptions on campus climate, academic experiences, and personal circumstances. As shown in Figure 1, a majority of students strongly agree (28.9%) or agree (38.7%) that the college is committed to fostering an environment in which students of color can be successful, significantly larger than the combined responses indicating neither agree/disagree (25%), disagree (4.4%) and strongly disagree (3%). Students also report strongly agreeing (29.8%) or agreeing (42.5%) that while being a member of their cultural, ethnic, or racial group they feel socially accepted on campus. Furthermore, there were responses of strongly agree (32.8%), and agree (39.5%) in regards to observing other students with their same cultural, ethnic, or racial background in their classes. A large number of students responded with neither agree/disagree when asked about people of their cultural, ethnic, or racial group being more likely to experience discrimination on campus (37.4%) and seeing teachers who look like them adequately represented in their classrooms (31%). See Figure 1 for Likert scale response represented in percentages.

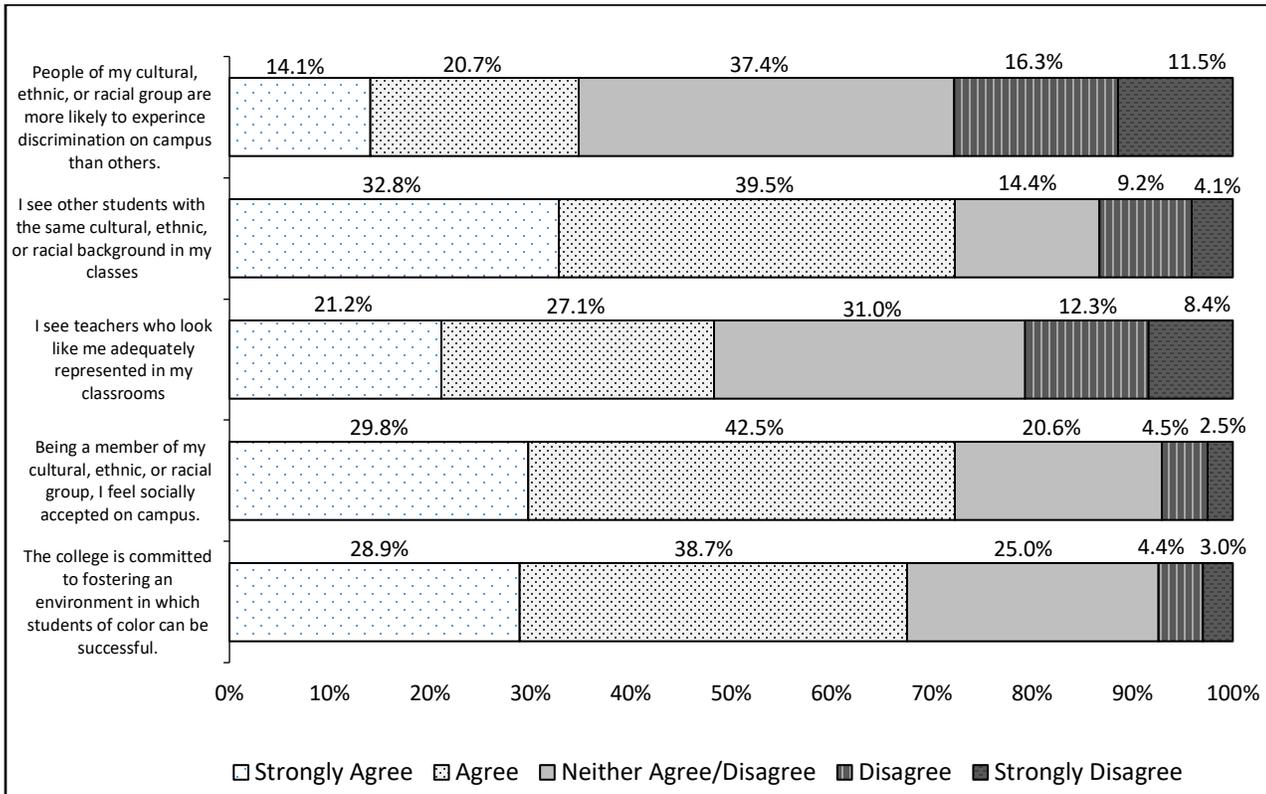


Figure 1. Student perceptions of campus in spring 2020.

This figure shows a summary of student opinions from all DI groups (African American, Native American, Latinx, and Multiracial American) on five Likert scale questions from the SES.

BARRIERS

Table 2 illustrates the barriers or challenges for Latinx, African American, and Native American groups in attainment of academic goals this last year. When students were asked to list all challenges in this past year that made it difficult for them to finish their degree, certificate, or transfer to a university, there were similarities across all three DI groups. Of the 558 Latinx students who responded to this question, they identified their top challenges as having difficulty balancing work and family (1st), not enough money for general living (2nd), not enough financial aid for school fees (3rd), low self-confidence about academic performance (4th), and taking care of family members (5th). There were 229 total African American students who answered this question, reporting top challenges as not enough money for general living (1st), not enough financial aid for school fees (2nd), difficulty balancing work and family (3rd), taking care of family members (4th), and low self-confidence about academic performance (5th). Unlike the Latinx and African American groups, the 21 Native American students who answered this question indicated similar hardships with not enough financial aid for school fees, taking care of family members, and low self-confidence about academic performance (all equally ranked 1st). They also specified equal challenges with not enough money for general living and difficulty balancing work and family (both equally ranked 2nd).

Table 2

Top challenges or barriers in reaching academic goals in this last year per racial, ethnic, and/or cultural group.

Top challenges or barriers	Latinx	African American (AA)	Native American (NA)
Not enough money to cover general living costs.	2nd	1st	2nd*
Not enough financial aid to cover school fees.	3rd	2nd	1st*
Difficulty balancing work and family demands.	1st	3rd	2nd*
Taking care of family members.	5th	4th	1st*
Low self-confidence about my academic performance	4th	5th	1st*

*Native American student reported equal significance with barriers marked 1st and 2nd.

MOTIVATORS FOR ATTENDING COLLEGE

Table 3 displays primary motivators influencing students' decisions to attend college per racial, ethnic, and/or cultural groups. For Latinx students, their top two motivating factors for attending college include obtaining a good paying job (1st) and to help their family, community, and society (2nd). African American students reported expanding career options (1st) and obtaining a good paying job (2nd). The Native American group reported their two most influential motivating factors as expanding career options and helping their family, community and society (both ranked as 1st).

Looking at middle ranked motivators between the DI groups, motivating factors slightly diverge. Latinx students ranked the following: expanding career options (3rd), being a role model and being the first person in their family to accomplish this goal (both as 4th). They identified being able to help people in their culture, ethnic, or racial group (5th) and parent/guardian/family encouragement to attend (6th). African American students ranked mid-level motivators as helping their family, community, and society (3rd), helping people of their culture, ethnic, or racial group (4th), and being a role model (5th). African American students reported least influential motivators as being the first person in their family to accomplish this goal (6th) and parent/guardian/family encouragement to attend (7th). In regards to Native American students, they ranked obtaining a good paying job (2nd), being a role model (3rd), and helping people of their culture, ethnic, or racial group (4th). Native American students also identified the two least influential motivators as parent/guardian/family encouragement to attend college and being the first person in their family to accomplish this goal (both ranked 5th).

Table 3

Primary motivators influencing students' decisions for attending college per racial, ethnic, an/or cultural group.

Primary motivators for attending	Latinx	African American (AA)	Native American (NA)
My parent(s), guardian(s), or family encouraged me to attend college.	6th	7th	5th**
I want to use my education to expand my career options.	3rd	1st	1st**
I want to use my education to obtain a good paying job to help myself and/or family.	1st	2nd	2nd
I want to be a role model.	4th*	5th	3rd
I want to use my education to help people of my cultural, ethnic, or racial group.	5th	4th	4th
I want to use my education to help my family, community, and society.	2nd	3rd	1st**
I want to be the first person in my family to accomplish this goal.	4th*	6th	5th**

*Latinx students reported equal significance with motivators marked 4th.

**Native American students reported equal significance with motivators marked 1st and 5th.

MOTIVATORS TO WORK HARD

In further examination of other success conditions, Table 4 displays the top motivating factors that encouraged students to work harder to be successful at ARC over the last year. All three DI groups (Latinx, African American, and Native American) ranked that positive interaction with a professor (1st) was the most influential motivating factor that encouraged students to do well. Latinx and Native American students reported family support for their education as the second most important motivating factors for success while African Americans ranked financial aid paying for school fees/texts. The greatest difference between groups occurred with mid-level rankings of motivational factors for success. Latinx students indicated financial aid paying for school fees/texts (3rd), culturally relevant instruction in classes (4th), working with a counselor (5th), and positive interaction with a staff person (6th). African American students reported family support for their education (3rd), working with a counselor (4th), positive interaction with a staff person (5th), and job placement to obtain steady income (6th). Native American students ranked positive interaction with a staff person (3rd), financial aid paying for school fees/texts (4th), working with a counselor (5th), and positive interaction with an administrator at ARC (6th).

Table 4

Top motivating factors that encouraged students to work harder towards success at ARC over the last year

Motivating factors that encouraged students to work harder	Latinx	African American (AA)	Native American (NA)
Financial aid to pay for school fees and textbooks.	3rd	2nd	4th
Culturally relevant instruction in the classroom.	4th		
Positive interaction with a staff person at ARC.	6th	5th	3rd
Positive interaction with a professor at ARC.	1st	1st	1st
Family support for my education.	2nd	3rd	2nd
Working with a counselor.	5th	4th	5th
Job placement to obtain steady income.		6th	
Positive interaction with an administrator at ARC.			6th

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES IN THE CLASSROOM

Table 5 displays the top factors likely to contribute to student success in future classes per racial, ethnic, and/or cultural group. All three groups (Latinx, African American, and Native American) ranked clear explanation of requirements as a top factor for success. Latinx and African American students similarly prioritized regular feedback from professors (2nd), different ways to learn course content (3rd), and safe classroom environment (4th). Native American students identify these factors as important but offer a slightly different ranking order with different ways to learn course content (2nd), safe classroom environment (3rd), and regular feedback from professors (4th). Additionally, Native American students report opportunities to work with classmates (5th) and relevant content that reflects student experiences (6th) as least influential in contributing to their success in the classroom. Latinx students marked opportunities to work with classmates (5th) and relevant content that reflects student experiences (6th). African American students indicated relevant content that reflects student experiences (5th) and opportunities to work with classmates (6th).

Table 5

Top factors likely to contribute to success in future classes per racial, ethnic, and/or cultural group.

Factors contributing to success in the classroom	Latinx	African American (AA)	Native American (NA)
Regular feedback from professor(s) about my academic performance.	2nd	2nd	4th
Opportunities to work with classmates on assignments.	5th	6th	5th*
Clear explanations on what is required to be successful on assignments and/or exams.	1st	1st	1st
Relevant content that reflects my cultural, ethnic, or racial experiences.	6th	5th	6th
Different ways to learn course content	3rd	3rd	2nd
Classroom environments where I feel safe to ask questions without fear of judgement.	4th	4th	3rd
Other**	7th	7th	5th*

*Native American student reported equal significance with factors ranked 5th.

** Short-answer responses in this category yielded no clear themes or conclusions.

DISCUSSION

This section examines the data findings and its implications in understanding the experiences of Latinx, African American, and Native American students at ARC. As defined by the DI project charter, the primary focus of data findings was to inform recommendations for serving African American (AA), Latinx, and Native American (NA) students in alignment with college wide efforts. A summary of student perceptions on campus, barriers, key motivators, and high impact practices in the classroom are discussed.

PERCEPTION ON CAMPUS

On all the five Likert scales examined, over half of students across all racial, ethnic, and/or cultural groups express feeling positive (strongly agree or agree) about seeing other students with their same background represented in their courses, feeling socially accepted on campus, and believing that the college is committed to fostering an environment in which students of color can be successful. At the same time, students across all racial, ethnic, and/or cultural groups also responded that people from their cultural, ethnic, or racial group are more likely to experience discrimination on campus. It is notable that the largest percentage (37.4%) of respondents neither agree/disagree when asked about the probability of their cultural, ethnic, and racial group experiencing discrimination on campus. A similar pattern emerged on the question asking if students saw teachers who looked like them adequately represented in their classrooms (48.3% total for strongly agree and agree, 31% for neither agree/disagree, and 20.7% total for disagree or strongly disagree). On two measures, the likelihood of student groups experiencing discrimination on campus and observing teachers who look like them adequately represented in the classroom, a substantial amount of student responses indicated neither agree/disagree and the reasons are unknown.

CHALLENGES OR BARRIERS FOR STUDENTS

The top barriers or challenges for DI students provide an intriguing illustration of how each racial, ethnic, and/or cultural group experiences these obstacles. Latinx and African American students seem to experience the top barriers in varying degrees. However, Native American students identify the same top barriers but ranked them all as equally challenging between first (not enough financial aid for school fees/texts, taking care of family members, and low self-confidence about academic performance) and second (not enough money for general living and difficulty balancing work and family). Group differences in ranking barriers suggests other unique issues may be present and specific to racial, ethnic, and/or cultural contexts. It is intriguing that the top barriers for all three DI groups consists of themes around concerns with finances, family, and low self-confidence about academic performance.

MOTIVATORS FOR STUDENTS

The list of student motivators for attending college (Table 3) seems to imply that students are driven to attend ARC for many complex reasons such as personal gain (e.g. expand career options, obtain a good paying job, be a role model, and be the first person to achieve educational goals) and familial or societal contributions (e.g. help their family, community, and society and help people of their cultural, ethnic, or racial group). These findings seem to suggest that students' reasons for attending ARC are multifaceted with interdependent relationships or outcomes that mutually benefit students' personal lives and their communities.

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES IN THE CLASSROOM

When students from all three DI groups were asked what they thought would contribute to their success in future classes, they all identified the same most significant factor – clear explanations on what is required to be successful on assignments and/or exams. Questions about motivations influencing students to work harder and contributing to success in the classroom suggests that professors have a crucial role in shaping the experience of DI students on campus. It appears that positive interactions with professors (Table 4) encourage students to work hard. Professors tend to define course expectations, determine academic content and facilitate the classroom environment. In addition to the influence from professors, students from DI groups also ranked support from family, counselors, staff, and administrators as meaningful to their efforts to do well. Finally, it appears that barriers or worries about adequate financial aid, enough money for general living expenses, balancing work and family responsibilities, and low self-confidence about their academic performance can also impact student performance or persistence on campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary charge was to do a literature review, engage in data collection, and form recommendations to help eliminate the equity gap with African American, Latinx, and Native American students at ARC. In this effort, the SES survey results provide a glimpse into the experiences of students from DI groups at ARC with questions probing for student perceptions of campus, challenges or barriers, motivational factors, and contributors to success in the classroom. Data findings appear to reveal intricate issues about student needs and what is important to their success at ARC.

A majority of students from all DI groups indicated positive perceptions about seeing students from their same cultural, ethnic or racial background in their courses, feeling socially accepted on campus, and believing that the college is committed to fostering an environment in which students of color can be successful. At the same time, there are a lot of students who answered with neither agree/disagree when asked about people from their cultural, ethnic, or racial group being more prone to experience discrimination on campus and seeing teachers who look like them adequately presented in classrooms. Since these questions have the potential to inform how students see themselves as belonging

to the campus community, it warrants further examination through administering follow up surveys, personal interviews, or focus groups.

Data findings also show that the top barriers for all three DI groups relate to finances, family responsibilities, and low self-confidence. Potential ways to address challenges or barriers with financial aid and general living costs may include informational workshops on the financial aid process, readily accessible financial aid advisors, free textbooks or school supplies, and greater student employment opportunities (e.g. paid internships or work experience). As top motivators for students included career options and securing employment, it seems reasonable that comprehensive career services would be crucial in assisting students with career advising, job search, interview techniques, résumé building, and other skills and services required to secure successful employment. Another way to support students with family responsibilities may involve greater on-campus assistance for students with children (e.g. easily accessible drop-off/pick-up childcare), vouchers or gift cards for personal needs and groceries, more college success workshops/courses providing academic success skills, and personal mental health support services. In addition to financial assistance and campus resources for students, it may also be necessary for ARC to investigate how systemic practices present barriers? by talking to DI populations to learn about their encounters with institutional barriers. The findings from this project offer a snapshot of student perceptions and their experiences offering a preliminary understanding of how to address their needs. It is preferable to do a long-term study to track academic success rates and situational changes within DI groups.

Addressing barriers appears to require an understanding of what motivates students to succeed. Students from all three DI groups report that having positive interactions with their professors was influential in making them want to work harder. Considering that students who are enrolled would have some level of contact with their professors, it is understandable that they would rank the student-professor relationship as an important motivational influence in encouraging them to work hard. To maximize and encourage student-professor relationships, it is important for ARC to support professors in this endeavor. One possible avenue is through long term professional development training to help professors develop best practices for promoting safe classroom environments, incorporating more culturally relevant course materials, implementing diverse learning strategies, and building connections with diverse students in their courses. However, professional development opportunities may not be sufficient. Thus, incorporating mentorships for professors with reassigned time to allow for individual support, engagement in social or campus conversations/activities, opportunity to incorporate new strategies, and receive feedback from others is suggested. Also, as it appears that interpersonal relationships are crucial for student success, it is worth exploring opportunities to involve students' families in their college experiences at ARC (e.g. multilingual college orientation sessions for families, free campus activities for families throughout the year, and family workshops on financial aid or academic requirements at ARC).

LIMITATIONS

The primary focus of this project relates to Latinx, African American, and Native American students at ARC. Thus, students who did not disclose their race/ethnic/cultural identity on their CCC application were excluded. When the team used the criteria of selecting students from these three DI groups enrolled in spring 2020, another demographic category emerged – multiracial students with ancestry from at least one of the identified DI groups. Multiracial students with Latinx, African American, and/or Native American ancestry were largely excluded from the DI report in efforts to follow the directives of the project charter. It is recommended that future studies include multiracial students as their experiences are important and likely contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the experience of students of color at ARC.

The DI team had tentative plans to promote the SES and encourage student participation through various student groups, campus advertising, and word-of-mouth interactions. These public efforts were canceled due to the emergence

of COVID-19 and the unexpected closure of ARC one week after the initiation of data collection. It is likely that survey response rates were negatively impacted with changing student priorities to securing basic needs during a pandemic, adjusting to remote courses, and adapting to the disruption or loss of campus support programs.

The DI project charter set forth by the Student Success Council served as a guiding document informing the timeline, participant selection, data collection, and overall scope of the report. The DI project was expected to start in spring 2019 and end in spring 2020. This short timeline posed many obstacles. DI team leaders and constituent groups were not formalized until the middle of the fall 2020 semester. The initial stages of this project required three to four months of research before writing a historical literature review, defining a methodical framework, and creating a survey tool that best fit the criteria of the project. In spring 2020, a series of important project steps (e.g. finalization of the SES, conducting a pilot survey, creating an electronic version of the SES, participant selection, data collection, and writing the report) all occurred in two to three months.

CONCLUSION

The primary charge for each DI project team was to do a literature review, engage in data collection, and form recommendations in efforts to eliminate the equity gaps that exist among African American, Latinx, and Native American students at ARC. Drawing on previous work in the field, the DI team created the SES to do local data collection on campus. A large majority of students from the three DI groups indicated positive feelings about being socially accepted on campus and the college's commitment to fostering an environment where students of color can be successful.

Results from the SES also show that top barriers for students from all three DI groups revolve around worries or issues with finances, family responsibilities, and low self-confidence in academic performance. At the same time, these students indicated their motivators for attending college largely as their desire to improve their personal lives and communities. They also identified their top motivator for working hard this last year as positive relationships with professors. Students from DI groups also acknowledged that increased success in future classes may likely depend on clear explanations of expectations, regular feedback from professors, different ways to learn course content, opportunities to work with classmates, safe classroom environments, and content relevant to their cultural, ethnic, or racial experiences.

In alignment with key findings, recommendations based on the data analysis include increased financial aid services, comprehensive career services, on-campus assistance for students with families, alleviating financial strain with free textbooks or supplies and employment opportunities, offering academic success strategies and providing mental health support. As it appears that DI students highly value extensive support systems, it is important for ARC to provide professors with time and resources in their efforts to redesign classroom environments and build deeper interpersonal relationships with diverse students. Additionally, the campus may want to explore greater opportunities to include students' families in supporting the academic success of its students. The findings from this project contribute to ongoing conversations about how best to serve students from DI populations in efforts to eliminate equity gaps on campus. However, future studies are needed to further inform institutional practices, support faculty/staff, and meet the diverse needs of students from Native American, African American, and Latinx communities.

A practical model emerges from the intertwining of the theories of Racial Identity Development, Critical Race, and Mattering and Marginality. This model can be achieved through multiple strategies. First, rituals are one way to help students deal with feelings of marginality and increase feelings of mattering. “Rituals can help. They sometimes occur naturally, but if they do not, then inattention to ritualistic passage can result in the individual feeling isolated” (Schlossberg, 1989 p. 12). Failure to hold rituals is a missed opportunity to help students feel that they matter. Because individuals in transition often feel isolated and vulnerable, ceremonies connecting them to society or to a group keep them from feeling lost (Schlossberg, 1989). According to Schlossberg, Barbara Myeroff (1985) even suggests that individuals develop rituals for themselves at moments to acknowledge small milestones in their lives. For example, we can encourage students to create rituals for completing a paper, passing a test, earning perfect attendance, tutoring a friend, asking for help, scheduling a counseling appointment, connecting with a professor during office hours, earning extra credit, etc. The ritual can serve to acknowledge completion of an important benchmark in one’s life and the advancement to the next (Schlossberg, 1989).

Ceremonies are another way to reduce feelings of marginality and increase feelings of mattering. “Ceremonies help define the person; they segregate or single out a person in the company of a meaningful community or group” (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 12). One example is the Los Rios annual Celebration of Excellence and Achievement for Students of African Descent. This cultural event serves to highlight the achievements of students of African descent who are graduating, transferring or completing a certificate. The ceremony is infused with rituals that reflect the customs and traditions of both African and African American culture. The procession of elders, pouring of libation, and the conferment of Kente cloth, all contribute to a celebration of achieving an educational milestone. The ceremony also serves to demonstrate to Black and African American students that they matter to the college as well as to their families and their community.

Another successful strategy of critical importance is culturally responsive teaching. Hammond (2015) suggests that culturally responsive teaching is not simply specific set of tools or lesson plans to be pulled in at specific moments in the teaching and learning process. Rather, it is a more intricate process that involves both intellectual and interpersonal interactions (Hammond, 2015). Her definition reads as follows:

An educator’s ability to recognize students’ cultural displays of learning and meaning making and respond positively and constructively with teaching moves that use cultural knowledge as a scaffold to connect what the student knows to new concepts and content in order to promote effective information processing. All the while, the educator understands the importance of being in a relationship and having a social-emotional connection to the student in order to create a safe space for learning (Hammond, 2015, p. 15).

According to Hammond (2015), many teachers do not offer culturally diverse students intellectually challenging work because they underestimate their abilities. Thus, students are not appropriately challenged because they are perceived to be deficient in various ways. Conversely, Hammond believes that a culturally responsive approach will help students build their intellectual capacity and also become independent learners. She asserts that there is a need for creating cultures of support that she calls learning partnerships.

Marva Collins’ relationship to her elementary school students represents an example of a learning partnership. Marva Collins was one of the first educators to challenge the deficit approach to teaching Black elementary school children attending impoverished schools in the city of Chicago. She opened the Westside Prep School in 1975 where she employed strategies for teaching that emphasized praise, affirmations and validations. In her book, *Ordinary Children*,

Extraordinary Teachers, Collins highlights her practices of praising, affirming, and validating her student's intellectual brilliance while honoring their cultural and life experiences. Marva Collins' pedagogy is similar to the definition of what Hammond calls a warm demander. "Warm demanders have personal warmth and active demandingness" (Hammond, 2015, p. 97). They create high standards of achievement then hold their students accountable to meeting the standards.

Implementing practices that affirm Black and African American students' importance can also increase the likelihood that they will feel important and appreciated by their instructors, staff, and classmates. In his book, *Black Minds Matter*, Wood outlines Ten Principles for Embedding Love in Education with Black Males (Wood, 2019, p. 153):

- 1) Excitement for arrival
- 2) Learn about them with interest
- 3) Want the best for them
- 4) Advocate for them
- 5) Guard them from others
- 6) Worry about them
- 7) Discipline them with love
- 8) Boast about them
- 9) Time investment
- 10) Shared investment

When students believe they matter to others, they are more likely to persist. When Black students persist, the college, the community, and society benefit from their knowledge, culture and experience.

Students believe they matter when they perceive they are important to others. Thus, mattering happens when students have meaningful connections to others. The interpersonal relationships that occur between Black students and their professors, coaches, teaching assistants, and tutors are paramount. Thus, classrooms and other areas of the college are opportune spaces to promote mattering. Students and instructors enter classrooms with an understanding that they are both the teacher and the student and thus, dependent upon each other for one's success. "We also know that good teaching matters and that students learn more from faculty who invest in their development as teachers. As well, faculty members' choices and actions are shaped by their institution and external influences that can be either barriers that discourage or scaffolding that supports teaching improvement and innovation (Austin, 2011; Hutchings & Sorcinelli, in press). This suggests that faculty and students need a strong set of supports to learn about new pedagogical practices, to try them out, and to experience success" (ACUE, 2019, p. 8). Colleges must invest in instructor/educator training resources that promote collectivism, culturally responsive teaching practices and other equity approaches that are effective in working with Black and African American students.

It is important to create employment as well as leadership opportunities for Black and African American students in and out of classroom spaces. For example, students can work on campus as tutors, peer mentors, student assistants and technology assistants. Also, offering stipends for participating in internships provides access to these opportunities for Black and African American students who otherwise might not have the luxury of taking advantage of them. Leadership opportunities include serving on student government, serving on college advisory boards and committees as well as representing student clubs and organizations. These types of leadership opportunities give Black and African American students, who often feel marginalized, opportunities to share their skills and talents. Research by Wood (2010) further supports the concept of mattering for Black and African American students. Students feel they matter when others

believe they are important. When faculty and staff believe students are important, they demonstrate their sentiment in different ways. One way, they show support for students is by monitoring students' academic progress. They check on them in person, by phone, by text by email. For example, remembering a student's name and asking how he/she did on a recent midterm, sends a message to the student that someone sees them as important, that they matter. Feelings of mattering can motivate students to persist and complete their goals because they believe others are depending on them to do so. Research by both Bush (2010) and Wood (2010) supports this theory. In his research focusing on Black males, Wood (2010) found a correlation between the student's perceptions of the college climate and academic performance, a positive campus climate influenced student success. In Wood's study, students "spoke about their relationships with campus staff (e.g. advisers, tutors, janitors, librarians), noting that these staff checked in on the students' academic progress and encouraged achievement" (Wood, et. al., 2016, p.82). When Black and African American students believe they matter to staff and faculty, their feelings of mattering influence their perceptions of the college climate and motivate them to succeed.

in addition to, cultivating faculty-student connections, colleges can also expand opportunities to cultivate staff-student interpersonal relationships. Staff are an integral part of the college community and are often undervalued in the role they play in supporting students' academic success. Staff are immersed in the culture of the college and play a pivotal role in how the college functions; and, without staff, colleges could not operate. Staff are ambassadors to welcome, support, and validate students. Their role is as important as faculty. Finding ways to better utilize their skills, talents and experience will benefit the college and students (e.g. allowing staff to serve as student club advisors, mentors, etc.). In addition to the role that faculty and staff play, it is also very important to offer opportunities for students to experience cultural engagement.

The Culturally Engaging Campus Environment Model (CECE) is a construct that proposes that college students who are in culturally engaging college environments, are more likely to experience a greater sense of belonging, higher completion rates and more likely to persist and graduate. There are nine indicators of a culturally engaging campus environment: 1) cultural familiarity, 2) culturally relevant knowledge, 3) cultural community service, 4) cross cultural engagement, 5) collectivist cultural orientations, 6) culturally validating environments, 7) humanized educational environments, 8) proactive philosophies, and 9) availability of holistic support (Museus, 2016). Of particular importance to Black and African American students are the indicators, culturally relevant knowledge and cultural familiarity. Culturally relevant knowledge includes providing space (i.e. in the classroom, in a center) for students to acquire knowledge about communities and countries of origin. Cultural familiarity provides an opportunity for students, staff and faculty to share common backgrounds through the lens of culture, thereby creating meaningful student-staff connections which foster mattering and improve student success.

Students who lack cultural knowledge and have unconsciously taken on or accepted the negative societal stereotypes of their racial or ethnic group are more likely to feel lost in terms of who they really are and to exhibit anger and frustration. Lacking the cultural knowledge and ability to challenge the narrative of the dominant culture which views them as threatening, hostile, violent, aggressive, etc., creates many barriers for Black and African American students to succeed in predominantly White educational institutions. Under these circumstances, Black and African American students who encounter microaggressions and discrimination will naturally experience feelings of isolation and marginalization which will undoubtedly affect academic performance. Black and African American students need safe spaces on predominately White institutions where they can affirm their identity and connect to others with common beliefs and experiences.

Creating spaces for Black and African American students to affirm their racial identity, build community, learn about their culture and make connections to peers, staff and faculty is vital. “Black Culture Centers (BCCs) present safe and welcoming spaces for Black students at predominately White institutions. Resulting from Black Student Movements led by Stokely Carmichael, in the 1960’s, BCCs have become institutional mainstays that provide services and programs to the entire campus community” (Patton, 2006, p. 628). For example, Pittman (1994) contends that BCCs help to foster the racial identity development process and increase student sense of belonging which may result in increased retention rates and enhance the college experience for students. BCCs developed as a way to provide a safe space where students can tell counter-stories that negate other narratives depicted of them in the media and society. But, “BCCs are on a list of endangered programs to be cut from universities or merged into multicultural centers. Merging individual cultural centers to bring underrepresented groups under one roof has the potential to undermine the rich history that each of these groups brings to the campus. The merging could invalidate their individual experiences as Black students” (Patton, p. 642). This action is reflective of the melting pot theory of assimilation (Femminella, 1976). The melting pot theory, like the colorblind theory assumes that one’s individuality disappears to be replaced by one all-encompassing definition (Patton, 2006). Unfortunately, these theories diminish the individual values, culture, beliefs, and characteristics unique to each particular group. “Campuses that have multicultural centers should begin to assess whether the facility...meets the needs of a diverse population” (Patton, 2006, p. 642). BCCs are spaces on PWI campuses for Black and African American students to access information, build community, and connect with peers, staff, and faculty. For some, BCCs serve as a home away from home where students come to get academic, social and emotional support and to not feel isolated.

FINANCIAL AID AS A BARRIER TO SUCCESS

Lack of adequate financial support is a barrier for Black and African American students to attend college. According to Wood (2012), “young Black men who attended college full-time as opposed to less than full-time had greater odds, by 78.8%, of persisting. In essence when students attend college full-time, they have more opportunities to engage with faculty access campus resources, and focus on their studies” (Wood, et. al. 2016, p. 83). Research by Wood, Bush, Hicks and Kampui (2016) found the three most significant reasons why students could not attend college full-time are work, finances and family responsibilities. The need to work was the most prominent factor impacting success for Black males in college. “When students lack the finances needed to focus on school, they often work to support themselves” (Wood, et. al., 2016, p. 90). Due to working long hours at demanding jobs, Wood found that working served as a barrier to students’ academic success (Wood, Hilton and Lewis, 2011, p. 91). Research from Wood, Hilton, and Lewis (2011) examined data from the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study and found that students valued working when their employment was related to their studies. They found that jobs related to their studies, helped them to better understand their coursework, provided greater work experience in the field, and enabled them to devote the necessary time needed to succeed in their classes (Wood, et. al, 2016, p. 91). Mason (1994, 1998) confirmed the correlation between decreasing family income and decreasing persistence rates. Clearly, the financial expenses of college can be a negative deterrent to Black males completing their educational goals. Lack of information combined with low financial aid application rates translates to missed opportunities for Black and African American students, not to mention the wealth of culture and talent colleges miss, when they are unable to attend.

A report titled, *Hidden Figures: A Framework to Increase Access to Financial Aid* (2019) published by Education Trust-West, states:

Primary state-funded student financial aid program, Cal Grant, was designed six decades ago and no longer meets the needs of the state’s growing number of struggling college students. Due to shifting student

demographics and the ever-rising cost of living in California, the program as originally designed falls short of advancing affordability and providing a pathway to success. It's simple: students are struggling more than ever to pay for not just their tuition, but also their basic needs like food and housing. Many students must work an excessive number of hours or take out crushing student loans, all in an effort to reach their educational goals and realize their dreams. For too many, these barriers put completion out of reach and magnify the challenges of an outdated aid program. Access to financial aid is critical for low-income students and students of color who want to go to college. Annually, California provides \$2 billion in state financial aid, through the California State Aid Commission's Cal Grant program offered to all students, including undocumented students. However, thousands of students in California who are eligible for financial aid do not receive it. Over the last two years, nearly a half million high school seniors in California did not complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application (CADAA). Despite notable informational, awareness, and completion efforts at the local level to increase these rates, only 54% of California's high school seniors completed a financial aid application in 2018, ranking the state 30th in the nation. Some of the reasons many eligible students do not complete a financial aid form are because they believe they do not qualify, have no information on how to apply, or do not want to share personal information because they fear deportation" (p. 2).

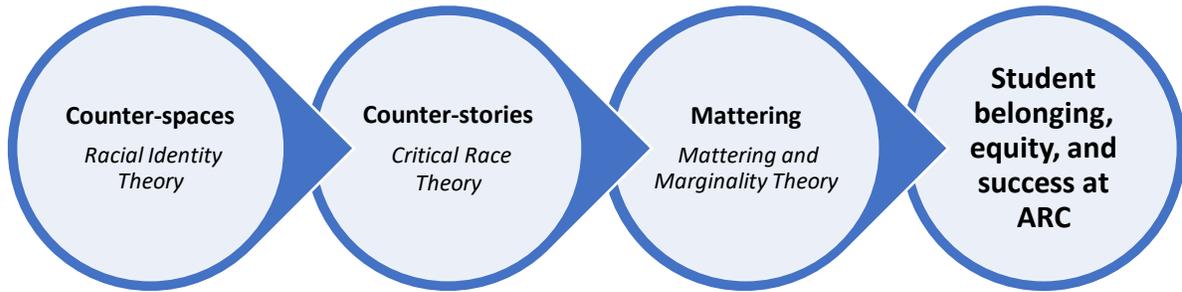
In their Report & Recommendations for Improving Black and African American Student Outcomes published in February 2020, the California Community Colleges Black and African American Advisory Panel also found that "Financial Aid is a major stumbling block for Black and African American students" (p. 7). According to the report, "financial Aid is a major stumbling block for Black and African American students. For Black and African American students, the biggest barriers to attending community college are lack of financial support, knowledge about the availability of financial aid, and for those who are aware, self-disqualifying and assuming they will not be eligible for aid" (p. 7). The report asserts that many students and their parents are unaware of the various financial aid resources, and other campus support services such as childcare. Colleges can take actions to inform prospective students and families about financial aid, career options and support services by working together with high schools and community organizations.

The fact that financial aid and the ability to pay for college costs, as well as living expenses is a major hurdle for Black and African American students is easily understood when you examine what Hammond describes as the sociopolitical context. "This term describes the mutually reinforcing policies and practices across social, economic, and political domains that contribute to disparities and unequal opportunities for people of color in housing, transportation, education, and healthcare, to name a few...redlining by banks which make it nearly impossible for people living in predominantly Black neighborhoods to secure home or new business loans, gerrymandering of political districts which effect the tax revenues and thereby impact school funding are just a few" (Hammond, 2015, p. 28).

Given the societal conditions mentioned previously, it stands to reason that Black and African American students are more likely to need financial assistance for basic essentials such as housing and food in order to succeed in the college environment. Many find themselves attempting to alleviate financial strains by working more hours which takes away from valuable time needed to successfully complete their courses; and when students do not successfully complete their courses, they lose their financial aid. It is an all too familiar pattern for students who lack the family and emotional support to stay in college and then arrive on community college campuses and must contend with the typical barriers of feeling marginalized and experiencing microaggressions. Providing campus jobs, free textbooks, and food may relieve the strain for some, but more financial aid options and an academic environment conducive to the needs of Black and African American students is necessary for long term gains in closing equity gaps.

RECOMMENDATIONS: MOVING TO ACTION

After thoughtful consideration of the research, the report team offers four recommendations for American River College. These recommendations were intentionally aligned to the Guided Pathways Pillars to enact meaningful change to equitize education across the entire student experience.



Specifically, there must be **Counter-Spaces** where students can tell **Counter-Stories** to foster **Mattering** on campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS	SUGGESTED STRATEGIES
<p>Clarify the Path: <i>Provide early outreach and financial aid information to prospective and continuing students</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify/hire/train dedicated Outreach Specialists to collaborate with college and high school staff to provide information on career options, and college programs to prospective high school seniors and their families. Identify/hire/train a dedicated Financial Aid Specialists to provide financial aid information/literacy workshops and financial aid application assistance to prospective high school seniors, their families, as well as, continuing college students. Identify/hire/train students to assist in outreach to high schools Administer needs assessment to prospective students to determine their financial needs (e.g., financial aid, textbooks, college supplies, necessity to work). Collaborate with Career and Pathways Center or Homebases and faculty to administer career assessments, provide labor information and provide career exploration information. Deploy financial aid specialist(s) and provide intrusive follow up to African American students three weeks prior to the start of the semester and three weeks after the semester has begun. Include financial aid information in ARC literature and view books targeted to prospective Black and African American students. Partner with community-based organizations to provide resources and support (e.g. housing assistance and other essential needs)
<p>Enter the Path: <i>Provide intrusive, systemic support; create opportunities to increase connections between faculty, staff</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize integrated Student Success Teams – team members should include: counseling faculty, instructional faculty, peer mentors, tutors, librarians, Student Personnel Specialists, technology specialist, Workforce Development/Internship staff, and a Financial Aid/literacy specialist to provide case management support to students. Create Black Faculty and Staff Advisory Council to provide advisement on issues regarding Black and African American student success and student needs.

<i>and students in and out of the classroom</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify a dedicated space with budget and staffing for Black and African American students to build community, access resources, affirm identity and cultivate connections between students, staff and faculty. ▪ Utilize Starfish or other comparable technology, to create warm hand-offs, positive reinforcement, referrals to people via technology. ▪ Expand course offerings of GE courses with an African American emphasis taught by equity minded, culturally responsive faculty ▪ Publish annually in print or electronically a directory of ARC Black and African American faculty and staff members and disseminate to new students. ▪ Increase the capacity of Umoja Sakhu and/or other programs and services which focus on positive racial identity development through curriculum as well as programming and services. ▪ Expand course offerings with an African/African American emphasis, taught by equity minded faculty who utilize culturally responsive teaching practices. ▪ Disseminate Welcome Letter with links to resources, services, programs, BFS Directory, to all new students who identify as Black or African American.
<p>Stay on the Path: <i>Provide funding resources, leadership and employment opportunities for students to alleviate their financial burden.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify/hire/train Instructional Assistants, Student Personnel Assistants, student assistants, peer mentors, tutors and technology aids; embed them in classes and offer follow-up academic assistance to students. ▪ Collaborate with Workforce Development and Internship Program to identify funding sources, provide stipends for internships and employment opportunities. ▪ Dedicate funds, administered by an advisory board, to supply students with funding for textbooks, college resources and other essential needs. ▪ Create technology loan programs.
<p>Ensure Learning: <i>Enhance classroom learning environments and invest in instructor/educator training resources that promote collectivism, culturally responsive teaching practices and other equity approaches that help students learn.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invest in teacher training programs like those offered by the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) and the Center for Organizational Responsibility and Advancement (CORA) to encourage, support and assist faculty in learning effective teaching strategies. ▪ Initiate cross-talk opportunities for student, staff and faculty to connect. ▪ Embed Instructional Assistants, Student Personnel Assistants, tutors, and student technology assistants in classes.

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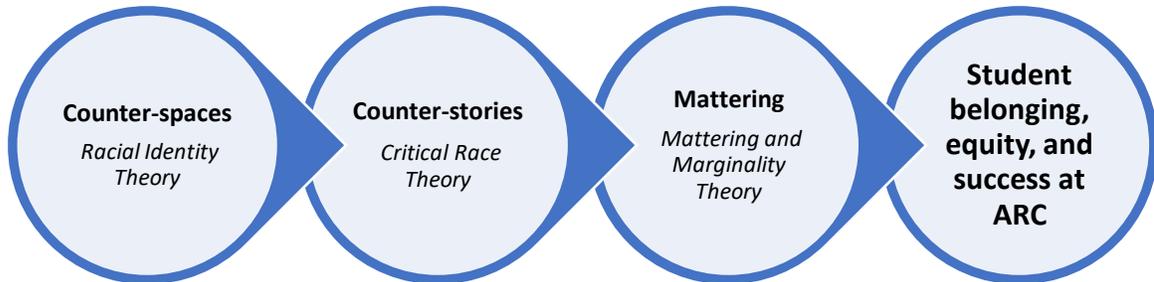
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APPENDIX A: CONNECTING THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

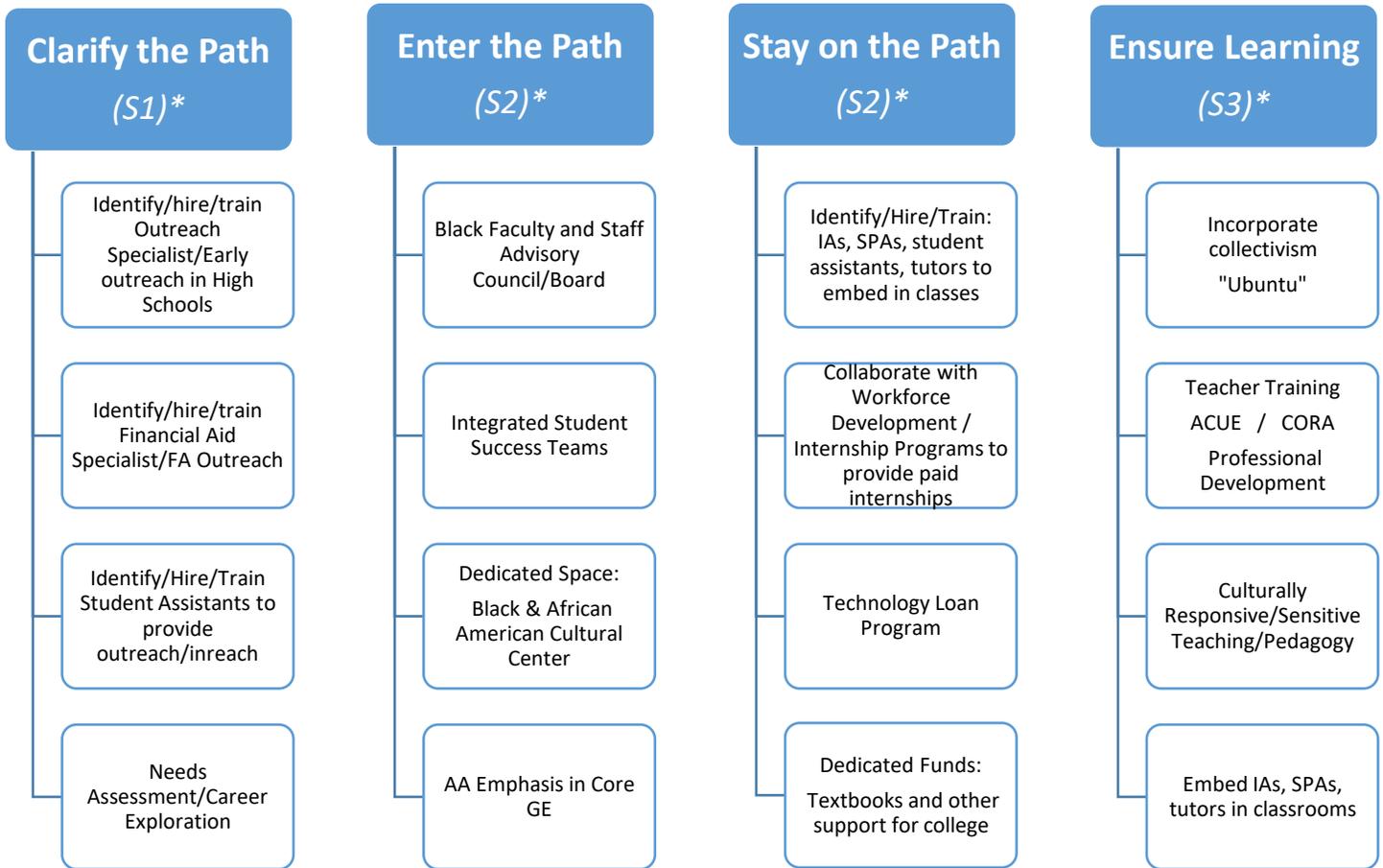
The theoretical concepts can be connected into practical application that creates the conditions for student belonging, equity, and success at ARC.



Specifically, there must be Counter-Spaces where students can tell Counter-Stories to foster Mattering on campus.

Counter-spaces	Counter-stories	Mattering
<i>Racial Identity</i>	<i>Critical Race Theory</i>	<i>Marginality & Mattering</i>
Themes	7 Tenants	Themes
Self- Determination	Whiteness as norm	Attention
Counter spaces	Interest convergence	Importance
Community Perpetuity	Critique of liberalism (a political philosophy based on belief in progress, the essential goodness of the human race, and the autonomy of the individual and standing for the protection of political and civil liberties)	Ego-Extension
Psychological Empowerment	Intersectionality	Dependence
	Commitment to social justice (primary issue- racism)	Appreciation
	Counter-storytelling	
	The permanence of racism	

APPENDIX B: RECOMMENDATIONS MAPPED TO GUIDED PATHWAYS



**ARC Strategic Plan Goals (2017-2021)*

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Black agency

Agency is the power people have to think for themselves and act in ways that shape their experiences and life trajectories.

Climate Survey

Campus climate [surveys] provide a baseline of data that helps the institution better understand how members of the campus community relate to one another on a daily basis, and allows the institution to determine what is working and what is not.

Collectivist Worldview

Collective worldview (or African worldview) places more importance on a group versus an individual orientation. The values and customs consistent with the African worldview are characterized by the sense of cooperation, interdependence and collective responsibility (Nobles, 1992)

Common Read

American River College's (ARC) Common Read is a community-wide reading program that offers a professional development opportunity for all ARC employees to focus on equity and social justice.

Community Engagement

ARC is committed to engaging our community in efforts to eliminate inequities and to promote positive social change.

Counter-spaces

Counter-spaces are physical places of meeting or emotional spaces of voice, resistance, and healing. Dr. Dorinda J Carter (2007) calls these spaces "identity affirming counter-spaces" that are not interchangeable with activities, opportunity, or situations but are qualitatively different.

Culture

According to sociologists, culture consists of the values, beliefs, systems of language, communication, and practices that people share in common and that can be used to define them as a collective. Culture also includes the material objects that are common to that group or society.

Counter Storytelling

Counter-storytelling is a framework that legitimizes the racial and subordinate experiences of marginalized groups... Counter-stories are personal, composite stories or narratives of people of color...The use of counter-stories in analyzing higher education's climate provides faculty, staff, and students of color a voice to tell their narratives involving marginalized experiences.

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Critical Race Theory analyzes the role of race and racism in perpetuating social disparities between dominant and marginalized racial groups...CRT's framework is comprised of the following five tenets: counter-storytelling; the permanence of racism; Whiteness as property; interest conversion; and the critique of liberalism.

Data on Demand

Data On Demand (DOD) is a subscription service that offers an application that enables institutions of higher education to conduct analyses of survey data with peer comparison groups that are created by the user (administrators, staff, etc.).

DataMart

Data mart provides information about community college students, courses, student services, outcomes and faculty and staff.

Disproportionately Impacted (DI)

The term disproportionate impact is used in the California Community College system to describe the condition when a population of students significantly underperforms on indicators of success when compared to the highest performing group or to the college as a whole.

Student Experience Survey (SES)

The Disproportionate Impact Focus Surveys were designed in consultation with members from each of the Disproportionate Impact teams and administered to ARC students in Spring 2020.

Educational Debt

The concept of educational debt was developed by Gloria Ladson-Billings in response to the term, “achievement gap” which blames individual children or their families for the gap. The phrase educational debt recognizes the pervasiveness that systemic racism, compounded over years, has had on students of color and the poor, specifically as it relates to the “achievement gap”. As a result, any potential solutions designed to eliminate that gap that do not consider and attempt to address the full economic, sociopolitical, moral, and historic debt owed generations of families, will continue to fail.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

Equity

Equity is focused on providing educational opportunities and support that meet the needs of the community, especially those who are historically underserved, marginalized, and/or disproportionately impacted. These communities include:

People of color including Black and African American, Asian and Asian American, Pacific Islander American, Latinx, Native American, multiracial, and other people disadvantaged due to racial and ethnic identity; Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and others (LGBTQ+); women-identified and females; undocumented, DACA, AB540, and mixed-status families; low-income and first generation; current and former foster youth; people with disabilities; non-majority religious and spiritual groups; refugees and persons holding Special Immigrant Visas (SIV); international students; people with limited use of the English language.

Equity Action Institute

The ARC Equity Action Institute is a two-semester cohort experience designed for full-time faculty members who want to improve disproportionately impacted student population success rates at American River College. In collaboration with other faculty, participants support one other while engaging in reading, reflection, dialogue, group work, and other transformative processes that deepen practitioner development around one’s racial and other identities and expand their ability to use teaching and learning tool kits to address the needs of our underserved students.

Equity-Minded Education

An equity-minded education values students and their life histories and experiences, making them central to the teaching and learning process. The histories, culture, and contributions of diverse groups are included in the student experience. Learning environments and curricula directly address racism, sexism, classism, linguicism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, religious intolerance, audism, xenophobia, and intersectionality.

Greater Sacramento Urban League (GSUL)

The Greater Sacramento Urban League (GSUL) provides under-represented youth and adults with education, career training, and employment opportunities in order to achieve economic self-reliance.

Guided Pathways

ARC is part of the California Guided Pathways project, whose goal is to provide students with the following: 1) Programs that are fully mapped out and aligned; 2) Proactive academic and career advising; 3) Responsive student tracking systems; 4) Structured onboarding processes; 5) Instructional support and co-curricular activities; 6) Redesigned and integrated basic skills classes.

Individualistic Worldview

Learning, from an individualistic worldview, is an individual matter; knowledge is acquired or constructed by individuals—albeit in a social context. Students are considered responsible for their own learning, and one of the developmental goals of schooling is to foster independent, autonomous learners (Betts, 2004; Centre for Promoting Learner Autonomy, 2006). The learning relationship is primarily between the teacher and the [individual student], not among the group of students in the classroom.

Institutional Barriers

Institutional barriers (IBs) are policies, procedures, or situations that systematically disadvantage certain groups of people.

Learning Communities

Learning communities foster personal growth and academic success by connecting students with similar interests and cultural backgrounds to each other and faculty.

Liberation

Liberation is the act of dismantling systems of oppression and disruption systems of power and privilege. This process includes the voices of those who have been excluded or marginalized. Liberation strives beyond equity through social justice to pursue true freedom.

Literature Review

A literature review is a comprehensive summary of previous research on a topic. The literature review surveys scholarly articles, books, and other sources relevant to a particular area of research. It provides a theoretical base for the research.

Marginality/Mattering Theory (Schlossberg)

Schlossberg theorized that as adults transition in life (e. g., entering first grade, college, getting married, or retiring), they are concerned with whether they are able to manage the transition as well as fit into new roles (Schlossberg, 1989). Schlossberg speculated that when an individual transitions into a new role, there is an increased likelihood of feeling marginal, which she defined as lacking a sense of belonging....Schlossberg suggested that mattering is starkly different from marginalization (Schlossberg, 1989)...and involves the feeling of belonging and mattering to others.

Methodological Framework

A methodological framework describes the research design, procedures and process of inquiry in a particular field.

Nationality

A group of persons belonging to a particular nation; a nation; an ethnic or racial group.

Quantitative Research

Quantitative Research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into useable statistics. It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and other defined variables – and generalize results from a larger sample population. Quantitative Research uses measurable data to formulate facts and uncover patterns in research. Quantitative data collection methods are much more structured than Qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data collection methods include various forms of surveys – online surveys, paper surveys, mobile surveys and kiosk surveys, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, longitudinal studies, website interceptors, online polls, and systematic observations.

Race

Socially defined race has been defined by an arbitrarily organized combination of physical traits, geographic ancestry, language, religion and a variety of other cultural features. Social definitions of race differ depending on context and always operate in the service of social-dominance hierarchies.

Racial Identity Development Theory

Racial Identity Development Theory discusses how people in various racial groups and with multiracial identities form their particular self-concept. It also describes some typical phases in remaking that identity based on learning and awareness of systems of privilege and structural racism, cultural and historical meanings attached to racial categories, and factors operating in the larger socio-historical level (e.g. globalization, technology, immigration, and increasing multiracial population).

Social Justice

Social justice is both a process and a goal. Social justice is a way of seeing and acting aimed at resisting unfairness and inequity while enhancing freedom and possibility for all. It focuses on how people, policies, practices, curricula, and institutions may be used to liberate rather than oppress others, particularly disproportionately impacted persons.

Transformative Leadership

ARC commits time and resources to supporting the development of courageous leadership. This includes the development of skills that address individual and systematic oppression.

[Umoja Sakhu Learning Community](#) (USLC)

The *Umoja Sakhu Learning Community* at American River College is open to all students and is specifically designed to increase the retention and success rate as well as the graduation and transfer rates of African ancestry students.

[White Privilege](#)

White privilege is having greater access to power and resources than people of color [in the same situation] do.

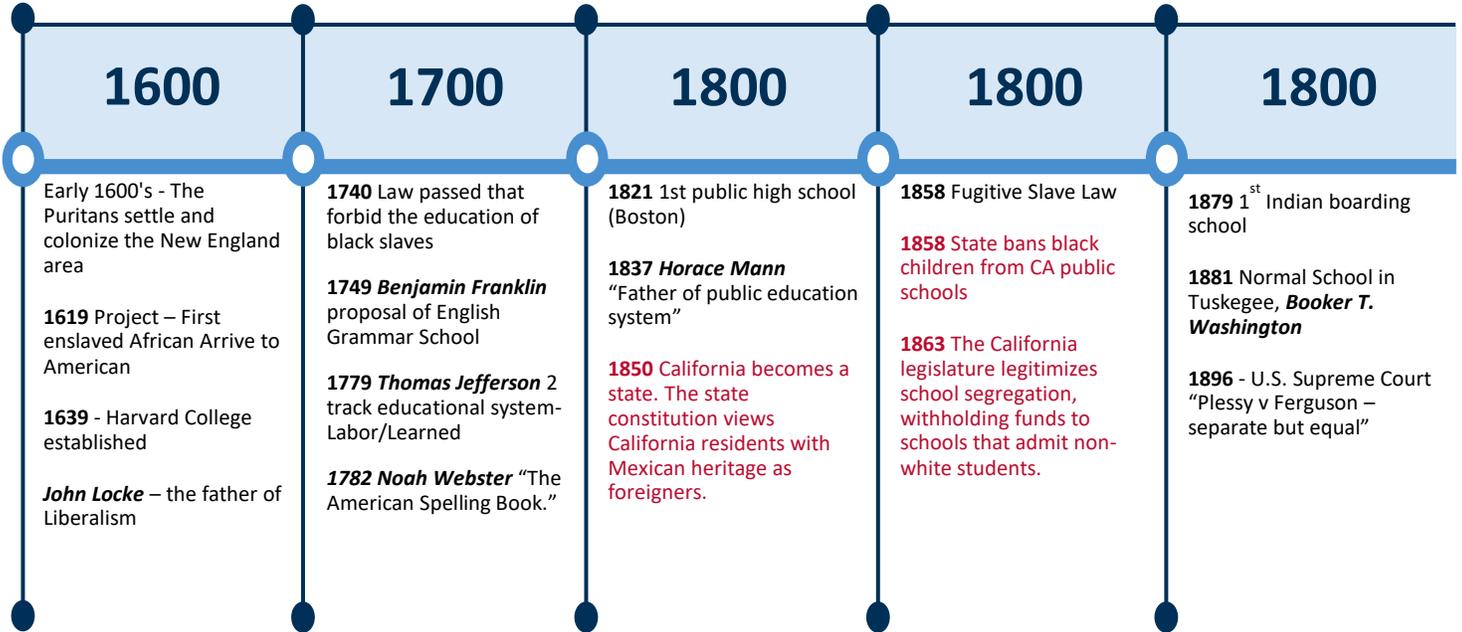
PUBLIC EDUCATION

Federal Initiatives

State of California Initiatives

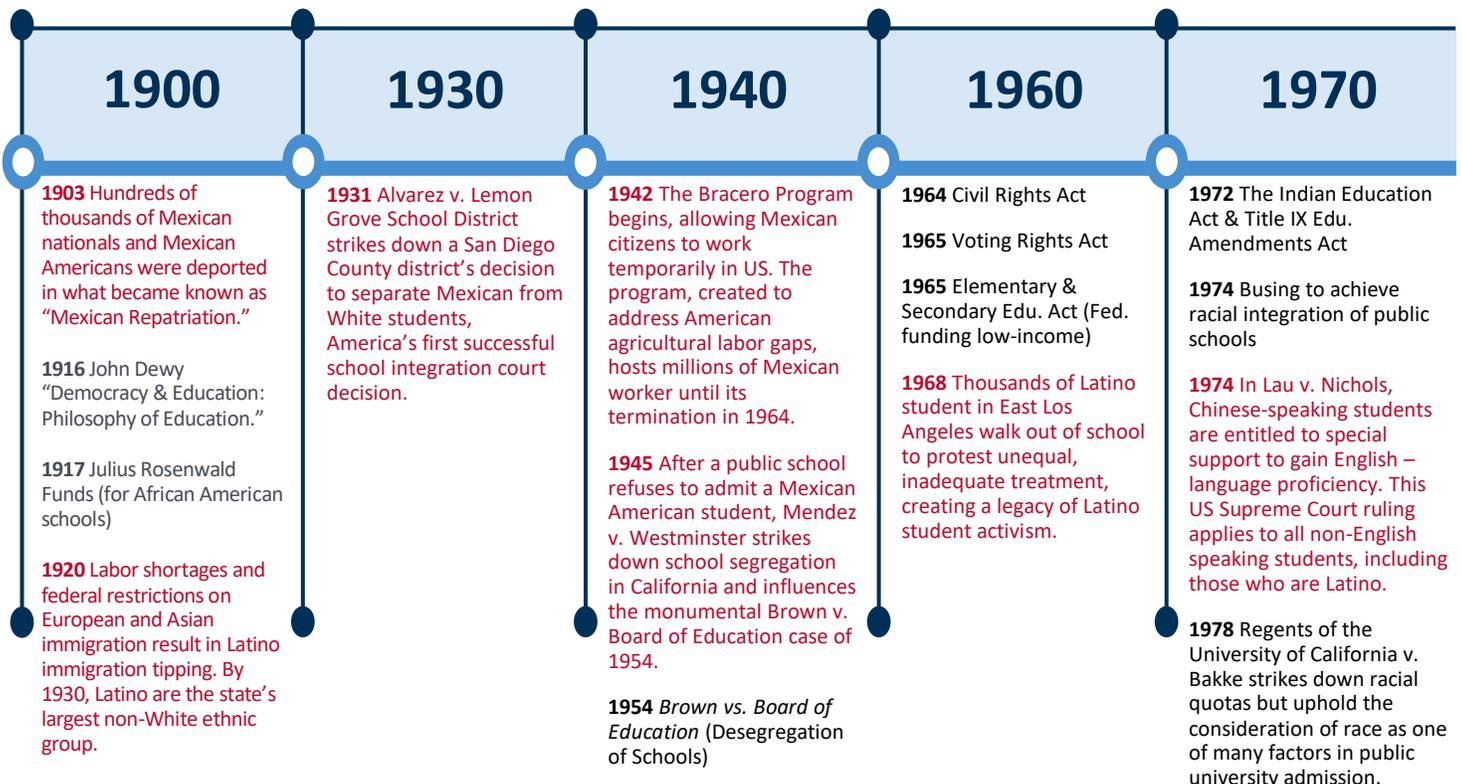
A Short History of Public Schooling

[youtube link](#)



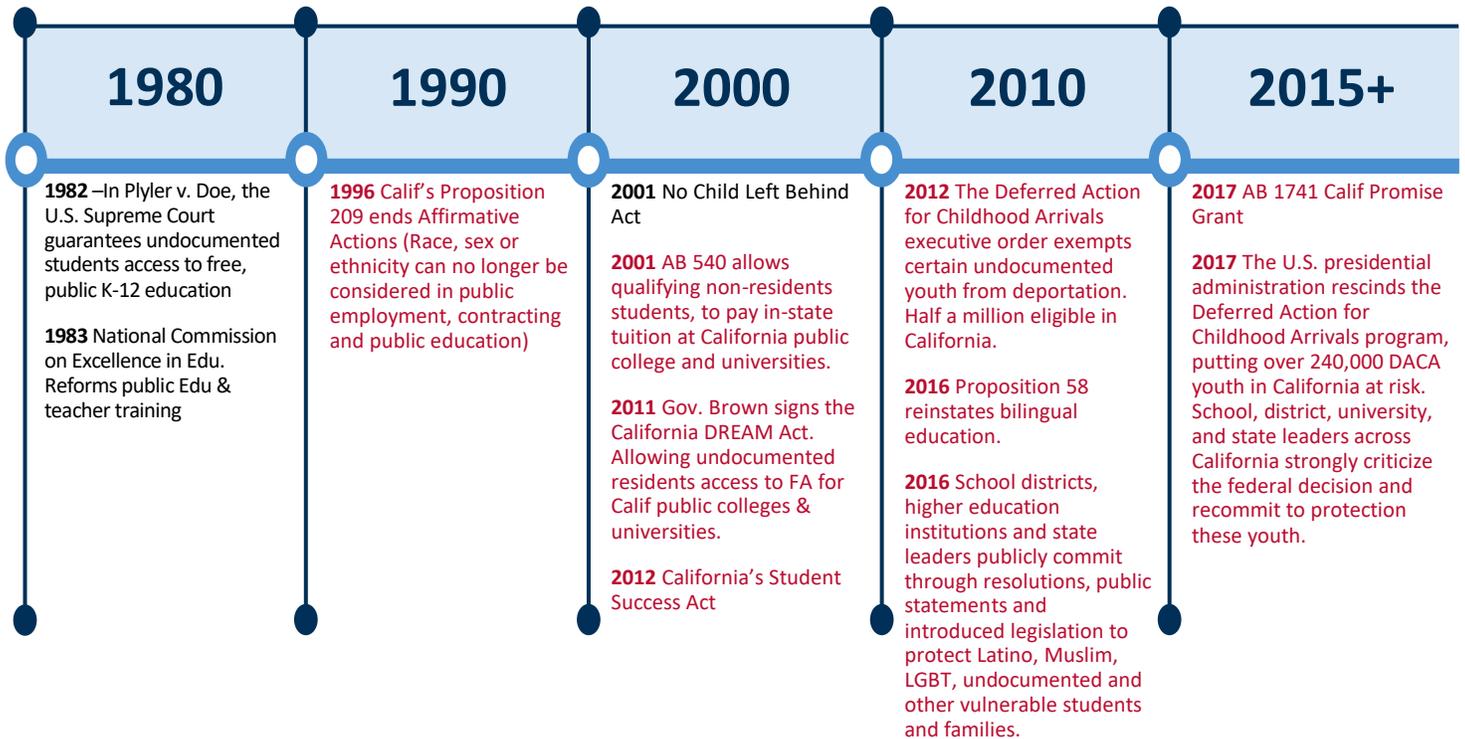
The Unequal Opportunity race

[youtube link](#)



HOW AMERICA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS KEEP KIDS IN POVERTY | KANDICE SUMNER

[youtube link](#)



APPENDIX E: WELCOME LETTER TO AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

Dear Black Scholar,

As you rush across campus on your way to class or cross the street from the bus stop, we see you, and it warms our hearts to know that you are here. You are manifestations of our ancestors' dreams. We see the ways you stand out from the crowd, and how you strive to blend in. And when we see you, we also see reflections of ourselves and some of what we felt as students: the thrilling nervousness of starting something new; looking forward (or not) to meeting new people; anxiety at being found out for not being "*enough*." And perhaps, too, questioning ourselves and wondering whether we belong, if we'll make it.

One thing is sure: no one makes it on this journey alone. And for that reason, we encourage you to invest in building a community of support while you're here. Sometimes that support can be as discreet as a [nod of acknowledgment](#) that we exchange in passing, affirming one another's presence by saying without words, "I see you."

An important way to build support is through making connections. Learning communities, student support services, tutoring and participating in student clubs are great ways to be engaged with others and to build communities of support. Participating in campus events that nurture and challenge you to grow are also great ways to build community. And as your own life experiences have taught you, real learning also takes place beyond traditional classrooms, so remain open to learning opportunities that can occur outside of class.

We, ARC's Black staff, also want to be part of your community of support. We each have our own unique stories and perspectives that we are happy to share. Some of what we have to share and contribute may resonate with you and your current needs, and some may not. As well, your stories are invaluable and hold lessons to life that reveal how you made it to this moment in time. If you happen to not feel heard, please reach out to one of us and someone will connect with you. We believe in you and in your potential to reach the goals you've set. We are your village, and we are here to help you succeed.

We want you to know that we are proud of you and thank you for choosing to become part of the ARC community. ARC is a phenomenal college; the number of lives that have been transformed by this institution is extensive; in fact, some of ARC's former graduates are the staff and professors you will interact with daily. And while this campus offers numerous opportunities to grow and learn both in and outside of the classroom, this institution is also a microcosm of the world at large and is not immune to the [systemic oppression](#) we experience beyond the college. Therefore, learning skills like how to reduce feelings of not belonging, and [how to respond to microaggressions](#) in effective ways that keep your mind and spirit healthy, are as essential as learning how to draft an outline.

Along with keeping our [minds healthy](#) and strong, and nurturing our spirits, it is also critical that we invest in strengthening our bodies by striving to consume [nutritious foods](#) whenever we can and engaging in activities like [yoga](#) and other forms of exercise to nurture and support our physical health. ARC has a wide range of fitness classes to choose from. So we also encourage you to, whenever possible, engage in opportunities that help feed your mind, body, and spirit.

We're reaching out to you because we believe in you, we see you, and you matter!

ARC's Black Staff

APPENDIX F: LIST OF RECOMMENDED READINGS

LITERATURE

- Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow*. ISBN: [978-1-59558-643-8]
- Anderson, C. (2016). *The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide: White Rage*. ISBN: [978-1-63286-412-3]
- Baldwin, J. (2013). *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. Vintage. [ISBN: 978-0345806543]
- Ellison, R. (2004). *Invisible Man*. Modern Library. [ISBN: 978-0679601395]
- Gates, H. L. and McKay, N. Y. (2014). *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature* (3rd ed.). W. W. Norton. [ISBN: 978-0393911558]
- Hansberry, L. (2004). *A Raisin in the Sun*. Vintage. [ISBN: 978-0679755333]
- Jacobs, Harriet (2009). *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (Classic)*. Seven Treasures Publication. [ISBN: 13: 978-1438299587]
- Morrison, T. (2004). *Song of Solomon*. Vintage. [ISBN: 978-1400033423]
- Toomer, J. (2011). *Cane*. Liveright. [ISBN: 978-0871402103]
- Toomer, Jean with Henry Louis Gates (2011). *Cane (Classic)*. New York: Liveright; Reissue edition. [ISBN: 978-087140210]

HISTORY

- Carson, C. (2010). *The Struggle for Freedom, Volume I* (3rd ed.). Pearson/Longman. [ISBN: 9780134056760]
- Carson, C. (2010). *The Struggle for Freedom, Volume II* (3rd ed.). Longman/Pearson. [ISBN: 9780134056746]
- Franklin & Higginbotham (2011). *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans* (9th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill. [ISBN: 9780072963786]
- Franklin, J. H. (2010). *From Slavery to Freedom, Volume I* (9th ed.). McGraw-Hill. [ISBN: 9780072393613]
- Franklin, J. H. (2011). *From Slavery to Freedom, Volume 2* (9th ed.). McGraw-Hill. [ISBN: 978-0077407520]
- Hine, D. C., et.al. (2013). *The African American Odyssey, Volume I* (6th ed.). Prentice-Hall Inc. [ISBN: 9780205971237]
- Hine, D. C., et.al. (2014). *The African American Odyssey, Volume II* (6th ed.). Prentice-Hall Inc. [ISBN: 9780205961610]
- Mintz, S. (2009). *African American Voices: The Life Cycle of Slavery* (4th ed.). Wiley-Blackwell Publishing. [ISBN: 9781405182676]

EDUCATION

- Desmond, M., and Emirbayer, M. (2013). *Racial Domination, Racial Progress*. McGraw Hill. [ISBN: 9780072970510]
- Hammond, Z. (2015). *Culturally Responsive Teaching & The Brain*. ISBN: [948-1-4833-0801-2]
- Healey, J. (2013). *Diversity and Society: Race, Ethnicity and Gender* (4th ed.). Sage. [ISBN: 9781412992459]
- Healey, J. (2013). *Race, Ethnicity, Gender & Class* (7th ed.). Sage. [ISBN: 9781452216508]
- Schaefer, R. (2013). *Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the USA*. Pearson. [ISBN: 9780205949793]

SOCIOLOGY

Tatum, B. (2003). *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria and Other Conversations About Race* (20th ed.). Basic Books. [ISBN: 978-0465083619]

Wood, J. L. (2019). *Black Minds Matter*. ISBN [978-0-7442-7494-3]

Wood, J. L., Harris, F.III, White, K. (2015). *Teaching Men of Color in the Community College*. ISBN: [978-0-7442-2952-3]

APPENDIX G: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Student Experience Survey (SES)

The purpose of this survey is to better understand students' perspectives, experiences and needs at American River College (ARC). Survey results will help inform policies and practices that impact ARC students and results will be made available by end of spring 2020. Your participation is voluntary. All responses are confidential so please be open and honest so we can genuinely learn from your important perspective. The survey should take about 20-30 minutes to complete.

If you choose to complete this survey, please know that some questions could potentially create emotional or mental distress. We have support personnel at the Counseling Center if you need to speak with someone at any time at 916-484-8572 (ask for an appointment with Kim Herrell, Rod Agbunag, Rick Ramirez, Denise Vinsant, Carmelita Palomares, Judy Mays, or Kay Lo).

From your experience at ARC during the current academic year, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I see myself as a part of the college community.					
I would feel comfortable asking a professor for help if I did not understand course-related material.					
I have at least one professor who cares about my academic success at ARC.					
I feel comfortable contributing to class discussions.					
I am invested in course materials because I can relate them to my real-life experiences.					
I believe that my professors care about my learning because they regularly ask about my understanding of course materials.					
I am able to understand course materials because my professors use different teaching tools to help me learn (e.g. videos, group activities, readings, writing exercises, etc.).					
When I interact with professor(s) at this college, I feel they care about how I am doing.					
I see teachers who look like me adequately represented in my classrooms.					
I see other students with the same cultural, ethnic, or racial background in my classes.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It has been easy for me to make friends at ARC.					
I feel comfortable discussing racially sensitive topics on campus with members of other races, cultures, or ethnicities.					
There is a space on campus where I can go to feel “at home” where students of my same identity value me.					
This college is committed to fostering an environment in which students of color can be successful.					
The college’s efforts at community building are effective (e.g. connecting diverse students and staff).					
I see students who look like me represented on ARC’s website.					
This college is committed to diversity and inclusion (e.g. making sure everyone feels included).					
When there were incidents of cultural, ethnic, or racial discrimination at ARC, the college reacted quickly and appropriately.					
People of my cultural, ethnic, or racial group are more likely to experience discrimination on campus than others.					
I sense cultural, ethnic, or racial tensions on campus.					
I feel awkward in situations at ARC in which I am the only person of my cultural, ethnic, or racial group.					
In consideration of my cultural, ethnic, or racial identity, I feel safe (e.g. physical security) on the ARC campus.					
Being a member of my cultural, ethnic, or racial group, I feel socially accepted (e.g. no discrimination) on campus.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Being a member of my cultural, ethnic, or racial group, I feel <u>included in informal activities</u> with other students.					
Being a member of my cultural, ethnic, or racial group, I am able to the <u>find academic support</u> I need to do well.					
Being a member of my cultural, ethnic, or racial group, I am being taken seriously by professors.					
In consideration of my gender identity, I feel safe (e.g. physical security) on the ARC campus.					
With my gender identity, I feel socially accepted (e.g. no discrimination) on campus.					
I feel comfortable (e.g. emotional or mental ease) to openly share my sexual orientation at ARC.					
In regards to my financial circumstances (e.g. personal income), I am able to purchase textbooks and supplies needed for this semester.					
Thinking about my financial circumstances (e.g. personal income), I feel confident about my ability to pay for my college education.					
In my daily experience at ARC, I regularly worry about my financial circumstances (e.g. personal income).					
My current housing situation allows me to have a safe place to live so I can focus on my education at ARC.					
I feel confident that I will complete my educational goal (e.g. certificate, associate's degree, transfer to 4-year, etc.).					

For each of the following questions, please check the answer(s) that best describe your current experience at ARC.

35. About how many hours per week do you typically spend working (e.g. employment on or off campus)?

- I am not working.
- 1-10 hours.
- 11-20 hours.
- 21-30 hours.
- 31-40 hours.
- More than 40 hours.

36. Reflecting on your academic experience in the current semester, how certain are you that you will return to ARC next semester?

- I **will return** next semester.
- I **will likely return** next semester.
- I **will likely not return** next semester.
- I **will not return** next semester.
- Undecided.

37. If you do not plan to return to ARC next semester, please indicate the reason(s) for your decision. Check all that apply.

- Not enough money to cover general living costs
- Not enough financial aid to cover school fees (e.g. books, tuition, supplies, etc.)
- Not enough food for daily meals
- Homelessness
- Looking for work
- Navigating the enrollment process at ARC
- Not ready for college (e.g. feeling underprepared for class materials and homework demands)
- Difficulty balancing work and family demands
- Taking care of family members (e.g. children, elders, parents, etc.)
- Lack of childcare while attending classes
- Lack of motivation about attending ARC
- Little to no contact with professor(s) outside of my course(s)
- Low self-confidence about my academic performance
- Unsupportive friends and family
- Facing discrimination on campus because of my identity
- Lack of adequate physical accommodations on campus.
- Lack of adequate mental health support services on campus.
- My parent(s), guardian(s), or family pressured me to go to college and I do not want to attend
- Other: _____

38. If you experienced social relationships that helped you to feel more comfortable at ARC, where did you primarily form these connections? Check all that apply.

- In a class.
- Through a college program.
- At college orientation.
- Through participation in a club, organization, or extracurricular activity.
- Through a Learning Community (e.g. Puente, Umoja Sakhu, Native American Resource Center, PRISE, etc.)
- Other: _____

39. During the last year, do you feel you have been mistreated by staff at ARC's main campus because of your:

- Tribal citizenship (e.g. Chumash, Alliklik, Kitanemuk, Serrano, etc.)
- Racial identity (e.g. African American, multi-racial, etc.)
- Ethnic identity (e.g. Latinx, Kenyan, Irish Puerto Rican, etc.)
- Culture or cultural identity (e.g. traditions, rituals, religions, languages, and other traits or practices commonly associated with ethnicities)
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Country of birth
- National citizenship
- Religion, spirituality, or personal worldview
- Socioeconomic class
- Age
- Body size
- Language
- Physical disability or limitations
- Criminal background
- Political affiliation
- Other: _____

40. During the last year, do you feel you have been mistreated by professor(s) at ARC's main campus because of your:

- Tribal citizenship (e.g. Chumash, Alliklik, Kitanemuk, Serrano, etc.)
- Racial identity (e.g. African American, multi-racial, etc.)
- Ethnic identity (e.g. Latinx, Kenyan, Irish Puerto Rican, etc.)
- Culture or cultural identity (e.g. traditions, rituals, religions, languages, and other traits or practices commonly associated with ethnicities)
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Country of birth
- National citizenship
- Religion, spirituality, or personal worldview
- Socioeconomic class
- Age
- Body size
- Language
- Physical disability or limitations
- Criminal background
- Political affiliation
- Other: _____

41. In this last year, if applicable, how many negative encounters have you had with any professor or staff person that made you doubt your belonging at ARC?

- I have had no negative encounters with a professor or staff person.
- I have had 1-3 negative encounters with a professor or staff person.
- I have had 4-6 negative encounters with a professor or staff person.
- I have had 7 or more negative encounters a professor or staff person.

42. If you have experienced at least one negative encounter with any **professor** which made you feel like you did not belong at ARC, please indicate how this person negatively influenced your experience? Check all that apply.
- No negative encounter(s) with any professors
 - Provided inaccurate information
 - Made negative comments about my cultural, ethnic, or racial background
 - Made negative comments about my gender identity
 - Made negative comments about my sexual orientation
 - Unresponsive to my requests
 - Unavailable to meet with me
 - Other: _____
43. If you have experienced at least one negative encounter with any **staff person** which made you feel like you did not belong at ARC, please indicate how this person negatively influenced your experience? Check all that apply.
- No negative encounter(s) with any staff person
 - Provided inaccurate information
 - Made negative comments about my cultural, ethnic, or racial background
 - Made negative comments about my gender identity
 - Made negative comments about my sexual orientation
 - Unresponsive to my requests
 - Unavailable to meet with me
 - Other: _____
44. In this last year, have any of the following challenges made it hard for you to finish your degree, certificate, or transfer to a university? Check all that apply.
- Not enough money to cover general living costs
 - Not enough financial aid to cover school fees (e.g. books, tuition, supplies, etc.)
 - Not enough food for daily meals
 - Homelessness
 - Looking for work
 - Navigating the enrollment process at ARC
 - Not ready for college (e.g. feeling underprepared for class materials and homework demands)
 - Difficulty balancing work and family demands
 - Taking care of family members (e.g. children, elders, parents, etc.).
 - Lack of childcare while attending classes
 - Lack of motivation about attending ARC
 - Little to no contact with professor(s) outside of my course(s)
 - Low self-confidence about my academic performance
 - Unsupportive friends and family
 - Facing discrimination on campus because of my identity
 - Lack of adequate physical accommodations on campus.
 - Lack of adequate mental health support services on campus.
 - My parent(s), guardian(s), or family pressured me to go to college and I do not want to attend.
 - Other: _____

45. Thinking about your courses this last year, what do you think will likely contribute to your success in future classes? Check all that apply.
- Regular feedback from professor(s) about my academic performance
 - Opportunities to work with my classmates on assignments
 - Clear explanations on what is required to be successful on assignments and/or exams
 - Relevant content (e.g. discussions, texts, and examples) that reflects my cultural, ethnic, or racial experiences.
 - Different ways to learn course content (e.g. small group work, writing reflections, interactive demonstrations, etc.)
 - Classroom environments where I feel safe to ask questions without fear of judgement.
 - Other: _____
46. If you attended college orientation on campus, how informative was the experience in helping you plan for your academic goal(s) at ARC.
- I did not attend college orientation on campus.
 - Orientation provided **no information** in planning for my academic goal(s).
 - Orientation provided **little information** in planning for my academic goal(s).
 - Orientation provided **some information** in planning for my academic goal(s).
 - Orientation provided **a lot of information** in planning for my academic goal(s).
 - Other: _____
47. What is the primary motivation that influenced your decision to attend college? Check all that apply.
- I want to be the first person in my family to accomplish this goal.
 - I want to use my education to help my family, community, and society.
 - I want to use my education to help people of my cultural, ethnic, or racial group.
 - I want to use my education to help people with my same gender identity.
 - I want to use my education to help people with my same sexual orientation.
 - I want to be a role model.
 - I want to use my education to obtain a good paying job to help myself and/or family.
 - I want to use my education to expand my career options.
 - My parent(s), guardian(s), or family encouraged me to attend college.
 - Decline to state.
 - Other: _____
48. In the past year, have any of the following factors motivated you to work harder to be successful at ARC? Check all that apply.
- Financial aid to pay for school fees and textbooks
 - Job placement to obtain steady income
 - Student job at ARC
 - Culturally relevant instruction (e.g. using diverse examples and texts) in the classroom
 - Positive interaction with a staff person at ARC
 - Positive interaction with an administrator at ARC
 - Positive interaction with a professor at ARC
 - Family support for my education
 - Extracurricular activities (e.g. sports, theater, music, etc.)
 - Working with a counselor
 - Other: _____
49. If applicable, what ARC learning communities are you a part of this semester? Check all that apply.
- I am not a part of any learning communities.
 - Puente
 - Umoja Sakhu
 - Native American Resource Center
 - PRISE
 - Other: _____

50. What support resources are you affiliated with? Check all that apply.

- Tutoring at the Learning Resource Center
- Beaver Food Pantry
- ARC General Counseling
- Child Development Center
- Dusty Baker Athlete Center
- Honors Program at ARC
- International Student Programs
- Transfer Center at ARC
- Career and Pathways Support Services
- CalWorks (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids)
- CARE (Foster and Kinship Care Education Program)
- DSPS (Disability Services and Programs for Students)
- EOP&S (Extended Opportunity Program and Services)
- Pride Center
- TRIO Student Support Services
- Veterans Resource Center
- Work Experience (program)
- MESA/STEM Center (Mathematics, Engineering, Science, Achievement/ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)
- Other: _____

51. In the last year, have you used any of the following regional resources (e.g. services or programs offered in Sacramento County)? Check all that apply.

- Homeless shelters
- Food banks
- WEAVE or other domestic abuse services/shelters.
- Community organizations (e.g. La Familia Counseling Center, Greater Sacramento Urban League, and Sacramento Native American Health Center)
- Foreign offices (e.g. Mexican Consulate)
- Veterans Resources
- I have not used any community resources but I would likely use them if I had more information.
- I have not used any community resources and I am not interested in them.
- Other: _____

52. What is your sexual orientation?

- Gay or lesbian (man sexually attracted to men; woman sexually attracted to women).
- Bisexual (a person sexually attracted to two genders).
- Pansexual or fluid (a person sexually attracted to multiple gender identities).
- Asexual (a person with no sexual feelings or desires).
- Queer (a person whose sexual attraction is generally beyond heterosexual norms and may include attraction to a broad range of sexes and gender identities).
- Heterosexual or straight (man sexually attracted to women; woman sexually attracted to men).
- Decline to answer.
- Other: _____

53. What country were you born in? _____

54. What country or countries where your parent(s) born in? Please list. _____

55. What primary language(s) do you speak? Please list. _____

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

SG1

Students First

The College engages and connects students early and often to people,

programs, and services as an integrated educational experience. By providing personalized, proactive support, the College fosters relationships that ensure all students, particularly the historically underserved and marginalized, persist, learn, and succeed.

SG2

Clear and Effective Paths

The College provides easily recognizable pathways to, through, and beyond ARC. Offering well defined and supported pathways provides a foundation for success as students enter the College, make timely progress toward achieving their informed educational goals, and seamlessly transfer to other colleges and universities or find employment in their chosen career.

SG3

Exemplary Teaching, Learning & Working Environment

The College ensures an equitable, safe, and inclusive teaching, learning, and working environment. Culturally relevant curriculum, innovative, high-quality instructional methods and technologies, exemplary academic and student support services, and comprehensive and integrated professional development create the best conditions for teaching and learning. The College promotes liberation and honors the dignity, humanity, and contributions of all members of our community.

SG4

Vibrancy and Resiliency

The College promotes a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, sustainability, and transparent communication. Proactive, effective, and efficient operational systems and governance and data-informed approaches to planning, decision-making, and resource allocation provide a high level of service to our students, community, and to one another.