

An Introduction to the Equity Scorecard™

The Equity Scorecard™ is a process that helps institutions understand how to act to improve equitable outcomes. As an adaptive process, the Equity Scorecard™ offers the following:

❖ **Data tools.** The Equity Scorecard™ provides tools that help teams and institutions organize numerical data on key indicators of student outcomes (in access, retention, and excellence in completion) so that progress toward racial equity can be systematically and routinely monitored, and so that gaps can be identified and addressed.

❖ **An inquiry process.** The Equity Scorecard™ process guides campuses to go beyond the common practice of simply finding and reporting student outcome gaps and recommending a best practice that may or may not fit the institution's unique needs. Instead, the Equity Scorecard™ brings together individuals from the famous “silos” of higher education to inquire into their institution's data and become experts on institutional areas of inequity and how policies and practices may be contributing to them. This process involves a cycle of action inquiry, including identification of gaps in educational outcomes, inquiry into instructional and academic support practices, purposeful changes in practices based on the results of systematic inquiry, and evaluation of the effectiveness of changes.

❖ **A process of problem-solving.** The inquiry process helps team members collaboratively consider what in their institution may be contributing to inequities. Numerical data only call attention to the presence of equity gaps; they do not reveal what is causing the equity gaps or what the institution can do to eliminate them. The Equity Scorecard™ provides tools to assist team members study how their institution ‘does’ things through observations, interviews, document reviews, site visits, and other kinds of qualitative research. This in-depth inquiry often points to simple solutions that can have as much impact as expensive and time consuming programmatic overhauls.

❖ **A theory of change.** The tools, processes, and practices of the Equity Scorecard™ create the conditions that are needed for institutional members to create change. The Scorecard approach is premised on the idea that to bring about change, and attain racial equity in educational outcomes, it is important to express on campus the ways in which it is not working well for “African American” or “Latino” or “American Indian” or “Hmong” students and that it is therefore necessary to find out why what is being done is not working. This is a significant change from common approaches in which students are seen as responsible and expected to “fix” themselves. The Equity Scorecard™ asks faculty and staff to focus on what they can change, and therefore leads to real, meaningful action.

❖ **An approach to academic leadership.** The Equity Scorecard™ places the power to identify and make change in the hands of those on the ground level of an institution – the faculty and staff – who work directly with students.

❖ **An approach to embedding a culture of equity-mindedness.** Equity-minded practitioners are aware of the racial and ethnic inequities ingrained in our society and intentionally work to address them. As the culture of equity-mindedness spreads through campuses, it joins with more than 50 Equity Scorecard™ institutions across the nation working to achieve parity in higher education outcomes—a goal that, once realized, will improve our nation's social justice, global competitive edge, and economic future.