



## MEMORANDUM

**November 5, 2020**

**TO:** George Frasier and Marcie Sims, Co-Chairs, Green River College Strategic Planning Steering Committee for the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan

**FR:** MIG, Inc.

**RE:** Summary of Equity-Centered Strategic Visioning and Planning Steering Committee Meeting #2, October 19, 2020

**In attendance:**

**Steering Committee:**

- George Frasier, Vice President of College Advancement, Co-Chair
- Marcie Sims, English Faculty, Co-Chair
- Adam Beals, IP Advisor
- Shirley Bean, VP of Business Administrative Services / HR
- Deb Casey, VP of Student Affairs
- Tsai-En Cheng, Dean of Branch Locations
- Dani Crivello-Chang, Dean of Campus Life
- Philip Denman, Senior Director of College Relations
- Quintana Erwin, student
- Rolita Ezeonu, VP of Instruction
- Jamie Fitzgerald, Transfer Dean
- Jaeney Horne, UF President
- Lonnie Hunter, WFSE Shop Steward
- Nancy Kremer, Chair of College Council
- Leslie Kessler, Chair of IC
- Michela (Muhan) Li, Associated Student Government, Vice President
- Camella Morgan, Executive Director of IT / CIO
- Trustee Sharonne Navas
- Rob Olsen, Director of Facilities
- Kim Olson, IT Help Desk
- LeaAnn Simpson, Faculty BTAC
- Kyle Stevenson, Faculty History & Political Science (adjunct / associate)
- Wendy Stewart, VP of International Programs and Extended Learning
- Matt Swenson, Grants Director

- Su Hoon Tan, SA Director of Auxiliary Services Student Engagement
- Amanda Walsh, Faculty Transitional Studies and Wellness
- Allison Warner, Director of Career and Advising Services
- Sidney Weldele-Wallace, CTE Dean

**MIG, Inc.:** Daniel Iacofano, Kate Joncas, Maria Mayer, Noé Noyola

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

On October 19, 2020, Green River College (GRC or the College) hosted the second of eight planned meetings of the Equity-Centered Strategic Visioning and Planning Steering Committee. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on the planning process and schedule; to summarize input from interviews and discussions conducted to date; and to review and refine the proposed discussion framework, format and agenda for the Equity Visioning Forum scheduled for October 23, 2020.

The agenda and presentation provided for the meeting are included in Appendix A, "Meeting Materials."

Steering Committee Co-Chairs George Frasier and Marcie Sims opened the meeting by welcoming all participants, briefly reviewing the agenda, and asking everyone to introduce themselves and their role at the College.

## **II. Project Overview**

Daniel Iacofano, MIG, Inc., lead facilitator for the strategic planning process, provided a brief update on the process timeline and current progress.

## **III. Summary of Input to Date**

### ***Emerging Themes and Issues***

Kate Joncas, MIG, Inc. provided a high-level summary of emerging themes and issues from input received to date through College community engagement, including retreats with the Board of Trustees and executive and administrative staff, Steering Committee Meeting #1, and stakeholder interviews with key communities of interest. These gave a general overview of input regarding: how to define and measure success for the planning effort; the greatest issues and challenges associated with developing the Strategic Plan; the key strengths and opportunities that can be leveraged in building the Plan; and how to further embed equity in both the process and all aspects of the College. Kate noted that this summary was based on a more detailed document compiling and correlating all input received the date, which will be

updated as engagement continues, and provided to the Steering Committee. This high-level summary is included in the presentation in Appendix A.

### ***Proposed Equity Forum Discussion Framework***

Next, Noé Noyola, MIG, Inc. presented the proposed framework for breakout group discussions at the Equity Forum, based on the key themes regarding equity that emerged from College community input. The framework began with a simple, high-level definition of equity as it occurs at Green River College—identified as a crucial key to the discussion: “Every single person gets what they need at Green River College to be successful in reaching their educational goals.” Noé explained that this is meant only as a starting point; it’s understood that further nuance will be incorporated based on feedback received during the Forum and the ongoing process. The framework went on to list six categories representing key areas of opportunity to embed equity at Green River College, again as emerging from early community feedback. Each of the discussion topics was accompanied by a “problem statement” giving more detail about the issues, challenges and opportunities associated with each. At the Equity Forum, participants will be divided into self-assigned breakout discussion groups with a facilitator and notetaker. They will be asked to: review and discuss the draft definition of equity and propose modifications as desired; address the problem statement for the assigned topic and identify specific actions, processes, policies, and programs to address it; and, for each proposed action, identify how success would be measured and what metrics and tracking mechanisms would be used. For each topic, prompting questions will be provided to help inspire and encourage the discussion. At the end of the discussion period, all participants will return to the main “room” and the facilitator and/or notetaker from each will provide a summary of their group’s discussion, based on the detailed notes taken during each.

Steering Committee members provided the following feedback on the Equity Discussion Framework:

- Concern was expressed that equity is being positioned as needs-based rather than focusing on the assets that communities bring and how equity can empower those assets. It’s crucial to embrace the reality that many of the issues faced by BIPOC communities are created by institutional and systemic racism. The draft framework appears to place the onus for fixing the system on communities of color rather than on the system itself.
- Before proposing solutions, it’s necessary to assess current processes, policies and practices at the College to uncover those which have inherently racist impacts. We must clarify the different systemic barriers for students, faculty, staff, etc. Consider—should there be a separate group to focus on this or should it be included as a lens for every topic group, possibly through creating a set of guiding values?

- It's crucial to shift the concept of "using an equity lens." Equity is not a set of eyeglasses which you put on and take off. What is needed is "Equity Lasic." Everyone must constantly pay attention to equity and anti-racism in every conversation, considering and recognizing barriers to equity at all times. Creating equitable processes and shifting GRC to an anti-racist college is the work and responsibility of all. If the equity conversation is segregated to one group, it sets up an "us and them" division and creates a limited committee trapped in analysis paralysis; it must be infused into every conversation.
- Calling this out and communicating it will be helpful to all, especially those just affiliated with College.
  - It's important to consider how to communicate to local junior high and high schools with college-bound programs and to potential students and their families what the College is doing to make everyone welcome and comfortable.
  - It's necessary to consider a broader definition of students—not just younger students entering with academic aims, but also those exploring training and capacity-building to enhance their current career or to shift careers. This isn't just the worker who got laid off at Boeing—it might also be someone like the "Tamale Lady," a street vendor who wants to legitimize and expand her business. The College must consider how to communicate opportunities to these potential students and must also identify the training needs of both the community and local industry in terms of training. GRC offers both small business training and an entrepreneur degree, but how to ensure that the Tamale Lady knows about those offerings? We must consider how to reach out through local networks to do so.
    - Also, the discussion of barriers must include considering what the Tamale Lady's barriers are to coming to and succeeding at College—including everything from completing paperwork to fully realizing her dreams. This must be considered as part of the "strengthening connections with local industry" discussion topic.
    - Another consideration emerges from the work of attracting undergraduates to STEM studies. Engaging these students with problems that are in their community and part of their daily experience has a greater impact on them and increases the likelihood they'll stay in college.
- It's important to discuss what it might look like to have not only more staff and faculty of color, but more non-racist white staff. Consider adding a prompt question for that topic area: "How do we build antiracist equity mindset capacity among all staff and faculty?"
- Each group will be asked to propose actions, policies, etc. that will help the College improve. We must think long-term as this must be applied consistently over time, and consider how to track and evaluate whether the intended changes are actually being made, as well as whether they are having the desired impacts in terms of both short- and long-term outcomes.

- When considering measurement and evaluation, note that the typical practices of using metrics, rubrics and checklists of actions are steeped in white organizational structure and culture. It's crucial to consider different ways of knowing, and include discussion of coping with the discomfort of non-closure.
- Establish this practice of reflection on current policies and practices as a guiding value / overall lens for the work. The work is constant and iterative; in order to maintain the laser focus on equity and barriers to equity, it must be based upon a consistent set of agreed-upon values, so that will be an important part of the work.

Steering Committee members were asked to communicate any additional feedback and suggested revisions to the Equity Discussion Framework within the next few days after the meeting.

#### **IV. Equity Visioning Forum Format and Agenda**

Daniel briefly described the planned format for the Equity Forum, which will consist of a presentation on the process, the emerging themes and issues from input to date, and the Equity Discussion Framework, followed by the breakout discussions and report-outs. Steering Committee members were asked to volunteer as facilitators and notetakers and state the topics in which they're most interested; MIG will also provide facilitation support for breakouts. A 30-minute facilitators' briefing will be scheduled prior to the Forum to prepare, and recorded for those who cannot attend, with a facilitator's guide provided for further support. Steering Committee members were also asked to activate their networks and do whatever they can to help draw people to the forum. George noted that an invitation will be going out this evening to the entire campus, including all students, stressing the importance of participating. Supervisors will be asked to be flexible in allowing people to participate. Per request, George will check on whether adjunct faculty can be compensated for their time and include that information in the messaging as well. Registration will likely be a two-step process which will include participants' identification of their top choices of discussion topic.

#### **V. Next Steps**

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will take place on Monday, November 16, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. The agenda includes a summary of the Equity Visioning Forum results and a more complete summary of preliminary results from the Environmental Scan.