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Carrying the Weight of Campus Change: The Role of Student Equity Leaders in Community College

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ABSTRACT
This article uses in-depth interviews to explore the experiences of four community college administrators leading policy efforts to advance racial justice efforts. Through a critical organizational lens, we document the unacknowledged labor associated with being the central figure driving institutional equity efforts and the primary person on campus responsible for overseeing and carrying out racialized organizational change. Our analysis yielded two themes: Feelings of taxation, isolation, and being burned out and the difficulty of navigating spaces of resistance to improve racial equity. The findings from this work have implications for policy and practice related to enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts, reframing community college leadership, and understanding racialized organizational change.

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> I have this deep sense of wanting students of color to have more of a say, have more power, and experience greater success, knowing that our students deserve better. I feel like I can make a difference on campus to improve equity. But then, on another day, I want to fully admit I want to quit. This work is hard, there's a lot of resistance, a need to challenge beliefs, and it becomes a very isolating position.

The remarks by Mai Huynh illustrate the dynamic experienced by equity advocates in community colleges who hold an unwavering commitment to addressing racial inequity while facing the continuous struggles of pushing campus stakeholders toward this same goal. Mai Huynh serves as a director of Student Equity at La Sirena College,[1] a formal position within the California Community Colleges (CCC) that is charged with coordinating and leading institutional efforts to close equity gaps in student outcomes. This Student Equity Leader[2] position was born out of a state policy from the 1990s that sought to identify and address educational barriers experienced by racially-minoritized students, women, and those with disabilities enrolled in California's Community Colleges (Felix & Trinidad, 2020). Specifically, the

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reform strives to increase access and success for "underrepresented ethnic minorities" by establishing a three-year equity plan that includes strategies and efforts to close gaps in participation and graduation rates (Guichard, 1992, p. 4).

The California Community Colleges — with 116 campuses and 1.8 million students — serve as a critical sector in higher education, offering the promise of educational access and success. But for far too long, researchers have documented the struggles within community colleges to support students' progression through developmental education (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; California Acceleration Project [CAP]; 2022; Ngo & Melguizo, 2016), completion of college-level courses (Alcantar & Hernandez, 2020; Public Policy Institute of California [PPIC]; 2023), and successful transfer (Vasquez et al., 2022) or graduation with an associate's degree (Bell & Gándara, 2021), especially for first-generation, low-income, and racially minoritized students (Cuellar Mejia et al., 2020). The types of students who enroll in CCC system and the barriers they encounter align with national trends. Despite their increased access, racially minoritized students experience significant inequities in educational outcomes (McPhail & Beatty, 2021). To help counter these known barriers in community college, states across the nation have taken various approaches to transforming institutions through removing developmental education, implementing guided pathways, improving learning to workforce opportunities, and enacting equity-oriented strategies (Felix & Castro, 2018; Community College Research Center, 2023).

One particular approach taken by the state of California was to establish the Student Equity Policy in the early 1990s, which is now known as the Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Program, to build institutional capacity and infrastructure to address disparities in student outcomes (CCC Chancellor's Office, 2023). In particular, the SEA program offers the opportunity to target specific groups, such as racially minoritized students, and use available resources to develop race-conscious and culturally relevant strategies to close longstanding racial equity gaps (Felix, 2020; R. L. Garcia, 2021). Through the SEA program, each college in CCC system has a Student Equity Leader (SEL), like Mai, who oversees the development of a three-year student equity plan that a) documents the extent of inequity for specific student populations such as racial/ethnic groups, b) establishes goals and metrics to address identified equity gaps over multiple years, and c) allocates policy-specific funds to create or scale-up initiatives to improve student equity (§54220, 2017). For many institutions, the SEA program has served as an opportunity to assess disaggregated data across key academic metrics (e.g., completion of transfer-level math or English), interrogate existing practices as causes of inequity, and craft a plan that addresses how the campus serves disproportionately impacted students (Ching et al., 2020). But within this work to examine organizational change, less is known on the impact to the individuals that lead these efforts to disrupt and dismantle inequitable practices.

Purpose of the study

Given the importance of improving racial equity in higher education, especially within community colleges, this paper explores the role of the SEL as the central figure on campus leading and sustaining equity-oriented change. As the opening quote highlights, these positions can be "very isolating" for those in them. Thus, we highlight the emotional and physical toll on SELs as they attempt to carry out racialized organizational change and improve the conditions, experiences, and outcomes for minoritized students at their respective institutions (H. N. McCambly et al., 2023). Insight for our study drew from a larger project discursively examining race-conscious policy implementation across 113 institutional equity plans submitted during the 2019–2022 cycle. Building from this discursive analysis, we were interested in qualitatively exploring how institutions leaders moved equity plan ideas from paper to practice; especially when efforts explicitly address barriers for racially minoritized students in critical areas like developmental education, transfer success, and completion of an associate degree. We identified four SELs as implementing race conscious efforts in their institutional equity plans. We followed these four SELs as they navigated their own institutions to understand the conditions, contexts, and challenges experienced as they oversee and implement efforts to improve racial equity. With so much responsibility put on the shoulders of SELs, this paper dives into the hidden costs and added labor required to lead large-scale organizational change efforts while navigating conditions that may hinder or help them enact planned racial equity initiatives. We were guided by the following research questions:

(1) What type of emotional and racialized labor is experienced by equity leaders advancing racialized organizational change in community college?
(2) When implementing racial equity efforts in community college what forms of resistance and challenge are faced by equity leaders?

Through a collective case study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 2005), we documented how four SELs sustained and advanced their racial equity efforts within different organizational conditions that enable and restrict their race work on campus. To complement our research design, we used a critical organizational lens (G. Garcia, 2017; Gonzales et al., 2018) that combined the concepts of cultural taxation, emotional labor, and racial equity labor to highlight the challenges SELs faced in navigating resistance to address and dismantle structural racism within the institution. This lens allowed us to document and capture distinct experiences across varying organizational conditions and how the level of support influences SELs' ability to implement efforts to close racial disparities.

Racial equity work in higher education organizations

Racial equity work in higher education (Bensimon, 2005, 2018; Dowd & Bensimon, 2015; H. McCambly & Colyvas, 2022) attempts to address longstanding disparities in admissions and campus enrollment (Baker, 2019; Poon et al., 2023), differential experiences that influence rates of persistence and graduation (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Vasquez et al., 2022), diversifying faculty composition (K. Griffin et al., 2020; Liera, 2019), and overall working toward creating institutions that include, value, and serve racially minoritized communities (Aguilar-Smith, 2021; G. Garcia, 2018; H. N. McCambly et al., 2023). As levers of organizational transformation (Chang, 2002; Kezar, 2014), racial equity work efforts commonly use critical inquiry and practitioner self-reflection (Bensimon, 2007; Bensimon & Malcom, 2012), equity-minded professional development, restructuring recruitment and hiring practices (Liera, 2019), and creating targeted interventions to address specific equity gaps (Harris et al., 2017). Compared to traditional efforts to change organizations in higher education, racial equity work seeks to get to the root of inequity by "problematizing whiteness as the structural and cultural conditions" that maintain racial inequity (Bensimon, 2018, p. 97). Thus, racial equity work is not about addressing surface-level issues but rather a deep introspection into how institutional structures, policies, and practices have contributed to the racial disparities observed over time (McNair et al., 2020).

The role of equity advocates enacting organizational change

Although institutions of higher education espouse commitments and priorities to improving racial equity through mission statements and strategic plans, equity advocates — faculty, staff, students, and administrators — are the individuals who actually lead and carry out the vision for a more equitable organization. Scholars with a critical orientation to organizational change have studied the internal and external factors that prompt colleges and universities to acknowledge and address longstanding educational inequities (Bensimon, 2005, 2007; G. Garcia, 2015, 2017; Gonzales et al., 2018). These works have noted the importance of internal factors such as acknowledging a history of white-settler colonialism that influences how colleges operate and the outcomes they produce (G. Garcia, 2018), the need for organizations to understand and address structural racism and its role in perpetuating inequity (Bensimon & Malcom, 2012; Ray, 2019), and the importance of individual actors serving as equity advocates "seeing the necessity of change" and leading these efforts (Kezar, 2001, p. x). Similarly, Bensimon (2005) argued that the most significant "possibility for reversing inequalities" within higher education organizations is the collective

shift among educators to assess their own "beliefs, expectations, values, and practices" and how they "create or perpetuate unequal outcomes" (p. 101).

Higher educational literature documents how campus professionals shape the experiences of underserved communities by promoting policies and practices centered around racial equity (Bensimon etal., 2019; Felix et al., 2022; Rall & Galan, 2022). Much of the literature on change work in higher education has focused on individual roles such as a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) and DEI practitioners, especially within the four-year context (Byrd, 2019; Wilson, 2013). These works have captured the unwillingness and hostility perpetuated by campus stakeholders against CDOs and DEI practitioner's attempting to address organizational barriers that impede equitable outcomes for underrepresented communities and create an inclusive environment rooted in values of diversity, equity, and inclusion within their institutions (Kluch et al., 2022; Nixon, 2017). However, the experiences of CDOs or DEI practitioners captured in the literature predominantly stem from four-year universities (Heard-Johnson, 2021; Pickett et al., 2017). Given the size and impact of community colleges in the United States' higher education landscape, new insight and scholarship is needed to understand these related roles and how individual DEI leaders are able to promote campus-wide equity efforts.

In community colleges, an equity advocate is a person who occupies a high-status position within their institution and knows how to access high-value resources, navigate complex systems, and take effective action to improve the conditions of underserved communities within their institution (Nienhusser, 2015, 2018). Examples of equity advocates can range from senior leaders tasked with executive decisions, such as vice presidents, deans, and department chairs, to practitioners working directly with students, such as program directors, counselors, admissions, and financial aid officers.

In reviewing the scholarship on racial equity work, we see the efforts by SELs in our study as one example of equity advocates prompting racialized organizational change in community colleges (H. N. McCambly et al., 2023). This approach is driven by both external forces (policy reform) and internal influences (committed equity advocates), which seek to transform, if not dismantle, existing policies, structures, practices, and beliefs that have failed to serve racially minoritized students and continue to perpetuate inequities in educational outcomes. These frameworks allow us to recognize colleges and universities as racialized organizations (Lerma et al., 2019; Ray, 2019). We need to understand how the everyday function of higher education has "institutionalized racial inequality," as well as the type of efforts necessary to restructure and change the organizational practices and routines that maintain inequitable results (Ray, 2019, p. 1).

The burden placed on equity advocates leading organizational change

The burden on individuals tasked with leading equity efforts has increased over the last two decades as higher education organizations have created formal positions to conduct diversity work, lead equity efforts, and improve inclusivity on campus (Ahmed, 2012; Gonzales et al., 2021; K. A. Griffin et al., 2019). These positions offer individuals the opportunity to address real-time issues like racial bias incidents as well as develop long-term plans and frameworks to improve issues of inequity. As K. A. Griffin et al. (2019) noted, these equity advocates become the change agents on campus that build a vision for a more equitable institution and mobilize stakeholders to join a collective effort. At the same time, the expansion of formal roles to advance equity has increased exposure to unwelcoming and toxic campus environments (Settles et al., 2020), limited commitment and capacity (K. A. Griffin et al., 2019), and illuminated passive and active resistance to organizational change. This reaction is especially problematic as these positions tend to be held by minoritized individuals with different levels of status, power, and discretion (Felix, 2021).

Well-documented is the responsibility placed on minoritized faculty and administrators to carry out the intended organizational change (Ching, 2018; Liera & Dowd, 2019). Leading racialized organizational change becomes both an opportunity and a burden. It enables racially minoritized practitioners to oversee campus transformation efforts while also exposing them to additional labor and taxation (Gonzales & Ayers, 2018). Gonzales et al. (2021) reported that few studies have examined how leading equity efforts can cause harm to minoritized equity advocates. In this way, we focus much more on the outcome of change than the process and how people leading the change experience these efforts as they unfold. Recently, Lerma et al. (2019) and Grier-Reed et al. (2020) focused on the racialized labor of people of color and how racialized higher education organizations cause racial battle fatigue (Smith et al., 2007, 2011), cultural taxation (Guillaume & Apodaca, 2020; Lerma et al., 2019; Padilla, 1994), and feelings of exhaustion, frustration, and disappointment (Gonzales et al., 2021).

In the community college context, the SEA program offers Student Equity Leaders the opportunities to transform their campus and improve how institutions address disparities in student outcomes. In recent years, scholars have studied community colleges with race-conscious equity efforts to understand the conditions that allow for race-focused implementation as well as the results from these initiatives (Ching et al., 2020; Felix, 2020). However, a missing aspect is exploring the added responsibility placed on these equity advocates as they develop, implement, and lead more transformational, race-conscious efforts on campus. Aligned with recent scholarship on racialized equity labor in higher education (Grier-Reed et al., 2020; Lerma et al., 2019), the goal of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the emotional and racialized labor

faced by SELs in their everyday work to advance racial justice and improve the organizational conditions for racially minoritized students in community college. By understanding the daily work of SELs, we can learn how individuals bear the brunt of organizational change and identify ways to better advance equity work that achieves its goals.

Theoretical framework

Our theoretical framework draws on three conceptual elements to better understand the experiences of individual equity advocates as they lead racialized organizational change within a community college (H. N. McCambly et al., 2023; Ray, 2019). We weave together cultural taxation (Guillaume & Apodaca, 2020; Padilla, 1994), emotional labor (Ahmed, 2012; Ayers & Gonzales, 2020; Gonzales & Ayers, 2018; Hochschild, 1979, 1983), and racialized equity labor (Grier-Reed et al., 2020; Lerma et al., 2019) to interrogate equity advocates' experiences as they seek to change organizational structures — rules and practices — that sustain inequitable conditions, experiences, and outcomes for minoritized communities in postsecondary education. First, cultural taxation in higher education is best illustrated by unreasonable expectations placed on racially minoritized staff and faculty to engage in equity-related work on behalf of the university simply because of their racial identity or cultural heritage (Guillaume & Apodaca, 2020; Padilla, 1994; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). The "tax" is placed on individuals when tasked with additional diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work, without institutional resources, support, or positional authority to perform such work. Cultural taxation includes: being called upon to be the expert on DEI topics within the organization; having to repeatedly educate individuals, mainly white colleagues, about issues of race and equity; and serving on committees and task forces to improve conditions with minimal power or resources to carry out recommended changes (Padilla, 1994). In our study, cultural taxation highlights how SELs, all self-identifying as racially minoritized, are burdened with the role of being the central figure to lead any and all equity efforts on campus.

Complementing cultural taxation, we then use emotional labor to understand how equity advocates spend additional energy managing their feelings and frustrations as they try to work with campus constituents to mobilize and achieve their racial equity efforts. Hochschild (1979, 1983) developed the theory of emotional labor, which described how one is required "to induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (p. 20). Within higher education, emotional labor is used to understand how minoritized individuals are expected to "control their emotions, especially anger or sadness" in the workplace and highlight that emotional labor is a form of work rarely acknowledged within

colleges and universities. Specifically, Hochschild's idea of a "managed heart" speaks to the ways equity advocates must "smile" and "manage a wide range of emotions" when interacting with campus stakeholders that may be reluctant, if not dismissive, to calls for improving racial equity (Aguilar-Smith & Gonzales, 2021). Like Gonzales and Ayers (2018), we apply emotional labor to explore how community colleges as organizations exploit equity advocates' "sense of commitment to serve to compensate for insufficient resources" on campus to advance intended racial equity work (p. 457). In doing so, emotional labor highlights the emotional responsibility and management of emotions that individuals tasked with doing equity work exemplified amid a lack of organizational credibility, authority, and resources. Emotional labor enables us to contextualize without romanticizing SELs' commitment to racial equity.

Lastly, because SELs directly oversee efforts that seek to identify and dismantle racist policies and structures within the institution, we include the concept of racialized equity labor (Lerma et al., 2019) which enables us to understand the additional work asked of individuals to resolve racial inequity, respond to organizational resistance, and lead racialized institutional change with limited staffing, resources, and capacity. Racialized equity labor describes a process by which the labor for race-based organizational change is denied, challenged, punished, or appropriated by the university. This third element helps to recognize colleges and universities as racialized organizations (Lerma et al., 2019; H. N. McCambly et al., 2023) and explore how they "enhance or diminish the agency" of equity advocates to change the organizational structures, rules, and practices that sustain inequitable conditions and outcomes for minoritized communities (Ray, 2019, p. 1).

Braiding the elements together

Any of these elements alone fail to capture how colleges and universities extract energy, emotion, and effort from equity advocates well beyond their normal roles and responsibilities with little regard for their humanity (See Table 1 below). Our theoretical approach illuminates how roles and responsibilities related to racial equity work led to being overburdened (Liera & Dowd, 2019), stressed (Guillaume & Apodaca, 2020), emotionally exhausted (Ayers & Gonzales, 2020), and burnout which increases attrition rates for minoritized equity advocates (Padilla, 1994). By pairing racialized equity labor with cultural taxation and emotional labor, we are able to observe the added layers of "stress, frustration, and additional work" placed on equity advocates in the name of improving equity and diversity in the community college context (H. N. McCambly et al., 2023).

Weaving these theoretical elements allows us to examine how SELs carry out their efforts to improve racial equity within their institution and the added mental, physical, and emotional labor and burden placed on them. Our

Table 1. Operationalizing theoretical concepts.

Theoretical Concept	Description	Application	Convergence
Cultural Taxation	The concept highlights the extra burden placed upon minoritized faculty and staff to serve as ethnic representatives as unofficial diversity consultants within the university setting	Cultural taxation highlights the expectations endured by SELs to engage in equity work with little authority, leverage, respect, and resources/support within the organization.	Given the positionality of SEL, Cultural taxation provides an opportunity to examine how a) SELs manage their emotion within a racially charged environment; and b) the additional labor needed from SELs to manage their emotions within a racially charged environment
Emotional Labor	Refers to how minoritized individuals are expected to control their emotions, especially anger or sadness in the workplace as they encounter inequitable conditions that interferes with their work.	Highlights an additional layer of uncompensated labor required from SELs committed to racial equity and allow us to center the humanity of SELs by capturing the emotional responsibility and management of emotions that SELs endure.	Provides an opportunity to examine how SEL manage their emotions as organizations seize/ appropriate their labor to preserve the image of the organization.
Racialized Equity Labor	A four-step process by which the labor of racially minoritized people concerned with raced-based organizational change is uncompensated, punished, and appropriate by the university.	Enables to account for the process by which institutions of higher education seize racial equity-driven endeavors and initiatives produced by people of color.	Provides an opportunity to capture the cultural taxation endured by SELs and their use of emotional labor as the organization dilutes and seizes equity efforts

approach to this study and the intentional curation of theoretical concepts illuminates the unacknowledged and hidden labor associated with being the central figure for institutional equity and the person responsible for overseeing and carrying out racialized organizational change. These concepts, taken together, allow us to explore how equity advocates across the four community colleges in our study carry out their everyday race work while responding to internal and external organizational forces that may enable or constrain their progress toward racial equity.

Research design

Through a collective case study (Stake, 2005), we explored the experiences of four SELs as they advanced change efforts proposed in their institutional equity plans. Case study methodology allows the in-depth study of people, places, and phenomena. A collective approach enabled us to select multiple cases, where the individual SEL was the unit of analysis, to answer our research questions and document the experiences individuals face as they lead racialized organizational change in community college (Flyvberg, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Drawing from a larger project examining the race-conscious implementation of institutional equity plans across the CCC system, we used

Table 2. Community college characteristics.

Campus	Geographic Setting	% Community of Color	Students Enrolled	% Student of Color	% Faculty of Color	% Admin of Color
Central City College	City	76%	24,000	80%	35%	39%
El Rancho College	Suburban	45%	11,000	74%	37%	58%
La Sirena College	Rural	34%	11,000	45%	19%	33%
Magnolia College	City	73%	8,000	80%	36%	53%

Note. Community of Color percentage draws from county-level U.S. Census, ACS 5-year estimates data.

a purposeful sampling strategy to identify and select SELs who: 1) proposed equity efforts that explicitly sought to address racial disparities in educational outcomes, 2) had multiple years of experience in this role, 3) had a critical mass of students of color to benefit from the plan and proposed efforts, and 4) provided geographic diversity across the state system. Given this strategy, our four cases provided "reasonable coverage of the phenomenon" to fulfill our study purpose and learn how the toll and toiled experienced by SELs as they lead racial equity efforts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 102). Table 2 highlights how each SEL was situated in a unique social context with diverse geographic settings and differing institutional conditions that influenced their ability to advance racial equity.

Student equity leader context

Although each participant held the formal role of coordinating student equity on campus, they all had unique paths, backgrounds, and experiences before taking on the role. Table 3 highlights some of these characteristics. In contrast to the predominantly white administration and faculty on their respective campuses, all four SELs self-identified as people of color and articulated a commitment to racial justice developed from their life experiences and previous roles. Alberto was a longtime Chicano Studies instructor, Mai had years of professional experience working for immigration and reproductive rights advocacy groups, Ryan served as the AANAPISI grant manager at Magnolia, and Emilio was a longtime administrator focused on improving diversity, equity, and inclusion. All SELs had over four years of experience in their respective role as SEA lead. There was some variation in the title of each

Table 3. Participant characteristics.

Campus	Name	Title/Role	Gender	Ethnoracial Identity	Years in Role	Previous Position
Central City College	Alberto Jimenez	Coordinator	Cis-Man	Mexican American	5	Chicano Studies Faculty
El Rancho College	Emilio Torres	Dean	Cis-Man	Mexican American	6	Dean of Grants
La Sirena College	Mai Huynh	Director	Cis-Woman	Vietnamese American	4	Cultural Center Coordinator
Magnolia College	Ryan Lavarias	Director	Cis-Man	Filipino American	5	AANAPISI Grant Manager

SEL and the level of support received (i.e., additional staff). Emilio was the highest-ranking SEL with the title of dean and held the longest tenure in that specific role, but his time was split also leading institutional grant getting activities. Alberto and Ryan were the only two SELs with office staff to help oversee their racial equity work, in particular, to assist with budgeting, programming, and administrative aspects.

Data collection and analysis process

We collected data between March 2019 and March 2020. As part of our case study, we conducted interviews, visited with each SEL at their campus, and collected various relevant documents. Our study began in March 2019 as a new three-year equity plan cycle started (2019–2022), but data collection was interrupted by the global pandemic. We had access to data beyond March 2020, but decided to bound our case study with data collected before the complete shift to remote work. We held four interviews with each participant during Spring 2019, Summer 2019, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020. Each interview was recorded via Zoom and lasted between 75–120 minutes. As our primary data source, each interview helped to learn how SELs were implementing their racial equity efforts over time and the organizational factors shaping progress. Additionally, we visited each campus for a two-day period to observe SELs within their specific organizational context; we attend student equity committee meetings, academic senate report outs, and presentations to the board of trustees.

To interpret our collected data, stay as close to our participants' experiences with leading equity efforts, and answer our research questions, we employed analytic questions as our strategy. Analytic questions are "questions that are asked of the data" meant to extract usable chunks to formulate patterns based on that extraction (Neumann, 2009). This approach can be described as taking a "small shovel, shaped (and iteratively reshaped)" to "scoop out" relevant data that help the researcher answer their questions of interest (Neumann & Pallas, 2015, p. 166). Analytic questions allow us to "search for direct responses to research questions" while also "considering potentially relevant surrounding content" (Neumann & Pallas, 2015, p. 157). For this study, we asked analytic questions at the individual, organizational, and theoretical level (See Table 4 below).

We piloted the analytic questions on a single transcript to strengthen our analysis. We independently read and scooped out data relevant to answering each of the analytic questions asked. We came back together to assess our ability to identify and include transcript excerpts related to each area. From this process, we revised and finalized the analytic questions and repeated this process across all transcribed interviews and fieldnotes. To track emerging ideas and insight, we wrote an analytic memo after each piece of data we

Table 4. Analytic questions posed.

Question Level
AQ1: Individual • How does this individual describe equity? Is it a racialized understanding? • How do they describe the work they do related to student equity? • What key experiences, characteristics, and/or identities are important for the work they do?
AQ2: Institutional • How do they describe how the equity plan is being implemented? • What are the challenges/barriers/obstacles in trying to implement their plan on campus? • What can be learned about advancing racial equity in community college?
AQ3: Theoretical • How does this leader describe added emotional labor or feelings of burnout? • How does this leader describe faculty resistance and related pushback more broadly? • How does this leader demonstrate leading toward racial equity?

reviewed (Emerson et al., 2011). As a data reduction strategy, we segmented transcripts and fieldnotes into important concepts highlighting the SELs' experiences in community college. In total, we extracted 180 segments across our nine analytic questions and then organized the data into themes that could answer our research questions (Evergreen, 2018). For example, with our first research question, we re-read the excerpts to describe the organizational conditions that influence how individual equity leaders can carry out their racial equity efforts. We then coded the segments for our second question based on our theoretical framework. As a team, we collapsed similar themes (e.g., pushback from faculty, faculty reluctant to address racism) and explored divergent patterns (e.g., academic senate as a barrier to equity), resulting in two overarching themes.

Findings

Our results are divided into two themes documenting the (in)visible labor of racial equity work and mapping out the spaces of resistance to racial equity efforts led and experienced by SELs. In our first theme, we answer our first research question and highlight the increased feelings of cultural taxation, isolation, and burnout associated with leading racial equity on campus. In the second theme we answer our second research question as we detail how faculty, individually and collectively, were identified as central sources of resistance attempting to diminish SELs' agency and ability to carry out their intended ideas to improve racial equity for community college students.

Documenting the (In)visible labor of racial equity work

SELs play an intricate role in community college and find themselves as central figures leading their institution's efforts to address and improve racial equity. In this work, they become the "equity person on campus," as Alberto Jimenez shared, seen as the "the only person" responsible for "leading racial equity

efforts." Alberto, who has led equity efforts at Central City College for four years, continues, "It sucks, we create these institutional plans, but ultimately it falls on us as individuals . . . but it's the reality for a lot of us equity warriors." Coincidentally, all four SELs in this study self-identified as people of color, centered their racial identities, and had prior experiences working in ethnic studies and cultural centers and overseeing federally funded minority-serving institutional grants. What Alberto notes about leading equity work also resonates with all our participants. He raises the idea of having to carry the weight of racial equity and organizational change as the only person responsible for it. We identified these added burdens to the work into three sub-themes: taxation, isolation, and burnout.

Willingness to undertake taxation

The SELs in our study spoke of being aware of the demanding role their position required and having to be prepared to manage the constant taxation. Being seen as the go-to person for all things equity and race-related, Alberto states, "You get tired, but you have to be willing to take on an amount of taxing and racial battle fatigue, just to see [your efforts] through at the college." To add, Alberto shares, "One [SEL] cannot implement all these equity activities. It's impossible." However, he also recognized that "if I don't take initiative, the values that I believe are most important for the college, they aren't going to be represented." Ryan Lavarias, who self-identifies as Filipinx, shared how he has internalized the responsibility of this work at Magnolia College: "I'm the type of worker where I put the weight of everything on my shoulders. I know that's who I am and what this job requires." Ryan was ready and willing to do this work. Like others, he accepted this taxation, knowing it could lead toward better campus conditions and outcomes for racially minoritized students. Alberto summarized this attitude as "If not me, then who? This work needs to be done."

Similarly, Emilio Torres, longtime dean of equity at El Rancho College, was optimistic about the taxing work. He shared, "I feel fortunate that everything I've been involved with has always been about student success and about changing lives. It's personal work, and it's difficult work, and I think that's what keeps me going." He acknowledged the difficulty of the work as a required tradeoff for the opportunity to change his campus. Emilio accepted the taxing role as part of the work to break down oppressive structures and barriers that hinder minoritized students in community college. Although many are willing to take on this additional taxation, Ryan adds, "If the college is being serious about [improving equity], this is not sustainable." These experiences reminded SELs that they are often the sole person advancing racial equity instead of having a campus with a collective sense of responsibility, leading to the second type of added emotional labor uncovered in our study.

Feelings of isolation

Our second sub-theme highlights the sense of isolation experienced by SELs and how, at times, described being the only ones pushing the equity work forward, centering race in conversations and continuously asking why racial disparities in outcomes were persistent on campus. For example, Alberto shared, "I feel I'm almost at a tipping point" since "I do all this work above and beyond my responsibilities" and "there's never any acknowledgment." He goes on to say, "There's no good job [Alberto], or any praise, sometimes I wonder: Do I need to be here? Should I be doing all this work? Is it worth it?" Similarly, Mai brings up feeling isolated, invisible and lacking acknowledgment in her role. As noted in the opening paragraph of our article, she has a deep commitment to serving communities of color and making a difference on campus. However, the role and campus dynamics weighed heavy on her as she shared: "I want to fully admit I want to quit. I feel so isolated because this is a very isolating place, and this is a very isolating position." Mai, the director of equity and student success at her campus, highlights the tension between feeling isolated and her commitment to equity work.

For others, isolation was something to be addressed. Ryan began to challenge feelings of isolation, stating, "Equity work can't be just me; it has to be all of us now . . . and I think people are seeing that. It can't all be on me. But the fundamental question is, where is the support for me moving forward?" Ryan recognized the lack of support and isolation doing equity work and began to hold conversations with campus leaders about additional resources and personnel to carry out Magnolia College's vision for a more socially just campus. As mentioned earlier, Ryan and Alberto were the only SELs with additional capacity and staffing which helped minimize feelings of isolation and build a collective responsibility for equity. From these examples, the lack of critical mass and campus support reinforces the racialized organizational change as an individual responsibility. Ultimately, most SELs felt alone in their work to improve racial equity on campus. The lack of acknowledgment left participants feeling invisible and questioning whether their role, work, and effort were making any difference. Feeling isolated contributed to SELs sharing that they always felt exhausted from trying to "fix racism," "being the sole person doing this work," and constantly trying to get colleagues to care about equity.

Experiencing burnout

Lastly, all four SELs talked about feeling burned out, especially from just trying to bring a basic level of awareness around racial equity to campus colleagues. For example, Mai Huynh, a Vietnamese American woman, worked on a predominantly white campus and described the arduous task of getting people to believe that race matters and should be considered when discussing equity:

> I was really, really angry and shocked. I didn't think I had to go 20 steps behind. Here I am pushing an initiative on equity, and all of a sudden, I'm not. I'm talking about race and if race even exists. Trying to convince people it matters. I was super shocked and then angry on a personal level, but just shocked that the campus was so far behind.

What Mai highlights is the added work of trying to build colleagues' awareness and competencies around race and equity, especially those reluctant to discuss contentious topics or support equity efforts focused on mitigating racial disparities. Ryan explains, "I don't know why it is that we can't talk about this [racial inequity], when it's all over us every day." He continues, "It's a touchy subject, especially for leadership, to talk about race and how we are responsible for addressing disproportionate impact based on race . . . It's a wake-up call; we need more conversations, more training, more opportunities" because to "build this right, it's going to be about shifting the culture and getting people to understand that our institution needs to work on closing the gaps." Ryan concludes, "It takes an emotional toll . . . knowing there are so many people we need to convince to care about racial equity." Ryan's experience illustrates the repetitive nature of SELs' attempts to plead with colleagues that race matters and that they need to acknowledge their role in producing the racial inequity experienced on campus.

In addition to enduring job burnout, others on campus reminded SELs of the position's challenging nature and high turnover. Alberto shares how colleagues would jokingly place bets on his survival at Central City College. He recalls being at a campus meeting within the first six months of his hire, and colleagues were wagering how long he would last in the position. Alberto's colleagues' awareness of the emotional labor required and the high turnover of the position illustrates the challenges faced by student equity leaders and what we have described in this first finding. As one participant shared, after a long and tension-filled campus equity committee meeting, "I'm super burnt out. If I could step away from this work, I would in a heartbeat." Having to be the central figure for all things equity is tiring, especially when positioned to constantly convince others to talk about equity and focus on race. If it is not feelings of isolation or burnout, then it is the compound effect of all three factors that weigh heavy on SELs and their ability to advance race work.

Faculty reluctance and resistance to racial equity

Our second theme highlights how faculty, individually and collectively, posed several roadblocks to advancing equity efforts. SELs described ways that individual faculty were reluctant to discuss issues of race or minimized concerns around racial disparities. Many of equity efforts and strategies proposed focused on addressing inequities in instruction and academic support, requiring SELs to work closely with faculty colleagues (See Table A1). For example, Magnolia College created an equity-minded teaching institute to shift

curriculum and pedagogy to be more culturally relevant. Similarly, El Rancho proposed that "math and English faculty work towards developing themed classes for foster youth, LGBTQ, African American, and Latinx." The student equity efforts being implemented by SELs sought to change aspects traditionally under the purview of faculty. Additionally, collective spaces like academic senate and shared governance were perceived by SELs to amplify resistance to their racial equity efforts.

Individual faculty pushback

SELs described ways individual faculty were resistant to join discussions on race and reluctant to acknowledge persistent institutional racial equity gaps. Mai shared that she faced serious pushback when equity conversations centered on race, and faculty did not want to participate. Mai remembered a social sciences faculty member rebuking the need to interrogate issues of race on campus, stating: "Race doesn't exist biologically, [and] you talking about and centering race is racist." At first, she was shocked by these comments, but then recognized the physical location of the campus, which is in a more rural, politically conservative, and primarily white area. Mai continued, "I felt like I was on Mars. I was super shocked and then angry, but just shocked that the campus was so far behind on race and that faculty who are supposed to be academics were so far behind too." Other SELs experienced similar faculty reluctance to participate in racial discourse and using institutional resources, like the student equity plan, to address racialized disparities specifically. Ryan discussed trying to create opportunities for faculty to gain awareness on issues such as equity, race, and structural racism, but faculty were hesitant to attend diversity training at Magnolia College. Ryan added that faculty had issues using words like "diversity" and "equity" to describe these types of professional development opportunities. Ryan recounts feedback received from faculty: "If we're being trained on it, that means that administrators don't think we know anything about those issues." Ryan's experience highlights how faculty were not only reluctant to participate in equity work but also resistant to the optics that they lacked certain equity competencies or needed to be trained on them.

A second factor impeding the racial equity work at these sites was the unwillingness of faculty to acknowledge their role in creating and maintaining institutional equity gaps. Ryan described how faculty reviewed disaggregated campus data but were dismissive of the campus equity gaps presented because some individual faculty believed students were successful in their own courses. He shared, "[Faculty] saw our data as questionable. They would say anecdotally, 'Well, students in my classes are completing and transferring, so what's the problem?'" Ryan continued, at these planning meetings, "Faculty felt they were being blamed, but faculty just didn't understand that it is the institution that needs to work on closing the gaps, not our students." Alberto echoed this sentiment, sharing, "Many faculty [were] completely resistant to the idea that

there is an equity problem, and that the college has something to do with it and can change it for the better." At El Rancho, Emilio spoke of needing to get faculty on the same page about what equity meant. He reflected on a conversation with a STEM faculty member: "Equity at the end of the day is not about you dumbing down the curriculum" and "we're not asking you to change what you're doing or how you're doing it, but improving your awareness to systemic issues, how you respond to racial realities, and how you treat students." Faculty being averse to race talk or acknowledging their institution's responsibility to address equity gaps created resistance for SELs to continue their equity efforts. Spaces like shared governance would also intensify these types of individual beliefs and practices among faculty.

The role of shared governance

A common theme observed was the collective resistance to racial equity faced by SELs in spaces like shared governance. Each campus had varying levels of resistance that stemmed from its shared governance or academic senate that blocked, delayed, or influenced the enactment of race work proposed in its plan. Shared governance plays a critical role in reviewing and approving the efforts in equity plans, especially if strategies seek to address inequity in academic and classroom contexts. SELs described how shared governance diluted race-conscious efforts and sustained structures perpetuating inequity. Mai Huynh recalls her experiences presenting the equity plan during an academic senate meeting:

> Our equity imperative for 2019–2022 was specifically reducing racial/ethnic equity gaps for our Latinx population as well as all other disproportionately impacted groups by 40% with the overall goal of eliminating all achievement gaps by 2026. But being race-conscious, folks thinking like, "oh, if we're focused on this one specific ethnic group or race, then we're being discriminatory towards everybody else." I sensed people's uncomfortableness in these senate meetings. But that was the narrative on campus. Just even dismantling that; no matter what kind of project it was doing, was difficult.

After this meeting, Mai recalled a faculty senator ridiculing the plan's goals to end systematic racism on campus by stating that they would alert the Nobel Prize Committee if the milestones were achieved at La Sirena College. In addition, many of the sites faced significant pushback related to the explicit efforts in their equity plan addressing racial disparities. Collectively, participants all experienced faculty senators who would thoroughly examine every word used in the equity plan and critique the strategies employed, such as creating race-specific support programs, culturally relevant pedagogy, faculty equity training, and other equity-oriented student-centered strategies (See Table A1 for examples).

At El Rancho, Emilio Torres sought to improve equity through new faculty workshops and curricular redesign initiatives. However, Emilio recalled being

denied the opportunity to oversee the professional development committee to advance these efforts. He noted presenting the idea at the faculty senate and remembered being told, "You can't have administrators telling faculty what professional development they need, or when they should get it and what it should be." Emilio's experience showcases the division between faculty and administration in working together to advance racial equity. The unwillingness to engage in new approaches continues to create barriers for SELs to push their efforts forward. Ultimately, he was discouraged, stating that faculty, "at the end of the day, [do] what they want to do." Thus, impacting the approach SELs take when navigating conversations surrounding equity-minded practices in the classroom.

In trying to put equity efforts into play, SELs had to navigate individual and collective faculty pushback related to race talk, understanding of equity, and the proposed racial equity efforts to improve student outcomes. Given a strong focus on improving academic outcomes through the student equity plan by targeting curriculum, academic support, and faculty training, there was much resistance to the SEL's racialized approach. We illustrated how passively reluctant or intentionally resistant faculty dilute race-conscious equity efforts.

Discussion

Our study explored the labor exacted from individuals that lead and implement racial equity efforts in community college. Using in-depth interviews over an extended time, we documented the experiences of four SELs navigating varying organizational conditions to implement and advance newly proposed efforts to improve racial equity at their campus. In answering our research questions, we provided insight into the experiences of people who carry out racialized organizational change, the added burdens placed on them, and the resistance faced in moving their work forward. Given the critical importance of improving racial equity in higher education broadly, and community college specifically, exploring the experiences of SELs is crucial to identifying how to better support campus leaders tasked with carrying out long-term and large-scale change initiatives. Our research revealed two major themes: 1) SELs experience emotional labor in three ways: taxation, isolation, and burnout, and 2) the reluctance and resistance of faculty as individuals and as a collective. Below we discuss our results within the context of existing literature and highlight the unique contributions of our work to scholarship on higher education, community colleges, and racial equity work.

Acknowledging the weight of racial equity work

In answering our first research question, we placed attention to the high levels of emotional labor exerted by SELs and their willingness to endure

these conditions as they sought to implement organizational efforts that address racial inequities. Ryan highlighted this dynamic when he stated: "I put the weight of everything on my shoulders. I know that's who I am and what this job requires." This notion was shared across the four SELs, each describing the ways they accept and tolerate the added labor, energy, and emotional costs in hopes of transforming their campus for the benefit of racially minoritized students. The results build on Gonzales and Ayers (2018) work that described how organizations rely on the emotional labor, personal commitments, and altruism of equity advocates to compensate for the lack of infrastructure, resources, and support on campus to address historical inequities in community college. Grandey et al. (2015) added that "organizations undervalue the toll of emotion-laden work on individuals," creating a hostile environment that threatens the well-being and sense of belonging (p. 773). Although individual SELs in our study demonstrated a personal commitment to improving conditions on campus for minoritized communities, without clear institutional support and resources, the effects of taxation, isolation, and burnout weigh heavy on SELs and their ability to advance racial equity efforts. These results provide a more nuanced understanding of the emotional labor exacted while performing race work in the community college context and the ways that individuals experience the added burdens of racialized organizational change.

Based on our research, it is critical that higher education institutions actively mitigate the negative impacts of emotional labor by (1) acknowledging and recognizing the extent of the labor, energy, and emotion tied to leading institutional equity efforts, (2) developing and institutionalizing a collective commitment to equity, and (3) building the capacity for equity leaders to be successful with additional resources and support staff. Given the experiences documented in our study, there was a lack of acknowledgment of the energy, effort, and labor required to lead equity efforts and build a campus coalition that embraces and supports racial equity and the specific efforts being implemented by each campus. Institutional leaders must provide SELs with symbolic and material support to sustain their race work and achieve equity goals. Additionally, the campus needs to foster a culture of change that centers on racial equity. As Kezar (2001) notes: "the institutional culture ties not only to the process of change, but to reasons of change" (p. XX). Without a shared understanding of why this work matters and why institutions should work collaboratively to address racial disparities, the weight of leading change efforts will continue to be put on SELs, thus delaying the implementation of racial equity efforts. Lastly, it was clear from our research that SELs faced challenges with having adequate staffing, resources, and support to be successful. Many of them were a team of one, trying to carry the weight of organizational change on their shoulders alone. If racial equity is a priority on campus,

resources must be relocated to build the infrastructure for SELs to carry out their race work with adequate staff and support.

Combating faculty resistance to equity-oriented change

Related to our second question, our results document how faculty, individually and collectively, act as barriers to advancing racial equity work. As recent scholars note (G. A. Garcia et al., 2020; Liera, 2019; Vargas et al., 2020), many faculty members struggle with understanding systemic issues underlying the outcome inequities faced by minoritized students, especially in predominantly-white institutions (G. Garcia, 2018; Liera & Dowd, 2019). As noted in the findings, all our participants identified as people of color and led equity efforts within white academic spaces. This finding mirrors McGee and Kazembe's (2016) work, which found that racially minoritized leaders working within predominantly white spaces faced added scrutiny, ridicule, and resistance by white colleagues on campus. Not only is organizational change already an arduous task, but now it is made even harder knowing that racially minoritized leaders are challenged and questioned more often than their white counterparts. The experiences of SELs highlighted in our work align with this scholarship and the noted role faculty members, especially white ones, play in perpetuating inequity in higher education (Dowd & Liera, 2018).

In our work, SELs spoke about faculty minimizing concerns around racial disparities and thus delaying the implementation of race-conscious interventions. The active and passive resistance from faculty sought to ignore the realities of race and racism in higher education. Faculty, individually and within shared governance, blocked, delayed, and influenced the enactment of equity-oriented student centered-strategies — specifically, strategies that sought to address inequity in the academic and classroom context. Our findings demonstrate how faculty passively or intentionally did not see themselves as part of the problem or solution. The unwillingness of faculty to acknowledge their role and take responsibility for addressing equity gaps demonstrates why there needs to be a collective understanding of why this work matters and is needed. Research consistently finds that community college faculty members are students' most critical connection to the college (Lundberg, 2014; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004; Tovar, 2014; Wood, 2014). Thus, equity-oriented change cannot be achieved without the explicit support, involvement, and actions of faculty members in community colleges. Given the role of shared governance in reviewing and approving the initiatives proposed in each institution's equity plan, faculty must be expected to learn about their institutional responsibility for equity and recognize the need for change in the classroom specifically and on campus generally.

Moving forward, we recommend that institutions (1) provide sustained faculty training to enhance competencies around racial equity and (2) engage

and increase faculty participation on equity-based committees. Our study documents the ways in which faculty minimize issues around race and resist the development and implementation of race-conscious interventions. Without faculty involvement, institutions cannot address disparities in student outcomes. Therefore, institutional leaders must work collaboratively with faculty and SELs to advance racial equity in the academic and classroom context. In addition, increasing faculty participation on equity committees will foster a culture of change that is student-centered and equity-driven. Previous research highlights the importance of faculty becoming aware of racial differences in classroom outcomes to advance racial equity and effectively serve racially minoritized students (Bensimon & Malcom, 2012; Dowd & Bensimon, 2015). Dismantling racism and privilege in higher education requires the collective efforts of staff, administration, and faculty. Without faculty buy-in, equity-oriented change will be resisted, blocked, and diluted from its more race-conscious and radical intents envisioned by student equity leaders. Our work reminds us of the need to create collective responsibility for racial equity to minimize the barriers to advancing this work and develop a critical mass of change agents across the institution.

Learning from student equity leaders: systemic responses to systemic inequities

Our work provides new insight into the types of racialized equity labor enacted by individuals in community college and the taxation, resistance, and burnout accompanying the implementation of racial equity efforts (Lerma et al., 2019). In particular, our study highlights how community colleges operate as racialized organizations and the ways the institution attempts to strip away agency from individuals through increased emotional labor, feelings of isolation as well as active forms of resistance. In recent years, scholars have paid increasing attention to the "psychological costs" (Gándara et al., 2023, p. 11) and the "additional burdens" (Liera & Dowd, 2019, p. 481) of advancing equity and diversity in higher education. Our study extends these conversations in the community college context focusing on the cultural taxation, emotional labor, and racialized equity labor extracted from equity advocates as they lead organizational efforts to improve racial outcomes. Emotional labor and racialized equity labor provide a theoretical lens to examine how organizational change, especially change that seeks to remedy persistent racial inequities, requires a commitment to dismantling existing policies, structures, practices, and beliefs to substitute for the lack of institutional support.

To truly work toward more equitable community colleges, institution and system leaders must acknowledge the weight of race-based organizational change and the burdens placed on SELs. Individuals entrusted with the

responsibility to advance organizational change rooted in racial equity in higher education, particularly in community colleges, must be provided with additional resources, capacity, and staffing to counter the documented burdens of institutional change work and be able to successfully advance racial equity work. Our study reminds us that we need systemic responses to systemic inequities; No individual effort can truly impact the enduring nature of racism embedded within our educational structures. Improving racial equity will require the weight of change to be distributed amongst the many, actively supported by senior leaders and shared governance, and ultimately be seen as a priority that permeates across campus. As we move forward with racial justice efforts in higher education, we must center solidarity building and collective action to address the organizational conditions, contexts, and challenges that impede racial equity.

Notes

1. Individual and college names are pseudonyms to protect anonymity.
2. Across the CCC system and its 116 campuses, there is wide variation to describe the primary individual overseeing "Student Equity" efforts, with titles and roles ranging from vice presidents, deans, directors, and coordinators as well as fulfilling these responsibilities in full-time and part-time roles across the system. This paper uses the term "Student Equity Leader" (SEL) to describe the individual who leads Student Equity efforts.

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Appendix

Table A1. Identified race-conscious equity efforts.

Campus	Equity Effort	Description	Target Groups	Focal Area
La Sirena College	Program Mapping	Developing Hispanic Serving Institution Teacher Pathways grant activities to expand collaboration and support of Latina Leadership Network (LLN) and other Latinx targeted activities	Latinx Students	Transfer
La Sirena College	Targeted Academic/ Student Support Services	It is important that LSC's counseling systems/structures communicate the benefits of working with a counselor in order to access accurate information early on in their educational path. Students reiterated the need to have the whole student taken into account as community college students often have complicated schedules with added financial pressures. This is particularly true for First Generation students, Latinx students, and African American/Black students who often work to help support their families.	Black and Latinx Students	Transfer
La Sirena College	Targeted Academic/ Student Support Services	As a Hispanic Serving Institution, it is important that our Latinx students are encouraged and recognized for their capabilities. Our Guided Pathways efforts must be in alignment with the onboarding process so that the whole student is considered during student advising.	Black and Latinx Men	Transfer Level-Math & English
Central City College	Interdisciplinary Faculty Equity Lab: Equity-Minded Tools for Reflective Teaching Practice	CCC will create a train-the-trainer, cohort model, group of interdisciplinary faculty members who will learn how to use equity-minded tools for reflective teaching and learning. Examples of some topics include course level data analysis, syllabi review, peer observations, institutional agents, and teaching and learning for equity.	All racially minoritized students	Student Retention
Central City College	CORA Online Training Certificate Programs	Enroll community members in the 1) Teaching Men of Color in the Community College: This course provides community college instructional faculty with strategies and approaches that can be used to foster enhanced learning among college men of color; (2) Supporting Men of Color in the Community College: This course provides community college advisors, student service officers, counselors and support staff with strategies and approaches that can be used to foster enhanced learning, development, and success among college men of color;	Men of Color	Transfer
Central City College	Increase Transfer Center Staffing to Support Equity-Centered Practices	In order to achieve this standard, Transfer Centers not only need equity-minded strategies, but they require adequate staffing to implement those strategies. Therefore, an increase in counseling faculty is needed for the Transfer Center. Additionally, it is important to have stability in staffing in order to oversee and implement student transfer interventions over multiple years. For this reason, an additional full-time counselor will be hired to focus on supporting equity-centered transfer activities.	All racially minoritized students	Transfer
Magnolia College	Mentoring Program	Design and implement a mentoring program, special orientation and monthly support sessions aimed to increase certificate and associate degree completion.	Black Latinx	Transfer Level-Math & English

(*Continued*)

Table A1. (Continued).

Campus	Equity Effort	Description	Target Groups	Focal Area
Magnolia College	Equity Professional Learning Institute	Institutionalize or create equity professional learning institute for all college employees in collaboration with the newly funded professional development coordinator position to develop the following: a) Communities of Practice; b) Train Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) Coaches in each division and the curriculum committee on strategies for assessment, alignment of pedagogy and curriculum with the framework of CRT and our equity framework; c) Offer monthly seminars on High Impact Practices for socio-emotional learning, culturally responsive engagement, mindfulness, harm-reduction, growth-mind-set, etc.	Black Latinx	Access
Magnolia College	Umoja Program	Development of an Umoja Program (Learning Community model with a focus on African American students)	Black	Completion
Magnolia College	Cross Cultural Center	Development of a Cross Cultural Center to serve as a hub of activities and support for populations such as Dreamers, Foster Youth, Homeless, LGBTQI+, etc.	Black Latinx	Access
El Rancho College	Umoja Village Space	The college will designate a space on campus for Umoja personnel to build community with participants. The space will house the Umoja Counselor/Coordinator, Student Success Coach, and peer mentors. The space will serve as a hub for students to interact with program personnel, meet with peer mentors, complete counseling appointments, and gather for social events.	Black	Attainment
El Rancho College	Associate Degrees for Transfer Workshops	Counselors will conduct in-class workshops on Associate Degrees of Transfer (ADTs) to increase completion and transfer. Umoja and Puente sponsored courses will be targeted for this activity. Other courses with high enrollments of LGBTQ, foster youth, and African American students will also be targeted.	Black	Transfer
El Rancho College	Equity Focused Community of Practice	Math and English disciplines will engage in actively developing communities of practice focused on researching and developing culturally relevant lessons and activities for disproportionately impacted (DI) student populations. Math and English faculty will pilot best practices in courses with high enrollments of DI students. Courses will be supported with embedded tutoring and supplemental instruction. Math and English faculty will also work toward developing themed classes for DI student populations, including foster youth, LGBTQ, African American, and Latinx.	Black Latinx	Transfer Level-Math & English