Taft College

Student Equity Plan Executive Summary

2022-2025

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Executive Summary

Taft College Background

Taft College, in the West Kern County Community College District, is located in the city of Taft, California, in the southwestern edge of the San Joaquin Valley in Kern County. Taft Junior College was established on August 30, 1922, as part of the Taft Union High School District, with classes first held on the high school campus. The school officially became Taft College on July 1, 1954, and in September of 1956 a separate campus opened in the current location at 29 Cougar Court adjacent to the high school. The West Kern Community College District was later formed and is a single-college district under the guidance of a five-member Board of Trustees. Taft College celebrated its Centennial year in 2022, proudly serving the educational needs of the community and region for one hundred years and counting.

The population of Taft was 9,327 at the 2010 census. In the 2021-2022 academic year, Taft College served 6,627 students including WESTEC, with an FTES count of 1,914.3. Of these, 46.3% were female, and 53.3% were male. By race or ethnicity, Asian students made up 1.5% of the population, Black or African American students made up 4.2%, Filipino students 0.9%, Hispanic students 65.6%, Pacific Islander students 0.2%, Native American students 0.4%, White students 22.1%, Mixed race students 2.3%, and other or unknown ethnicity 2.9%. Taft College draws students from the immediate and surrounding areas, including larger metropolitan areas within about a 30-mile radius.

When we removed our WESTEC students for the same 2021-2022 academic year, Taft College served 2,942 students, with an FTES count of 1,780.6. Of these, 68.8% were female, and 30.5% were male. By race or ethnicity, Asian and Pacific Islander students made up 3.2% of the population, Black or African American students made up 3.7%, Hispanic students 58.1%, Native American students 0.3%, White students 26.7%, Mixed race students 3.4%, and other or unknown ethnicity 1.0%. Taft College draws students from the immediate and surrounding areas, including larger metropolitan areas within about a 30-mile radius.

Taft College Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

Taft College is committed to creating a community of learners by enriching the lives of all students we serve through career technical education, transfer programs, foundational programs, and student support services. Taft College provides an equitable learning environment, defined by applied knowledge leading to students' achievement of their educational goals.

Vision

Taft College instills a passion for learning, leading to success for all.

Values

• Students and their success.

- A learning community with teaching excellence.
- An environment conducive to learning, fairness, dialogue, and continuous improvement.
- A communicative, collaborative, collegial, and respectful culture.
- A partnership of students, faculty, support services, and community. o Innovation, diversity, creativity, and critical thinking.
- Academic, financial, personal, and professional integrity.
- Employees and their professional development.
- A transparent, accessible, participative governance structure. o Innovation, diversity, creativity, and critical thinking.
- An environment conducive to learning, fairness, dialogue, and continuous improvement.

Academic and Career Programs at Taft College:

Ensuring that students complete degrees and certificates that will enhance our students' lives and promote economic growth in our community is an essential component of our mission. Taft College offers more than fifty academic and career technical educational degree and certificate programs, with 15 AS/AA Degrees for Transfer programs that align with our CSU partners.

Transfer Degrees:

- Administration of Justice for Transfer
- Art History for Transfer
- Biology for Transfer
- Business Administration for Transfer
- Early Childhood Education for Transfer
- Economics for Transfer
- Elementary Teacher Education for Transfer
- English for Transfer
- History for Transfer
- Kinesiology for Transfer
- Mathematics for Transfer
- Psychology for Transfer
- Law, Public Policy, and Society for Transfer
- Sociology for Transfer
- Spanish for Transfer
- Studio Arts for Transfer

Career Technical Educations degrees and certificates

Our Mission is to be a provider of quality career and technical education to enable students and employers to compete in a global market economy and be productive members of society.

Programs include:

- Administrative Services
- Allied Health
- Business Administration
- Court Reporting

- Criminal Justice Administration
- Dental Hygiene
- Disability Services
- Direct Support Education
- Early Care, Education and Family Services
- Energy Technology
- General Business
- Management
- Occupational Safety and Health

Planning Process

The creation of the Student Equity and Achievement Steering Workgroup (SEASW) was established to evaluate the success of goals and activities of the 2019-2022 Student Equity and Achievement Plan to identify where we have been successful in closing gaps in achievement for Disproportionately Impacted (DI) student groups, and areas of growth to continue to focus on improvement. SEASW is composed of faculty, staff, administrators, and the intentional inclusion of a former student who currently works as a tutor for the campus. SEASW established working norms in creating an equitable learning environment that was based on authenticity, collegiality, and self-awareness. These norms were utilized to guide conversations around student equity work and established a post-pandemic framework of "Equity First" as a lens to create the 2022-2025 Student Equity and Achievement Plan. The charge of SEASW was to:

- Review and evaluate successes and areas of growth from the 2019-2022 Student Equity and Achievement Plan.
- Collect and review data that identified achievement gaps of students identified in DI groups.
- Develop and create a 2022-2025 Student Equity and Achievement Plan
- Establish a standing Student Equity and Achievement Committee to implement and evaluate goals and activities identified in the plan to close achievement gaps.

In developing this plan, the college chose to prioritize equity using an "Equity First" approach with a student-ready mindset. This mindset is based on the belief that every student can succeed when provided the necessary resources and support and relies on a college dedicated to meeting students where they are, and the ability to adjust to ensure we can meet the needs of the students and community. This student-ready mindset includes structuring courses with support courses, creating a safe space for our students, ensuring that the college has appropriate staffing to support students' various identities, collaborating with our community partners, and increasing access to our public spaces. "Equity First" does not mean "everything to everyone" but providing each student the support and resources they need to mitigate barriers to success; providing individualized support and ensuring that students are treated as individuals and get what they need to be successful in achieving their educational goals.

The development of the 2022-2025 Student Equity plan is designed to ensure all goals are integrated, driving equity-mindedness as the college engages in data mining and data inquiry addressing achievement gaps. The Integrated Plan framework is driven by the college's mission and vision and is aligned with the college's Strategic Action Plan. Taft College is using the Guided Pathways framework to

refine existing programs, reduce duplication, expand resources, and support new opportunities for students while strengthening integration efforts across programs.

The primary goal of the Student Equity and Achievement Plan is to identify student populations that demonstrate a disproportionate impact in achieving the student success metrics of the CCCCO and to mitigate and close the achievement gap for disproportionately impacted groups as identified by the state Chancellor's Office. A secondary goal is to focus on additional groups identified by Taft College as those who could benefit from the "Equity First" activities, including historically racially minoritized students of color. An evaluation process will be implemented, applying defined metrics to achieve the goals. The data, assessment, metrics, and overall evaluation will continue to be discussed and reviewed by the Student Success Committee and by the Access Committee on an annual basis.

Identified Disproportionately Impacted Student Groups

The goals/outcomes and actions/activities in this Student Equity Plan address disparities and disproportionate impact on student success across disaggregated student equity groups, including gender, age, ethnicity, disability status, financial need, and foster youth status with specific actions to address disproportionate impact whenever observed in the data. Student success is defined using the Board of Governors' "success indicators," which capture rates of successful enrollment, Math and English course completion, persistence from Fall to Spring, Degree and Certificate completion, and transfers.

Based on data provided by California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) and local data indicates gaps in success metrics for the following student group at Taft College:

- Hispanic/Latino Men
- African American Students
- First Generation Students
- Low-Income Students

Taft College has an interest in promoting student success for students who were not identified among groups significantly Disproportionately Impacted within the Student Success Metrics (SSM) dashboard data provided but could benefit from equity-focused activities. These include groups identified by the Chancellor's Office in previous years as disproportionately impacted:

- Current or former foster youth
- Students with disabilities
- Veterans
- Racially minoritized Students of Color

Taft College has implemented several processes through the Guided Pathways initiative to ensure the institution consistently and regularly reviews its practices, activities, and policies integral to supporting an equitable learning experience for underserved students. Formal practices include monthly meetings attended by categorical program leaders to discuss services and support available for students (Student Services Staff Meeting, DSPS Staff Meeting, EOPS/CARE/CalWORKS Staff Meeting) and semi-annual advisory board committee meetings (DSPS, EOPS/CARE/CalWORKS). These categorical programs have

also created formal processes for referral to capture students identified from general populations who may benefit from categorical program support.

Other formalized institutional practices which support the coordination of equity-related programs include annual program review, mandated state and federal annual reporting, and categorical program plans. Through these formal processes, the faculty and administrative leadership responsible for various categorical programs and services coordinate efforts to recruit students, implement program plans, and align program goals with the district's identified institutional planning priorities (as specified in the district's Strategic Action Plan, EEO Plan, Educational Master Plan, and SEA Plan). In addition to reporting and planning practices, several faculty, staff, and administrative members from categorical programs serve on various shared governance committees, including the Governance Council, the Guided Pathways Oversight Committee, the Academic Development Committee, the 508 Accessibility Committee, Student Services Coordinators Team, and Strategic Enrollment Management Committee (SEMCOM). It is in these settings that the objectives and activities of categorical are shared with other college members, enhancing efforts to coordinate across categorical and college programs.

Identified Issues in Identifying Disproportionately Impacted Groups

Limitations in current data collection that allow for disaggregation within success metrics based on identified disproportionately impacted groups. For example, AB 540 students enrolled at Taft College receiving services associated with AB 540 are not disaggregated from Hispanic/Latino students or identified as a group within first-generation student data. Anecdotal information provided by the Student Equity Steering Committee indicates that barriers such as language and outreach to the community impact student success.

Limitations in data collection and the ability to analyze data for institutional planning purposes are based primarily on staffing shortages within Institutional Research, Tableau licenses. These issues are addressed in the Resources and Budgeting section of this report.

Enrollment data includes students enrolled in Westside Energy and Services Education Center (WESTEC), which provides short-term industry and job training for local industry partners that are primary employers for the region (Safety Classes, Law Enforcement, Court Reporting). These training classes range in time from one-day to two-week training modules and do not correspond to the Student Success Metrics identified by the Chancellor's office. Limitations on the ability to identify and disaggregate students enrolled in WESTEC courses at this time skew available student data in areas of completion of transfer-level math and English in the first year; persistence from Fall to Spring; degree/certificate completion in 3 years; and transfer to 4-year institutions.

Most men identified in our DI groups are full-time employees of industries in our energy sector (oil and petroleum industry). To be initially employed – and to remain employed – they must take short-term extended safety courses mandated for California oil producers. They complete these through our contracted education partner, WESTEC (Westside Energy Services Training and Education Center). While these courses also serve as entry-level courses to certificates through Taft College, students taking these courses are doing so primarily for the purpose of continued employment. Their success goals are not typically toward obtaining a college certificate or degree, rather their immediate goal is continued employment. However, Taft College realizes the importance of continued education to obtain certificates or degrees, so Taft College will continue to provide directed onsite academic counseling at

the WESTEC facility regularly and will begin a more robust outreach program directed to these students in Fall 2019, to be reassessed in Fall 2021.

Student Success Metrics

The California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) sets the student success metrics every three years. The metrics are closely aligned with the Chancellor's Vision for Success metrics. Colleges were instructed to use the Student Success Metrics (SSM) dashboard to ascertain DI for the following metrics:

- <u>Successful Enrollment</u> (percentage of first-time college students who applied and enrolled in the same year in a primary term)
- <u>Transfer-level math and English</u> (percentage of first-time college students who completed transfer-level math and English in the first year)
- Persistence (percentage of first-time college students who enrolled in the subsequent semester)
- <u>Vision Goal Completion</u> (percentage of first-time college students who completed a degree or certificate in three years)
- <u>Transfer</u> (percentage of first-time in college students who transferred to a four-year institution within three years)

Based on Institutional data and data provided by the Student Success Metrics dashboard, gaps in the proceeding student success metrics were identified for Hispanic/Latino men, and African American students, and indicates an intersection of first-generation, low-income students and AB 540 who fall into the identified racially minoritized groups. The three-year trend from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 for Hispanic males in the metrics indicates an upward trend of 1% each year in Math and English completion, persistence from Fall to Spring, degree/certificate completion and transfer. However, the overall percentages are still well below the statewide level. The three-year trend from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 for African American males, enrollment has declined slightly, and significant metrics such as completion of Math and English are "masked," which is defined by the SSM dashboard as "Under Complementary Suppression circumstances, the "All Masked Values" bar may represent a larger group together with small groups with <10 students. "All Masked Values" in this chart includes subgroups: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Filipino, Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native, Multiple Values Reported, Two or More Races, and Unknown/Non-Respondent." Data that was available indicated an increase in persistence from Fall to Spring and in degree/certificate attainment. However, these rates are still below the statewide level. Institutional data indicates an intersection between Hispanic student population, first-generation students, and low-income students.

Goals and Activities

The goals and activities to address barriers to success for disproportionately impacted students at Taft College were developed during an intensive workshop with the Student Equity Plan Steering Committee based on best practices that have been developed by student support services and instructional faculty and staff that includes successful student support efforts prior to the pandemic and reflect on the lessons learned in the post-pandemic semesters. The Student Equity Steering Committee identified five goals that align with the Guided Pathways Plan and the CCCCO Vision for Success metrics. The Taft College 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 Strategic Action Plan was utilized to identify gaps in achievement with the established institutional goals and data supporting Leading Indicators and Lagging Indicators to

identify gaps in success metrics experienced by students identified as Disproportional Impacted groups in racially minoritized, low income and first-generation student groups.

Goal #1: Increase access for African American and racially minoritized students of color.

Successful enrollment for African American students, inclusive of those at WESTEC, had declined in post-pandemic semesters from 760 students in 2018-19 to 299 students 2021-22. Similar declines in enrollment include Asian students reduced from 169 to 87, Native Americans from 78 to 28, and students identified as two or more races from 228 to 157 for the same period. The largest student population, Hispanic/Latino, also reflects a 20% drop in enrollment.

Successful enrollment of students exclusive of WESTEC declined similarly from 2018-19 to 2021-22. African American students declined in post-pandemic semesters from 155 students in 2018-19 to 73 students 2021-22. Similar declines in enrollment include Asian students reduced from 97 to 54, Native Americans from 21 to less than 10 but more than zero, and students identified as two or more races from 128 to 88 for the same time frame. Hispanic/Latino enrollment declined by over 60% when comparing 2018-19 and 2021-22. There is an opportunity to expand enrollment to non-traditional students and students who attended prior to the pandemic but still need to complete a degree/certificate to re-enter the path to completion.

Goal #2: Increase successful completion of transfer-level Math/English for first-year racially minoritized students of color (Hispanic/Latino, African American, Asian, Native American, bi/multi racially identified).

Completion of Math/English for first-year students remains low for DI groups, although success has increased by 1%-3% annually for Hispanic/Latino students. SSM data indicates that less than 10 African American and other racially minoritized groups of students completed Math/English in their first year. Both metrics are well below the institutional goal of 16% with room for improvement with intentional strategies.

Goal #3: Improve persistence rates for first-time college students from Fall to Spring.

Persistence from Fall to Spring semesters for Hispanic/Latino students has increased from 35% in 2018-19 to 48% in 2020-21, although it has declined for African American students and other racially minoritized DI groups. Metrics are well below the institutional goal of 87%. However, these numbers are based on total student enrollment for the time period, and WESTEC students may skew the persistence rates.

Goal #4: Improve Certificate/Degree attainment for Hispanic/Latino, African American, and racially minoritized students of color three-year completion rates.

Degree/Certificate completion has yet to meet the institutional metric to increase awards to 494. However, three year-completion from 2019-2022 was interrupted by the pandemic. The trend for Hispanic/Latino students indicates that female students attained awards of degrees/certificates at a higher rate than males. African American and other racially minoritized student award attainment has decreased each year.

Goal #5: Increase transfer to four-year institutions for Hispanic/Latino, African American, and other racially minoritized students of color.

The transfer rate for DI student groups remains a lagging indicator, with numbers in decline from the 2018 baseline. This metric has the greatest potential for growth over the next three years as the Guided Pathways plan implementation comes into effect.

Goals and Activities	Guided Pathway Pillar
Goal 1: Increase access for African American and racially	
minoritized students of color.	
1.1 Outreach to recruit new, underrepresented students in the	Clarify the path, enter the
community through direct marketing, sponsoring, and attending	path.
cultural events and direct outreach to non-traditional students with	
different language options.	
1.2 Outreach and academic counseling to WESTEC students to inform	Enter the path, stay on the
of educational advancement opportunities in industry specific jobs.	path, clarify the path.
1.3 Professional learning opportunities for instructional and non-	Ensure learning.
instructional faculty training on DEIAA.	
1.4 Clarify the Taft College website for easy accessibility to all	Clarify the path, enter the
students and potential students.	path.
1.5 Professional development related to Culturally responsive	
teaching strategies.	
1.6 Increase Group Advising opportunities and peer mentoring by	Clarify the path, stay on the
second year students.	path.
1.7 Expansion and/or implementation of culturally responsive	Enter the path, stay on the
student success programs (Puente, Umoja, A2MEND) for first year	path.
cohorts.	
1.8 Provide extended orientations for students	Enter the path
1.9 Strengthen partnerships with feeder high schools that serve	Clarify the path, enter the
underrepresented students, hold "Cougar Days" at high schools.	path.
Goal 2: Increase successful completion of transfer level	
Math/English for first-year racially minoritized student of color	
(Hispanic/Latino, African American, Asian, Native American,	
bi/multi racially identified).	
2.1 Creation and expansion of co-requisite courses that provide	Clarify the path, enter the
support for transfer level math/English.	path, stay on the path.
2.2 Continue use of peer mentoring and peer coaching services for	Stay on the path, ensure
identified student groups, with meaningful follow-up	learning.
2.3 Increase the range of courses available for tutoring, and hours of	Stay on the path, ensure
available tutors. Embedded tutoring and tutor training.	learning.
2.4 Provide professional development focusing on minimizing the	Stay on the path, ensure
achievement gap for students with disabilities, in and outside the	learning.
classroom.	
2.5 Peer tutoring opportunities, support for on campus student	Stay on the path, ensure
learning spaces and student learning spaces in the community.	learning.

2.6 Clarify the Taft College website for easy accessibility to all	Clarify the path, enter the
students and potential students.	path.
2.7 Expanded hours for academic advising and tutorial services	Stay on the path; ensure
	learning
Goal 3: Improve persistence rates from Fall to Spring for first time	
college students.	
3.1 Identify and provide additional financial support that allows	Clarify the path, stay on the
students to prioritize school while minimizing financial hardships	path.
3.2 Develop and establish recognition of "milestone" completion	Clarify the path, enter the
(i.e., First generation first year celebration)	path.
3.3 Establish and enhance use of peer mentoring and peer coaching	Stay on the path, ensure
services for identified student groups, with meaningful follow-up)	learning.
3.4 Provide Mental Health and Wellness Counseling to identified	Stay on the path, ensure
students through a college referral process.	learning.
3.5 Identify housing for homeless students within the community	Clarify the path, enter the
(e.g., dorm rooms on campus).	path. Stay on the path,
	ensure learning
3.6 Develop and establish learning communities	Stay on the path, ensure
	learning.
3.7 Flexible Course scheduling	Stay on the path, clarify the
	path
	+ '
3.8 Expand learning support services (peer tutoring)	Stay on the path
3.8 Expand learning support services (peer tutoring) 3.9 Establish a Welcome Center	Stay on the path Enter the path, stay on the
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5.4 Design and implement Transfer workshops for students	Clarify the path, ensure
	learning
5.5 Invite past graduates who have attained post-baccalaureate	Stay on the path, clarify the
degrees to speak to students	path
5.6 Establish intentional outreach and end of semester check-in with	Stay on the path, ensure
students (individually and groups)	learning

Resources and Budgeting

The DEIAA committee will be requesting a diversity coordinator position including appropriate support and space through the program review and budget development process for the 2023-2024 AY:

Request for Equity Funds	Amount Budgeted
Administrative and support salaries and wages	\$176,034
Benefits, STRS, PERS, OPEB, OASDI, other payroll costs	\$80,000
Consultants and contracts	\$27,950
Computer usage	\$13,000
Employee miscellaneous services	\$10,500
Tableau licenses	\$4500
Total	\$311,984

Goals Accomplished from 2019-2022 Student Equity Plan

Taft College has provided increased professional development on equity, gathered, and applied meaningful data on DI populations, and provided DI students with tangible resources and targeted services. Notable activities and achievements have included:

- Professional Development/Training:
 - Faculty ongoing opportunities for flex credit through Vision for Success related to equitable teaching practices, 2019-2023
 - Lunch and learn ongoing faculty seminars on diverse topics, 2020-2023, including (for example) Accessibility and Inclusion, Equity and the Law, Serving LGBTQ+ Students
 - Faculty inclusive teaching practices, professional development for flex credit, Fall 2020 series, Mathematics Pathways

- One-day training focused on staff and faculty groups, Dr. Frank Harris III, May 25, 2021
- Faculty in-service flex credit through CORA (Center for Organizational Responsibility and Advancement) webinars and NISOD (National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development) webinars, May 23-25, 2021
- College-wide workshop led by Dr. Tyrone Holmes, "The Impact of Unconscious Bias on Organizational Inclusion," August 16, 2021
- Faculty professional development in-service workshop, Cultural Curriculum Audit, May 23-25, 2022

Data:

- Development of DI data table
- Established data coaches

Student Resources:

- Student Resource Center (Food Pantry with Clothing needs)
- Lactation Room / Parents Room
- Veterans Resource Center

Student Support:

- Wellness Counseling (including mental health)
- TimelyCare (virtual health and well-being services for students)
- MESA Program (student support for math, engineering, and science students)
- NextUp Program (support for foster youth)

Analysis of Past Plan Goals

Goals:	Activities:	Status:
Access: Improve access by one percent	"Equity First." Communication strategy. Persistence support.	☐Yes ☒ In progress ☐Not
•		Completed
Course Completion: Improve	Peer mentors Success Coaches,	□Yes ⊠ In progress □Not
course completion success rate	Completion Coaches Success	Completed
by one percent	Plus	
Degree/Certificate Completion:	Success Coaches, Completion	□Yes 図 In progress □Not
Improve program completion	Coaches Enrollment	Completed
success rates by 5%.	management plans	
Transfer	Success Coaches, Completion	□Yes 図 In progress □Not
	Coaches Enrollment	Completed
	management plans	

Activities used to achieve previous equity goals:

• "Equity First" – provide outreach and services for students identified in Equity focus.

- Communication Strategy targeted online communication and community organizing.
- Persistence Support assigned student peers with special training in persistence support.
- Peer Mentors student peers with special training in creating a support relationship.
- Success Coaches student peers with support training in writing, library use, etc.
- Completion Coaches student peers with specialized training in degree completion.
- Enrollment Management optimizing program design, delivery.
- Student resources as needed (e.g., food pantry, Veterans Center)
- Student support as needed (e.g., wellness counseling)

Appendix

Data Charts for the following metrics and years

Successful Enrollment 2018-2021 (Ethnicity, Gender, first-generation status, low-income status, age)

Completion of transfer-level math/English in first year 2018-2021 (Ethnicity, Gender, first-generation status, low-income status, age)

Persistence from Fall to Spring 2018-2021 (Ethnicity, Gender, first-generation status, low-income status, age)

Degree/Certificate Awarded 2018-2021 (Ethnicity, Gender, first-generation status, low-income status, age)

Transfer 2018-2021 (Ethnicity, Gender, first-generation status, low-income status, age)

Student Equity and Achievement Steering Workgroup:

Dr. Amar Abbott: High Tech Access Specialist/Faculty

Chris Aldaco: Student Outreach/Foster Youth/ AB 540

Cecilia Alvarado: Dean, Student Services

Dr. Damon Bell: Vice President, Student Services

Candace Duron: Counselor/Academic Senate President-Elect

Dr. Sharyn Eveland: Academic Senate President

Dr. Vicki Jacobi: Counselor/Articulation/Vice President, Academic Senate/Curriculum Chair

Dr. Xiaohong Li: Vice President of Information and Institutional Effectiveness

Dr. Leslie Minor: Vice President of Instruction

Orion Wise: Tutor

Mireya Zermeno: Admissions and Records