



HECC's Equity Foundation

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HECC Equity Stance

For the HECC, postsecondary education equity will be achieved once one's community or characteristic—including but not limited to racial/ethnic identity, socio-economic background, dis/ability status, gender, parental status, veteran status, sexual orientation, and geographic origin or location—no longer predict inequitable access to and success in postsecondary education and training. We will work towards this by addressing the root historical causes of systemic racism and inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes the intentional examination and elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that perpetuate the stark inequities in postsecondary education and workforce training we see today.

Oregon HECC Equity Lens

The Oregon Equity Lens was adopted by the HECC in 2014 as a cornerstone to the State's approach to education policy and budgeting.

- **Purpose:** To clearly articulate the shared goals we have for our state; to assess the equity impact of policies and investments; **to make intentional policies, investments and systemic change to achieve an equitable educational system;** and to create clear accountability structures.
- Confirms the **importance of identifying and urgently addressing institutional and systemic barriers** that have limited access and success for many students.
- Emphasizes **historically underserved students**, with a **particular focus on racial equity.**



In November 2021, the HECC Equity Lens was updated. It is now titled the Oregon HECC Equity Lens, with a renewed attention on application to **postsecondary education and training**. The primary focus areas described here remain consistent.

Strategic Roadmap for Action

The Vision

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission envisions a future in which all Oregonians—and especially those whom our systems have underserved and marginalized—benefit from the transformational power of high-quality postsecondary education and training. It is a future where innovative public and private colleges, universities, and training providers help Oregonians to reach their highest potentials, build trajectories to family-wage careers, foster a more just society, and break patterns of intergenerational poverty. It is a future where postsecondary education fuels a resilient economy by anticipating workforce needs and by fostering innovation, research, and knowledge. In the future we envision, all Oregonians enjoy well-lived lives thanks to the myriad benefits of postsecondary education and training: higher earnings, lower unemployment rates, self-sufficiency, civic involvement, better health, and more. Our communities thrive as a result.

Roadmap Goals:

- Transform and innovate to serve students and learners best.
- Center higher education and workforce training capacity on current and future state needs.
- Ensure that postsecondary learners can afford to meet their basic needs.
- Create and support a continuum of pathways from education and training to career.
- Increase public investment to meet Oregon's postsecondary goals.

A New Consideration in Our Collective Work

Targeted Universalism Scholars and practitioners have been employing the phrase, “targeted universalism,” to successfully break through the binary of universal responses versus targeted solutions in these attempts to remedy the effects of inequity.



Universal or Targeted

UNIVERSAL RESPONSES AND STATEMENTS are a way of signaling the desire for a diverse and equitable society, but can strike people, especially people who have been oppressed for generations, as being too grand and ambitious without any direct way of helping those who are still being harmed.

TARGETED POLICIES are more direct and localized, but they often seek to meet the needs of a particular group, so can be viewed from a zero-sum perspective, causing hostility and resentment.

Approach to our Work



TARGETED UNIVERSALISM is an alternative framework to design policies and implementation strategies to achieve policy goals. Targeted universalism is sensitive to structural and cultural dynamics in ways that often elude both targeted and universal strategies.

Qualitative & Quantitative Data

There is a need to ask the right set of questions, collect the right data.

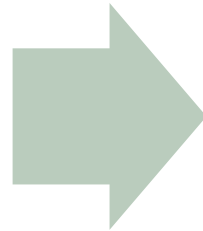
STREET DATA “calls upon readers to 'flip the dashboard' from a focus on big data to a focus on the voices at the margins – those learners and their families who have been most affected by deep-rooted systemic inequities. When we listen closely to these voices with curiosity, courage, and humility, we gain a greater understanding of the meaning and root causes of these inequities, as well as how they can be addressed in ways that transform and heal.”

-Linda Darling-Hammond, Professor Emeritus at Stanford University and President of the Learning Policy Institute

From Status Quo to Transformation

The system we work in:

- Prioritizes measurement and incremental improvement over learning and transformation.
- Shallow approach to the incorporation of student and community voices.
- Perpetuates tokenism and marginalization of their gifts and voices.



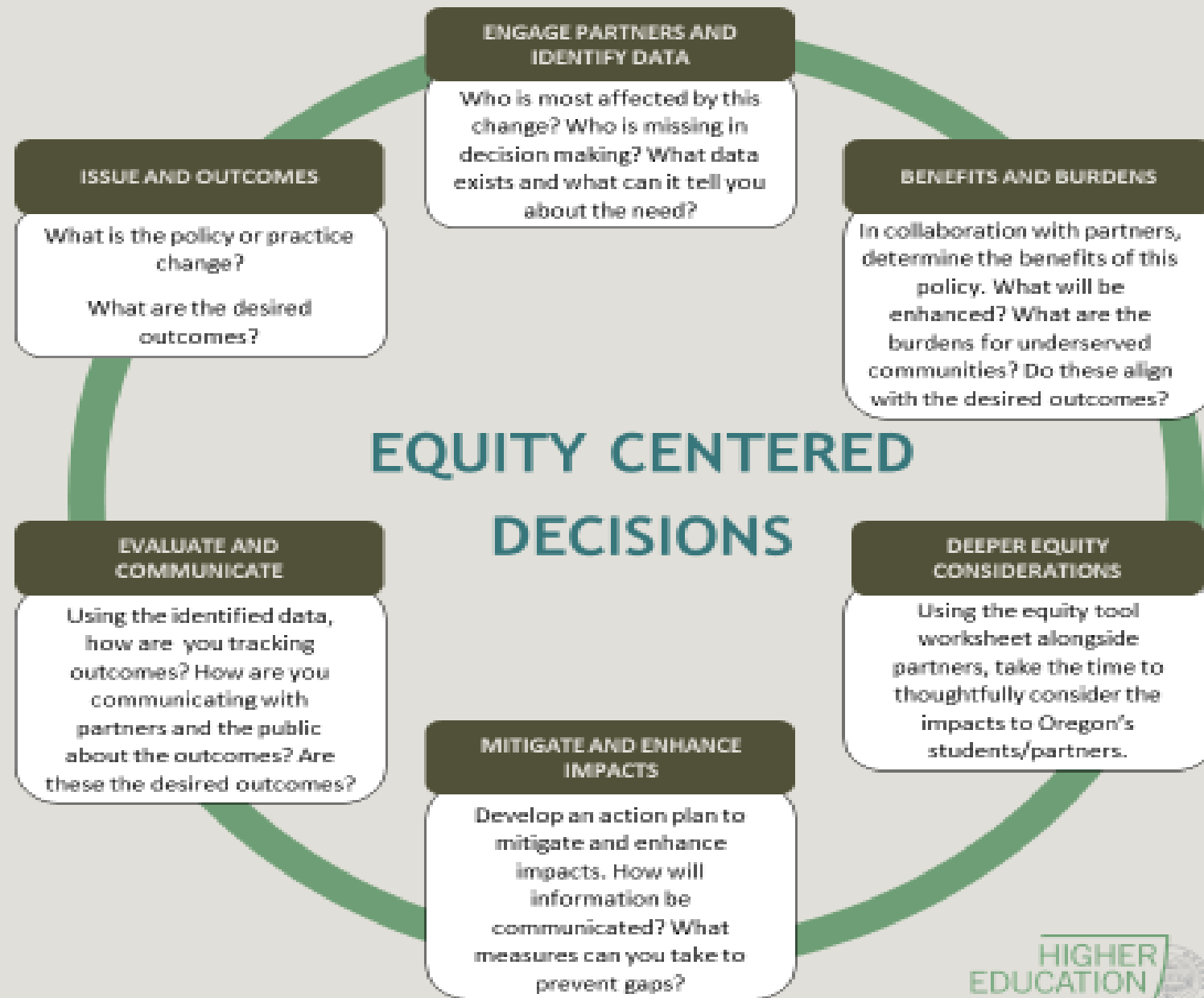
We are called to:

- Focus and work towards a transformational system.
- Authentically engage student voice.
- Value multiple ways of knowing and learning.
- See and understand community cultural wealth.
- Build relationships and work towards restoration and healing.

EQUITY IMPACT PROTOCOL

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission is committed to explicitly identifying disparities in education outcomes to act, intervene, and invest in equity practices. To take these steps we must understand and address the impact of our power and position in assisting or hindering Oregon's students. At the HECC, we oversee the budget of postsecondary education, coordinate, develop and implement policy and procedure through legislative direction. These tasks and decisions can enhance the lives of our students and partners and create a better Oregon. To make equity centered decisions, the HECC will use the Equity Impact Protocol in collaboration with our partners. This will serve as a guide when developing and implementing policy and procedure, and budgetary decisions.

This infographic is a condensed version of the HECC Office Equity Action Plan.



Questions to Consider in Process

- How do we authentically center adult students/workers in this process?
- What is the role of leadership and workforce partners in supporting/workforce culture/climate in the equity work?
- What is missing from Oregon's current system?

“Whenever we allow people’s identities to be a barrier, not an asset, we begin to see unnecessary distinctions; it’s important to value people’s unique identities as assets to a full fabric of a beautiful mosaic of difference, diversity, belonging, and humanity.” – Anonymous Educator