



We change lives



Student Equity Plan Executive Summary

December 8, 2015



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Merritt College Student Equity Plan

Student equity and success continues to be a high priority for Merritt College as indicated throughout its core values and in particular:

- **Diversity:** We honor, and respect the different backgrounds, experiences, languages, values and cultures of everyone at the college.
- **Campus Climate:** We strive to create a student-centered learning environment that leads to student retention, persistence and success.

The Merritt College SSSP/Equity Committee for 2015-16 used a variety of resources and key findings from several college-wide projects to support the preparation of this plan. The committee actively utilized campus-based research, data analysis, and findings resulting from the college's Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) administered to students in 2011 and 2014, and the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey administered in 2009, 2011, and 2014. Furthermore, goals and activities included in this plan are based on the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Scorecard, 2010 U.S. Census Bureau demographic data, and Bay Area Census data. As a result, the target groups in need of academic performance improvement were identified through a series of collaborative efforts involving all stakeholders: faculty, staff, administrators, students, trustees, community members, and other external stakeholders.

A. Target Groups

The target groups vary per indicator based on student characteristics. Groups in need of improvement have been previously identified based on data, studies and reports. Findings include:

- The majority of these students were enrolled in programs leading to lesser economically rewarding occupations;
- The majority of these students were enrolled in basic skills or lower level courses with their share of basic skills enrollments much greater than their representation in the student body.
- Students' lack of progress towards certificates, degrees, and transfer to four-year colleges;
- The students' retention rate were below the statewide average;

The Merritt College SSSP/Equity Committee also identified foster youth as a target group based on their numbers for access and course completion.

B. Goals

The Student Equity Plan for 2015-16 is centered on the main purpose of achieving equity throughout the student body that is reflective of the diversity of the community served by Merritt College. The target groups identified for each indicator in the "Goals and Activities"

section are considered a priority. Below is a summary of some of the goals under each indicator:

- Access: Improve access of under-represented populations within the college service area.
- Course Completion (*Retention*): Increase overall college retention rate.
- ESL and Basic Skills Completion: Increase completion rates and ensure that students succeed.
- Degree and Certificate Completion: Increase the number of students obtaining a degree or certificate who are below the .85 level:
- Transfer: Increase the overall college transfer rate to aim to reach 1.0 level for groups not achieving this level:

C. Activities

The SSSP/Equity Committee identified various activities and actions required for the college to achieve goals specified in the plan. Below is a summary of primary activities for each indicator.

A more detailed explanation is provided in the “Goals and Activities” section of the plan:

- Access: Increase outreach and recruitment to target groups;
- Course Completion (*Retention*): Improve course completion, particularly the rate of male students;
- ESL and Basic Skills Completion: Ensure and monitor appropriate course placement and completion;
- Degree and Certificate Completion: Increase the number of students obtaining a degree or certificate for all target groups;
- Transfer: Increase the number of students transferring to a four-year university for all target groups particularly for under-represented populations.

In summary, the Merritt College’s Student Equity Plan was drafted utilizing campus-based research, data analysis and findings that then form the foundation for the identification of the target groups needing improvement towards obtaining equity in overall student access and success.

The targeted groups include but not limited to:

- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Males
- Foster Youth
- Low income