

# Closing Student Achievement Equity Gaps

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## Closing Student Achievement Equity Gaps Event Report

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# Closing Student Achievement Equity Gaps

## Executive Summary:

The Office of the Provost (OtP), under the leadership of Ron Bramhall, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and Austin Hocker, Assistant Vice Provost for Data and Decision Support, convened the Closing Student Achievement Equity Gaps event on May 30, 2023, from 9am to 3pm at the EMU, Redwood Auditorium.

In 2022-2023, all undergraduate programs were asked to use newly provided disaggregated course level data and other sources to select a student achievement goal on which to focus future efforts— particularly where equity gaps exist (See Appendix 1: [University of Oregon Student Achievement Goals 2023](#)). Closing Student Achievement Equity Gaps brought together approximately 75 academic leaders (deans, associate deans, department heads, and vice provosts), and representatives of academic support units Undergraduate Education and Student Success (UESS), Teaching Engagement Program (TEP), UO Online, and UO Libraries to strategize around the student achievement goals created by undergraduate programs in 2022-2023 Annual Assessment.

The day consisted of morning presentations, information around promising practices, and facilitated conversations resulting in the identification of top strategies, and academic supports (services, resources, programs) related to strategies. This report provides a description of the process and results of the event.

Figure 1 shows how the Office of the Provost (OtP) expects the results of the event to be used to inform future work at different institutional levels. Ultimately, by spring 2024, all undergraduate programs must select a strategy to implement to move them towards their student achievement goals. The intention is that the results of this event will help units in that task and in future goal setting and implementation. This is meant to be ongoing work.

**Figure 1: Future Expectations**

Departments and Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure department level structures are in place to sustain this work over-time.</li><li>• Use strategies to inform department/program level strategies.</li><li>• Implement strategies – no time limit.</li><li>• Annual assessment reports – minimal reporting.</li></ul>
School and College Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use strategies to inform college/school level planning, support structures, and resource allocation.</li></ul>
Office of the Provost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connect academic support resources to strategies.</li><li>• Provide data that is close to practice to support student achievement goals.</li><li>• Develop and make better institutional structures.</li></ul>

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## Event Outcomes & Agenda:

1. Create strategies to address student achievement goals identified in Annual Assessment.
2. Acknowledge and learn from the work that people are doing in this space.
3. Connect academic support unit resources to strategies.
4. Create ownership and a sense of importance around the goal of closing student achievement equity gaps in academic units.

Agenda Item	Minutes	Time of Day
Welcome & Framing the Day	35	9:00-9:35
Institutional Equity Gaps	10	9:35-9:45
Learning From Our Colleagues: Sustaining the Work	35	9:45-10:20
BREAK	10	10:20-10:30
Promising Practices	35	10:30-11:05
Learning From Our Colleagues: Strategies that Work	35	11:05-11:40
LUNCH	45	11:40-12:25
Identifying Cluster Based Strategies	90	12:25-1:55
BREAK	10	1:55-2:05
Identifying Unit Level Strategies	45	2:05-2:50
Connecting Academic Supports to Strategies	45	2:05-2:50
Closing/Next Steps	10	2:50-3:00

(See Appendix 2: [Closing Student Achievement Equity Gaps - Slide Deck](#) to access the event PPT slides)

## Welcome & Framing the Day:

The welcome and framing session consisted of presentations from Interim Provost Janet Woodruff-Borden, Vice Provost of UESS, Kimberly Johnson, and Associate Vice Provost of Academic Affairs Ron Bramhall, and Associate Vice Provost of the Teaching Engagement Program (TEP), Lee Rumbarger. Topics included:

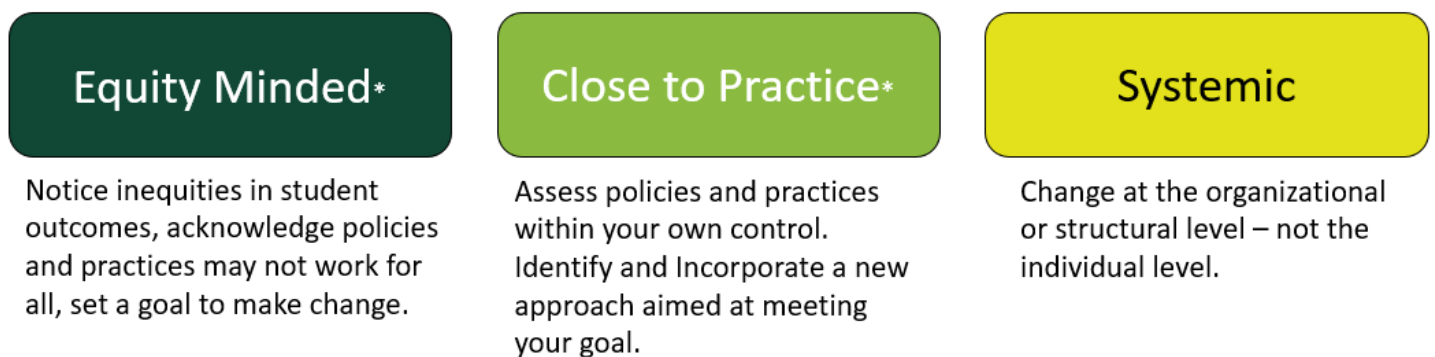
- The land acknowledgement and the connection to the event outcomes.
- Recognition of the hard work and time it will take to close student achievement equity gaps.
- Redesign of annual assessment including:
  - Provision of new data dashboards with disaggregated course level data.
  - Focus on autonomy for departments to identify and assess their own goals.
  - Streamlined reporting.
  - Expectation that the change process will be deliberate, iterative and occur over time.
- UESS guiding principles and priorities.
- Institutional priorities around equitable student achievement.

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- The new program assessment model.
- Introduction to student achievement goals.
- Future expectations (see Figure 1).
- Principles of focus for the event.

Three principles of focus shown in figure two were introduced and highlighted as critical to the event outcomes and future work. These principles were referenced throughout the day as units work together to create strategies.

**Figure 2: Principles of Focus**



Source: \*Center for Urban Education. (2020). *Equity minded inquiry series: Data Tools*. Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California.

## Institutional Equity Gaps:

Austin Hocker, the Assistant Vice Provost for Data and Decisional Support, presented institutional equity gap data highlighting that:

- While four-year graduate rates have increased on average for UO students' graduation rates for Latino/a/x, first generation, Pell-eligible, Native American, Black, and Pacific Islander students remain lower than the rates for UO students on average;
- Most students who don't graduate leave in the first two years and that Pell, first gen, Black, Latino/a/x Native American, and Pacific Islander are more likely than all UO students on average to leave in the first two years;
- Students who receive a DFN in their first two years are twice as likely to leave UO.

These data show the impact of receiving a DFN on retention and graduation rates, bringing these institution-wide measures "closer to practice" for academic units by connecting it to more locally impactable DFN rates of courses.

In addition, data were presented showing %DNFW equity gaps reductions from 2015 to 2022 for three separate courses in three different schools and colleges. The exemplars show that equity gaps reductions are possible but take long-term sustained effort.

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The session concluded with the OtP expectations around the long-term process of moving this work forward. Specifically highlighting the following timeline for programmatic and unit work around these efforts:

- **2022-23:** Noticing inequities, setting goals & identifying possible strategies.
- **2023-24:** Assessing policies and practices – choosing strategies.
- **2024-25:** Implementing strategies & reviewing outcomes.
- **2025-26:** Reflecting on outcomes and iterating.

## Learning from our Colleagues Sustaining the Work:

Participants engaged in a table talk intended to help units learn from each other about the internal processes or structures needed to sustain this work over time, and to create ownership of this work going forward. Participants were encouraged to take notes as they heard ideas from their colleagues that resonated and could be replicable. The session concluded with a share-out from tables of promising ideas. These ideas were intended to seed strategy ideas for later conversations.

## Promising Practices:

Participants heard two 15-minute presentations around promising practices for closing student achievement equity gaps and the course and program level.

## Course Level Presentation:

Associate Vice Provost Lee Rumbarger, and TEP Consultant Laurel Bastian presented research on course level strategies that have proven to work in closing equity gaps. The research was presented in five broad categories shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Closing Equity Gaps Research Categories**



The research presented from this session is summarized in Appendix 3: [Closing Equity Gaps – Research and Promising Practices](#).

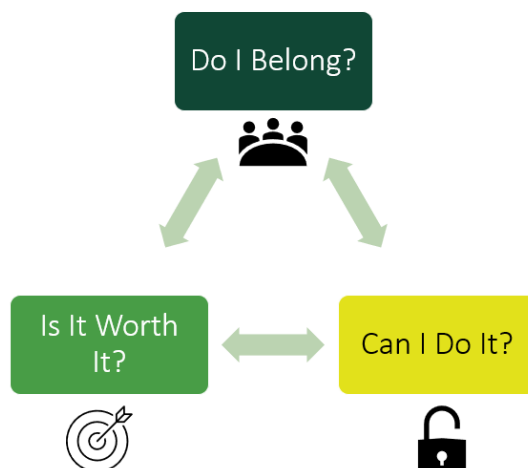
## Program Level Presentation:

Associate Vice Provost Ron Bramhall presented course level promising practices framed around three central questions presented in Figure 4 that serve to think about what students might be experiencing in our

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programs. Research and example strategies were presented and are included in Appendix 2: [Closing Student Achievement Equity Gaps - Slide Deck](#).

**Figure 4: Questions to Frame Student Experiences**



## Learning from our Colleagues: Strategies that Work

Participants engaged in a second table talk intended to recognize the work already being done in this space and learn from other units about strategies that are working. Again, participants were encouraged to take notes as they heard ideas from their colleagues that resonated and could be replicable. The session concluded with a share-out of one top idea from each table. These ideas were intended to seed strategy ideas for later conversations.

## Identifying Cluster Based Strategies:

Clusters of similar goal types submitted by programs in Annual Assessment were created prior to the event to help small mixed-unit groups identify systemic strategies that could help achieve the goals (Appendix 1: [University of Oregon Student Achievement Goals 2023](#)). Participants were organized around six cluster focused workshop boards. Facilitators at each board helped participants identify barriers (Appendix 4: [Identifying Cluster Based Barriers – Session Notes](#)) around goals in each cluster, and then led participants through The Workshop Method – a process created by the Institute of Cultural Affairs – to create a prioritize strategies based on two criteria:

- Which strategies would have the greatest impact in moving us towards our collective goals?
- Which of these would benefit most from institutional level support and resources?

Each participant had four votes – two for each for the criteria. The top cluster-based strategies and notes from this session are included in Appendix 5: [Identifying Cluster Based Strategies – Session Notes](#).

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## Identifying Unit Level Strategies:

Participants worked with their college, school, or divisional colleagues to identify top strategies that can be owned by their unit and have the greatest impact in moving them towards the student achievement goals identified by programs in their unit. Groups prioritized a maximum of five strategies to recommend to school, college, or division leadership. Top strategies are included below, documentation of all strategies is included in Appendix 6: [School, College, or Division Level Strategies - Session Notes](#).

### College of Arts and Sciences - Natural Sciences

- Proposal for larger budget for undergrad TA's and LA's (pay undergrad advisors) (21 Votes)
- Better integration for Tykeson and individual departments (8 Votes)
- Incorporate equity gap closing measures into faculty evaluations (8 Votes)

### College of Arts and Sciences – Humanities + Clark Honors College + History

- Curricular change
- Classroom practices
- Advising and storytelling

### College of Arts and Science – Social Sciences

- Build community – social belonging through outreach, small class sizes, events, so students feel connected and less likely to 'ghost' class (so we know why leaving class – if because of factors beyond our control) (3 votes)
- Provide resources to faculty to support teaching innovation (and make sure counts for promotion and tenure on on-going basis) (2 votes)
- Redesigning curricula for transparency and clear pathways (2 votes)

### College of Design

- Focus on strategies for students in year 1 and 2 (3 Votes)
  - On-boarding
  - Why are you here?
- Ask faculty: "what if sense of belonging explained 100% of the equity gap – what would you do"? (2 votes)
- Incentivize curriculum redesign to address equity – achievement gaps (2-votes)
- Review degree complexity (1 Vote)
- Early intervention strategies for "no-show" students (1 Vote)

### College of Education:

- Schedule and coordinate data sharing (talk/unpack grading standards) – 3 votes
- Identify training opportunities for expanding skillset (faculty, students, staff) – 3 votes
- Develop shared resources, process docs, rubrics, tools and materials for experiential learning and student support – 2 votes

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## Lundquist College of Business:

- Mentoring ecosystem (3 Votes)
- Alumni connections and systems (2 votes)
- Co-curricular requirement (2 Votes)
  - Expand beyond LCF
  - Badging
- Analyze data by demographic. (2 Votes)
- First-year experience – consistent (2 Votes)
  - Expand beyond ARC
  - Expand Flight school

## School of Journalism and Communications:

- Add official positions with titles to support departmental equity projects. These individuals can also work to create a shared understanding of policies across faculty (e.g., Mandatory attendance).
- Develop shared resources that document process, guidelines, rubrics, tools, and materials for experiential learning - (i.e., Formalize ways for learning that often requires expensive domestic and international travel to be shared with more students)
- Establish a culture of peer learning and coaching.
- Create easily manageable and transparent degree pathway (\* The SOJC has recently re-imagined and is about to implement a new curriculum in Fall 2024)
- Early intervention - provide support for faculty of high DFNW courses in identifying students who are struggling and create early intervention support resources for struggling students.

## Connecting Academic Supports to Strategies:

While representatives of schools, colleges and divisions worked together to create strategies, participants from academic support units worked to connect academic supports (services, resources, and programs) to the top cluster-based strategy ideas.

Academic support units identified support they currently have or could make available in the next year (Existing Supports) as well as support that could be obtained through grants of other institutional investments (Future Supports). Results from this session can be found in Appendix 7: [Connecting Academic Supports to Strategies – Brainstorming Session Notes](#).

## Closing and Next Steps:

See Figure 1 in the executive summary for future expectations from programs and departments, schools, colleges and divisions, and the Office of the Provost.



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Appendices:

Appendix 1: [University of Oregon Student Achievement Goals 2023](#)

Appendix 2: [Closing Student Achievement Equity Gaps - Slide Deck](#)

Appendix 3: [Closing Equity Gaps – Research and Promising Practices](#)

Appendix 4: [Identifying Cluster Based Barriers – Session Notes](#)

Appendix 5: [Identifying Cluster Based Strategies – Session Notes](#)

Appendix 6: [School, College, or Division Level Strategies - Session Notes](#)

Appendix 7: [Connecting Academic Supports to Strategies – Brainstorming Session Notes](#)