

EpiCenter update

EpiCenter = Equity-minded Professional
Innovation Center

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EpiCenter Vision

The EpiCenter strives to build community and capacity among all employee groups to make SMC a place where everyone belongs and realizes their potential.

Why the EpiCenter?

The EpiCenter is Santa Monica College's Equity-minded Professional Innovation Center and the Professional Development hub for all employees. It is named for its dynamic role as a force with transformative effects that radiate outward. By advancing our professional skills, we not only enrich ourselves but also create a ripple effect that positively impacts our entire community.

Many External Initiatives and their relevance to the EpiCenter

Focus on Professional Development Recommendations

From

- SEP 2.0 Inquiry Phase Summary Report
- Equity Audit
- Redesign

SEP 2.0 Inquiry Phase Summary Report

Action Steps

Professional Development:
Support innovative,
sustained, equity-minded
professional development
for all employee groups
specifically addressing the
strengths, needs, and goals
of Black and Latinx
students.

Key Action Steps Identified

1. Transformative professional development to include:
 - mandatory training
 - identifying the leaders to implement this professional development as a broad priority
 - support from senior leadership to implement this goal throughout campus initiatives
2. Focus on hiring and supporting faculty who will participate in ***continuous education about current learning theories and practices.***
3. Professional development focused on ***understanding learning needs and environments for Black/African American and Latinx students*** that prioritize best teaching practices.
4. Provide resource allocations for ***ongoing training to cross-train all faculty and staff*** to effectively engage the social-emotional, academic, and basic needs of our Black/African American and Latinx students.
5. Establish and support collaborative networks to ***cultivate and promote equity-minded community building.***

Equity Audit

Recommendations

Key Themes: Clarity and Connection (lack thereof), Challenges to developing an equity ecosystem, Competencies for Student Success

Equity Audit Recommendations related to Professional Learning

1. Develop Employee Learning Pathways
2. Expand Equitizing Gateway Courses opportunities
3. Provide training and coaching for managers/administration with formal responsibilities over equity initiatives.
4. Develop leadership training (modules/workshops) for student leaders & student employees.
5. Revise the Data Coaching program
6. Develop a cohorted professional learning series that features external experts.

Redesign

Goals

Overarching Goals of
Redesign relevant to
Professional Development

Redesign Goals Related to Professional Learning

1. **Professional Development:** All faculty, staff, and administrators participate in strategic, frequent, and consistent professional development to sustain SMC's student-centered, equity-minded, data-driven efforts.
2. **Campus Community:** The college provides the physical and social space conducive to campus engagement and to a sense of belonging.

Action Steps, Recommendations & Goals

- SEP action steps - Supports 5 out of the 5 action steps of previous slide
- Equity Audit recommendations - Supports 1 & 3
- Redesign: All faculty, staff, and administrators participate in strategic, frequent, and consistent professional development to sustain SMC's student-centered, equity-minded, data-driven efforts.

Where we are:

- **Sustained equity professional development programs have been implemented across classified professionals (Classified Professional Equity Certificate - CPEC) and faculty (EGC - Equity Gateway Courses*).**
- **Equivalent manager equity PD is forthcoming.**
- **Development of the EpiCenter.**

*Note: EGC began before the EpiCenter by Dr. Tiffany Dowd & Dr. Chanté DeLoach. The EpiCenter strives to support to EGC. Currently Dr. Marisol Moreno heads the EGC along with Dr. Chanté DeLoach.

Action Steps, Recommendations & Goals

SEP action step: Focus on hiring and supporting faculty who will participate in continuous education about current learning theories and practices.

Where we are:

- EpiCenter supports new programming: ***Beyond Safe Zone*** created by Dr. Steph Anderson & Dr. Yamissette Westerband.

Action Steps, Recommendations & Goals

- SEP action steps 2, 3 & 5.
- Equity Audit recommendations - Supports 1
- Redesign: All faculty, staff, and administrators participate in strategic, frequent, and consistent professional development to sustain SMC's student-centered, equity-minded, data-driven efforts.

Where we are:

- EpiCenter also supports the *New Faculty Institute* (NFI**).

**NFI also began before the EpiCenter by Dr. Erin Cue. The EpiCenter continues to support NFI.

Action Steps, Recommendations & Goals

SEP action step 3: Professional development focused on understanding learning needs and environments for Black/African American and Latinx students that prioritize best teaching practices.

Where we are:

- EpiCenter supports the Professional Development Committee (PDC) programming of **Faculty Forums**.

Action Steps, Recommendations & Goals

SEP action step 5: Establish and support collaborative networks to cultivate and promote equity-minded community building.

Where we are:

- EpiCenter organizes monthly *Learning Lounges*.
- EpiCenter supports *Caring Campus*, an initiative begun for Classified Professionals in 2023.

Action Steps, Recommendations & Goals

Equity Audit: Develop Employee Learning Pathways to guide employees in accessing activities and programs best aligned with their interests and needs as it pertains to professional growth. This would include an inventory of all organized PD activities, when they take place during the year, expertise levels, modality, and resources.

Where we are:

- Monthly pathway professional development email from Abigail Orosz (PD Coordinator)

Collaboration Works!

We are a tight-knit team.

We have worked hard to build trust and learn from one another.

Working across different job classifications is possible and useful—we are weaving together different initiatives from our various perspectives.

Working collaboratively can be slow and messy...but the product is better.

The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.



Thanks from the EpiCenter Team!

- Silvana Carrion: Project Manager, NSF Grants, Manager Lead
- Amanda De La Torre: Student Services Specialist, Student Life, Classified Lead
- Dr. Kiersten Elliott: Dean of Community and Academic Relations, Manager Lead
- Dr. Lea Hald: Professor Psychology Department, Professional Development Committee chair, Faculty Lead
- Dr. Jessica Krug: Professor of English, Faculty Lead
- Erin O'Neill: Administrative Assistant, Campus Police, Classified Lead
- Hannah Mock: Administrative Assistant, EpiCenter
- Abigail Orosz: Professional Development Coordinator

Equity Audit Recommendations Update

6. Develop a cohorted professional learning series that features external experts.

Where we are:

- Our work primarily focuses on internal expertise.