

California Community Colleges' journey toward racial equity: Understanding the process of
addressing systemic racism

by

Angela Marie Meraz

B.A., University of California, Los Angeles, 2004
M.Ed., University of Maryland, College Park, 2006

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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Department of Educational Leadership
College of Education

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Manhattan, Kansas

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Abstract

The California Community Colleges (CCC) system is the largest, most diverse public college system in the nation. As the system works to improve outcomes for all students, and in response to the racial climate in the United States during 2020, the system's Chancellor's Office released a call to action, asking all colleges to address systemic racism by strategizing and taking action to identify and eradicate systemic racial injustice. This study focused on understanding if and how colleges were responding to the call to action. Using an explanatory mixed-methods design, this study was an exploration of ways in which colleges in the CCC system aligned their work with the CCC Chancellor Office's call to action. Using critical race theory as a theoretical framework, antiracist work occurring at colleges in the CCC was explored through a quantitative survey and qualitative focus group interviews. This study demonstrated which colleges in the CCC system have been addressing systemic racial injustice through policy, practice, or program changes; highlighted factors that led colleges to this focus of change; and revealed processes colleges used to develop, implement, and measure these changes. Through data analysis, four themes were identified: Equity Is Being Addressed Through Antiracist Practices, Antiracism Is a Focus of Planning and Review Practices; Antiracist Work Involves Professional Development for Faculty and Open, Collaborative Dialogue Among Multiple Stakeholder Groups; and Increased Antiracist Dialogue Generates Measurable Action but More Needs To Be Done.

Keywords: California Community Colleges, antiracist, systemic racism, equity

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Approved by:

Co-Major Professor
Dr. Linda Garcia

Approved by:

Co-Major Professor
Dr. Cindy Miles

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to every woman working on her education while trying to raise babies. That type of commitment and challenges faced along the way take superhuman power to overcome. This dissertation is also dedicated to every student who has ever struggled in an educational system not designed for you. Navigating the world of higher education is complex, and the barriers that exist are plenty. I chose to work in this field because I have witnessed the power one gains through education, and I am committed to helping others find that power. Students, you all deserve better, and I commit to doing my part to make sure better happens for you.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a Black man, was arrested by members of the Minneapolis police force for allegedly using a fake \$20 bill to purchase cigarettes (Deliso, 2020; Hill et al., 2020). Reporters confirmed Floyd died in police custody as bystanders filmed a police officer kneeling on his neck (Deliso, 2020). Video footage of Floyd pinned underneath three officers, crying out that he could not breathe went viral (Deliso, 2020; Hill et al., 2020). Outraged that yet another Black man died while in police custody, protesters flooded the streets of Minneapolis, as well as those in other cities across the country (Deliso, 2020). Protests lasted for months in some U.S. cities as individuals, organizations, institutions, and the country reflected on the complex issues that led to protestors' outrage and demands (Greenblatt, 2020; Hsu, 2020; Kirby, 2020; Livingston, 2020; Stein, 2020).

The California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) was among many institutions that responded to the death of George Floyd. They did so by issuing a *Call to Action* and hosting a series of webinars to discuss and address systemic racial injustice (CCCCO, 2020b, 2020c). Deputy Chancellor Daisy Gonzales began the one of the webinars by discussing the importance of defining, identifying, and strategizing against structural racism:

Together, we need to figure out how to use our positions of privilege, influence, and power to make a difference in this moment. We cannot say we are equity champions and be afraid to have an open dialogue about structural racism, because we cannot talk about equity without talking about inequality. And we cannot talk about inclusion without talking about oppression. And we cannot talk about diversity without talking about privilege. That is what makes up structural racism and we need to define it, we need to

identify it, and we need to actively strategize against it or it will impede our progress.
(CCCCO, 2020b, 7:18)

Structural racism has been defined in different terms by various scholars who have studied racial issues. Sociologist Joe Feagin (2000) defined *systemic racism* as the “diverse assortment of racist practices, encompassing daily microaggressions, deep-seated inequalities, historical inequalities, and antiblack ideologies” (p. 16). Historian Ibram Kendi (2019) defined a *racist policy* as “any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between racial groups” (p. 18) and policy as “written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people” (p. 18). Kendi (2019) also argued racist policies have often “been described as other terms: ‘institutional racism,’ ‘structural racism,’ and ‘systemic racism,’ for instance” (p. 18). CCCCCO (2020b), Feagin (2000) and Kendi (2019) all described similar themes in their definitions: privilege, power, racist practices, and inequalities. Kendi’s (2019) definition provided a tangible place to begin when seeking to address the root problem of racism, and Gonzales’s (2020) description informs what the conversation around structural racism should include for community college across the state

During the CCCCCO webinar, Chancellor Oakley said the system’s call to action was not only in response to the outrage regarding the brutal death of Floyd, but also the hundreds and thousands of other similar incidents which have occurred throughout history (CCCCO, 2020b). While the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action* was issued directly after Floyd’s death, the key areas outlined were a result of years of work completed by the Chancellor’s Office Vision for Success Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force (CCCCO, 2020b, 2020f). The call to action asked all colleges within the California Community College system to mobilize by actively addressing systemic racism in the following six key areas:

- A system-wide review of law enforcement officers and first responder training was needed.
- Campus leaders must host open dialogue and address campus climate.
- Campuses must audit classroom climate and create an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum.
- District boards must review and update equity plans with urgency.
- The timeframe for the full implementation of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Integration Plan must be shortened.
- Joining and engaging in the Vision Resource Center “Community Colleges for Change” was necessary.

Understanding these six key areas and investigating how individual colleges approach this call to action could provide insight and guidance for other colleges who choose to join the call and mobilize against structural racism.

Statement of the Problem

California Community Colleges (CCC), the largest public college system in the nation, serves over 2.1 million students in 116 colleges throughout the state (CCCCO, 2020d). CCC comprise the most diverse student population in the country and are often the first step in higher education for most minoritized students (Sims et al., 2020). The term *minoritized* speaks to socially constructed processes that “have over time limited access to, and led to a lack of presence among students of color in higher education labeled as racially and ethnically different from the norm” (Benitez, 2010, p. 131). Despite the diversity in enrollment at CCC, significant gaps in student success measures have existed between minoritized students and their White counterparts (CCCCO, 2020e). In addition, minoritized student have often been excluded from

educational opportunities, and their academic success—or lack thereof—has often been viewed through a deficit lens (Sims et al., 2020). Furthermore, minoritized students have often reported racial tension on campus affecting their socioemotional and psychological well-being, and the lack of diverse information and ideas influencing whether they stay in college or drop out (Hurtado, 1994; Hurtado, Clayton-Pedersen, et al., 1998; Milem et al., 2004; Yosso et al., 2009). Minoritized students’ persistence in college, or lack thereof, has been an issue because “education has and continues to represent the most reliable way out of poverty” (Sims et al., 2020, p. 17).

Gaps in student success measures, deficit-oriented theories and paradigms, and campus racial climate have impacted the ability for colleges within the CCC system to provide educational equity and justice for all students, especially for minoritized students. Informed by this knowledge and motivated by the mission to provide equitable educational opportunities for all students, the CCC system has developed guiding goals to improve student outcomes and a *Call to Action* to address systemic racial injustice (CCCCO, 2020c; Foundation for CCC, 2019). Understanding how colleges have been creating, implementing, and measuring programs, policies, practices, or programs in response to these guiding goals and the call to action can help identify and understand the key components of antiracist work in CCC.

Background of the Problem

Community colleges throughout the United States enroll over half of all undergraduate college students and include the most diverse student body among all sectors of higher education (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2008). With enormous size and diversity, the CCC system serves one in four community college students in the United States, nearly three quarters of whom identify as minoritized (CCCCO, 2020d). Although enrollment has increased

for minoritized students, critics have challenged whether equitable educational opportunities have existed for them (Garcia, 2019; Gilbert & Heller, 2013; Harper et al., 2016; Sims et al., 2020). These critics have also argued the lack of educational opportunities for minoritized students has been the result of a system whose history has been founded in systemic racism that has been perpetuated over years. The CCC system has acknowledged the role systemic racism has played in the achievement of minoritized students (CCCCO, 2020b, 2020c). How this system views and responds to concerns about racism could mark the way for community colleges across the nation.

Academic outcomes have often been used as indicators to determine whether academic institutions have met the needs of their students (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2019b; Boggs, 2011; Contreras & Contreras, 2015; Jones, 1996). These indicators have typically measured six key outcome areas: access, retention, occupational success, transfer, degree and certificate completion, and remediation (Jones, 1996). Year after year, colleges reporting on these metrics have shown significant gaps between White students and minoritized students, often referred to as *achievement gaps* (CCCCO, 2020e; Carnevale et al., 2018; NCES, 2008). The achievement gap has been a systemic issue identifying the “disparity in academic performance between groups of students” (Ansell, 2011, para. 1) and has been most prevalent when looking at disparities between students in the majority populations and students from minority populations. For example, despite a 20% increase in public college enrollment between 1980 and 2015 for minoritized students, degree completion for minoritized students has decreased by 6% over those same years (Carnevale et al., 2018). Only 48% of CCC students completed a degree or certificate or transfer to a 6-year university in a 6-year time frame, and these gaps have disproportionately impacted minoritized students (CCCCO, 2020e). According to

the CCC system scorecard, cohort data outcomes from 2017 showed a completion rate of 40% for African Americans and 41% for Hispanics, compared to 54% for their White peers (CCCCO, 2020e). The system’s average completion rate was 48.2% (CCCCO, 2020e). Although these achievement gaps have helped scholars and practitioners identify where disparities in educational opportunities exist, the lens with which achievement data are collected has been one of a deficit model, in which responsibility for failure has been placed on the student (Garcia, 2019; Harper et al., 2016; Sims et al., 2020). A paradigm shift away from blaming student inadequacies to understanding how systemic racism has impaired student achievement and the lack of educational opportunities for minoritized students has been garnering increased attention.

The Foundation for CCC (2019) has articulated the system’s strong commitment to equity, claiming, “higher education should be available to everyone” (p. 1), and CCC have strived to achieve this promise through open access policies and low tuition. Although the system’s commitment to open access has led to an increase of over 40,000 students between 1990 and 2020, it has also demonstrated significant challenges and barriers to completion for its students (CCCCO, 2020a; Foundation for CCC, 2019). Sims et al. (2020) argued a paradigm shift from deficit model thinking—where the onus or responsibility has been placed on the student—must occur to help minoritized students succeed in community college. Sims et al. described this shift by introducing the *obligation gap*, “a shift in accountability, which holds institutions accountable for the academic achievement of minoritized students of color [and] underscores the obligation that we have as actors within an educational system uniquely positioned to disrupt institutionalized educational inequity” (p. 36). This paradigm shift acknowledges the impact systemic racism has had on the lack of educational opportunities for

minoritized students and calls on the institution to provide the support students need to close achievement gaps.

Academic outcome data are helpful in identifying disparities between White and minoritized students, but the lens through which these data are collected has often identified student deficiencies rather than a lack of educational opportunities (Garcia, 2019; Pendakur & Harper, 2016; Sims et al., 2020). The paradigm shift toward the obligation gap has asked colleges to think critically about the role they play in perpetuating the lack of educational opportunities available for minoritized students (Sims et al., 2020). The CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action* has invited colleges to examine the impact systemic racism has had on CCC campuses by reviewing six key areas. As leaders examine the impact of systemic racism and begin to make changes to policy, programs, and practices, understanding the steps each campus takes to answer the call to action may help provide tangible guidance for college leaders seeking to create antiracist policies, practices, and programs on their respective campuses. Systemic racism has been difficult to measure, and the ambiguity in its meaning and in what tangible steps work to disrupt structural racism can lead to inaction. In *How to be an Antiracist*, Ibram Kendi (2019) argued, "every policy in every institution, in every community, is producing or sustaining either racial inequity or equity between racial groups" (p. 18).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which CCC have been aligning their work with the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action* to strategize and take action to identify and eradicate systemic racial injustice. Using a transformative, explanatory mixed-methods design, this study identified colleges within the CCC system that have been addressing systemic racial injustice through policy, procedure, or program changes and explored the factors that led them to

this focus of change. For the purpose of this study, *policies* are defined as “any written and unwritten [law, rule, procedure, process, regulation or guideline] that govern [students]” (Kendi, 2019, p. 18). *Programs* are defined as any instructional, instructional services and libraries, student services, maintenance and operations, and institutional support programs that receive institutional funding (Academic Senate for CCC, 2020).

The study further explored the processes colleges have used to identify racist policies, procedures, and programs that have been perceived to contribute to systemic racial injustice. When such policies and programs were identified, this study documented the processes colleges used to develop antiracist policies, procedures, and programs in response to their initial assessment. Finally, this study identified measurable and perceived improvements that resulted from antiracist policy, procedure, and program development and implementation in their institutions.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the level of engagement among California Community Colleges (CCC) in examining and changing policies, programs, and practices to promote antiracism?

- a) Which CCC are engaging in antiracist work?
- b) What are the factors motivating those institutions to do so?

Research Question 2: How are those colleges going about developing and implementing antiracist policies, programs, and practices?

- a) Which specific areas are being addressed?
- b) What steps are colleges taking to undertake these changes? Who is involved? What are they doing?

- c) What, if any, improvements (measurable or perceived) have resulted from these changes?

Theoretical Framework

CRT has provided a theoretical lens with which to analyze the process colleges have used to assess policies, practices, or programs to determine if they are racist and the process colleges used or are using to develop antiracist policies, practices, or programs. Critical race theorists Delgado and Stefancic (2017) identified six tenets that guide the theory:

- *Racism is ordinary*: Racism is ingrained within U.S. society.
- *Interest convergence*. Racism serves both wealthy and working-class members of the majority White population.
- *Social construction*. The concepts of race and racial difference are not grounded in biology or genetics but are products of human thought and interaction.
- *Differential racialization*. Societal views and stereotypes of minority groups have an evolving history, depending on changing perspectives of the dominant population.
- *Intersectionality and antiessentialism*. Every person has multiple social identities, roles, affinity groups, and backgrounds that intersect with their racialization.
- *Voice of color*. Those who experience racism should be the voices of authority, and storytelling is an important form of sharing these experiences. (pp. 8–11)

CRT “challenges the experiences of whites as the normative standard” (Taylor, 1998, p. 2) and emphasizes the importance of the historical context of racial oppression in understanding the experiences of people of color. Critical race theorists have sought to understand White supremacy and change the systems that uphold White supremacist ideas (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

The CCC system has sought to examine the current system, identify how systemic racism has shaped the system, and identify ways the system can change so that it no longer perpetuates systemic racism (CCCCO, 2020b). The call to action acknowledged racism exists and racist ideas have influenced the way the system functions and the students it serves. CRT offers a critical lens that may prove helpful in examining policies, practices, or programs for racist ideas that have led to systemic racism. In addition, CRT's tenet of storytelling to understand the student experience has identified the importance of allowing students to share their stories of racism and racial tension on campus to help colleges better understand the impact racism has had on their educational goals and opportunities. The CCC system has also indicated student voices are important to their growth and has underscored the centrality of student voices in the Guided Pathways initiatives they have funded on campuses system wide (CCCCO, n.d.-c). The CRT lens was useful in this study, as this study seeks to understand how colleges identify racist ideas that have contributed to systemic racism.

Several studies have served as a guide to using CRT as a lens when analyzing policies, practices, or programs. For example, Radd and Grosland (2018) used CRT as the theoretical framework to examine the Minnesota Desegregation Rule. Radd and Grosland (2018) used CRT "to discern how even well-intended individuals and efforts can maintain and perpetuate racist structures, practices, and power arrangements" (p. 401). Vaught and Castagno (2008) examined teacher "attitudes towards race, racism, and White privilege" through a CRT lens to better understand how these attitudes are "illustrative of larger structural racism" (p. 95). Based on their findings, Vaught and Castagno concluded racist attitudes and a lack of action allowed structural racism to continue. Young (2011) conducted a study on antiracist training through a CRT lens,

and from this study found “data revealed four personae of racism” (p. 1443). Studies such as these, provide context, insight, guidance, and critique of CRT’s use in examining racist policies.

Ladson-Billings (1998) argued CRT can help school leaders examine policy and practice for educational equity, claiming leaders “expose racism in education and propose radical solutions for addressing it” (p. 22). Through the lens of CRT, and by building on other CRT studies’ findings, this study will seek to understand which colleges are engaging in antiracist work, why they have chosen to focus on this work, what they have been doing to change policies and programs that have been perceived to contribute to systemic racism, and whether these changes have been helping students find success. CRT was used as a lens to develop survey and interview questions and to code, evaluate, and analyze all data from the study to better understand colleges’ processes in addressing policies, practices, or programs that have contributed to systemic racism.

Methodology

To understand how colleges have been choosing to address systemic racism on campus, this study used transformative and explanatory mixed-methods designs. Transformative design has been used in mixed-methods research and provides the researcher a lens to examine societal issues related to power, privilege, oppression, cultural complexity, and social justice (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017; Mertens, 2007). Mertens (2007) argued transformative design has given a voice to those who have historically been excluded from research and therefore advances human rights. Because the aim of this study was to understand the complexity of policy analysis using the theoretical framework of CRT, it was appropriate to use transformative design as a methodology.

Through this transformative mixed-methods design, the researcher collected survey results and conducted focus group interviews. First, an online survey was distributed to all CCC

presidents and chancellors. This survey was used to identify key characteristics of participants in the study. In addition, this questionnaire was used to identify community colleges within the CCC system that have made—or have been in the process of making—changes to policies, practices, or programs to align with the Chancellor’s call to action to end systemic racism. Based on purposeful criterion sampling, representatives from college who met the criteria for inclusion were selected as desirable participants. Selected colleges represented a diversity of institutions within the CCC system including size, geographic location, and membership in single and multicollge districts. Once colleges were identified, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) were asked to identify individuals to participate in a focus group interview. Through these interviews, the researcher sought to understand the processes colleges engaged in to identify existing racist policies, programs, or practices and what each college did to change these into antiracist policies, programs, or practices. Specifically, the researcher was interested in the process, who was involved, what was done, what activities are ongoing, and how success was being measured.

Delimitations and Assumptions

This study was delimited to 139 CEOs serving in the 73 CCC multicollge or single-college districts. All CEOs were invited to participate in the distributed survey. Once all quantitative data from the survey were analyzed, the study was again delimited to a sample of institutions identified as being in the full implementation or measurement phase of antiracist policies, programs, or practices. All data collected were kept confidential and anonymous, and participation in the study was voluntary.

The survey was sent via email invitation to all CCC CEOs by one of the trichairs of the Racial Equity and Inclusive Excellence Taskforce. The Racial Equity and Inclusive Excellence Taskforce was established in the Fall of 2020 by the Chief Executive Officers of the California

Community Colleges to action plan DEI work identified by the Vision for Success Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Taskforce (Community College League of California, n.d.-a) The purpose of the study was explained, and the researcher was introduced in the message from the trichair, and CEOs were highly encouraged to complete the survey. Once survey results were analyzed, a selected portion of this population was invited to participate in the qualitative portion of the study. These participants were selected through purposeful sampling related to established criteria. For this reason, colleges invited to participate in the qualitative portion of this study were not representative of all colleges within the CCC system. Due to the confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary considerations of the research, the researcher assumed participants were honest and trustworthy.

Significance of the Study

Through this study, the researcher sought to understand the process community college leaders throughout the state of California engaged in to identify structural racism in their respective institutions and steps taken to eradicate structural racism through policies, programs, and practices. Findings from this study could contribute to practice, policy, and the body of knowledge in multiple ways.

Information about how college leaders addressed racism on campus through the development of antiracist policies, programs, and practices could guide other leaders and practitioners grappling with these issues on their campus. By identifying emerging antiracist policies, programs, and practices in the CCC system, findings from this study could serve as a guide for other colleges looking to develop, implement, and measure policies, programs, and practices that promote antiracist ideas. Findings could also provide insights on the effects of antiracist policies, programs, and practices on improving student outcomes and campus climate.

In addition, understanding the six key areas outlined in the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action* and investigating how individual colleges approach this work could provide insight and guidance for other colleges that choose to engage in work to identify and eradicate structural racism. This study could also provide guidance for the implementation of a statewide initiative.

Governors, state elected officials, state agencies, higher education systems, and local boards of trustees have played a vital role in writing and passing laws, allocating funds, and overseeing community colleges throughout the United States. Findings from this study could provide insights to inform national and state policy development. In addition, this study could help policymakers understand some of the factors that lead college leaders to prioritize antiracist policies, programs, and practices. This understanding could provide context to the ways in which colleges need support through policy development.

This research could also contribute to the body of knowledge by chronicling the CCC response to systemic racism and the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*. Through this study, the researcher aimed to understand factors that contribute to prioritizing antiracist work. This understanding could add to the body of research by identifying key factors and to what degree these factors influenced leaders' decisions. Through this study, the researcher also sought to understand the process and metrics used to measure success in antiracist work. This understanding could add to the body of knowledge by identifying vital components of antiracist policies, programs, and practices.

Definitions of Terms

Important terms relevant to this study are defined in Table 1.

Table 1*Definitions of Terms*

Term	Definition
Achievement gap	The achievement gap is a systemic issue identifying the “disparity in academic performance between groups of students” and is most prevalent when looking at disparities between students in the majority populations and students from minority populations (Ansell, 2011, para. 1).
Antiracist	An antiracist is “one who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea” (Kendi, 2019, p. 13).
Antiracist education	Antiracist education is “a critical pedagogy that seeks to take a stand against racial injustice and oppression” (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 20).
Antiracist policy	An antiracist policy is “any measure that produces or sustains racial equity between racial groups” (Kendi, 2019, p. 18).
Antiracist work	Antiracist work is any work the college is intentionally undertaking to promote antiracist ideas, which produces or sustains racial equity between racial groups, or takes a stand against racial injustice or oppression (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997; Kendi, 2019).
Institutional racism	Institutional racism is “the support of racism through various social institutions that tend to favor one race over others . . . Institutional racism occurs when one race has the power and desire to design roles, norms, and social expectations for our social institutions to favor members of its own group and to disfavor or oppress members of other racial groups” (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 145)
Minoritized	Minoritized is a socially constructed processes that “have over time limited access to, and led to a lack of presence among students of color in higher education labeled as racially and ethnically different from the norm” (Benitez, 2010, p. 131). This term refers to the racist treatment of underrepresented people.
Obligation gap	The obligation gap is “a shift in accountability, which holds institutions accountable for the academic achievement of minoritized students of color [and] underscores the obligation that we have as actors within an educational system uniquely positioned to disrupt institutionalized educational inequity” (Sims et al., 2020, p. 36).
Opportunity gap	The opportunity gap is “the reality that higher education is currently structured in a way that produces significantly lower outcomes for students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students” (Pendakur & Harper, 2016, p. 6).
Policy	Policies are “written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people” (Kendi, 2019, p. 18).
Racial inequity	Racial inequity occurs “when two or more racial groups are not standing on approximately equal footing” (Kendi, 2019, p. 17).
Racialization	Racialization is a socially constructed process of making up racial categories based on ideologies influenced by history, economics, culture, and politics (Omi & Winant, 1994).
Racism	Racism is “the marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities” (Kendi, 2019, p. 17).

Term	Definition
Racist	A racist is “one who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist idea (Kendi, 2019, p. 13).
Racist policy	A racist policy is “any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between racial groups” (Kendi, 2019, p. 18).
Systemic racism	Systemic racism is “a diverse assortment of racist practices, encompassing daily microaggressions, deep-seated inequalities, historical inequalities, and antiblack ideologies” (Feagin, 2000, p. 16). Systemic racism and structural racism are used interchangeably in this study.

Summary

This first chapter introduced some of the social, political, and historical factors that have led to the CCCCO’s decision to issue a call to action asking colleges within the system to address structural racism. First, an overview of the CCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action* and the six areas of focus, were introduced. An explanation of the problem gives context to the historical challenges students in the CCC system have faced when trying to reach student success. The purpose of the study and research questions were described. Next, this chapter discussed delimitations, assumptions, and the significance of the study. Key terms used in this dissertation were listed and defined, and the chapter concludes with the organization of the study.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 of the dissertation presented an overview and organization of the study. Chapter 2 contains the literature review. Chapter 3 details the methods used for conducting this transformative explanatory mixed-methods study. Chapter 4 contains the findings of the study and the themes that emerged through the data analysis process. Finally, Chapter 5 contains the discussion and implications for future research.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides content relevant to the investigation of college responses to the California Community College Chancellor's Office's (CCCCO; 2020c) *Call to Action* to address structural racism. First, changing enrollments in community colleges and the role racialization in higher education played in creating structural racism are reviewed and summarized. Next, a review of the accountability movement in community colleges gives context to the data and tools used to evaluate student success and the evolution of a paradigm shift from the achievement gap to the obligation gap, a shift that places the responsibility of student success into the hands of college leaders rather than on students. Literature regarding campus climate and how students' perceptions affect their decisions to stay in college is discussed. The next section provides an overview of the diversity, equity, and inclusion work conducted by the CCCCCO and how this work led to the development of the CCCCCO's *Call to Action*. The literature review concludes with an overview of critical race theory (CRT) as a theoretical lens for this study.

Changing Enrollments in U.S. Community Colleges

When community colleges were first established in 1901, Joliet Junior College, an extension of Joliet High School, sought to prepare students to transfer by offering collegiate level courses that would satisfy the first two years of college requirements (Johnson, 1965). Over the years, this goal has morphed into a more comprehensive mission that has encompassed the values of "access, community, responsiveness, creativity and student learning" (Boggs, 2011, p. 3). The expansion of the mission and the rapid growth of community colleges across the United States since 1901 has led to increased and diversified enrollments. The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (1988) reported on enrollment data between 1947 and 1988.

Based on their report, 497,065 students were enrolled in 640 junior colleges in 1947. By 1988, over 5 million students enrolled in credit programs at over 1,224 community, technical, and junior colleges. In 1992, the primary advocacy organization for community colleges changed its name from the American Association of Junior and Community Colleges (AAJCC) to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC, 2020b). The organization continued to report on enrollment trends at community colleges across the country. AACC (2019) reported community colleges across the nation saw peak enrollments in 2010, with over 8 million students enrolling in over 1,732 community colleges. Since 2010, there has been an annual 2.2% decrease in enrollment nationally, yet community colleges have still enrolled over 7 million students.

Several scholars have given context to these enrollment trends by describing the ethnic breakdown of students and the varying motivations for students who have chosen to attend college. Cohen et al. (2003) stated:

The increase in community college enrollments may be attributed to several conditions in addition to general population expansion: older students' participation; financial aid; part-time attendance; the reclassification of institutions; the redefinition of students and courses; and high attendance by women, minorities, and less academically prepared students. (p. 46)

Some researchers have supported this claim but have added that other trends such as the proximity of the college, an increase in dual enrollment programs, the great economic recession between 2007 and 2009, and availability of distance education have added to the increase in community college enrollments (AAJCC, 1988; AACC, 2019; Boggs, 2011). Just as the reasons bringing students to community colleges have varied, so have the educational goals of those who have enrolled. Cohen et al. (2003) reported students have sought to “transfer to a senior

institution, enter the job market, get a better job, or merely learn for one's own purposes" (p. 70). Whether external or internal factors have influenced enrollment, more people across the United States have been turning to community colleges to pursue their educational and personal goals.

Enrollment has increased significantly since the onset of community colleges, and disaggregated data have provided a deeper understanding of who makes up the community college student population. Throughout the United States, community colleges have enrolled over half of all undergraduate college students and included the most diverse students (NCES, 2008). AACC (2019) published reports of annual data on the racial and ethnic makeup of community colleges. Between 2001 and 2017, the percentage of minoritized students enrolled in community colleges grew by 48%, while White students' enrollment declined by 15%. In 2017, White students represented 46% of the community college population. Hispanic students represented the largest proportion (24%) of minoritized students enrolled in community colleges at that time. African American students were the next largest group of minoritized students at 13%. AACC report also noted while Hispanic student enrollment has continued to increase between 2001 and 2017, African American student enrollment peaked at 14.6% in 2011 and has declined since. The student composition of the total community college population in the United States included 6% Asian and Pacific Islander, 1% Native American, 3% students who reported more than one race, and 2% undocumented students.

The Community College Research Center (n.d.) reported for the 2018–2019 academic year, enrollment at public 2-year colleges in the United States was 6% Asian, 13% Black, 24% Latino, and 46% White. AACC (2020b) confirmed the continued demographic shifts, noting among community college students enrolled in credit programs in Fall 2018, only 45% were White and most were student of color (26% Hispanic, 13% Black, 6% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1%

Native American). Notably, 4% of the students were reported as two or more races. These data suggest minoritized students have comprised the majority of all community college enrollments in the United States, and this trend will continue.

California Community College Demographics

The Community College League of California (CCLC; 2020b) is a nonprofit organization that supports elected trustees and college CEOs in their roles at their respective community colleges. In 2018, the CCLC embarked on a project to document the history of CCC. Galizio (2019), the president and CEO of the CCLC, shared some of the initial findings in a letter during CCC month. Galizio reported CCC were first authorized under the 1907 California Upward Extension Act, which allowed high school districts to offer an additional 2 years of postsecondary education to students. Fresno High School was the first high school to offer such a program by opening the Collegiate Department of Fresno High School, which has since evolved to become Fresno City College. In 1910, 28 students enrolled in the first CCC. The growth of CCC was rapid, with 16 colleges opening by Fall 1917. By 1930, 34 colleges served 15,000 students and by 1947, 55 colleges served 60,346 students. As of 2020, over 2.1 million students were attending the 116 colleges in the state (California Community College Chancellor's Office [CCCCO], 2020a; Community College League of California, n.d.-b; Galizio, 2019).

Similar to the mission for community colleges around the nation, the mission of CCC has expanded through the years from being solely focused on transfer to include “transfer, career, workforce, developmental, and community education” (CCLC, n.d., p. 1). The CCC system has grown into the largest community college system in the country serving the most diverse student population in higher education (CCCCO, 2020a; Community College League of California, n.d.-b). The student demographics by ethnicity during the 2017–2018 academic year for CCC was

44% Hispanic, 25% White, 12% Asian, 6% African American, 3% Filipino, 5% unknown, 4% multiethnicity, 0.5% Native American, and 0.5% Pacific Islander (CCCCO, 2020a). Overall, these demographic data show the CCC system has served nearly one in four community college students in the United States and nearly three quarters of students identify as non-White.

Racialization of Higher Education

Community colleges' changing demographics have demonstrated a shift from serving a majority White student population to serving a majority minoritized student population. Although this shift can be analyzed for understanding from multiple lenses, one lens that has provided context noted to be more prevalent in recent literature is that of the *racialization* of postsecondary institutions. Racialization has been defined as a socially constructed process of devising racial categories based on ideologies influenced by history, economics, culture, and politics (Omi & Winant, 1994). The process often assigns value to one group while diminishing value of another (Garcia, 2019). Scholars who have discussed racialization and racialization of postsecondary institutions often focus on four themes: superiority, value, access, and resources (Garcia, 2019; Harper et al., 2016; Kendi, 2019; Kozol, 2005; Sims et al., 2020).

Superiority

Several scholars who have studied race and race relations have discussed the idea of *superiority* and *White supremacy* in the context of educational institutions (Braddock et al., 1984; Garcia, 2019; Harper et al., 2016; Kendi, 2019; Sims et al., 2020). The ideas have stemmed from eugenics theories, a racist pseudoscience grounded in the ideology that “human worth is a function of the hierarchical system based on race and class” (Sims et al., 2020, p. 42). Eugenics has led to racism because it has positioned minoritized populations as inferior and White populations as superior. Kendi (2019) defined racism as “a marriage of racist policies and

racist ideas that produces or normalizes racial inequities” (p. 17). This racism has been seen not only in the U.S. Constitution, but also in many state laws, institutional policies, and the development of the U.S. education system (Braddock et al., 1984; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Garcia, 2019; Harper et al., 2016). White supremacy has also been founded in eugenics and racism. Sims et al. (2020) defined White supremacy as the “belief that everything that is good, everything that is of Cultural value is derived from and curated by the inherent genius and civility of European Americanness” (p. 19). The ideas of superiority, White supremacy, eugenics, and racism have led to systemic injustice in our educational institutions.

Value

Garcia (2019) called the *racialization* of postsecondary institutions “a process whereby colleges and universities are assigned value based on their institutional race (e.g., predominately White, historically Black)” (p. 7). As with superiority, Garcia maintained racialized value of White postsecondary institutions in the U.S. is also intertwined with the development of the U.S. Constitution. Garcia further explained racialization has been the idea that some races have value, and others do not, and in the United States, it has been Whiteness that has become “engrained in culture, law, and society” (p. 8). Garcia concluded the process of racialization has created racial inequities that have been present in most societal structures.

Access

College enrollment trends disaggregated by ethnicity have provided insight into the racialization of higher education. While the first African American student gained access to a postsecondary institution in 1820 and Oberlin College began openly admitting freed slaves in 1833, it was not until the passage of the second Morrill Act of 1890 when access to postsecondary institutions was extended to African Americans (Harper et al., 2016). The second

Morrill Act extended access to postsecondary education for African Americans through mandates of federal funding to develop land-grant institutions and other institutions that were “separate but equal,” and those developed added several Black colleges to the growing list of schools that would later become known as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs; Garcia, 2019).

Separate but equal institutions were legally permitted in the United States until 1954, when *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* forced desegregation (Garcia, 2019). However, some states did not see the mandate take effect until the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which restricted discrimination in postsecondary institutions based on race, color, or national origin (Harper et al., 2016). Despite desegregation efforts, Garcia (2019) maintained, “whiteness continues to be valued” (p. 11) throughout most postsecondary institutions in the United States, as evidenced through ranking systems, curriculum, classroom environments, White voices and histories, policies, procedures, artifacts, and decision making. Garcia (2019) argued:

The dominance of Whiteness is detrimental when it comes to the hierarchical structure of the postsecondary educational system, with a few select institutions, racialized as white, considered “excellent,” and others assumed to be less competent when it comes to effectively educating students, including those that are racially minoritized. (p. 11)

The value placed on Whiteness and the diminishing of minoritized students has significantly affected students’ experiences, success in college, and success in life after college.

Resources

The racialization process has privileged those intuitions who have served predominately White students through policy development, funding, resources, ideological teachings, faculty, and infrastructures (Garcia, 2019). Although access to higher education was extended for Black

communities, the poorly resourced, underfunded colleges developed under the Morrill Act did not provide equal educational opportunities for African Americans (Garcia, 2019; Harper et al., 2016). In addition, Anderson (1988) studied the history of southern Black education and argued the federally funded vocational training programs promoted the idea of Blacks' intellectual inferiority in society. Roebuck and Murty (1993), who chronicled the history of HBCUs, offered strong criticism of the Morrill Act and argued the act was created to provide millions of dollars to White land-grant institutions while denying Black students access to those predominately White institutions. Despite such charges of unequal educational opportunities and the criticism of the factors that contributed to the development of these colleges, 34,000 African American students earned college degrees by the turn of the century (Anderson, 1988; Harper et al., 2016).

Racialization in CCC

Although the CCC system was first created as an opportunity for students to gain 2 years of education after high school, the goal of community colleges in California was further defined through the California Master Plan for Higher Education in 1960 (CCLC, n.d.). Through this plan, admission to the University of California (UC) was restricted for the top 12.5% of graduating high school seniors and for the top one third of graduating seniors to the California State University System (CSU; CCLC, n.d.). Under the plan, community colleges would have served 100% of California's population as an open access institution (CCLC, n.d.).

Despite serving the most diverse student population in the state—offering various programs that serve a range of needs and providing educational opportunities for over 70% of all students pursuing postsecondary education—CCC have been underfunded and underresourced (Spence, 2002). In the state of California, community college funding has been tied to the funding of the K–12 system. Proposition 98 detailed the breakdown of dollars for each system,

allocating only 11% of the budget to CCC (Spence, 2002). During the 2019–2020 academic year, this breakdown equated to \$12,018 per student attending the K–12 system and \$8,306 per student attending a CCC (CCLC, 2020a). When compared to the allocation per student attending other California systems of higher education, the CSU received \$18,445 per student and the UC system received \$33,569 per student (CCLC, 2020a). This has shown CCC have been the lowest funded system of education in the state, receiving a quarter of the funding per student that CSUs has received, half of the funding provided to the UCs, and less than three quarters of the funding provided to the K–12 system. This inequitable funding has provided significant challenges for colleges in the system. It is another example of unequal educational opportunities for minoritized students, as community colleges serve the state’s most diverse population.

Although the funding formula for community colleges has changed since the passage of Proposition 98 in 1988, the proportional allocation of state dollars has not been increased (Spence, 2002). Although the state governor and legislatures have not allocated more funding to the CCC system, they have adopted a new policy change in the funding formula. This change attempted to reward colleges meeting certain student success measures, especially those that close equity gaps (The Campaign for College Opportunity [CCO], n.d.-b). This policy change focused on increasing equity, a counter to the racialization in the community college system. It was aimed at improving student success for the most vulnerable populations by aligning funding to the tenets of the system’s *Vision for Success* goals (CCO, n.d.-b).

Some critics have not been sure equity can be gained through this new policy. Jones et al. (2017) explored the ways outcomes-based funding has often perpetuated inequities in educational systems. Their findings suggested outcomes-based funding can lead to a lack of prioritization of equitable outcomes not measured by the funding formula. Additionally, colleges

and universities have not been required to disaggregate data based on race and ethnicity, which can affect the focus of resource allocation. Furthermore, many colleges that have served low-income and minoritized students have traditionally received less funding. This last point has been evident in the CCC system.

In addition to California's policy on funding higher education, other California state policies have provided more examples of the racialization process in CCC. The California Student Equity Policy (SEP), created in 1992, was designed to help "improve the educational outcomes for racially minoritized groups, women, and students with disabilities" (Felix & Trinidad, 2019, p. 466). Through their analysis of the implementation of the California SEP with a CRT lens, Felix and Trinidad (2020) found "mandates to address racial equity have diminished over time" (p. 478). The policy's original intent had been weakened over time through color-evasive language, lack of financial resources, and the emergence of intermediary organizations that enable or constrain the race-conscious implementation of SEP. In addition, Proposition 209 significantly limited colleges' ability to develop programs to support minoritized students without fear of legal ramifications. The racialization process of postsecondary institutions, both nationally and in California, have had significant, real-life implications for racially minoritized students (Garcia, 2019).

Race Classification and Why It Matters

Cohen et al. (2003) stated, "the classification of students into special groups is often more politically inspired than educationally pertinent" (p. 63). Garcia (2019) also discussed the social construct of race and the impact this social construct has had on the racialization of postsecondary institutions. Kendi (2019) argued, "definitions anchor us in principles," and "to be antiracist is to set lucid definitions of racism/antiracism, racist/antiracist policies, racist/antiracist

ideas, racist/antiracist people” (p. 17). Kendi (2019) asserted to understand racial classification—why it matters, and how it impacts the racialization of postsecondary institutions and students’ success at those institutions—has required clear definitions of relevant terms. Kendi (2019) defined *racism* as “the marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produce and normalizes racial inequities” (p. 17) and *racial inequity* as “two or more racial groups not standing on approximately equal footing” (p. 18). Kendi further argued, “every policy in every institution, in every community, is producing or sustaining either racial inequity or equity between racial groups” (p. 18). Kendi (2019) defined a *racist policy* as “any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between racial groups” and *policy* as “written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people” (p. 18). Kendi (2019) further argued racist policies have often “been described as other terms: ‘institutional racism,’ ‘structural racism,’ and ‘systemic racism,’ for instance” (p. 18). Based on Kendi’s definition, one can draw parallels between racist policies and the racialization of postsecondary institutions.

From the lens of racialization, White dominance in postsecondary institutions has created a culture where colleges and universities that have predominately served minoritized populations have been undervalued. Minoritized institutions have been disregarded, “even though they provide access to students of color and other minoritized students (e.g., low income, immigrant), which is an important role within the stratified system” (Garcia, 2019, p. 12). Devaluing these institutions, many of which are CCC, has led to “longstanding disparities in college enrollment and completion and have resulted in large gaps in degree attainment by race/ethnicity” (CCO, n.d.-a, p. 1). Simpson (2016) asserted antiracist work must begin with the acknowledgment of cross-racial histories and “the choice to recognize the weight of racism, past and present, in our interactions with people of color” (p. 25). The literature on postsecondary institution racialization

has concluded antiracist work requires scholars and practitioners to question whether they are reinforcing or challenging the dominant White narrative (Garcia, 2019).

The Accountability Movement in Community Colleges

Traditional accountability measures continue to be a major area of focus for institutions of higher education. Accountability in the broad sense has been defined by Zumeta (2011) as “responsibility for one’s actions to someone or to multiple parties as a result of legal, political (in best, constitutive sense), financial, personal, or simply morally based ties” (p. 133).

Accountability in higher education has been a delicate walk between institutional autonomy and external oversight, and the evolution of accountability throughout the last century has been influenced by increasing public interest, legislatures, and governmental agencies (McLendon et al., 2016; Zumeta, 2011). Higher education accountability, once focused on input measurements, has shifted into an era focused on output metrics (Zumeta, 2011). Output metrics, many of which were born out of funding and enrollment declines in the 1970s, have included measures such as persistence, retention, and completion rates (Head, 2011). The higher education accountability movement was “largely driven by external forces, as all levels of government, accrediting agencies, students, and the public increasingly demanded colleges and universities be held responsible for their product” (Head, 2011, p. 7).

In their presidential address at the 2010 annual meeting for the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), Zumeta (2011) described the evolution of accountability in U.S. higher education by recounting the context that forced accountability to change over time. According to Zumeta, U.S. higher education transformed as public interest in higher education increased after World War II. As more people sought out higher education, and state-allocated funding increased, higher education systems went from being accountable to citizen governing

boards with very little oversight to being accountable to state-level higher education governing bodies. Accountability to government agencies increased again during the 1960s as state budgetary appropriations became more complex and directive in how funds allocated to higher education should be spent. During the 1980s, higher education accountability shifted again from a system focused on inputs to a system focused on outputs. Zumeta outlined six factors that led to this shift:

- The growth in the size and expense of public education were more noticeable.
- The recession caused many leaders to look at education from a business perspective, interest in quality improvement, and cost control.
- Commission reports, such as *A Nation at Risk*, published by the U.S. National Commission on Excellence in Education, began to point out the gap in workers' skills, and the role K–12 and higher education played in perpetuating this gap.
- As the education level of state legislators and their staff increased and data became more accessible, leaders became more critical of the cost of education and no longer deferred to academic leaders' expertise.
- President Reagan led a movement in the federal government that called for more scrutiny of higher education.
- The federal government began to question the high tuition rates of colleges and universities and, as a result, involved itself in the internal decisions of colleges and universities.

Similar to other community colleges throughout the United States, CCC receive most of their revenue from state allocated funding (Ewell, 2011). As a result, CCC accountability is heavily legislated and regulated. In March of 1986, the Commission for the Review of the

California Master Plan for Higher Education completed a report that recommended improvements to accountability for CCC in the areas of transfer, vocational, remedial, noncredit, and fee-based community services (Jones, 1996). In October of 1986, a joint task force of CCC Chief Executive Officers and CCC Trustees responded to the Commission's report, identified accountability problems in the current CCC governance structure, and produced a policy paper with several recommendations. These recommendations included monitoring accountability through an integrated Management Information System (MIS), setting minimum performance standards, and assessing student achievement and progress. Increased accountability for community colleges in California continued to be an area of focus for legislators and led to development of a statewide accountability system written into AB 1725 in 1994. The accountability portion of this bill held districts accountable for results in five key areas: student access, student success, student satisfaction, staff composition, and fiscal condition.

In 2011, a national system of community college accountability was created called the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (Lopez, 2014). This framework, sponsored by the AACC, the Association of Community College Trustees, and the College Board, is now on its ninth version to publicly report community college metrics on student progress and learning outcomes in a uniformed manner (AACC, 2020a). The Measurements of accountability continue to shift in CCC. Most recently, the California legislature passed the Student-Centered Funding Formula, a new statewide performance-based funding formula for CCC that seeks to align the CCCCCO's Vision for Success with metrics that support student equity and success (CCCCCO, n.d.-d).

The Achievement Gap

The accountability movement in the United States has imposed the need for language to describe differences in student success that exist between White and minoritized students. This language has evolved over time but began with the term *achievement gap*. Achievement gap refers to a “disparity in academic performance between groups of students” (Ansell, 2011, para. 1) and is most prevalent when looking at disparities between White students and Black and Hispanic students (Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis, 2020). The achievement gap is measured in several forms of achievement data including “grades, standardized test scores, course selection, dropout rates, and college-completion rates” (Ansell, 2011, para. 1).

Chubb et. al (2004) described debates among scholars regarding causes of the achievement gap, some identifying causes rooted in “family, peer groups, culture, discrimination, heredity, and schooling” (p. 2). Garcia (2019) asserted the term achievement gap, and the reason the gap exists, are due to educational inequities that exist as a result of the racialization of higher education, a process. Many scholars agree that the language and paradigm around the achievement gap portray a deficit model of thinking in which structural racism is not considered as a variable in inequity and the responsibility for closing the gap focuses on student characteristics rather than the institution (Ford & Harris 1996; Ford & Whiting, 2008; Garcia, 2019; Mickelson, 1990; Sims et. al, 2020).

The Equity Gap

It is unclear when the term *equity gap* was first used to describe the gap in educational outcomes between different student groups. Escarcha (2020) described the equity gap as “any disparity in a metric, like graduation rate or term-to-term persistence, along racial, socioeconomic, gender, or other major demographic groupings” (p. 1). The Higher Learning

Advocates (2019) described equity gap as “significant and persistent disparity in educational attainment between different groups of students” (p. 1). Often, achievement gap and educational gap are used interchangeably, but the difference is achievement gaps seem to describe gaps in a moment in time, whereas equity gaps describe disparity gaps that exist over time (Ansell, 2011; The Higher Learning Advocates, 2019). Although the definition of equity gap begins to acknowledge the historical context associated with educational gaps, it still discusses gaps in terms individual attainment of students, again placing the onus of responsibility on students rather than the institution of higher education.

The Opportunity Gap

Language and a paradigm shift occurred again during the early 2000s when educators begin to use the term *opportunity gap*. Pendakur and Harper (2016) described this shift as more than one of semantics and underscored that it signaled a shift in focus of control. Rather than placing students at the center of the problem, the opportunity gap focuses on “institutions of higher education and their administrators’ willingness to capitalize on the enormous opportunity they have to empower every student they admit to thrive in college and to graduate in a timely manner” (Pendakur & Harper., 2016, p. 6). Garcia (2019) argued a focus on the opportunity gap allows educators to recognize racial groups have unequal access to academic opportunities based on a range of social and economic factors. Garcia stressed deficit frameworks and blaming students contributes to the problem. Closing the opportunity gap calls on institutions to focus on providing students with access to resources, strategies, and programs that increase their opportunities for success (Pendakur & Harper, 2016).

The Obligation Gap

In early 2020, five community college practitioners released *Minding the Obligation Gap: In Community Colleges and Beyond*, in which they introduced a new term, the *obligation gap* (Sims et al., 2020). This term was first coined by one of the authors, Dr. Jennifer Taylor Mendoza, in reference to the increasing lack of access to higher education for incarcerated youth (Shaw & Wallace, 2018). They defined obligation gap as “the gap in what community colleges as service institutions provide vis-à-vis the actual needs of the student that these institutions serve” (p. 1). Shaw and Wallace (2018) claimed the term obligation gap is being used more and more by CCC practitioners, as the paradigm shift “highlights the responsibility faculty and administrators have for serving underrepresented and marginalized students” (p. 1). Sims et al. (2020) asserted this paradigmatic shift emphasizes “an equity minded institution must take personal and collective responsibility for student success” (p. 26).

Campus Climate

CCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action* identified campus and classroom climates as critical focus areas in colleges’ efforts to address structural racism. Over the past 3 decades, educational scholars have brought attention to the concept of campus climate as colleges and universities have looked for ways to understand diversity issues and gauge students, staff, and faculty’s perception of the campus environment (Cuellar & Johnson-Ahorlu, 2016; Edman & Brazil, 2008; Hamilton, 2006; Hurtado, Clayton-Pedersen, et al., 1998; Hurtado et al., 1999; Solórzano et al., 2000; Yosso et al., 2009). Although difference of opinion and perspective are inherent to college campuses, Hamilton (2006) asserted, “toxic campus climates are not born; they’re made. They arise out of the metaphors campuses use to talk about diversity” (p. 34). Researchers agree that

understanding the effect campus climate has had on students and how college campuses have talked about and engaged with diversity can provide insights to guide improvements.

Not all scholars have agreed on the same definition for campus climate, but many have agreed it includes understanding the intersections of complex social systems (Hurtado et al., 1999; Peterson & Spencer, 1990; Yosso et al., 2009). Hurtado, Clayton-Pederson, et al. (1998) discussed the importance of comprehensive long-term planning when trying to redesign campus to create a positive climate. They asserted college campuses have been complex social systems and “defined by relationships between the people, bureaucratic procedures, structural arrangements, institutional goals and values, traditions, and larger socio-historical environments” (p. 296). As college campuses have become more diverse, creating comfortable campuses has become a priority, and defining, evaluating, and understanding campus climate data help create desired institutional change (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado, Carter, & Kardia, 1998).

Peterson and Spencer (1990) provided a broad definition of campus climate, which included the attitudes and perceptions of an organization’s members toward the objective climate, the perceived climate, and the psychological climate. Hurtado et al. (1999) built on Peterson and Spencer’s definition by introducing the notion “that quite diverse views of the environment emerge as a result of racial dynamics that develop on campus” (p. iii). Yosso et al. (2009) defined campus climate as “the overall racial environment of the university” (p. 664) and asserted a campus racial environment can positively or negatively affect students’ academic performance. Hurtado, Clayton-Pederson, et al. (1998) expanded on Peterson and Spencer’s definition, asserting climate has not been limited to perceptions and attitudes, but also included institutional history, structural diversity, and behavioral climate.

Critics have challenged these definitions of campus climate, indicating limiting the definition to race and ethnicity has excluded other components that have affected campus climate such as religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, socioeconomic status, and other aspects of identity (Hart & Fellabaum, 2008). They have acknowledged the intersections of an individual's identity have contributed to the marginalization of many students, especially students of color. Hurtado, Clayton-Pederson, et al. (1998) offered the straightforward definition of *campus climate* as the internal and external forces that interact with one another to produce the campus racial climate.

Evaluating Campus Climate

The most widely used theoretical model to evaluate campus climate was first created by Hurtado (1994) and further developed by Hurtado, Clayton-Pederson, et al. (1998). The theoretical framework suggested external and internal factors interact to produce a racial campus climate. External factors include forces that occur outside the college campus, such as government policy and programs and sociohistorical forces (Milem et al., 2005). To describe and evaluate the internal forces of campus climate, Hurtado, Clayton-Pederson, et al. developed a framework based on four dimensions, including institutional history, structural diversity, psychological climate, and behavioral climate. Milem et al. added a fifth dimension to this framework called the organizational/structural aspect. This framework has been based on several empirical studies and acknowledged campus climate has been multidimensional while offering specific suggestions for policy and practice (Milem et al., 2005).

In 2011, Dr. Shaun Harper created the Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education, which was relocated to the University of Southern California (USC) in 2017 (USC Race and Equity Center, 2020). The center's mission has been to "illuminate, disrupt, and

dismantle racism in all forms” through “rigorous interdisciplinary research, high-quality professional learning experiences, the production and wide dissemination of useful tools, trustworthy consultations and strategy advising, and substantive partnerships” (USC Race and Equity Center, 2020, About Us section). One tool developed by a 14-member team from the center was a survey titled the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (n.d.). The survey has taken about 15 minutes to complete, has been available to both 4-year universities and community colleges, and focuses on six areas including:

- Appraisals of institutional commitment
- Impact of external environments
- Racial learning and literacy
- Encounters with racial stress
- Mattering and affirmation
- Cross-racial engagement

Once completed, participating colleges have received a report with aggregated data, which has allowed campuses to compare themselves to peer institutions and provide specific recommendations for campus climate improvements (Watson, 2018). The survey was new and first piloted in 2018, and an advisory panel of experts and 60 cognitive student interviews were used to ensure validity and reliability of the instrument (National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates, n.d.).

Empirical Studies on Campus Climate

Many empirical studies conducted on campus climate have reported significant differences between the perceptions of White students and students of color (Hurtado, 1994; Johnson et al., 2013; Yosso et al., 2009). For example, in a study conducted at 4-year universities

with Latino students, Hurtado (1994) concluded, “Latino students who believe that Hispanics face social inequities due to systemic discrimination tend to perceive racial tension and report discrimination on their campus” (p. 36). In this same study, students who identified as first generation born in the United States also reported perceived racial tension on campus. Yosso et al. (2009) studied racial microaggressions experiences by Latina/o students on selective campuses. This study demonstrated these microaggressions have often led to feelings of rejection. Cuellar and Johnson-Ahorlu (2016) examined students’ perceptions of discrimination and bias among Asian, Latino/a, and White students at community colleges designated as Hispanic-serving institutions (HSI). Cuellar and Johnson-Ahorlu found Asian students and Latino/a student reported discrimination and racial bias at a higher rate than White students. Johnson et al. (2013) concluded negative perceptions of campus climate and the stress caused from racism has influenced persistence decisions for students of color.

Some campus climate studies have also looked at students interaction with diversity and the effect this interaction has had on their perceptions of campus climate. Milem and Umbach (2004) conducted a study with 1,900 1st-year students by applying Holland’s theory to examine students’s views on diversity and found seven out of 10 White students “had no substantive interaction with people of color prior to entering college” (p. 645). In this same study, White students who had frequent interaction with students of color before college also had more favorable views of diversity. Milem and Umbach concluded the diverse makeup of a college did not matter if students did not have an opportunity to interact with diverse students in the classroom. Interaction opportunities were often influenced by major choice, where social and artistic majors experienced less classroom segregation than students in realistic, investigative, and enterprising majors. This study suggested it has been important for colleges to look more

into major selection and the support provided in certain majors on college campuses. Findings from another study conducted by Milem et al. (2004) on the impact of students diversity related experiences suggested, “segregation tends to perpetuate itself in our society and its institutions unless something happens to disrupts this cycle” (p. 698). Milem et al. recommended exposure to diverse information and ideas and involvement in diversity related activities can help disrupt the cycle of segregation.

Policy Development

Campus climate research has revealed, “despite 15 years of racial climate research on multiple campuses, the themes of exclusion, institutional rhetoric rather than action, and marginality continue to emerge from student voices” (Harper & Hurtado, 2007, p. 21). Although these studies have demonstrated negative campus climates, racial tension, and hostile environments can lead students to feel stress and decide to leave school, there are steps colleges can take to help mitigate these outcomes. Hurtado, Carter, and Kardia (1998) asserted although colleges and universities cannot change their past, there are steps they can take to limit campus racial tension, ensure students feel safe on campus, and help students meet their educational goals. For example, colleges can support students by finding ways to build community and foster skills that help students navigate the relationship between their home environment and college (Yosso et al., 2009). Campuses can also help reduce racial tension and hostility by seeking first to understand students experience and then responding to student concerns, investing in student development, and addressing students’ needs (Hurtado, 1994). Colleges that have been striving for the total package have commonalities. Hamilton (2006) indicated commonalities included:

Historic legacy of openness to student activism, a broad commitment to supplementing the traditional structures of intragroup support, including offices of minority or

multicultural affairs, with programs that foster *intergroup dialogue*, a rigorous commitment to research and to putting structures into place to support specific outcomes. (p. 35)

Campus climate research has also offered suggestions for policy and program development beyond individual college campuses. Hurtado, Clayton-Pedersen, et al. (1998) suggested attorneys and policymakers search for research on the benefits of diversity to help inform the work they do. In addition, policymakers and higher education system leaders have been looking for ways to translate this research into actual practice (Hurtado, Clayton-Pedersen, et al., 1998). Fallon and Paquette (2009) provided a model that can be used to critically analyze policy that may be helpful to leaders of higher education insitutions. The authors identified four stages in the cycle including: policy origins, policy development, policy implementation, and policy impact. They suggested at each state, policy implementers critique the policy based on different elements. For example, during the policy origins stage, leaders can analyze the policy based on policy milestone, the social and political context, and interest and ideas. This model may be helpful for leaders as they critique policy to determine if the policy is racist and negatively impacting student success. The suggested elements of analysis can also be used to critically think about developing new antiracist policies.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the CCCCCO's Call to Action

Upon his appointment as the Chancellor for CCC, Dr. Eloy Ortiz Oakley worked with his executive team to create a vision for the system that clarified challenges and opportunities members of the system faced when serving students. The vision for the system has been “making sure students from all backgrounds succeed in reaching their goals and improving their families and communities, eliminating achievement gaps once and for all” (CCCCO, n.d.-f, para. 1). A

review of scholarly literature and research, expert interviews, and an examination of system-wide data indicated the system has made significant strides but also faced several system-wide challenges (CCCCO, 2019). Challenges were described in the Foundation report and included the following:

- Most students never reach their defined goal.
- Students who are able to reach their defined goal usually take a long time to do so.
- Older and working students are often left behind.
- Community colleges are more expensive than they appear.
- Serious and stubborn achievement gaps persist.
- High-need regions of the state are not served equitably.

The Vision for Success goals and commitments were established out of a desire to address these system-wide challenges. Two goals were developed to specifically address equity and achievement gaps between White and minoritized students in the system. A deeper dive into the support needed to address these goals revealed the lack of diversity among faculty and staff played a role in diminished and inequitable student success. As a result, the need to create cultural change and increase the diversity of faculty and staff was identified as a vital component of student success. The Faculty Diversity Task Force was born in 2018 out of this conclusion.

CCO (2018) released a report that revealed the lack of ethnic and racial diversity in campus leadership, faculty, and staff in California Colleges and Universities had a direct impact on student success. In response to this report, the CCC Board of Governors directed the CCCCCO to convene a task force charged to “identify ways to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the California community college workforce” (CCCCO, 2020f, p. 11). The task force, cochaired by Deputy Chancellor Dr. Daisy Gonzales and Academic Senate for California Community

Colleges (ASCCC) President Dr. John Stanskas, was first titled the Faculty Diversity Task Force. The name was subsequently changed to the Vision for Success Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force to reflect its broader focus (CCCCO, 2020e). The first task force consisted of 16 members representing presidents and chief executive officers, faculty, human resource managers, community college district trustees, researchers, students, and CCCCCO's staff (CCCCO, n.d.-a). Guided by the belief diversity, equity, and inclusion “enriches the vision of equity outlined in the Vision for Success and fosters an inclusive, anti-racist campus culture” (CCCCO, n.d.-b, p. 1), the task force spent 6 months in collaboration to gain understanding of the problem that led to a lack of employee racial and ethnic diversity, explore possible solutions, and make recommendations to the board of governors (CCCCO, 2020f).

In February 2020, after a 6-month period of collective analysis, the DEI Task Force produced a summary report to provide details regarding the systemic approach the Chancellor's office was taking. The report also included a snapshot of the work to improve faculty and staff racial and ethnic diversity that had been completed thus far (CCCCO, 2020f). The DEI Task Force delivered a set of recommendations to the Board of Governors also outlined in the report. Two questions guided development of these recommendations:

1. “How is achievement impacted when faculty and staff are unlike the students they serve?
2. What does it take to create an inclusive environment where all students are equitably served?” (CCCCO, 2020f. p. 12)

The guiding questions led to the following decisions the board of governors made on September 17, 2019:

- Accepted the proposed DEI Integration Plan to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into the Vision for Success and directed the CCCCCO to present a preliminary timeline for the DEI Integration Plan to the Board of Governors at the January 2020 Board meeting with a description of the implementation team and a possible recommendation for additional oversight, based upon the 2020–2021 budget outlook.
- Adopted the proposed CCC DEI statement and directed the CCCCCO to propose changes to Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, the mission of the California community college system, Equal Employment Opportunity plans, and multiple measures certification forms by September 2020.
- Supported the 2020–2021 budget proposal submitted by the task force to augment statewide resources that will advance the implementation of the DEI Integration Plan (CCCCCO, 2019).

The report also described details of the process the task force undertook to establish these recommendations (CCCCCO, 2020f). The task force first developed a shared understanding of the problem and the meaning behind diversity, equity, and inclusion. The task force then developed actions that aligned with the Vision for Success intended to dramatically improve diversity. Acknowledging financial resources needed to be allocated to bring these actions to fruition, the task force requested additional state funding to advance statewide diversity efforts. This report was then submitted to the Office of the Governor of California, and implementation efforts began.

Two major societal events affected the implementation of the recommendations outlined by the DEI Task Force and forced the CCC system to shorten the timeframe for implementation

and emphasize the importance. The first event was the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) global pandemic. This pandemic forced colleges to move all academic and student service programs into an online environment, and the transition revealed many challenges and opportunities for colleges and students (Jimenez, 2020). In many cases, the pandemic elucidated the educational inequities that existed as students reported that the demands of school are just too much considering the other stressors brought about by the pandemic, the technology divide is impossible to overcome, and remote instruction is not ideal (Lanahan, 2021).

The second incident was the death of George Floyd, which led to civil unrest throughout the United States (Deliso, 2020). In response, the CCC system quickly organized a webinar where a call to action was revealed and six areas of focus were outlined to address systemic racism (CCCCO, 2020b). These six areas of focus were:

- A system wide review of law enforcement officers and first responder training.
- Campus leaders must host open dialogue and address campus climate.
- Campuses must audit classroom climate and create an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum.
- District boards review and update your equity plans with urgency.
- Shorten the time frame for the full implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Integration Plan.
- Join and engage in the Vision Resource Center “Community Colleges for Change.”

Though Areas 1–3 are self-explanatory, Items 4–6 are not as clear, especially for those not working directly in the CCC system. Equity plans refer to the student equity and achievement plans all CCC needed to submit in 2018, which specifically outlined ways in which colleges would boost student achievement by addressing disparities discovered through disaggregated

data (CCCCO, n.d.-e). The DEI Integration Plan was developed by the DEI Implementation Workgroup (2020). The Vision Resource Center is a virtual platform that connects faculty, staff, and leaders from all 116 community colleges by providing space for discussions, professional development, resources, tools, and connections (CCCCO, n.d.-g).

Since the initial call to action was released, the CCCCCO has released several updates geared toward providing tools, resources, and guidance to college leaders engaging in antiracist work. One memo released by the CCCCCO (2020g, November 9) assured college leaders antiracist work was supported throughout the state, despite the federal government's attempt to stop the discussion of race in professional development activities by threatening a cut in funding. In addition, in this memo, Ortiz Oakley updated college leaders on systemwide efforts that had been completed since the call to action had been released. These efforts included (a) the integration of DEI into the organization structure of statewide associations, (b) an addition to Title 5 regulation that specifically addresses DEI regulatory action, (c) a resolution to declare the month of April "DEI Awareness Month," and (d) the development of a systemwide DEI glossary of terms. On June 14, 2021, the CCCCCO released an additional update discussing the progress on the six items outlined in the call to action. This update included the following information:

- The impact of campus police culture on student learning was still being explored by the CCC system. In addition, a CCC representative was appointed by the CCCCCO to the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training advisory board.
- Campus leaders throughout the state were continuing to center DEI as the driving theme of conferences and events. The CCCCCO was also working to ensure equity was an explicit component of the guided pathways reform happening across the state.

- Leaders were trying to improve campus climate by adopting antiracist practices and curriculum, incorporating DEI criteria into faculty and staff evaluations, promoting and supporting equity in the classroom, and requiring ethnic studies courses as a part of the associate degree.
- The CCCCO partnered with the Center for Urban Education. This partnership focused on analyzing equity plans all CCC in the system submitted. The results had reaffirmed the urgency to advance equity throughout the system.
- The DEI workgroup was close to completion on implementing all 68 recommendations from the DEI Integration Plan (DEI Implementation Workgroup, 2020).

The CCC Executive Office further indicated the Vision Resource Center had become a virtual space to share learning and tools that supported professional development related to institutional racism, and DEI. This update also encouraged leaders to continue to disaggregate data through an equity lens and align investments and priorities to equity priorities. Community colleges throughout California chose to respond to this call to action in several ways. Chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation are an attempt to describe this response through survey and interview data.

CRT as a Theoretical Framework

CRT grew out of a movement known as critical legal studies and evolved into a “collection of activist and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 3). The movement was a response to the frustration and outrage over outcomes from the Civil Rights era—outcomes that did not bring about “meaningful racial reform” (Taylor, 1998, p. 122). Key scholars in the movement included

Derick Bell; Alan Freeman; Charles Lawrence, III; Lani Guinier; Richard Delgado; Mari Matsuda; Patricia Williams; Kimberle Crenshaw; and Gloria Ladson-Billings (Taylor, 1998).

CRT has challenged “three mainstream beliefs about racial injustice” (Valdes et al., 2002, p. 1) and reframed these beliefs into the following assertions:

- Colorblindness will not eliminate racism.
- Racism is a systemic issue.
- Racism can only be fought by paying attention to the intersectionality of human social identity.

Ladson-Billings (1998) asserted CRT as a critical social tool for “deconstruction, reconstruction, and construction: deconstruction of oppressive structures and discourses, reconstruction of human agency, and construction of equitable and socially just relations of power” (p. 9).

CRT has extended from legal studies into other academic disciplines such as education, sociology, and women’s studies (Taylor, 1998). The overarching theory is based on six tenets:

- Racism is normal: According to Ladson-Billings (1998), “race is always present in every social configuring of our lives” (p. 9), and racism is prevalent in U.S. society. Delgado and Stefancic (2017) asserted racism is so prevalent that it is natural and often goes unnoticed by White people, and it is embedded in many U.S. systems and cultural values.
- Interest convergence: Interest convergence is founded in the idea racism benefits the White elite and the White middle class (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). The tenet emphasized racial equity for Black people is only achieved when it has converged with the interest and for the benefit of White people (Taylor, 1998).

- Race is socially constructed: The idea of race is not founded based on biological characteristics or geographic locations; rather, it has come into existence by human thought and categories invented by society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).
- Voices of authority: Narratives and counter-narratives through storytelling are an important component of CRT. It is through this these stories the ideas of racism and privilege have been explored and the status quo is challenged (Taylor, 1998).
- Differential racialization: Because race is a social construct, the categories and stereotype of race change, as society changes. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2017), race has an “ever-evolving history” (p. 10) and changes with the shifting needs of society and the labor market.
- Intersectionality: Humans exist in society with multiple identities. These identities intersect, some come with privilege and others with oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

CRT in Education

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) introduced CRT into the field of education by presenting a framework for educators to help theorize race as a tool for understanding inequity. This article introduced three central ideas that help frame the idea of educational inequity through a CRT lens. These three central ideas included:

- Race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States.
- U.S. society is based on property rights.
- The intersection of race and property rights creates an analytic tool through, which we can understand social (and, consequently, school) inequity (p. 48).

Through their discussion of these ideas, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) defined educational inequity as a property issue. The property issue has manifested itself in four ways in educational environments:

- Rights of disposition: The White experience has been considered the normal experience, and students are punished for behavior outside this norm.
- Rights to use and enjoyment: More resources, better technology, and more course offerings exist at schools that are predominately White and middle class.
- Reputation and status property: Terminology is meaningful and can carry baggage and/or prestige.
- The absolute right to exclude: Tracking students, school funding, voucher systems, private schools, and school choice all work to exclude certain students from educational opportunities.

Several studies have used CRT to examine educational practices, campus climate, and policy implementation (Felix & Trinidad, 2020; Radd & Grosland, 2018). For example, Radd and Grosland reviewed the text of the Minnesota Desegregation Rule for themes of race, racism, and social justice in the language of the law. Radd and Grosland's (2018) findings revealed practices that resulted from the law were well intended but "undermined social justice progress and antiracist efforts" (p. 1). Felix and Trinidad (2020) used CRT to examine California's Student Equity Policy for the dilution of language in the implementation of the policy and found policymakers continuously "diluted the role of race and opportunities to address racial disparities in legislative mandates" (p. 1). Yosso et al. (2009) employed CRT to understand microaggressions experienced by Latina/o students and their response to these microaggressions. Their findings indicate Latina/o students are empowered by community building and developing college

navigation skills. These studies provide insight into the use of CRT in exploring the social, political, and historical implications of race and racism on student success.

Summary

This chapter examined several areas of research integral to understanding the historical, political, and social factors that have influenced the CCCCCO's work on diversity, equity, and inclusion and the call to action to address structural racism. A significant body of literature provides context for community college practitioners who may seek to develop programs, practices, and policies that are antiracist in nature. However, little research is available regarding the activities of colleges undertaking these transformations. Furthermore, there is limited published research that identifies factors motivating colleges to engage in antiracist analysis and change or the experiences and results of their work. Thus, this study intends to address these gaps, at least partially, by examining CCC engaging in this work, as described in Chapter 3, which details the research methodology.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

This chapter focuses on the research methodology used to identify and understand colleges within the California Community College (CCC) system that have been engaging in antiracist work to address systemic racial injustice. The purpose and the research questions that guided the study are described first in this chapter. Next, the research paradigm and theoretical framework are discussed to provide context to the lens through which the data were collected and analyzed. The research design section then describes the design, setting, participants, and instrumentation used in the study. Finally, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, and limitations are described. This section concludes with a chapter summary.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore how CCC are aligning their work with the CCC Chancellor's Office's (CCCCO; 2020c) *Call to Action* for every college in the system to strategize and take action against systemic racism. Through a transformative and explanatory mixed-methods design, this study identified colleges within the CCC system that made changes or were in the process of making changes to policies, programs, or practices to address structural racism. The study identified factors that led colleges to engage in antiracist analysis and change. An exploration was conducted of the processes colleges used, or are using, to identify racist policies, programs, or practices that are perceived to have contributed to structural racism. Lastly, the processes colleges used to develop antiracist policies, practices, or programs and the ways in which success was measured was explored.

Research Questions

The following research questions (RQ) guided this study:

RQ1: What is the level of engagement among California Community Colleges (CCC) in examining and changing policies, and practices to promote antiracism?

- a.) Which CCC are engaging in antiracist work?
- b.) What are the factors motivating those institutions to do so?

RQ2: How are those colleges going about developing and implementing antiracist policies, programs, and practices?

- a.) Which specific areas are being addressed?
- b.) What steps are colleges taking to undertake these changes? Who is involved? What are they doing?
- c.) What, if any, improvements (measurable or perceived) have resulted from these changes?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework serves as the foundation of a study and helps to provide an “explanation to your audience about the way that you made sense of the relationships and interactions” (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017, p. 31) in a study. This study’s methodology design was informed by critical race theory (CRT). CRT grew out of a movement that involved “a collection of activists and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 3). CRT has allowed the researcher to employ a critical lens that “challenges the experiences of whites as the normative standard” and emphasizes the importance of the historical context of racial oppression in understanding the experiences of people of color (Taylor, 1998, p. 2). CRT was used in the development of survey and interview questions for this study. In addition, CRT provided a lens to analyze data and make sense of the findings.

Research Design

Transformative and mixed-methods research designs guided this study. Transformative research design has been a type of design that calls for a paradigm shift where social justice is at the forefront and allows the researcher to examine issues of power, privilege, oppression, cultural complexity, and social justice (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017; Mertens, 2007). A transformative research design has allowed the researcher to develop methodologies that have been sensitive to marginalized communities, especially in qualitative research, and allowed the research to focus on concern for the human condition (Sweetman et al., 2010). Because the researcher sought to understand antiracist work occurring on CCC campuses, this framework was appropriate for the study. *Antiracist work* has been defined for all participants as any work the college has been intentionally undertaking to promote antiracist ideas, producing or sustaining racial equity between racial groups, or taking a stand against racial injustice or oppression (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997; Kendi, 2019). Antiracist work has specifically addressed the needs of those traditionally excluded from research and most educational policies, practices, and programs. Furthermore, this research design calls for the researcher to take issues of power, privilege, oppression, and discrimination into consideration through all elements of the design development.

According to Lochmiller and Lester (2017), mixed-methods research has combined the strengths of quantitative and qualitative data to explore complex problems in education. Whereas qualitative methodology has focused on “social life as it unfolds in its natural environment” (p. 93), quantitative methodology has focused on the “analysis of numeric data” (p. 117). Together, the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods provide a more comprehensive picture of the investigated problem. Lochmiller and Lester (2017) also explained explanatory sequential

design as the type of research in which quantitative data informs qualitative data. It is a process whereby quantitative data provide the foundational understanding of the problem, and qualitative data allow the researcher to take a deeper dive into particular ideas or concepts. Based on this description, a mixed-methods design was appropriate for this study because the researcher explored research questions best answered by the collection of quantitative and qualitative data.

Study Setting

All community colleges within the CCC system were selected as the target population for this study. The system consists of 116 colleges throughout California serving over 2.1 million students (CCCCO, 2020e). These colleges have been organized into 73 districts, and over 67% of all students served by CCC are students from a diverse ethnic background (Foundation for CCC, 2020). Colleges in the system range in size, geographic location, and resources. Small colleges are designated as serving up to 3,000 students, medium colleges serve 3,000 to 9,000 students, and large colleges serve 9,000 or more students. Because colleges have acted independently, the researcher considered each individually but was also open to investigating districtwide activities or initiatives that may be identified by multicollege districts, in which college presidents report to a district chancellor and a single board of trustees. In all cases, the colleges are separately accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

Population and Sample

Participants for this study were recruited from chief executive officers (CEO)—chancellors and college presidents—of the CCC system. These CEOs were selected as the target population for responding to the quantitative survey, as it has been their role in the system to build shared vision, collaborate to set priorities for the college, and inspire others toward action

(AACC, 2018). In their roles, chancellors and presidents have championed initiatives that have the greatest benefit for students, built teams through trust and transparency, and established expectations for others in the organization. CEOs had been in the best position to respond to the survey for this study because, if their district or college had chosen to engage in antiracist work, it was reasonable to assume they would have likely played a major role in setting antiracist work as a priority and building the team responsible for implementing and measuring progress of the work.

The target population for the qualitative portion of this study (i.e., focus group interviews) included representatives from colleges whose CEOs indicated their institutions were in the phase of advanced implementation, full implementation, or measuring results of antiracist activities being undertaken at the college. As of January 2021, it was unknown how many colleges were engaging in antiracist work, but at that time, the researcher expected a minimum of 10% of CEOs would identify their college as engaging in antiracist work, therefore meeting the qualifications to identify members from the college to participate in the qualitative focus groups of this study.

Selection of Participants

This study focused on the factors that contributed to participants choosing to engage in antiracist work and the processes their colleges followed to address systemic racial injustice on their respective campuses. Nonprobability sampling was used for the quantitative portion of this study, a process that includes the entire population in the research study (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). The target population for the quantitative portion of this study was 100% of all CCC CEOs. This included the 139 CEOs who served in the 73 CCC multi- or single-college districts. Responses were cultivated by collaborating with state leaders and members of the CEO Racial

Equity and Inclusive Excellence (REIE) Taskforce. The trichairs of the CEO REIE Taskforce were asked to encourage their colleagues to respond to the survey for this study, and a minimum of 25% of the population were expected to respond.

Purposeful criterion sampling was used for the qualitative portion of this study. Criteria were used to identify six to 10 colleges in the CCC system that reflected diversity in the types of institutions throughout the system. As part of the survey, CEOs were asked to indicate their level of involvement in each of the six items outlined in the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*. CEOs chose from six different options on a Likert scale. These options were “not engaged,” “discussion phase,” “beginning implementation,” “advanced implementation,” “full implementation,” and “measuring results.” CEOs were also asked if they were willing to identify individuals from their college who would participate in a focus group to further explore antiracist activities happening at their college. Results of these two questions were then used to help select the target population for the qualitative portion of this study (i.e., focus group interviews).

To select the target population for focus groups, the researcher reviewed survey results to identify CEOs who agreed to identify members from their college to participate in a focus group. A total of 17 CEOs agreed to participate in the qualitative portion of the study. Data provided by these CEOs were analyzed further to determine their colleges' level of engagement in the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*. Colleges where CEOs indicated they were in advanced or full implementation, or measuring results, on four of the items from the call to action were selected as preliminary colleges of focus. Demographic data of these colleges were then examined to ensure focus group participants' colleges were representative of the following criteria:

- The college had engaged in antiracist work to address systemic racial injustice.

- The college had selected advanced or full implementation or measured results in at least four areas of the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*.

To make sure the widest possible range of community colleges were represented in the focus group, the researcher made sure to select (a) small, medium, and large colleges; (b) at least one college from a multicollge district; (c) at least on college from a single college district.

Once identified, an invitation was sent to 10 colleges' CEOs inviting them to participate in a focus group. Focus groups were used as a method for obtaining qualitative data from a selected group of college personnel who have led or served on implementation teams for antiracist activities at their respective colleges (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Liamputtong (2011) suggested focus groups consisting of four to six people allow participants to discuss issues in greater depth and often leads to more relevant data. Therefore, the invitation asked college CEOs to select between four and six people who had been integral to the implementation and evaluation of antiracist college activities, to participate in a focus group interview.

It was anticipated a high portion of CEOs would be willing to identify college personnel who would be ideal to participate in a focus group for this study, as colleges that have been in more advanced phases would recognize their institutions may be leading this work in the state. These colleges have been most likely to emerge as models in reducing systemic racism, a topic receiving considerable national and state attention. The researcher began with the goal of conducting 5–10 focus groups. The theory of saturation was applied, which indicates the study concludes once “additional information no longer generates new understanding” (Liamputtong, 2011, p. 15). Saturation was achieved after six focus groups were conducted.

Instrumentation

An online survey with 17 questions was designed by the researcher on the Qualtrics platform to collect data about colleges' engagement in antiracist work to address systemic racial injustice (see Appendix A). According to Lochmiller and Lester (2017), surveys have been used to “collect information from participants about their views, experiences, or perceptions” (p. 158) and should be developed based on the literature and distribution methods. According to Rea and Parker (2014), surveys have been used to collect descriptive information, behavioral information, and attitudinal data. Rea and Parker also stated surveys can help generalize results, be distributed in a timely fashion, and lend to complex statistical analysis. The researcher hoped to collect demographic and behavior data through survey responses in a short period of time. Therefore, developing a survey that can collect these data is an appropriate instrument for the quantitative data collection required for this study.

Survey development took into consideration the placement and format of questions, the number of questions, the length of time required to complete the survey, the deployment method, and incentives to complete the survey (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017; Rea & Parker, 2014).

Questions development was guided by the literature and information from the DEI Implementation Workgroup report. Questions were developed in consultation with experts in education and survey development (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017).

A blend of open and closed forms and scaled items were used. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) described open-form questions as those that allow participants to write in their own answer, which allows for the “capture of idiosyncratic differences” (p. 198). In contrast, they described closed-form questions as a list of predetermined responses from which the participant can choose. Likert scale questions, the most widely used scaled item, were used to

capture participants' descriptions about actions, strategies, and plans implemented and evaluated at the college.

Logic was built into the survey guiding participants to answer only those questions that pertained to their experiences. Some questions in the survey required an answer, whereas others were able to be left unanswered. The survey included demographic questions to gather information on the respondent's ethnicity, gender, district information, years as CEO, and years in current position. The survey also asked questions about factors that may have contributed to colleges choosing to engage in antiracist work. A list of possible factors was provided, and colleges were asked to select all factors that apply. Respondents also had an option to list any additional factors that may not have appeared on the list. Likert scale questions were asked to gauge the importance of antiracist work and the level of engagement.

To reduce measurement error, validity and reliability of the developed survey were tested using five sequential steps outlined by Radhakrishna (2007). First, questions were developed in alignment with the purpose and research questions of the study and by considering the background of the participants and the topic being examined. CRT played an important role in understanding the background of the topic being examined. Next, questions were conceptualized by generating survey questions and linking each survey question to the research question the researcher was attempting to assess. In the third step, attention was given to question format, layout, and ordering. In addition, each question was linked to the type of data analysis the researcher planned on conducting. The fourth step specifically addressed validity by establishing a panel of experts to test the survey. Finally, reliability was addressed by conducting a cognitive lab, a process whereby the researcher studies the mental process one uses to complete a task (Zucker et al., 2004). In this case, the researcher asked three recently retired CEOs from the CCC

system to complete the survey developed for this study. While completing the survey, cognitive lab participants were asked to verbally report their thoughts as they attempted to answer each survey question. The researcher took notes of the cognitive process, indicating where the question was not clear and needed to be refined. The researcher also asked cognitive lab participants what was missing from the developed questions. The researcher then revised the survey questions based on these results.

Once surveys were completed and data analyzed, college representatives, identified in the survey, were be invited to participate in follow-up focus groups. The focus group protocol took into consideration the purpose of the study, the purpose of conducting focus groups, and the research questions being addressed (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). A semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix B) was followed to allow for flexibility and the opportunity to ask for further clarification to gain a deeper understanding (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017).

Data Collection and Data Sources

Survey distribution occurred through an email invitation (see Appendix C) sent to all 139 CEOs who were serving as either a chancellor of one of the 23 multicollge districts or president of one of the 116 colleges within the CCC system. The initial invitation was sent on May 24, 2021, by one of the trichairs of the CEO Racial Equity and Inclusive Excellence (REIE) Taskforce. This invitation included an introduction of the study's purpose, an introduction or the researcher, and an encouragement to complete the survey. All prospective participants were informed their participation is voluntary and their information would be kept confidential. Additionally, prospective participants were directed to a website via a hyperlink to complete the questionnaire. All survey questionnaires were completed and submitted online via Qualtrics. CCC CEOs were reminded and encouraged to complete the study survey during the CEO REIE

Taskforce meeting on June 15, 2021. A reminder email was sent on June 15, 2021. A final reminder email was sent on June 23, 2021, indicating it was the last day for the survey to be completed. Immediately upon completion of the survey, participants received thank-you emails. Participants were given 31 days to complete the survey.

Once the survey was completed, qualifying participants were invited to partake in a focus group conducted via the Zoom media platform. The focus group consisted of semistructured questions to provide flexibility by allowing the researcher to propose topics or ideas, ask open-ended questions, and follow-up for clarification (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). Focus group interviews were scheduled with members of each selected community college campus. Focus group members included those people identified by CEOs as responsible for leading antiracist work at their respective college. Each interview lasted 75–100 minutes and was recorded through the Zoom platform and transcribed via Scribie audio transcript service.

Data Analysis

Survey results were tracked in Qualtrics, and data were imported into Microsoft Excel for analysis. Lochmiller and Lester (2017) asserted the purpose of quantitative data analysis is “to use descriptive and inferential statistics to assess patterns, trends and relationship in data” (p. 189). Descriptive statistics were used to provide context to colleges decision to engage in antiracist work by gathering information about factors that influenced CEOs to prioritize antiracist work, and to what degree each factor contributed to this prioritization process.

Qualitative data analysis helps bring order and meaning to the information collected and is an ongoing process that requires the researcher to visit the data multiple times to gain understanding (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). To gain this understanding, the researcher organized all data collected from focus group interviews into themes. The researcher used the NVivo

program to organize, sort, and code all information to identify all major and minor themes. These themes are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Validity and Trustworthiness

Validity in both quantitative and qualitative data collection deals with a researcher's ability to establish truth and justify truth claims (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). It is important that survey and interview questions generate data that answer each research question. To ensure the validity of data collected by the survey instrument, the researcher facilitated a cognitive lab with three retired CCC CEOs. Through this process, the cognitive lab participants were asked to verbally process the thoughts that came to mind as they answered each survey question (Zucker et al., 2004). The researcher took detailed notes of each CEO's thought process and used the feedback provided to adjust questions as needed. Similarly, validity of the data collected from the qualitative instrument was established by piloting the focus group questions with experts in the CCC system. Several CCC professionals engaged in antiracist work, but not selected as participants in this study, were asked to review the questions for clarity. The goal was to establish credibility, a process of accurately representing the views of the respondent (Nowel et al., 2017).

The trustworthiness of findings that emerged from analyzing the focus group interview data was enhanced through member checking and application of best practices for qualitative research. Throughout the interviews, the researcher employed member checking by summarizing statements and requesting clarification by participants to check the authenticity and accuracy of the researcher's understanding and interpretation of information being shared. Participants were also offered an opportunity to review the written results to ensure experiences were captured fully and accurately (Given, 2008). To further establish an overall trustworthy

study, Tracy's (2010) eight criteria for producing quality qualitative research were used. These eight criteria include: (a) worthy topic, (b) rich rigor, (c) sincerity, (d) credibility, (e) resonance, (f) significant contribution, (g) ethics, and (h) meaningful coherence.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were accounted for throughout this study; yet, there are still concerns that should be addressed. First, the researcher took steps to preserve ethical research practices by obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval at Kansas State University. In addition, measures were taken to address specific ethical concerns. For this study, confidentiality and informed consent were the main ethical concerns during the focus group portion associated with this study. Participants were asked to agree to informed consent form (see Appendix A) before participating in the focus group process. The researcher and participants understood staying logged into the Zoom platform was an agreement of the informed consent. In addition, data were only accessible to the researcher.

Building trust was also an important ethical consideration of this study. Because participants discussed a process that involved multiple stakeholders, participants needed to trust the researcher would not disclose those aspects of the process that could be viewed as controversial. Therefore, all participant responses were kept strictly confidential, unless there was a mutual agreement to disclose this information.

Limitations

Although efforts were made to ensure the credibility of this study, there were various limitations. One limitation pertains to the fact most antiracist work within CCC was emerging and not yet complete. Through this study, the researcher sought to understand colleges' processes in identifying the need for antiracist work, factors that motivated their engagement,

how colleges developed and implemented this work, and how colleges measured their progress and success. Because this work was emerging, college personnel may not have been able to articulate the work being done entirely or the impact it was having on perceived and measurable outcomes.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore how CCC were aligning their work with the CCC Chancellor's Office (CCCCO, 2020c) *Call to Action* for every college in the system to strategize and take action against systemic racism. A transformative sequential explanatory mixed-methods design informed by CRT allowed the researcher to collect and analyze data through a critical lens to allow the research to serve the needs of those most often left out of the research process (Mertens, 2007). Incorporation of both quantitative and qualitative data allowed for a comprehensive picture of the research questions investigated. Survey distribution provided a mechanism to collect quantitative data to inform the qualitative data collected through focus groups. This chapter described the details of the methodology deployed to answer all research questions. The following two chapters will report the results and discuss the findings.

Chapter 4 - Results

This chapter is a presentation of the results of this mixed-methods study. The chapter begins with a review of the research questions (RQs) and the data collection process. Then, the demographic characteristics of the 42 quantitative questionnaire respondents are reported, followed by a description of the six focus groups, which included a total of 24 participants. Next, this chapter includes a description of the execution of the data analysis procedures described in Chapter 3. This chapter then includes a presentation of the study results, organized by RQ, followed by a summary of results.

Research Questions

This study was an exploration of the ways California Community Colleges (CCC) aligned work with the CCC Chancellor's Office's (CCCCO, 2020c) call to colleges to strategize and take action against structural racism in colleges across the state. The purpose of this study was to identify institutions in the CCC system that had made changes or were in the process of making changes to programs, practices, or policies to intentionally address structural racism. The researcher investigated the RQs through a quantitative survey, followed by qualitative focus groups. The RQs addressed in this study were:

RQ1: What is the level of engagement among CCC in examining and changing policies, programs, and practices to promote antiracism?

- a. Which CCC are engaging in antiracist work?
- b. What are the factors motivating those institutions to do so?

RQ2: How are those colleges going about developing and implementing antiracist policies, programs, and practices?

- a. Which specific areas are being addressed?

- b. What steps are colleges taking to undertake these changes? Who is involved?
What are they doing?
- c. What, if any, improvements (measurable or perceived) have resulted from these changes?

Data Collection

Data in this study were collected using both quantitative and qualitative instruments. Quantitative data were collected via surveys administrated through the Qualtrics platform over a 3-month period. The survey consisted of 21 questions with smart logic built into the survey so participants could skip questions that did not pertain to them. The survey instrument was piloted with Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) from the CCC system who had retired from the system within the previous year. The pilot process was conducted through a cognitive lab, a process by which the researcher studies the mental process one uses to complete a task (Zucker et al., 2004).

Qualitative data were collected over a 4-month period through semistructured focus group interviews via the Zoom platform. Focus group interview questions were piloted and refined with community college leaders in the CCC system. The average focus group lasted 90 minutes and consisted of 10 planned questions. The researcher added follow-up questions in instances in which clarification was needed. The focus group interview began with each participant answering the first question. The remaining nine questions were answered by whomever felt compelled to answer. It was not expected for each participant to answer every question.

Demographics

Data were collected from both a survey and focus group interviews. The survey was sent to 139 CCC CEOs, of which 42 responded, a 31% response rate. The following tables describe

the demographic information of all survey respondents. Table 2 indicates questionnaire respondents' reported genders. Table 3 indicates questionnaire respondents' reported races or ethnicities. Table 4 indicates questionnaire respondents' roles in leading their CCC institutions. Table 5 indicates questionnaire respondents' number of years as CEO of a community college or district. Table 6 indicates questionnaire respondents' number of years in their current position.

Table 2

Questionnaire Respondents: Gender

Gender	Frequency, <i>n</i> (%)
Female	17 (40)
Male	23 (55)
Nonbinary/third gender	2 (5)

Table 3

Questionnaire Respondents: Race and Ethnicity

Race or ethnicity	Frequency, <i>n</i> (%)
African American	4 (10)
Asian	4 (10)
Caucasian	21 (50)
Latino or Hispanic	9 (22)
Two or more	3 (6)
Prefer not to say	1 (2)

Table 4

Questionnaire Respondents: Leadership Role

Role in leading institution	Frequency, <i>n</i> (%)
Chancellor in a multicollge district	7 (17)
College president (superintendent/president) in a single-college district	15 (36)
College president in a multicollge district	20 (47)

Table 5*Questionnaire Respondents: Years as CEO of a Community College or District*

Years as CEO	Frequency, <i>n</i> (%)
3 years or less	19 (44)
4–5 years	7 (17)
6–10 years	10 (24)
11–15 years	4 (10)
More than 20 years	2 (5)

Table 6*Questionnaire Respondents: Years in Current Position*

Years of service	Frequency, <i>n</i> (%)
3 years or less	24 (57)
4–5 years	6 (14)
6–10 years	10 (24)
11–15 years	1 (2)
More than 20 years	1 (2)

As part of the survey, CEOs were asked if they would be willing to select representatives to participate in a focus group to gather more information on antiracist policies, programs, and practices being implemented at their respective colleges. Of the 42 participants, 17 agreed to take part in the focus group portion of this study. The researcher then applied purposeful criterion sampling to identify appropriate focus group participants. Based on purposeful criterion sampling, six focus groups with a total of 24 participants were conducted at six CCC in the qualitative component of the study. Table 7 indicates the sizes and types of districts selected as locations to participate in each focus group.

Table 7*Size and Type of District*

Focus Group (FG)	Size	Type of community college
FG 1	Small	Multicollege district
FG 2	Medium	Multicollege district
FG 3	Large	Multicollege district
FG 4	Large	Multicollege district
FG 5	Medium	Single-college district
FG	Medium	Multicollege district

Demographic information for individual members of each focus group was not collected. Instead, focus group participants were asked to describe their role as it related to antiracist work occurring at their college. Each focus group's makeup varied, and participants' roles ranged from college presidents and other executive leaders to middle managers, faculty, and classified professionals. Each focus group also ranged in number of participants. Table 8 indicates the number of participants in each focus group.

Table 8*Number of Participants in Focus Groups*

Focus Group (FG)	<i>n</i> (participant pseudonyms)
FG1	5 (BT, DC, KH, S2, TM)
FG2	3 (DA, DG, JL)
FG3	2 (AH, BH)
FG4	3 (JL, MD, PC)
FG5	5 (AH, DS, EP, KH, RB)
FG6	6 (AM, CR, HE, KL, LF, MC)

Note. *n* = 24

To maintain confidentiality while attributing responses to specific participants in the presentation of qualitative results, focus group participants are designated with a prefix

indicating their focus group number (e.g., FG1, FG2), followed by a suffix indicating the specific participant's pseudonym. For example, quotes from participant BT in FG1 are attributed to FG1-BT, and quotes from participant DA in FG2 are attributed to FG2-DA.

Data Analysis

Survey participants entered quantitative responses into the Qualtrics platform. Responses were compiled in Qualtrics and exported to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Questionnaire data were analyzed in Microsoft Excel using descriptive statistics. Microsoft Excel formulas were used to calculate frequencies and percentages for multiple-choice responses, and minimums, maximums, means, medians, and modes for Likert-like items.

After the survey responses had been gathered, the researcher first reviewed responses to Question 20, which contained the following:

I will be conducting follow-up focus groups with representatives from several institutions that are highly engaged in antiracism activities to identify promising practices and lessons learned. These focus groups will take place virtually through Zoom. Would you be interested in having your district/college participate in a focus group?

For every CEO who answered “yes” to this question, the researcher pulled data from their survey results to apply purposeful criterion sampling to select participants who would be invited to partake in the qualitative portion of this study. CEOs at each of the colleges selected, based on the outlined criteria, were then asked to select members from their respective college to participate in focus group interviews. Of 10 colleges invited to participate, six agreed to follow through with the process. The researcher then worked with the executive administrative assistant at each college to schedule focus group interviews and invite all identified participants.

Next, the researcher analyzed the qualitative data gathered during the focus group process. The professional transcription service Scribie transcribed verbatim the audio-recorded, qualitative focus group data. The researcher verified transcripts by reading and rereading them while listening to the recordings. Verified transcripts were imported as source files in NVivo 12, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. As indicated in Chapter 3, qualitative data were analyzed inductively and thematically. For additional guidance in performing the analysis, Braun and Clarke's (2006) inductive, thematic, six-step procedure was used.

In the first step of the analysis, the transcripts were read and reread in full to gain familiarity (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The second step of the analysis involved coding the data. To code data, the researcher used an annotation process to identify potential themes. Phrases or groups of consecutive phrases that expressed meanings relevant to ways in which CCC had been aligning their work with the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action* were assigned to codes, which were labeled descriptively. Different response excerpts with similar meanings were assigned to the same code. For example, FG2-JL stated, "I think that we have a pretty unique president who herself has engaged in activism. And so, once she is leading and facilitating a dialogue on campus climate, she comes at it from a very critical lens." Taken in context, FG2-JL's response indicated the president of the CCC was engaged in and promoting antiracist work at the college. This response excerpt was therefore assigned to a code, which was labeled, "executive administration is prioritizing antiracist work." FG3-BH stated, "We have the benefit of having a leader who is invested in this work around antiracism." FG3-BH's response expressed a meaning similar to FG2-JL's response, indicating the college leader actively prioritized antiracist work at the college. FG3-BH's response was therefore assigned to the same code as FG2-JL's. In this

way, a total of 267 response excerpts were grouped into 25 initial codes. Table 9 indicates the initial codes and their frequencies.

Table 9

Initial Code Frequencies

Initial code	FGs ^a <i>n</i>	Excerpts ^b <i>n</i>
A variety of stakeholders are involved	4	5
Executive administration is prioritizing antiracist work	5	7
Annual program evaluation	2	4
Antiracism built into curriculum review process	2	6
Antiracism built into strategic plan	3	8
Antiracist hiring and promotion practices	5	11
Antiracist professional development	5	14
Creating a diversity, equity, and inclusion integration plan	3	6
Creating positions responsible for equity-focused changes	2	6
Data-driven success assessments	4	28
Dialogue around antiracism is more open	6	15
Discrepant data - Minimal review and accountability	3	13
Educating about antiracism	5	17
Equity and antiracism are related terms with different political connotations	2	2
Equity is being addressed through an equity plan	4	6
Examples of practices directed toward faculty	4	14
Examples of practices directed toward students	3	12
Lack of designated responsible individual is a challenge	1	3
Lack of shared definitions is a challenge	6	22
Learning community	2	3
Open dialogues and information exchanges	6	26
Participation in equity efforts is not mandatory	3	11
Partnerships	4	8
Resistance to antiracist changes is a challenge	5	9
Work groups	3	10

Note. ^a reflects the number of focus groups in which the code was found. ^b reflects the number of excerpts assigned to the code.

The third step of the analysis involved searching for themes in the data by grouping similar or related codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For example, the code, “executive administration is prioritizing antiracist work” was grouped with four other codes, including “antiracism built into curriculum review process,” “antiracism built into strategic plan,” “antiracist hiring and promotion practices,” and, “creating a diversity, equity, and inclusion integration plan.” These five codes were grouped because they all indicated planning and review practices driving antiracist work at the CCC. Four themes were formed from the 25 initial codes.

In the fourth step of the analysis, themes were reviewed by comparing them to the original data to confirm they accurately reflected patterns in the responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Next, in the fifth step, themes were named. The sixth step of the analysis involved preparing the presentation of results in the following section of this chapter. Table 10 indicates how the initial codes were grouped to form the finalized themes.

Table 10

Grouping of Initial Codes to Form Themes

Theme	Initial code grouped to form theme	FGs in which theme was found <i>n</i>	Response excerpts assigned to theme <i>n</i>
1	Equity is being addressed through antiracist practices Equity and antiracism are related terms with different political connotations Equity is being addressed through an equity plan Examples of practices directed toward faculty Examples of practices directed toward students	6	34
2	Antiracism is a focus of planning and review practices	6	38

Theme	Initial code grouped to form theme	FGs in which theme was found <i>n</i>	Response excerpts assigned to theme <i>n</i>
	Executive administration is prioritizing antiracist work Antiracism built into curriculum review process Antiracism built into strategic plan Antiracist hiring and promotion practices Creating a diversity, equity, and inclusion integration plan		
3	Antiracist work involves professional development for faculty and open, collaborative dialogue among multiple stakeholder groups A variety of stakeholders are involved Antiracist professional development Creating positions responsible for equity-focused changes Educating about antiracism Learning community Open dialogues and information exchanges Partnerships	6	89
4	Increased antiracist dialogue generates measurable action but more needs to be done Annual program evaluation Data-driven success assessments Discrepant data—Minimal review and accountability Lack of designated responsible individual is a challenge Lack of shared definitions is a challenge Dialogue around antiracism is more open Participation in equity efforts is not mandatory Resistance to antiracist changes is a challenge	6	105

Presentation of Results

This section is a presentation of the qualitative and quantitative results, organized by RQ.

Table 11 is a summary of how results were used to address the RQs.

Table 11

Use of Results to Address the RQs

RQ	Results used to address question
RQ1: What is the level of engagement among CCC in examining and changing policies, and practices to promote antiracism?	This question was addressed by addressing the two subquestions derived from it.
Sub-RQ1a. Which CCC are engaging in antiracist work?	This question was answered using quantitative questionnaire data.
Sub-RQ1b. What are the factors motivating those institutions to do so?	This question was answered using quantitative questionnaire data.
RQ2: How are those colleges going about developing and implementing antiracist policies, programs, and practices?	This question was addressed by addressing the three subquestions derived from it.
Sub-RQ2a. Which specific areas are being addressed?	This question was addressed using quantitative questionnaire data and qualitative data from Theme 1 (“Equity Is Being Addressed Through Antiracist Practices”).
Sub-RQ2b. What steps are colleges taking to undertake these changes? Who is involved? What are they doing?	This question was addressed using qualitative Theme 2 (“Antiracism Is a Focus of Planning and Review Practices”) and qualitative data from Theme 3 (“Antiracist Work Involves Professional Development for Faculty and Open, Collaborative Dialogue Among Multiple Stakeholder Groups”).
Sub-RQ2c. What, if any, improvements (measurable or perceived) have resulted from these changes?	This question was addressed using qualitative data from Theme 4 (“Increased Antiracist Dialogue Generates Measurable Action but More Needs to Be Done”).

RQ1: What Is the Level of Engagement Among CCC in Examining and Changing Policies and Practices to Promote Antiracism?

This question was addressed through the two subquestions derived from it. The following two subsections indicate the results used to address the subquestions.

Sub-RQ1a: Which CCC Are Engaging in Antiracist Work?

This question was addressed using quantitative questionnaire data. Table 12 indicates how many questionnaire respondents reported their institutions were engaging in antiracist work in response to the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*.

Table 12

Questionnaire Respondents: Institutions Engaging in Antiracist Work

Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist work to address structural racism?	Frequency, <i>n</i> (%)
Yes	38 (90)
No	4 (10)

A large majority of respondents reported their institutions were engaging in antiracist work to address structural racism. The four respondents who indicated their institutions were not engaging in antiracist work in response to the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action* provided clarification in open-ended questionnaire fields. Respondent 3 (R3) stated:

A great deal of professional development work has taken place at both the college and district level. However, there has been little action taken to address systemic racism through a thorough review of policies and practices. There is a growing interest in promoting equity. However, there remains some resistance at all levels of the organization.

R3 noted some antiracist work was being done in the form of professional development, but no systematic review of policies and practices had been conducted. This response was substantiated by focus group participants, who shared professional development was happening, and a systematic process was being developed to review policies and practices but had not yet been implemented. R3's response may therefore be regarded as substantially affirmative with respect to this research subquestion. R5 reported the CCC was engaging in antiracist work but gave a negative response to the questionnaire item because the work began prior to the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*:

We were on a path to becoming a racially just institution before George Floyd's death and before the *Call to Action*. So, we are not responding to that call, we committed to what it takes to be a racially just institution prior.

R5's response is also substantially affirmative with respect to the research subquestion, indicating antiracist work was being done. Therefore, although these two respondents stated they were not responding to the call to action, they concluded antiracist work was still occurring at these two institutions. Two other respondents expanded on their no answer to this question indicating antiracist work was not happening at their institutions. For example, R9 stated:

We ascribe to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream of a society where we are judged on the content of our character, not the color of our skin. We think the current movement against so-called systemic racism and so-called critical race theory is itself racist and is contrary to most everything we learned and achieved over the decades since Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led us toward a much less racist, colorblind society than he had inherited in his day.

R9's response indicated the institution was not engaging in antiracist work because of ideological opposition, which the CEO supported. R9's response must be regarded as negative with respect to the research subquestion. In addition, R41 stated:

This [not engaging in antiracist work] is not a decision I have made. The district is still in the process of acknowledging systemic racism, a topic our board of trustees has struggled with, alongside groups of faculty that see changes in response to the Chancellor's *Call to Action* as a threat to academic freedom.

The decisive factor at R41's college appeared to be the board of trustees' resistance to undertaking antiracist work. Participants in all six focus groups reported some faculty resistance at their institutions, but this resistance did not preclude antiracist work.

In summary, questionnaire data indicated some antiracist work was being done at 40 out of 42 of the respondents' institutions. At R3's college, despite the response indicating no antiracist work, the respondent did share that antiracist work was happening at the college, just not yet systemically. At R5's college, antiracist work was already being done prior to the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*. Therefore, even though four respondents indicated they were not responding to the call to action, only two, R9 and R41, stated no antiracist work was occurring at their institution. R9's negative response was associated with the ideological opposition to antiracist work of their institution's CEO. R41's negative response was associated with opposition from the institution's board of trustees and some faculty.

Sub-RQ1b. What Are the Factors Motivating Those Institutions to Do So?

This question was addressed using quantitative questionnaire data. Table 13 indicates the relevant questionnaire results.

Table 13*Factors Promoting the Decision to Prioritize Antiracist Work*

Factors that had the greatest impact on the decision to prioritize antiracist work	Frequency, <i>n</i> (%)
Institutional commitment to equity	24 (57)
Your personal commitment to antiracism	22 (52)
Mission, vision, values of your district/college	21 (50)
Board of trustees' interest in prioritizing institutional antiracism	13 (31)
Stakeholders' interest in prioritizing institutional antiracism	9 (21)
Institution's strategic goals	8 (19)
Social factors	7 (17)
Chancellor's Office call to prioritize antiracism	6 (14)
Your personal experiences with racism	6 (14)
No response	5 (12)

Note. *n* = 38. Respondents could select up to three factors.

The three factors at least 50% of respondents cited as impactful were (a) institutional commitment to equity; (b) the CEO's personal commitment to antiracism; and (c) the mission, vision, and values of the district or college. Notably, only a minority of respondents (14%) cited the CCCCCO's call to prioritize antiracism after the murder of George Floyd as impactful.

RQ2: How Are Those Colleges Going About Developing and Implementing Antiracist Policies, Programs, and Practices?

This question was addressed by addressing the three subquestions derived from it. The following subsections indicate the answers addressing the subquestions.

Sub-RQ2a. Which Specific Areas Are Being Addressed?

This question was addressed using both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative questionnaire data were used to indicate which of the six areas of the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action* were being implemented and the level of implementation at respondents' institutions. Qualitative data were used to gain a more in-depth description of the goals and kinds of antiracist

work being done. Table 14 is a display of quantitative results indicating the extent to which each of the six areas of the call to action was being implemented at the 42 respondents' colleges.

Table 14

Six Areas of the CCCCCO's Call to Action: Levels of Implementation

Area outlined in the CCCCCO’s call to action	Level of implementation ^a					
	<i>M</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>Mo</i>	
Conducting a system-wide review of law enforcement officers and first responder training and curriculum	2.2	0	5	2	2	
Hosting open dialogue to address campus climate	3.3	0	5	4	4	
Auditing classroom climate and creating an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum	2	0	5	2	2	
Your district/college board is reviewing and updating your equity plans with urgency	2.6	0	5	2	2	
Shortening the time frame for the full implementation of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Integration Plan	2.3	0	5	2	4	
Joining and engaging in the Vision Resource Center “Community Colleges for Change”	2.3	0	5	2	4	

Note. Across the six areas, *M* = 2.4, *Min* = 0, *Max* = 5, *Mdn* = 2.3, *Mo* = 3.^a0 = least, 5 = greatest.

There was wide variation in the degree to which each of the six areas was being implemented across the 42 CCC, with responses ranging from a minimum of no implementation to a maximum of the highest level of implementation in all six areas. The minimum and maximum reported levels of implementation were not outliers; multiple respondents indicated implementation levels of 0 and 5 under each of the six areas. When average scores were calculated for each college across the six areas, one college averaged an implementation level of 4, and one college averaged an implementation level of 5, indicating the highest level of implementation across all six areas. All other colleges had an average level of implementation of less than 4 across the six areas, with a mean of 2.4 and a median of 2.3, indicating the six areas

were at a beginning level of implementation on average. The area with the highest average level of implementation was “hosting open dialogue to address campus climate.” This result was consistent with qualitative focus group responses discussed in more detail under Sub-RQ2b. The lowest average level of implementation was in the area of “auditing classroom climate and creating an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum.” This result was also consistent with focus group responses. The following subsection is a presentation of the qualitative findings used to address Sub-RQ2a.

Theme 1: Equity Is Being Addressed Through Antiracist Practices. Quantitative results used to address Sub-RQ2a indicated the extent to which the six areas in the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action* were being implemented. The qualitative finding indicated in the present theme was used to clarify the overall focus area of the antiracist work being done at the six CCC represented in the focus groups. More details about the nature of the antiracist work being done at the six focus group colleges is provided under Sub-RQ2b. The intention in the presentation of Theme 1 is to establish a context for that discussion through a high-level description of the antiracist work.

The finding represented by Theme 1 indicated antiracist work occurring at the six focus group schools was intended to address the broader issues of equity and student success. Though participants from all six focus group schools indicated they did not have a shared definition of the term “antiracist,” they all agreed developing antiracist policies, practices, and programs was a part of addressing the broader issue of equity. For example, FG4-PC stated, “Any learning and any practice we do around antiracism and what antiracism means is directed at student success. That is the bottom line.” In addition, FG1-WT shared:

I also think, early on, the institution may have made a mistake by linking so closely the concepts of antiracism and equity, rather than recognizing that antiracism is a part of the equity conversation. It is not the equity conversation.

Though participants from all six focus group schools agreed the operational definitions of antiracism and equity were different, some focus group participants indicated “equity” was related to “antiracism,” but equity was the term used more often than antiracism only because it tended to provoke less resistance among the faculty than antiracism. For example, FG6-LF stated the term equity was used instead of antiracism in internal communications to “soften the language.” Similarly, FG4-PC described the term equity was preferred instead of antiracism: “We really were already working on people becoming equity practitioners, and I think that’s the term we tend to use more so than antiracist.”

Though equity may have been the preferred term, some focus group participants shared the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action* shifted the conversation and empowered leaders to take a bolder stance in support of antiracism. For example, FG2-JL stated, “I definitely think there was an embrace of the more political language, the language that we use, the language we embrace.” In addition, FG5-EP shared, “I feel like it empowered the work on campus because it was really nice to have that to point to.” Yet, others felt the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action* was reactive and empty and resulted in disingenuous action and conversations. For example, FG4-MD stated, “we did some optical things like putting things on our website that represent the *Call to Action*.” In addition, FG1-KH shared, “There is also a lot of politicization of that process, and a lot of people who view the idea of racism versus antiracism as a direct attack against them, and really a proud sense of being anti-antiracism.” Many focus group participants acknowledged this

dichotomy and the challenges accompanied it. FG2-DA conceptualized this struggle with their statement:

That is where the work really lies in higher education, it is really trying to. . . . On the surface level, everyone agrees that, sure, we should be antiracist. But how do we operationalize that in our daily practice and with our immediate spheres? . . . Where [our college] is doing a better job is connecting our statement with action . . . connecting it to data.

Though all focus group participants acknowledged the difference between antiracism and equity and the importance of directly calling out racism on campus, much of the conversation related to the six items in the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action* centered around the concept of equity, rather than antiracism. To further establish context through high-level description, the remainder of the presentation of this theme consists of examples of how institutions addressed equity was through the development of equity plans and practices directed toward faculty and students.

Participants in four of the six focus groups indicated equity plans either had been developed or were under development at their CCC. FG3-BH stated equity goals had been written into an already-developed vision statement:

We've engaged in our comprehensive educational and facilities planning efforts over the last 2 years, so now, we have a visionary document that will guide us for the next 10 years, that has infused racial equity and equity mindedness in a number of ways throughout the document, including, very explicitly, in the statement and the language of the goals themselves.

FG6-MC stated an equity plan was under development, and a dedicated group of around 40 volunteers drawn from a variety of stakeholder groups had already drafted the proposed language. They indicated:

We're working on that equity plan. I think that we have a whole group, a SEA group, the Student Equity and Achievement group, that was put in place before I was here that basically did the work of probably what I would have done in writing the plan.

Participants in all six focus groups described equity-focused practices directed toward faculty. FG2-DA reported their college was implementing an equity dashboard, a computer application that enabled faculty to view data on student performance in their classes, broken down by different demographic characteristics, including race and ethnicity. The purpose of the application was to enable faculty to identify and correct systemic bias in their courses.

Participants in two other focus groups also reported their colleges were implementing equity dashboards. FG2-DA said of the application, "It is a data dashboard that every professor can look at to see the performance of their students by disaggregated data variables: gender, race, ethnicity." About the purpose of the equity dashboard, FG2-DA added, "They [faculty] can see for their current course, and they can see historically for their course, to see where they might need to take some action in making the curriculum more culturally responsive." Participants in all six focus groups also reported colleges were conducting education efforts to raise equity awareness among faculty. FG4-PC reported the example of a "class for most of [the] faculty, time to engage in a 2-semester-long institute, to develop their practitioner sense of equity, their equity consciousness, and to think about how then to implement things that they could do that were equitable." Another form of antiracist practice directed toward faculty was the community of practice, in which faculty worked together to provide mutual support in promoting equity

goals. FG4-JL described this practice in stating, “Communities of practice [are] all just faculty led, faculty driven, observing peers’ classrooms, giving feedback, keeping journals, coming together, reflecting on goals, and progress, and challenges.” Antiracist work directed toward faculty also included the facilitation of open dialogues and information exchanges between faculty and other stakeholder groups, an effort that occurred at all six focus group schools and FG4-PC discussed in the following example:

We called a retreat of interested people . . . and this was students, staff, faculty, managers, all came together. We had, I think, maybe 35 people. We met on campus in a day-long meeting . . . and we basically got input on, “What does equity mean to you? What does it look like? What would you like to see in a training and development program?” Like, “When would it have to be held for you to be part of it?”

Practices to promote equity were also directed toward students at all six focus group colleges. One such equity-focused practice was an equity analysis of the scholarship review process conducted at the FG3 college. FG3-AH said of this effort, “We did an equity analysis on our scholarship application process about who applied, who received awards, how much they received, and we did that looking at gender, at race, at first generation, at language, at a variety of things,” with a view toward eliminating disparities and ensuring awards went to students with the greatest need. At the FG5 college, a manager was assigned by the executive leadership to ensure student services were adequately provided to minoritized students. FG5-EP explained, “I manage our programs where we provide direct services to students in minoritized communities.” FG5-DS said services provided to students in need included “technological support, transportation, accommodations, food and securities.” FG5-DS shared, “We’re trying to address any and all nonacademic variables to show the students that we’re supporting them and get them

back so they can continue their education.” FG5-RB added other accommodations extended to students in need, included flexibility on deadlines for assignments and class attendance requirements. The goal of services and accommodations was, FG5-RB said, “To address the nonacademic barriers” to student success. FG6-HE reported a focus at their college was student onboarding, with services being evaluated to ensure they met the needs of minoritized and nontraditional students, saying, “One of my focuses right now is really the onboarding of students, and how our traditional practices may affect those from our disproportionately impacted groups on our campus,” which the same participant also described as, “those students that are affected most by our inability to assist them with application to registration.” FG6-LF reported students, like faculty, were invited to engage in open dialogues and exchanges of information related to equity through “panel discussions or discussion forums [where they] tried to center the student voice. [They] included students in these particular discussions to really try to push some of these conversations forward.”

In summary, antiracist work at the six focus group colleges was directed toward equity and student success, and focus group participants described it as substantively related to antiracism. Equity-focused work was manifested in practices directed toward faculty and students. Faculty were engaged in (a) education, (b) open dialogues and information exchanges, (c) reviews of disaggregated data to identify and correct disproportionate impacts, and (d) communities of practice to provide mutual support in promoting equity. As will be discussed in more detail in the Sub-RQ2c section, participation in equity-focused practices was optional rather than compulsory for faculty. Equity-focused practices for supporting minoritized students who were traditionally underserved included services such as transportation and onboarding, and accommodations such as flexible deadlines and class attendance requirements. Students were

also engaged as contributing participants in open dialogues and information exchanges with other stakeholders, including faculty, staff, and managers. Four of the six focus group colleges were also working on equity plans. Participants also described potential policy changes when it was discovered policies were barriers to students. Policy changes were often addressed through the lens established by equity frameworks.

Sub-RQ2b. What Steps Are Colleges Taking to Undertake These Changes? Who Is Involved?

What Are They Doing?

This question was addressed using qualitative focus group data. Two of the themes identified during qualitative analysis were used to address the question, including Theme 2, “Antiracism Is a Focus of Planning and Review Practices,” and Theme 3, “Antiracist Work Involves Professional Development for Faculty and Open, Collaborative Dialogue Among Multiple Stakeholder Groups.” The following subsections are presentations of these themes.

Theme 2: Antiracism Is a Focus of Planning and Review Practices. The finding this theme represented indicated ways focus group colleges were going about developing and implementing antiracist practices including planning (e.g., through the creation of equity plans, strategic plans, and diversity, equity, and inclusion [DEI] plans) and review practices (e.g., of job candidates and curriculum). Participants from most focus group colleges further indicated supportive administrators were driving the implementation of practices. Practices described under this theme addressed three areas of the CCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action*, including, “auditing classroom climate and creating an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum,” (p. 2) “your District/College Board is reviewing and updating your Equity plans with urgency” (p. 3), and “shortening the time frame for the full implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Integration Plan” (p. 3).

As discussed under Theme 1, participants in four focus groups stated their CCC were developing equity plans. The development of equity plans was in accordance with the fourth area of the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*: "Your District/College Board is reviewing and updating your Equity plans with urgency" (p. 3). Participants from three focus groups further indicated equity and antiracist goals were being written into their colleges' strategic plans. FG1-BT said of this effort, "The first goal in our strategic plan [is] equity and antiracism," and added a review process was being considered by the strategic planning committee for implementation in which, "the reporting programs need to respond to prompts that speak to how they are contributing or working toward contributing to goals in [the] strategic plan," including the first goal of equity and antiracism. FG1-BT further added funding for programs would be tied to their performance of all strategic goals. FG3-BH also offered an example of equity and antiracist goals being written by the strategic planning team into a CCC's strategic plan in stating their college's planning and institutional effectiveness committee. They said:

[We] developed our strategic plan, [which] is a set of strategic priorities over the next 5 years that is more action oriented. And again, the language of those objectives is intentional and explicit in their direction toward closing equity gaps, infusing social and racial justice, environmental justice, things like that, into the language of the objectives themselves.

Participants in three focus groups indicated their institutions were engaging in the development of DEI integration plans. FG2-DA said of drafting a DEI plan:

We are in the middle of crafting a DEI plan that kind of coalesces our existing strategic plans and metrics that we need to weave into one place so that way we can, as a

community, figure out how to move the needle when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion in a meaningful way.

FG2-DA added, “We have shortened our time frame for the DEI integration plan,” in accordance with the fifth area of the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action*, which was, “Shortening the time frame for the full implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Integration Plan” (p. 3). FG3-BH said, at their college, the committee on diversity action, inclusion, and equity had “developed a 13-point DEI action plan, which [included] campus or classroom audits. Not just classroom audits, but also all workspace units, like offices, administrative areas, things like that,” in accordance with the third area of the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action*: “Auditing classroom climate and creating an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum” (p. 2).

Participants in five focus groups indicated their CCC were integrating antiracist practices into hiring and promotion review processes. FG1-KH described this additional review of candidates as:

Making sure that our screening questions include explicitly antiracist questions, so having broadly equitable or equity-minded questions, but also in terms of the content, for example, “How would you make this lesson plan antiracist, or address medical racism [in the context of a biology course]?”

About review processes for promotion, FG6-KL reported adding an equity-focused element to the self-evaluations faculty seeking tenure were required to conduct: “I volunteered to help develop a new self-eval form, and I added language . . . that asked faculty to reflect on equitable practices and antiracist work in the classroom.” FG6-KL added of self-evaluation requirements, “[Faculty seeking tenure] have to do this four times, they have to speak to

[equitable practices] and give examples about the [antiracist] work they're doing in the classroom.”

Participants from two focus groups reported antiracist goals were built into the curriculum review process at their colleges. FG1-LH said of the curriculum-review practices in their school, “This review process reviews all course outlines of record for intentional antiracist curriculum and cultural relevance for our specific student population.” FG4-JL spoke of providing input to the committees that developed curricula to help them evaluate their work in relation to antiracist or equity goals: “I serve on different college-wide governance councils and committees, and so my role there . . . is looking at curriculum . . . and working with the folks to apply an equity lens to those things.”

Participants from five focus groups indicated supportive administrators drove the work being done at their colleges to develop and implement antiracist practices. FG2-JL stated, “I think that we have a pretty unique president who herself has engaged in activism. And so, once she is leading and facilitating a dialogue on campus climate, she comes at it from a very critical lens.” FG3-BH stated, “We have the benefit of having a leader who is invested in this work around antiracism.”

In summary, the ways the focus group colleges were going about developing and implementing antiracist practices included planning and review practices. Planning involved the development of strategic plans and DEI integration plans to set explicit equity goals, the performance of which was or could be tied to program funding. Review processes included screening candidates for hiring and promotion by assessing their preparedness to engage in or success at engaging in antiracist work in the classroom or through student-services practices and programs. Curriculum-review practices were also developed by faculty to view historical and

proposed curricula through an equity lens in relation to the cultural sensitivity and relevance to student populations the CCC served. Supportive administrators were involved in driving these efforts.

Theme 3: Antiracist Work Involves Professional Development for Faculty and Open, Collaborative Dialogue Among Multiple Stakeholder Groups. The findings under this theme indicated ways the focus group colleges were going about developing and implementing antiracist practices including professional development (PD) for faculty and facilitating open, collaborative dialogue among multiple stakeholder groups. PD for faculty included workshops and trainings to raise awareness and help develop language about antiracism, develop skills, encourage self-reflection, and teach ways to implement antiracist goals. The facilitation of dialogue among stakeholder groups included work groups, townhalls, and open forums in which students, faculty, and staff could engage as active, contributing participants in building a shared understanding of antiracism or equity and the work needed to promote it. Practices described under this theme addressed three areas of the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*, including “conducting a system-wide review of law enforcement officers and first responder training and curriculum,” (p. 1) and “hosting open dialogue to address campus climate” (p. 2).

Participants in all six focus groups reported practices were implemented in their colleges to educate and train faculty about equity and the implementation of equity goals. FG2-JL said of an education effort for faculty and their college, “Our president actually led a reading circle, so there were a bunch of different articles related to equity and antiracism.” FG2-JL added the president also hosted a keynote speaker to educate faculty about antiracism, and they said of the educational program, “It was campus wide. Anyone could have joined us, and it was attended by faculty, classified professionals, and managers.” FG5-RB spoke of introducing an ongoing

learning experience for representatives from all departments: “We’re gonna have an equity learning academy, where I’m asking two faculty per school to join. . . . I’m reaching out to departments that are not at the table [to] find out why they’re not and work with them.” As a further example, FG3-BH reported:

We engaged in a series of trainings over the entire academic year through a company that specifically focuses on trainings in antiracism . . . so, we had large group trainings that talked about the concepts of antiracism, historical sort of contributions to our systemic racism issues that we’re trying to tackle right now.

Participants in all six focus groups reported their colleges were engaged in facilitating open dialogues and information exchanges, in accordance with the second area of the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action*, which was “Hosting open dialogue to address campus climate” (p. 2).

FG5-AH described the facilitation of student forums and townhalls:

We definitely, as a college, do a lot of dialogue, if you will, especially with Zoom. I think we have leveraged that. Our student government has done a lot in terms of facilitating student forums. I think with our new administration, we have regular townhalls where he’s [the CEO] specifically working with different groups.

FG6-MC reported hosting campus retreats to facilitate open dialogue among interested stakeholders: “We’ve had campus retreats and opportunities for folks to share their input and influence and feedback on a number of things.” FG1-TM referred to three forums being hosted in their college: “It’s been nice to be engaging in those conversations as a college on the whole, whether it’s our college hour, where all faculty are present, whether you go and meet with the guided pathways group, or the equity group.” FG3-BH described the facilitation at their college of a “work group that helped devise some tenets and principles for how we move forward,” in

“antiracism, historical sort of contributions to our systemic racism issues that we’re trying to tackle right now.” Participants in FG1 and FG5 also reported work groups were formed at their colleges to facilitate dialogue about and identify specific goals to promote antiracism.

Another form of open dialogue involved communication between CCC and police to address equity in policing. Participants from two focus groups reported their colleges were actively addressing the first area of the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action*, which was “conducting a system-wide review of law enforcement officers and first responder training and curriculum” (p. 1) through open dialogues with police organizations. FG6-CR described one of these efforts:

We are part of a consortium regarding public safety . . . one of the several colleges that is part of that consortium. And one of the things that we and the different colleges have directed the consortium is to review the curriculum for campus police or the police curriculum to ensure that it integrates diversity, equity, [and] inclusion.

On the question of who was involved in the ways focus group colleges were going about developing and implementing antiracist practices, participants reported a wide range of stakeholders were engaging with antiracist work. The involvement of supportive administrators was discussed under Theme 2. Findings under the present theme indicate the nature of faculty and student involvement in training and open dialogue. FG1-KH gave a sense of the range of stakeholders involved in work groups to identify antiracist goals at their college, stating the groups included “representatives from different constituency groups, so there were instructional faculty, noninstructional faculty, classified professionals, at least one admin per group, and . . . a student for every group.” Participants in two focus groups further reported positions had been created at their colleges dedicated specifically to the promotion of antiracist or equity work. FG6-MC reported they filled such a position, which they described as “a new position on

campus,” explaining the role was to, “partner with all folks across campus to determine and assess and evaluate equity and antiracist programming on campus.” FG5-RB provided a second example of a dedicated position in stating, “My role is . . . working specifically with equity, and so this is the first time we’ve had a position like this on campus.”

In summary, focus group participants indicated ways their colleges were going about developing and implementing antiracist practices including PD for faculty and facilitating open, collaborative dialogue among multiple stakeholder groups. PD for faculty included reading groups, learning academies, retreats, and trainings. Open dialogue was facilitated through townhalls, work groups, discussion forums, and committees. Multiple stakeholder groups were involved, including faculty, staff, administrators, and students. Open dialogue also included communications and partnerships with local police at two of the CCC to promote equity in policing.

Sub-RQ2c. What, if Any, Improvements (Measurable or Perceived) Have Resulted From These Changes?

This question was addressed using qualitative data. One theme was used. The following subsection is a presentation of the theme.

Theme 4: Increased Antiracist Dialogue Generates Measurable Action but More Needs to Be Done. Findings under this theme indicated most focus group colleges had implemented data-driven methods to assess the success of antiracist or equity work, including disaggregating student performance data by race and ethnicity to identify and longitudinally track disproportionate impacts indicating systemic bias. Although some focus group colleges could point to anecdotal evidence to show improvements in campus culture and student success, many of the changes were too new at the time of this study to have data available that indicated

whether there had been significant improvement. Anecdotally, participants reported improvements consisted of their perceptions of increasingly open dialogue at focus group colleges about antiracism or equity and the development of tools used to assess equity and student success. Participants noted significant challenges limited the efficacy of equity-focused work at their colleges, including the optional nature of faculty participation, a lack of shared definitions of central terms such as equity and antiracism, a lack of accountability for the implementation of antiracist work, and a lack of resource allocation.

Participants in four focus groups indicated their colleges were using data to identify and track manifestations of systemic bias in student performance. FG2-DA reported they had contributed to developing a rubric to assess equity levels at their college: “One of the major successes in my role was developing and having our governance constituencies approve an equity framework that we designed to use as an assessment tool to determine whether equity exists or does not exist.” FG5-DS reported their college had also developed an equity rubric for assessing program impacts on advancing the goals in the equity plan. FG2-JL added of how quantitative data on student success, disaggregated by race and ethnicity through the equity dashboard (discussed under Theme 1), were used to identify equity shortfalls:

It actually clearly identifies equity gaps. It is color coded where literally it identifies like, “You might have an equity gap here.” We are seeing a pattern that, for example, Latinx students have a lower success rate in your course. We do not mince words in there, we don’t say it nicely, we literally say, “There’s an equity gap.”

FG2-DA added of how quantitative equity dashboard data on student success were used: If API [Asian and Pacific Islander] students are not doing well in a class, and they haven’t been doing well historically in your class, that’s not a coincidence, something

needs to change pedagogically to ensure they're meaningfully included and represented in the curriculum.

The FG3 college also used an equity dashboard, of which FG3-BH said, "The dashboard allows us, depending on what type of data we're looking at, includes an equity analysis, and, by default, the first equity analysis you look at is by race." FG3-BH summarized how quantitative data on student success were used in an equity analysis: "It's just disaggregating [the data] by certain characteristics so that you can see differences [between racial and ethnic groups]." Participants in FG4 and FG5 also reported their colleges used equity dashboards in the manner participants in FG2 and FG3 reported. Equity dashboards and equity rubrics had not yet indicated improvements in participants' schools, however. In a representative response, FG5-KH noted these review practices were new, implemented within the year prior to the time of this study. They shared, "We've only had a year since these changes. So, most likely any results that you see won't be shown [in the data]." Similarly, FG2-JL noted the data were not yet indicating measurable changes: "I'm not seeing the transfer numbers increase that I would like to see, I'm not seeing this change in momentum in our students' success, which means all this work has to be generational. It has to be long term." FG3-BH provided a corroborating statement in saying, "Many of the things that we're trying to do are long-term changes that we don't see reflected in the data for 2 or 3 years out."

The area in which participants in all six FGs perceived improvements was in the increasing openness of dialogue about antiracism or equity at their colleges. Participants described this increased openness of dialogue as indicating a higher comfort level and willingness to engage with antiracism among the faculty. FG1-JM said the following of the increasing conversation around antiracism:

I think by actually having a conversation as something that we can do a few times a month, that is a new thing. That has not always been here, so I think we're really early in the change because we're all hearing that we're all willing to talk about these things, whereas in the past, we didn't hear that.

FG2-JL said of a perceived change in relation to antiracism, "We're less afraid than we used to be to talk about all of it. We really are." FG5-AH described as a form of progress conversations around antiracism were becoming campus wide rather than siloed, or "trying to have that conversation throughout the campus, versus it just being had in specific corners, if you will." FG6-MC said of the increasing openness of dialogue around antiracism on their campus, "I'm really proud of the way folks have stepped up, especially in this environment, to be vulnerable, to be open to doing this [antiracist] work, and to being, again, maybe receiving some criticism or reflection."

Participants in all six focus groups described significant challenges they perceived as slowing the rate at which effects of antiracist work were manifesting in student success data. FG4-MD spoke of lack of accountability as a challenge in stating, "Where we've neglected as an institution was now how do we operationalize [equity or antiracist goals] and hold our entire institutional accountable?" Participants in two other focus groups also spoke of unsatisfactory accountability measures at their colleges as challenges. One form lack of accountability took at FG1 was the lack of a position dedicated to formulating and advancing antiracist or equity goals, of the kind described under Theme 3 as being newly established at FG5 and FG6 colleges. FG1-KH described the lack of such a position at their college as, "Not having a clear person to lead this as their designated role, an equity coordinator or antiracist coordinator." focus group participants also addressed accountability as they described lack of resources and funding

allocated to antiracist work. For example, FG4-MD shared the lack of funding allocated by the state to address the call to action was not there. They shared, “You don’t just shift culture, you don’t get to do this work [without] resources associated with it. It doesn’t just happen, you have to invest in it, and I think the investment is not there.”

Participants in all six focus groups cited the challenge of a lack of shared definitions for terms such as equity and antiracism, which were central to conversations about how equity goals should be formulated and promoted. FG6-CR provided a representative response in stating, “A common definition, we don’t have that yet, we haven’t arrived at a common definition for ‘diversity,’ ‘equity,’ ‘inclusion,’ ‘equality,’ ‘antiracism,’ or ‘antiracist strategy.’ I think all of those things are still works in progress for the college.” FG3-AH reported their college did not yet have a shared definition of antiracism, and the process of developing a shared definition of equity had been arduous: “Defining equity for our college, that was actually a year-long process, which we first worked with six groups of initiatives, key initiatives.” A further challenge was resistance among some faculty to implementing antiracist practices. FG2-JL said of resistant faculty, “I’ll be very candid, some of our older White male faculty members are clearly struggling, and they let it be known in very public spaces that they’re struggling.” RG5-RB provided corroborating data by stating, “We have people who are still resistant to the whole notion of the label ‘antiracist.’ We’ve had these discussions at academic senate of people feeling offended by that.” One of the reasons why ideological resistance among some faculty was a barrier to antiracist work was participation in the work was optional for faculty. For example, FG4-MD said the following about antiracist PD at their college: “Much more opt in, if I choose to opt in, right? So, for those people that are interested or immersed in the work, they come, they show up, they get this particular exposure.” FG4-MD added the optional nature of the PD created

a challenge because, “Our issue is figuring out ways to ensure that it touches every nook and cranny, regardless of folks’ comfort level.”

In summary, participants in all six focus groups reported they were implementing rigorous, quantitative data collection and analysis to track and disaggregate student success by racial and ethnic groups to identify and correct systemic racial bias at the level of individual courses. However, participants stated effects of antiracist work were not yet measurable in these comparatively new metrics, and achieving measurable effects was expected to be a long-term effort. The area in which participants in all six focus groups perceived positive change was in the increasing openness of dialogue on their campuses around antiracism or equity. Participants associated this increasing dialogue with an increased willingness among faculty to engage with antiracist work. Participants in all six focus groups cited challenges that impeded the achievement of antiracist goals, including a lack of accountability, lack of resources, resistance among some faculty, and a lack of shared definitions of terms such as equity and antiracism.

Summary

Two primary RQs were used to guide this study. RQ1 was “What is the level of engagement among CCC in examining and changing policies, and practices to promote antiracism?” This question was addressed by addressing the two subquestions derived from it. Sub-RQ1a was “Which CCC are engaging in antiracist work?” This question was answered using quantitative questionnaire data. Results indicated antiracist work was being done at 40 of the 42 respondents’ colleges. Sub-RQ1b was “What are the factors motivating those institutions to do so?” This question was also answered using quantitative questionnaire data. The three factors cited as impactful by at least 50% of respondents were (a) institutional commitment to equity; (b) the CEO’s personal commitment to antiracism; and (c) the mission, vision, and values

of the district or college. Notably, only a minority of respondents (14%) cited the CCCCCO's call to prioritize antiracism after the murder of George Floyd as impactful.

RQ2 was "How are those colleges going about developing and implementing antiracist policies, programs, and practices?" Like RQ1, this question was addressed through the subquestions derived from it. Sub-RQ2a was "Which specific areas are being addressed?" Quantitative results indicated all six areas of the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action* were being addressed but only, on average, at a beginning implementation level. Qualitative findings added the overarching area being addressed was equity, and it was being addressed through antiracist practices directed toward faculty and students. Sub-RQ2b was "What steps are colleges taking to undertake these changes? Who is involved? What are they doing?" Qualitative findings used to address this question were (a) antiracism is a focus of planning and review practices and (b) antiracist work involves professional development for faculty and open, collaborative dialogue among multiple stakeholder groups. Sub-RQ2c was "What, if any, improvements (measurable or perceived) have resulted from these changes?" The qualitative finding used to address this question was increased antiracist dialogue generates measurable action but more needs to be done. Chapter 5 includes the discussion, implications, recommendations, and conclusions drawn from these results.

Chapter 5 - Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the study and findings derived from the data analysis. It begins with an overview of the problem, followed by the purpose of the study and a review of the methodology and data analysis. Next is a discussion of study findings, organized by research question, and connection between study findings and the literature review. The chapter ends with implications, recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

Overview of the Problem

California Community Colleges (CCC), the largest, most diverse, public college system in the United States, serves over 2.1 million students in 116 colleges throughout California (CCC Chancellor's Office [CCCCO], 2020d). Although access to CCC has increased for minoritized students, colleges have struggled to close equity gaps and provide opportunities leading to educational equity. Informed by this knowledge and motivated by the mission to provide equitable educational opportunities for all students, the CCCCCO developed guiding goals to improve student outcomes (Foundation for CCC, 2019) and a *Call to Action* (CCCCO, 2020c) to address systemic racial injustice. Understanding how colleges have been creating, implementing, and measuring programs, policies, and practices in response to these guiding goals and the call to action can help identify and understand the key components of antiracist work in CCC.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how CCC were aligning work with the *Call to Action* (CCCCO, 2020c) for every college in the system to strategize and take action against systemic racism. This study focused on identifying colleges in the CCC system that had made changes or were in the process of making changes to policies, programs, or practices to address structural racism. The study addressed factors that led colleges to engage in antiracist analysis

and change. An exploration was conducted of the processes colleges used—or were using—to identify racist policies, programs, or practices participants perceived to have contributed to structural racism. Lastly, processes colleges used to develop antiracist policies, practices, or programs and the ways in which they measured success were explored.

Review of the Methodology and Data Analysis

A transformative and explanatory mixed-methods design was selected for this study. The transformative design allowed the researcher to explore issues of power, privilege, oppression, cultural complexity, and social justice (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017; Mertens, 2007). The explanatory mixed-methods design allowed the researcher to explore the problem through both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The following research questions guided the research study:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What is the level of engagement among CCC in examining and changing policies, programs, and practices to promote antiracism?

- Sub-RQ1a: Which CCC are engaging in antiracist work?
- Sub-RQ1b: What are the factors motivating those institutions to do so?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): How are those colleges going about developing and implementing antiracist policies, programs, and practices?

- Sub-RQ2a: Which specific areas are being addressed?
- Sub-RQ2b: What steps are colleges taking to undertake these changes? Who is involved? What are they doing?
- Sub-RQ2c: What, if any, improvements (measurable or perceived) have resulted from these changes?

Data were collected through a quantitative survey and six qualitative focus group interviews. A sample of 42 CCC chief executive officers (CEOs) participated in the quantitative portion of this study by completing an online survey distributed through Qualtrics software. A sample of 24 community college professionals from six CCC participated in the qualitative portion of this study by answering semistructured questions in focus groups interviews. Data analysis was completed using Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, and NVivo software. Quantitative data analysis was used to answer RQ1 and both subquestions associated with this question (i.e., Sub-RQ1a and Sub-RQ1b). Quantitative data analysis was also used to answer a portion of Sub-RQ2a. Qualitative data analysis was used to answer RQ2 and all subquestions associated with this question (i.e., Sub-RQ2a, Sub-RQ2b, and Sub-RQ2c).

Discussion and Interpretation of Study Findings

The study revealed several key findings regarding how CCC have been aligning their work with the CCCCCO (2020c) *Call to Action* to strategize and take action against systemic racism. Quantitative data revealed some antiracist work to address structural racism was being conducted at 40 of the 42 respondents' institutions. In addition, three significant factors were cited as impactful by at least 50% of respondents as having the greatest influence on their decision to prioritize antiracist work: (a) institutional commitment to equity; (b) the CEO's personal commitment to antiracism; and (c) the mission, vision, and values of the district or college. Quantitative data also revealed a wide range of variation in the degree to which colleges were addressing the six areas the *Call to Action* (CCCCCO, 2020c) outlined. Although areas being addressed ranged across colleges, the highest area of implementation was "hosting open dialogue to address campus climate" (see Appendix A for the survey protocol). The lowest area of

implementation was “auditing classroom climate and creating an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum.”

Qualitative data analysis revealed four themes: (a) Equity Is Being Addressed Through Antiracist Practices; (b) Antiracism Is a Focus of Planning and Review Practices; (c) Antiracist Work Involves Professional Development for Faculty and Open, Collaborative Dialogue Among Multiple Stakeholder Groups; and (d) Increased Antiracist Dialogue Generates Measurable Action but More Needs to Be Done. Presented next is the discussion of the study’s findings, organized by research questions and themes.

RQ1: What Is the Level of Engagement Among CCC in Examining and Changing Policies, Programs, and Practices to Promote Antiracism?

Almost one third of all CEOs serving in the CCC system participated in this study, and the vast majority (38 out of 42) indicated their colleges were responding to the CCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action*. Four CEOs indicated they were not responding to the call and shared three key reasons for making this decision. First, antiracist work was already being developed, implemented, and evaluated at one community college. For this reason, the CEO at this college stated they were not directly responding to the call to action because the members at this college had already been engaged in antiracist work. This response suggests this CEO valued and prioritized antiracist work long before the CCCCO released the call to action. Second, another CEO highlighted college stakeholders were just beginning to think about equity work in terms of antiracist work. For this college, stakeholders were still in the discussion phase of the call to action, as plans had not yet been actualized. Third, two college CEOs shared they were choosing not to engage in antiracist work at all. These leaders were a small minority—only 5% in this study—and they reported ideological and political resistance in their institutions prevented them

from responding. Resistance at one college came directly from the executive leadership, faculty, and staff. Resistance at the second college came from their board of trustees, responsible for hiring the CEO and setting the policy agenda for the college.

Study data showed variation in the degree to which CCC leaders were addressing the six areas outlined in the call to action. This variation could be the result of several factors. First, the call to action had been released less than a year before the survey for this study was distributed. Although many colleges may have been engaging in antiracist work prior to the call to action, this work may not have been situated in the six areas outlined. In addition, CEOs were asked to self-report on how far along they felt their colleges were in their antiracism activities. It is possible one CEO's perception of full implementation was different from another CEO's. For example, full implementation to one CEO could have meant implementing a program with the goal of addressing antiracism, whereas full implementation to another CEO could have meant developing antiracist goals in every aspect of the colleges' planning, review, and prioritization processes. It is also possible CEOs had not yet conducted a collegewide assessment, with multiple stakeholders, of antiracist work. When the CCCCCO released the call to action, it did not prescribe accountability measures. In addition, the CCCCCO did not provide a tool for self-assessment, and funding was not allocated along with the call to action. Therefore, CEOs responding to this study survey may not have assessed the degree to which their colleges were addressing each of the six areas outlined in the call to action.

Results of this study suggest a large majority of CEOs serving in the CCC system value and prioritize antiracist work, even if they are not directly responding to the call to action. Only 14% of respondents stated the call to action was a factor that motivated them to prioritize this work. This finding suggests antiracist work is important to college CEOs, and they had been

prioritizing it prior to the release of the CCCCCO's (2020c) *Call to Action*. Although the call was not a motivating factor for most, it influenced the type of work being done and helped to accelerate and institutionalize antiracist projects and plans. For example, focus group participant FG2-JL¹ stated a new position focused on antiracist work was created due to the call to action, saying, "It took us a while to find the language, to figure out where we wanted to go, but [that] position definitely came from the call." According to FG2-AH, the CCCCCO also had an impact on student services. FG2-AH stated, "The call was to create a program, interrogate your process, remove barriers, do something specific with intention of creating conditions that matter for Black students to succeed." Some focus group members also spoke to the validation the call to action provided to those already engaged in antiracist work and the support it provided for integrating the work across college activities. FG5-AH shared, "This helps validate, so to speak, the work that some of us have been trying to do now for a while," and FG6-KL stated, "I think it gave some justification and support for the work that was siloed to start to come together." Findings from this study indicate the call to action provided validation, support, and momentum for antiracist work to become integrated into aspects of the college.

The rationale of the small minority of CCC CEOs who chose not to respond to the call to action provides insight into the impact language and shared understanding have on influencing antiracist work. One CEO stated:

We think the current movement against so-called systemic racism and so-called critical race theory is itself racist and is contrary to most everything we learned and achieved

¹ To maintain confidentiality while attributing responses to specific participants in the presentation of qualitative results, focus group participants were designated with a prefix indicating their focus group number (e.g., FG1, FG2), followed by a suffix indicating the specific participant's pseudonym.

over the decades since Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led us toward a much less racist, colorblind society than he had inherited in his day.

This statement depicts an ideological opposition to antiracist work and shows the significance of language, the need for operational definitions, and the importance of leaders being understanding of stakeholder's world view and life experiences. Another participant spoke directly to concerns about lack of clarity surrounding politicized language:

I don't know why [critical race theory] is being given so much time and space and energy when it's not actually what we're doing. . . . I'm baffled why it's so political and being given so much space, and also the fact that it is being given so much time and energy distracts from the actual work that needs to be done. So, it's a distraction tactic.

Another participant indicated a misunderstanding of critical race theory (CRT) may have contributed to its misuse in conversation, stating:

People who are offended by what they understand these concepts to mean, they brought in this theory, that is still controversial in the academy to essentially undermine a lot of the work that's being presented and again, misrepresenting, at least my understanding, of critical theory and critical race theory anyway.

These statements suggest when leaders do not have clear definitions and shared understanding with all stakeholders, the work needed to create conditions in which minoritized students can reach success may be undermined by stakeholders who do not align with or understand the goal of antiracist work. An absence of alignment and understanding could lead to a shift in focus away from student success toward highly politicized theories and concepts based on individuals' life experiences and personal understanding. When the focus of antiracist work shifts from student success, antiracist work is no longer about creating the best conditions to support student

success. FG2-DA explained how they dealt with this type of resistance: “We connect our statement with action and doing things. And, not only connecting to action but connecting to data.” Data help highlight where colleges are finding success in supporting students and where they are failing. The overarching point these leaders made is it is hard to deny racist policies, practices, and programs when data show specific groups of students are not finding success with opportunities colleges are providing. It is hard to deny, with these types of data, something needs to change. This finding is supported by research on the obligation gap from Shaw and Wallace (2018) and Sims et al. (2020). These authors discussed the responsibility equity-minded institutions have to ensure marginalized students are served. Findings from this study, corroborated by this research, suggest college administrators and faculty can use data to change institutions so the systems and programs in place better meet the needs of minoritized students.

The CEOs whose colleges were responding to the *Call to Action* (CCCCO, 2020c) identified three main motivating factors driving their work: (a) organizational commitment to equity; (b) personal responsibility to antiracism; and (c) alignment between the work and the mission, vision, and values of the district or college. As the most diverse higher education system in the country, and as a system committed to access and equity, it makes sense CEOs would prioritize antiracist work because it aligns with the overall mission and values of the CCC system. CCC have progressed toward equity by working to close gaps the system uses to measure student success. One way leaders in the system have demonstrated their commitment to equity has been through the implementation of statewide policies and regulations aimed at eliminating barriers for minoritized students. For example, state regulations like California Assembly Bill 705 (2017), a state law requiring CCCs to change course placement policies to maximize the probability students will enter and complete college-level courses in English and

math in their 1st year, has centered the equity conversation (CCCCO, n.d.-h). The shift in the state has permeated to districts and colleges in the CCC system, as demonstrated by CEOs selecting “institutional commitment to equity” as a motivating factor to prioritize antiracist work.

The majority of CEOs indicated their individual belief in the importance of antiracist work and responsibility for addressing racism was a motivating factor to prioritize antiracist work at their institution. These CEOs demonstrated an embodiment of the paradigm shift Sims et al. (2020) described: “An equity minded institution must take personal and collective responsibility for student success” (p. 26). However, not all CEOs were motivated by a personal commitment to antiracism. Seventeen CEOs indicated they were motivated to respond to the call by social factors or stakeholders’ interest in prioritizing institutional racism. These CEOs were motivated by external, rather than personal, factors. Nonetheless, CEOs have the role in the organization to build shared vision, collaborate to set priorities for the college, and inspire others toward action (AACC, 2018). Understanding the motivating factors that lead CEOs to prioritize antiracist work provides insight into the decision-making process of those responsible for building shared vision, setting priorities, and inspiring others.

RQ2: How Are Those Colleges Going About Developing and Implementing Antiracist Policies, Programs, and Practices?

The current research revealed four key themes demonstrating how college stakeholders were addressing systemic racism at their colleges: Equity Is Being Addressed Through Antiracist Practices; Antiracism Is a Focus of Planning and Review Practices; Antiracist Work Involves Professional Development for Faculty and Open, Collaborative Dialogue Among Multiple Stakeholders; and Increased Antiracist Dialogue Generates Measurable Action but More Needs to Be Done.

Theme 1: Equity Is Being Addressed Through Antiracist Practices

A common distinction was made about the difference between antiracism and equity.

FG1-WT expressed this difference:

I also think, early on, the institution may have made a mistake by linking so closely the concepts of antiracism and equity, rather than recognizing that antiracism is a part of the equity conversation. It is not the equity conversation.

At least one participant in each focus group identified antiracism as a critical component of equity that must be addressed. Some participants indicated “equity” was their preferred term, as it was more inclusive and provoked less resistance. Others underscored the power of using the terminology “antiracism” and said conversations began to shift when the call to action was released because it provided guidance and support for leadership to focus on antiracist work specifically. The call to action seemed to provide a framework for leaders to look at inequities in the CCC system, using race as a lens.

This shift in conversation aligns with research from Felix and Trinidad (2020), who cautioned against diluting the language in policies, specifically around topics of race and ethnicity. The authors suggested the intent of policy can be weakened over time due to color-evasive language. They further recommended focusing on a specific piece of equity is beneficial, if that focus is what is needed. Given the political and social context of 2020, the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action* asked college leaders to focus on race as a component of equity. Findings from this study support Felix and Trinidad’s recommendation in revealing the call to action provided support for having bold conversations centered on race and antiracism and was a part of the larger equity conversation in these colleges. Focusing on race in these conversations helped

college stakeholders address student and institutional needs sometimes overlooked when race was not centered in decision-making processes.

No matter the lens, college leaders engaging in antiracist work agreed both antiracist and equity work should focus on student success, with progress monitored by measurable outcomes. College leaders made it clear any learning or practice centered on antiracism was directed toward student success. Centering conversations about this work on quantifiable data helped keep student success as a focal point and gave rationale and direction for developing, implementing, and measuring antiracist policies, programs, and practices.

Theme 2: Antiracism Is a Focus of Planning and Review Practices

Study findings showed most colleges were developing and implementing antiracist practices through their existing institutional planning and review practices. Many were incorporating antiracist and equity goals into integrated plans; strategic plans; and diversity, equity, and inclusion plans. Multiple stakeholder groups, including administration, faculty, staff, students, and community members, were involved in developing these plans. Including antiracist goals in planning processes allowed for collegewide integration of activities to serve students of color, in contrast to traditionally disconnected programs that may struggle for recognition or resources and have limited ability to effect large-scale improvements.

College integration of antiracist goals also allowed leaders to develop performance indicators to measure success, provide rationale for resource allocation, create more opportunities for students, and tie outcomes to funding. When antiracist goals were included in the planning process, leaders and practitioners developing and implementing these programs had access to the support and resources needed to positively impact student success outcomes. This access is important because, as Garcia (2019) described, racialization of higher education has

predominantly privileged White students through funding, resources, and infrastructure. In addition, Sims et al. (2020) asserted equity-minded institutions have a responsibility to serve marginalized students. These researchers argued for the connection between resource allocation and the obligation college leaders have to serve minoritized students. This study supports findings in the literature demonstrating antiracist policy, practice, and program development, implementation, and evaluation could benefit by incorporating antiracist goals into college integrated planning processes.

Theme 3: Antiracist Work Involves Professional Development for Faculty and Open, Collaborative Dialogue Among Multiple Stakeholders

Hosting open dialogue with stakeholders was the area of the call to action CEOs rated with the highest level of implementation across all colleges. This finding is supported by literature that has shown engaging in dialogue is an important starting point in antiracist work. Kendi (2019) asserted clear definitions and relevant terms are needed to understand racial classification and why it matters. Simpson (2016) emphasized the importance of acknowledging cross-racial histories and the weight of racism at the beginning of antiracist work. This literature is corroborated by findings from this study. For example, one participant discussed meetings, stating:

Meetings are always a space to be able to check in, to talk about what we are feeling as it relates to some of the things that are going on in the world, like, “What are you bringing to this space? Let’s talk about where we’ve seen equity, where we’ve had success. Let’s ground ourselves in that so that we can have this meeting with intention, purpose, [and] focus on our students.”

Study findings demonstrate an alignment with Kendi's (2019) and Simpson's (2016) work, suggesting open dialogue is a critical component of antiracist work and can be a good place to start. Key approaches to open dialogue sessions included beginning with conversation, creating mutual understanding, providing a safe space, and developing relationships—all focused on creating an environment where leaders and practitioners can learn, grow, and support one another in advancing the work.

Although open dialogue may be critical to understanding others and laying a foundation for antiracist work, convening them does not come without challenges. As one participant shared, "It's very difficult to host open dialogue because there are so many deeply held positions that oftentimes really sadly obliterate others," adding, "Often times [things] arise in large, open forums because it just becomes too big, and the distance is too far." Participants noted facilitation of open forums sometimes leads to unintended consequences, creating resistance because conversations become politicized and personalized. When hosting open dialogues, it seems vital to take into consideration the size and composition of groups, facilitation and conflict-mediation skills of the host or facilitator, and sensitivity needed around topics that could trigger negative reactions. Open dialogues are foundational, but having highly skilled facilitators, intentional goals, and allocated resources could lead to more successful dialogues. Further, dialogue that results in action plans and specific action steps helps solidify an institution's commitment to antiracist work.

Another key area of findings centered on the importance of professional development for faculty in advancing antiracist work. The third item in the call to action spoke to "auditing classroom climate and creating an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum" (CCCCO, 2020c). This item received the lowest overall ratings of implementation.

The roles of faculty codified in statewide educational policy for the CCC suggest one reason for finding less progress in this area. Classroom climate and curriculum fall under the purview of faculty in the CCC. According to the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (2022), the primary function of faculty “is to make recommendations with respect to academic and professional matters” (p. 1), including curriculum, grading policies, and student success standards. As a result, curriculum changes cannot be implemented by administration alone. Administration can encourage, provide structure and resources for, and incentivize antiracist work in the classroom. It was apparent many college administration teams were, in fact, doing these things. However, as drivers of curriculum development and classroom climate, faculty members are the only group that can implement this type of work.

This restriction can be a challenge for leaders looking to change curriculum and the ways in which it is taught. Ideological differences, comfort level with antiracist topics, and political climate impact faculty member’s willingness and ability to implement curricular and classroom environmental changes. Without faculty taking the lead on this item, full implementation may never be reached. Study findings suggest professional development for faculty may help to alleviate or solve some of these challenges. Having a faculty development program that provided faculty with reassignment time to participate in an equity institute offered promise. By participating in this equity institute, faculty members were able to, as one participant put it, “develop their practitioner sense of equity, their equity consciousness.” Faculty development can take many forms, and the research indicates dedicated time supports the larger call to action goals.

Theme 4: Increased Antiracist Dialogue Generates Measurable Action but More Needs to Be Done

During focus group interviews, each participant was asked about improvements they observed at their college and whether those improvements were measurable or perceived. Each participant was able to point to one activity that helped change the culture of their institution; helped students find greater success; or helped the institution develop, implement, and evaluate antiracist policies, practices, or programs. Participants in all six focus groups reported they were implementing rigorous, quantitative data collection and analysis to track and disaggregate student success by racial and ethnic groups. These data collection and disaggregation processes served as the initial basis for highlighting equity gaps. Although specifics of the data were not discussed, focus group participants indicated they showed significant gaps in student success measures between minoritized students and their White counterparts. These gaps provided the motivation for leaders at CCC to address structural racism at their institutions.

Although leaders at these colleges had taken steps to increase student success and ensure equity, antiracist work being developed and implemented was in the infancy stage. College leaders were continuing to collect data, ensure data are accessible and user friendly, and analyze data to determine if changes being made to create antiracist college are producing desired outcomes. However, much of this work is new, and its effects are not yet measurable. Longitudinal data have yet to be analyzed to determine if desired results have been met. Study participants all agreed there was still much work to be done but asserted culture in their institutions was shifting, as evidenced by the types of conversations taking place, positions created to focus on antiracist work, tools created to assess equity, and antiracist goals created during planning processes. Challenges still existed for leaders implementing antiracist work.

These challenges included stakeholder resistance and lack of resources, accountability, dedicated professionals, and shared language. However, focus group participants remained hopeful, as progress and change were happening at each of their institutions.

Implications for Practice

Findings from this study can be used to inform the development, implementation, and measurement of antiracist policies, programs, and practices for community colleges across the state of California and across the United States. Participants shared key insights that can provide guidance to the field. The study included representatives from community colleges throughout the state of California different in size, location, student population, type of college, and surrounding community; yet, participants discussed similar activities taking place to address structural racism. Not all colleges were implementing each of the activities; however, the following lists could provide inspiration and guidance for colleges looking to create antiracist institutions.

College leaders looking to change or develop hiring and employee retention practices to become antiracist could consider the following activities:

- Incorporate an evaluation of antiracist practices and equity-focused classroom activities into the tenure self-evaluation process.
- Provide release time for faculty and staff as part of their contract to focus on equity and equitable practices.
- Revise and create job descriptions and analyze the ways in which positions are advertised to include language that demonstrates the college's commitment to antiracism and desire to employ equity-minded practitioners.

College leaders looking for guidance to help develop a process to include antiracist goals in the integrated planning process could consider the following activities:

- Create strategic master plans, educational master plans, equity plans, facility plans, and integrated plans that use explicit antiracism and equity language.
- Create positions dedicated to formulating and advancing antiracist or equity goals.

College leaders looking for assessment resources to determine if an existing policy, practice, or program is racist could consider these activities:

- Create equity frameworks or processes to review and evaluate programs for equity.
- Conduct curriculum audits to ensure course curriculum is equitable and topics are covered through an equity lens.
- Create consortium of community professionals, college faculty, students, and other stakeholders to review curriculum and practices in various disciplines.

College leaders looking to create opportunities for open dialogue could consider the following activities:

- Center student voices in development and implementation of antiracist work.
- Facilitate courageous conversations about equity, race, and student success.
- Create opportunities for college professionals to develop their equity and antiracist consciousness and develop more equitable practices.
- Provide professional development opportunities that focus on gaining awareness, knowledge, skills, and tools at all organizational levels, including state, district, and college.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of this study, the researcher has multiple recommendations for future research. The first recommendation is to conduct a qualitative study using a systematic procedure to analyze documents created to support antiracist work. Several participants discussed documents created to support the process of antiracist work, including strategic plans, equity plans, facility plans, equity rubrics, and scholarship-evaluation processes. A thorough review of these documents and the ways in which they support the development, implementation, and evaluation of antiracist policies, programs, and practices could provide even greater insight for leaders who hope to create antiracist colleges.

While this study was being developed and data were being collected, the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (2021) charged a taskforce to create “a framework for diversity officers to advance antiracism strategies, particularly anti-Black racism, at their respective institutions” (p. 5). The framework, titled *A Framework for Advancing Anti-Racism Strategy on Campus*, addresses 10 priority areas and provides a more comprehensive guide to combating racism at higher education institutions by identifying additional priorities and organizing them differently from the CCCCCO’s (2020c) *Call to Action*. This study revealed CCC are addressing several priority areas in the framework. An analysis of the CCCCCO’s *Call to Action* in relation to this framework would add context to the antiracist work already being implemented at CCC and illuminate additional areas colleges may need to address.

The researcher also recommends future studies focus on exploring the antiracist work happening across CCC in another 3 years, and again in 6 years, to provide an update on ways college stakeholders are addressing equity, specifically related to race. In addition, it would be helpful to learn more about the innovative antiracist work happening at CCC across the state

geared at eliminating systemic racism. Findings from this study suggest it is too early to collect valid and reliable data that would show the impact of antiracist work on student success at most colleges. Student success is measured over time and consists of students meeting certain milestones along their educational journey. This is a dynamic process that cannot be observed or explained at one point in time. Rather, this type of impact must be studied over a long period of time so patterns can be identified (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). Because most community college data are collected in 6-year cohort measurements (CCCCO, 2020e), the researcher recommends replicating this study in 6 years.

In addition, it may be helpful for future studies of antiracist practices to examine the ways in which performance indicators are designed and selected as a way to measure student success. Traditional measures of student success, such as graduation and retention rates, may not be adequate measures for understanding the impact of antiracist work. Future studies could explore how antiracist work affects indirect measures of success, or liberatory outcomes, as suggested by Garcia (2019). For example, examining the effect antiracist work has on the racial identity development or leadership development of students could be useful in understanding the impact antiracist work has on the holistic development of students and their success. Community college leaders around the nation could benefit from the collection and analysis of longitudinal student success data, both direct or indirect measures, as results could provide insight into whether changes made at institutions to eliminate systemic racism help students achieve their desired educational goals and help institutions become antiracist.

Conclusion

Community college leaders and practitioners have an obligation to provide equitable opportunities in their colleges and communities that will create a just society for students and

their families. To meet the demands of this obligation, it is important to find ways to deconstruct systems in colleges that perpetuate racism. Leaders must not be passive in this process but instead take an active approach in understanding how and why the system was built. College leaders need to interrogate their policies, practices, and programs to determine where the system creates barriers, rather than provides opportunities. College leaders and practitioners must actively search for ways to do better and put an end to the oppression minoritized students have faced throughout history.

During the summer months of 2020, the CCCCCO (2020c) acknowledged the pain students and communities were experiencing due to racial injustices existing in the United States and its colleges. Through this acknowledgement, the CCCCCO asked CCC leaders and practitioners to use their positions of “privilege, influence, and power to make a difference” (p.1) by addressing systemic racism at their colleges. This study showed most colleges in the CCC system were responding to this call. Participants in this study expressed a personal commitment to antiracist work and discussed the alignment of their commitment with the mission, vision, and values of CCC districts and colleges. Participants shared the call to action helped bring validation and urgency to the antiracist work already taking place at various CCC, and the call also inspired new work to address racial injustice. Community college leaders and practitioners have been demonstrating their commitment by reevaluating policies, practices, and programs through various measures, including equity frameworks, planning processes, and data collection and analysis. Antiracist work is critical to ensuring success in community colleges for all students of all backgrounds. More importantly, this work is critical to the effectiveness of CCC. CCC are prioritizing antiracist work, and as a result, they are changing the lives of their students.

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Appendix A - Survey Protocol

California Community College Journey Towards Racial Justice

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Dear California Community College CEO,

I invite you to participate in the following survey.

I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Cindy Miles and Dr. Linda Garcia in the Kansas State University, Community College Leadership Program. I am conducting a research study to explore the ways in which California Community Colleges (CCCs) are aligning their work with the CCC Chancellor's Office call to strategize and take action against structural racism in our colleges across the state.

The purpose of this study is to identify institutions within the CCC system that have made changes or are in the process of making changes to programs, practices, or policies to intentionally address structural racism. This study seeks to understand the factors that have contributed to this work becoming a priority in your district or college, and to understand the process your institution has undertaken to develop, implement, and evaluate this work.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey. Your responses will help shine a critical light on the range of approaches and types of antiracist work underway in community colleges across California.

Participation in this survey is voluntary, confidential, and greatly appreciated. You may withdraw your participation at any time without penalty. There are no known risks associated with participation in this study. The survey is expected to take 5-7 minutes.

Your survey responses will not be shared in a manner that ties them back directly to you. Your responses will not be shared, will not be identified with you, and data will be confidentially stored using pseudonyms. Individual responses will not be reported, but statistical analysis will be applied to combined scores, and data will be coded for common themes. Only the researcher will have access to your responses. The researcher has no intentions of sharing this data with future researchers. Should you wish to review the information you have provided, the data and for your responses only will be made available to you to confirm your responses.

The confidential information you provide will contribute not only to helping with my study but also has the potential to provide insights to community college leaders who are looking to develop, implement and evaluate antiracist policies, programs, and practices.

By completing this survey, you are agreeing to participate in exploratory research of an emerging, contemporary phenomenon.

Questions and comments about this study and survey may be directed to any of the following:

Angel Meraz, xxxxxx@email.com

KSU Dissertation Co-Chair Dr. Cindy Miles, xxxxxx@email.com

KSU Dissertation Co-Chair Dr. Lind Garcia, xxxxxx@email.com.

KSU University Research Compliance Office, xxxxxx@email.com

KSU IRB Chair, Rick Scheidt, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Understanding of consent conditions and permission is assumed if one proceeds with completing this survey.

IRB approved April 20, 2021

With gratitude for your participation,

Angel Meraz

Kansas State University Doctoral Candidate

Please click on the arrow to begin survey

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Block 6

Q1 Please specify your ethnicity.

- ☐ Caucasian
- ☐ African American
- ☐ Latino or Hispanic
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Native American
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Two or More
- ☐ Other/Unknown
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Q2 What gender do you identify as?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ Non-binary/third gender
- ☐ Other

Q3 Which of the following describe your role in leading your institution?

- ☐ College president in a multi-college district

- ☐ College president (superintendent/president) in a single-college district
- ☐ Chancellor in a multi-college district

Q4 How long have you served as a CEO of a community college or community college district?
Please include all years of service as a CEO.

- ☐ 3 years or less
- ☐ Between 4 and 5 years
- ☐ Between 6-10 years
- ☐ Between 11-15 years
- ☐ Between 16-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

Q5 How long have you served in your current position?

- ☐ 3 years or less
- ☐ Between 4 or 5 years
- ☐ Between 6-10 years
- ☐ Between 11-15 years
- ☐ Between 16-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

Q6 Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist work to address structural racism?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Display This Question:

If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = No

Q7 If your college or district leadership has chosen not to respond to the Chancellor's Call to Action, can you please provide a brief description as to why you made this decision.

Display This Question:

If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = No

Q8 Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Display This Question:

If Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes

Q9 If your college/district was engaging in antiracist work prior to the Chancellor's Call to

Action, please indicate to what degree the work aligned with the items listed in the Call to Action.

	Not Engaged (1)	Discussion Phase (2)	Beginning Implementation (3)	Advanced Implementation (4)	Full Implementation (5)	Measuring Results (6)
Conducting a system-wide review of law enforcement officers and first responder training and curriculum (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hosting open dialogue to address campus climate (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auditing classroom climate and creating an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your District/College Board is reviewing and updating your Equity plans with urgency (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shortening the time frame for the full implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Integration Plan (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Joining and engaging in the Vision Resource Center “Community Colleges for Change.” (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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End of Block: Block 6

Start of Block: Block 1

Display This Question:

If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor’s Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes

Q10 Please indicate the current level of your institution’s engagement in each of the 6 areas outlined in the Call to Action.

	Not Engaged	Discussion Phase	Beginning Implementation	Advanced Implementation	Full Implementation	Measuring Results
Conducting a system-wide review of law enforcement officers and first responder training and curriculum (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hosting open dialogue to address campus climate (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auditing classroom climate and creating an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your District/College Board is reviewing and updating your	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Not Engaged	Discussion Phase	Beginning Implementation	Advanced Implementation	Full Implementation	Measuring Results
Equity plans with urgency (4)						
Shortening the time frame for the full implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Integration Plan (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Joining and engaging in the Vision Resource Center “Community Colleges for Change.” (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 2

Display This Question:

*If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor’s Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes*

Q11 Please select the **top three factors** from the list below that had the greatest impact on your decision to prioritize antiracist work in your institution.

- ☐ Stakeholders interest in prioritizing institutional antiracism
- ☐ Board of Trustees interest in prioritizing institutional antiracism
- ☐ Chancellor’s Office call to prioritize antiracism
- ☐ Mission, Vision, Values of your district/college
- ☐ Institutional commitment to equity
- ☐ Institution’s strategic goals
- ☐ Social factors
- ☐ Political factors
- ☐ Historical factors
- ☐ Your personal commitment to antiracism
- ☐ Your personal experiences with racism

Display This Question:

*If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes*

Q12 Are there other factors, not listed above, that prompted your institution to prioritize antiracist work? If yes, please list them below.

End of Block: Block 2

Start of Block: Block 3

Display This Question:

*If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes*

Q13 Please select the top three factors from the list below that served as barriers or challenges in your institution's decision to prioritize, or not prioritize, antiracist work

- ☐ Board of Trustees interest in prioritizing institutional antiracism
 - ☐ Chancellor's Office call to prioritize antiracism
 - ☐ Fiscal Resources
 - ☐ Historical factors
 - ☐ Institutional commitment to equity
 - ☐ Institution's strategic goals
 - ☐ Knowledge or skills needed to respond
 - ☐ Mission, Vision, Values of your district/college
 - ☐ Political factors
 - ☐ Resistance of college/district faculty, staff, and/or leadership
 - ☐ Stakeholders interest in prioritizing institutional antiracism
 - ☐ Social factors
 - ☐ Too many initiatives
 - ☐ Your personal commitment to antiracism
 - ☐ Your personal experiences with racism
-

Display This Question:

*If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes*

Q14 Are there other factors, not listed above, that served as barriers or challenges to your institution's decision to prioritize antiracist work? If yes, please list them below.

Display This Question:

*If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes*

Q15 Do you feel that you have a strong executive team that helps support the engagement of and is committed to antiracist work?

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no

End of Block: Block 3

Start of Block: Block 4

Display This Question:

If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes

Q16 Please briefly describe one or two activities your institution is engaging in to address structural racism?

Display This Question:

If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes

Q17 What is something that you are really proud of, as it relates to antiracist work, happening in your college/district?

Display This Question:

If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes

Q18 Based on your experience in advancing antiracism in your institution, which of the following areas of training and development would you recommend an institution focus on to best prepare to start such work? Please click on the options below to highlight your response. Please choose all that apply.

- ☐ Diversity, equity, and inclusion training
- ☐ Unconscious bias
- ☐ Creating an inclusive climate
- ☐ Culturally competent curriculum
- ☐ Racial identity development
- ☐ Your institution's historical context related to race, racism and antiracism
- ☐ Your community's historical context related to race, racism and antiracism
- ☐ Crucial conversations about race, racism, and antiracism

Q19 What would help advance your institution's work in antiracist policy, program and practice development?

Display This Question:

*If Is your institution responding to the Chancellor's Office Call to Action by engaging in antiracist... = Yes
Or Did your college/district leadership decide to prioritize antiracist work prior to the Chancellor... = Yes*

Q20 I will be conducting follow-up focus groups with representatives from several institutions that are highly engaged in antiracism activities to identify promising practices and lessons learned. These focus groups will take place virtually through Zoom. Would you be interested in having your district/college participate in a focus group?

- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
-

Display This Question:

If I will be conducting follow-up focus groups with representatives from several institutions that... = Yes

Q21 If you are interested in having your institution participate in follow-up focus groups, would you please provide your contact information and that of your administrative assistant who would be available to help with scheduling?

End of Block: Block 4

Appendix B - Interview Protocol

For this first question, I am going to ask each of you to share:

1. Please share a little bit about your role at the college as it relates to developing, implementing, or evaluating antiracist programs, policies or procedures at your college.

For the rest of these questions, all or just one of you can answer these questions, whatever you all feel is more appropriate.

2. Has your college created a shared understanding of the term “antiracist”?
3. Are there other terms or specific language that have been important to define as your college has delved into the work of developing antiracist programs, practices and policies?
4. What effect, if any, did the Chancellor’s *Call to Action* have on the antiracist work you are doing here at your college?
5. I am going to share my screen with you so that I can display the areas outlined by the Chancellor’s *Call to Action* to address systemic racism. Can you please share your thoughts on the areas your college is addressing and to what degree?
 - A systemwide review of law enforcement officers and first responder training and curriculum
 - Campus leaders must host open dialogue and address campus climate
 - Campuses must audit classroom climate and create an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and antiracism curriculum
 - District boards review and update your equity plans with urgency
 - Shorten the time frame for the full implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Integration Plan
 - Join and engage in the Vision Resource Center “Community Colleges for Change.”
6. How is your college going about making these changes? Who is involved? What is their level of involvement?
7. What are some specific activities your college is engaging in that are helping you to identify racist programs, practices, or policies?
8. What are some specific activities your college is engaging in that are helping you to develop and implement antiracist programs, practices, or policies? Ideas or practices?
9. What, if any, improvements (measurable, perceived) have resulted from these changes?
10. What is one thing that you are most proud of regarding antiracist work at your college?

Appendix C - Email Invitation to Participate

Dear (CEO Name),

I invite you to participate in the following survey.

I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Cindy Miles and Dr. Linda Garcia in the Kansas State University, Community College Leadership Program. I am conducting a research study to explore the ways in which California Community Colleges (CCC) are aligning their work with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office call to strategize and take action against structural racism.

The purpose of this study is to identify colleges within the CCC system that have made changes or are in the process of making changes to programs, practices or policies to address structural racism. This study seeks to understand the factors that have contributed to this work becoming a priority in your district of college, and to understand the process your college has undertaken develop, implement and evaluate this work.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey. Your input is important in the exploration of the ways in which California Community Colleges (CCC) are aligning their work with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office call to strategize and take action against structural racism.

Participation in this voluntary survey is expected to take 5-7 minutes. By completing this survey, you are agreeing to participate in exploration research. Your input could guide other college leaders who seek to address structural racism at their college.

With gratitude for your participation,

Angel Meraz
Kansas State University Doctoral Candidate
College of the Desert, Counseling Faculty

Questions and comments about this survey should be directed to:

Angel Meraz, xxxxx@email.com or KSU Dissertation Chairs, Dr. Cindy Miles, xxxxx@email.com; Dr. Linda Garcia, xxxxx@email.com or; KSU University Research Compliance Office xxxxx@email.com

IRB approved