



**DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN FOR  
SOUTHEAST KENTUCKY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
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**Submitted by  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unlike most institutions in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College (SKCTC) did not peak in enrollment until 2011, and enrollment has declined since. However, a drop in enrollment of almost 30% from Fall 2013 to 2014 has grabbed everyone's attention. An additional concern, voiced by staff, is the decline in the economy of Eastern Kentucky. Higher wages are no longer prevalent, and unemployed workers will leave the area rather than be retrained for positions that will not pay at the level they previously enjoyed. This will be a marketing challenge. SKCTC, which is located in the Fifth Congressional District, continues to have a high percentage of adults 18 and over without a high school diploma or GED. SKCTC is accredited by the SACSCOC and offers a wide range of classroom and online course options through each of the five campuses in Cumberland, Harlan, Middlesboro, Pineville and Whitesburg. The Diversity Action Plan will align with the KCTCS and SKCTC Strategic Plans. Development of the SKCTC Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan will be grounded in the institutional mission, goals, and the Strategic Plan of the college and will continue the commitment to excellence and service to the community. The Plan establishes a unified direction for SKCTC and KCTCS for increasing not only enrollment and retention, but awareness. Further, it establishes responsibility, resources required, timetable, and method of evaluation, thus facilitating control of progress. The Plan is based on three focus areas:

1. Opportunity: Student and graduate demographics; goals for recruitment and enrollment of Blacks and underrepresented minorities (URM); recruitment and enrollment strategies.
2. Success: Identify high impact practices; goals for URMs and low-income student success metrics.
3. Impact: Set goals for increasing faculty and staff diversity; strategies to increase, retain, and promote diverse faculty, promote equity and inclusion, and monitor the campus and community environment; strategies to implement initiatives designed to increase the cultural competency of students, faculty and staff.

An appropriate plan for assessing each strategy is included in this report, followed by the conclusion/next steps and the references.

## INTRODUCTION

Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College (SKCTC) is a non-residential, two-year public institution dedicated to providing quality education opportunities for students planning to transfer to a baccalaureate degree or pursuing a two-year technical program. In the fall of 2015, the student population consisted of 54% females and 46% males, with 49% over 21 years of age. More than 90% of students received financial assistance in the 2014-15 academic year, with over 67% receiving the Pell Grant. SKCTC offers an extensive list of diploma and certificate programs and three Associate's degree programs: (1) Associate of Arts, (2) Associate of Science, and (3) Associate of Applied Science.

SKCTC is located in the heart of the Central Appalachian Coal Fields, with campuses in Harlan, Bell and Letcher Counties and serving neighboring Knox County. It serves the cities of Cumberland, Harlan, Whitesburg, Middlesboro and Pineville, as well as the outlying cities of Wise, VA, and Harrogate, TN.

Bell, Harlan, Knox, and Letcher Counties have been identified as a part of the Promise Zone Initiative because they are labeled distressed by the Appalachian Regional Commission. That



determination is based on literacy rates, income, and social conditions. SKCTC's service area is part of the Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) Initiative to improve education and employment rates. The College also hosts several grant programs, including the Eastern Kentucky Coal County Transformation Project (with Big Sandy and Hazard), Student Support Services, Upward Bound Math Science, Selling to the World, and Project Lead the Way, all of which work to improve educational attainment and the workforce.

### Opportunity

The service area maintains one of the lowest levels for educational attainment in the nation. The average educational attainment for Bell, Harlan, Letcher, and Knox counties are: 5.3% with a Bachelor's degree, 6.3% with an Associate's degree, 37.1% with a High School diploma, and 15.5% with some college but no degree (Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics 2014-2015). Only 37.7% of high school seniors are college-ready. SKCTC continues to strive to identify and address the needs of traditional and non-traditional students in response to individual abilities, backgrounds, interests, and experiences.

SKCTC’s target area’s population has declined in Bell, Harlan, and Letcher Counties, while Knox County has seen an increase. Table 1 shows the service area’s population and racial demographics. While it will be a challenge, SKCTC is committed to increasing enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates among minority student populations and increasing and retaining the employee minority population. SKCTC continually focuses on strategies to

Table 1: SKCTC Population Estimate						
County	AA/ Black	Hispanic	Two or More Races	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White
Bell	2.2%	0.7%	1.5%	0.2%	Z%	95.6%
Harlan	2.2%	0.7%	1.0%	0.1%	Z%	96.1%
Knox	1.1%	0.8%	1.1%	0.3%	Z%	97.1%
Letcher	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%	0%	98.8%
<i>Z - Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown.</i>						

improve student success. While there are obstacles to overcome concerning job and population loss, SKCTC has many opportunities to increase the

number of citizens obtaining an associate’s degree and training for a technical career. A seamless SEM plan is a much needed tool for student recruitment, retention and marketing efforts. To succeed, college-wide support and commitment to provide resources will be required. SKCTC was one of the KCTCS colleges that was consulted by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO) on developing an SEM plan. The SEM plan will define the college’s recruitment, retention and marketing goals and be aligned with KCTCS’s Strategic Plan. SKCTC’s Goals are:

**Goals – SKCTC Adopted 2010 by the SKCTC Faculty and Board of Directors**

1. Advance Excellence and Innovation in Teaching, Learning and Service
2. Increase Student Access, Transfer, and Success
3. Cultivate Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion
4. Enhance the Economic and Workforce Development of the Commonwealth
5. Promote the Recognition and Value of SKCTC and KCTCS

## **DIVERSITY PLANNING PROCESS**

The term "diversity" means difference, variance, and heterogeneity. The term is used to refer to different religions, social class, political philosophies, capabilities, accomplishments, sexual orientations, races, ethnic groups, and gender. It also includes LGBTQ, international, and disabled individuals. The work of this committee and recommendations focus on gender, racial, ethnic, and sexual orientation differences.

The Plan calls for leadership from the top. When the President and senior administrators endorse diversity programs and initiatives, they affirm that diversity is a core value and set the tone for action throughout the college. The appointment of a Chief Diversity Officer and establishment of a Cross functional team to replace the Campus Environment Team (CET) will be a visible commitment. With wide representation from administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community members, the new council will focus on major diversity initiatives. It is fitting at the outset to reiterate SKCTC's commitment to creating a diverse environment, along with the rationale for such a commitment in the Diversity Plan. The 2016-22 SKCTC Strategic Plan Goals align with the Diversity Plan.

### **2016-22 Strategic Plan Goals**

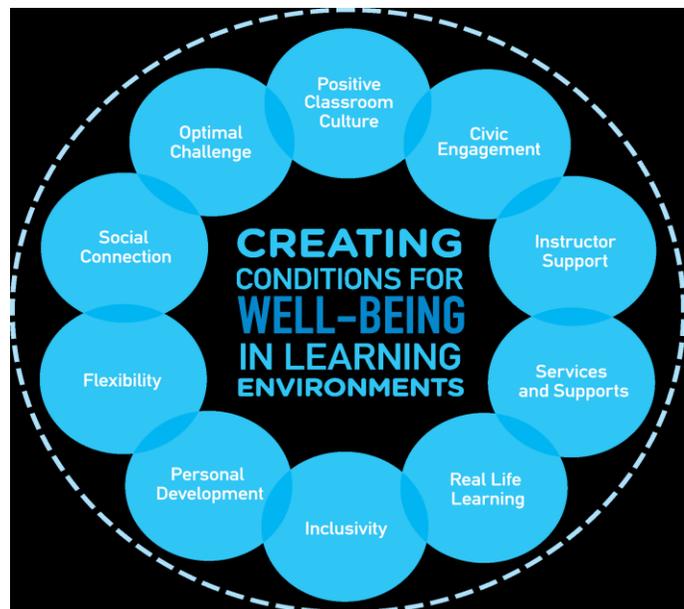
1. Raise the level of educational attainment in the Commonwealth by positioning SKCTC as the accessible, affordable, and relevant postsecondary education choice for Southeast Kentucky.
2. Increase access and success for all SKCTC students, particularly among traditionally underserved populations.
3. Develop clear pathways through all levels of postsecondary education with an emphasis on experiential learning that lead to successful employment outcomes for SKCTC graduates.
4. Improve student engagement, support, experiences, and success with the best-in-class academic and student services.
5. Align programs and curricula with the needs of employers that enhance the employability, job placement, and career development of SKCTC graduates. The Diversity aligns with KCTCS Strategic Plan, which list the values as: (1) flexibility and innovation, (2) quality and excellence, (3) openness and accountability, (4) continuous improvement, (5) data- and outcomes-driven decision-making, (6) inclusion, equity, respect, and global diversity, and (7) balance, collaboration, and teamwork.

Students learn better in a diverse setting. Students who experience the most racial and ethnic diversity in classrooms and in informal interactions on campus become better learners and citizens. Students who attend a truly diverse college are better prepared to live and work in a multi-cultural society and global economy. The Vice President of Diversity/Inclusion & Special Programs (Chief Diversity Officer) will serve on the President’s Cabinet and be responsible will:

- Develop and deliver education and training programs to promote and sustain diversity, inclusion, equity and respect.
- Facilitate cultural competence workshops.
- Propose, plan, and coordinate diversity seminars for students, staff, and faculty.
- Serve as **bias awareness** subject-matter expert (recruitment/employment/academic decisions).
- Provide consultation and coaching to managers to improve cross-cultural communication.
- Develop policy proposals and recommendations to foster a diverse and inclusive community.
- Provide other diversity and equity services as deemed appropriate.

The Plan calls for an environment fostering belongingness and uniqueness, which will improve group performance. SKCTC strives to be multicultural and inclusive so that diversity of knowledge perspectives of employees and students shape its strategy, work, core values, and management and operating systems. Figure 1 demonstrates the conditions required to create well-being in learning environments. The Plan argues that “the nation’s higher education institutions have endorsed the concept that racial and ethnic diversity should be one factor among many considered in admissions and hiring to provide a quality education for all students.”

**Figure 1**



The President will create a budget and provide valuable input. Each Cross Functional Team member (Table 2) will identify, implement, and evaluate goals. SKCTC’s commitment to diversity programs and services is strong and is built into the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan. It will assure continued access to a

diverse population, including low-income and first-generation students who historically have not had an opportunity to experience the American dream.

All staff and faculty will receive training in how to best support student success. The following initiatives are so important that they will require the best efforts of every employee:

1. Out-of-Class Support - Extensive free resources, including individual tutoring, libraries, and computer labs.
2. Integrated Career and Academic Advising - A full-service operation that helps students define who they are and identify career paths.
3. My Learning Plan - An online tool that prescribes courses students need to take to complete their academic program.
4. New Student Orientation - Offered in person, sets expectations early and introduces students to everything they'll need at SKCTC.
5. Student Coaching - We identify struggling students early so they stay enrolled, on track with assignments, and fully engaged.

<b>Table 2: SKCTC Cross Functional Team</b> (Italics Represent Minorities)	
Dr. Vic Adams	President
<i>Dr. Shelia Ahmad</i>	<i>Medical Doctor Harlan ARH</i>
Dr. Michelle Dykes-Anderson	Chief Institutional Advancement Officer
Sandra Brown	Academic Program Coordinator, East KY Coal County Transformation Project
Ron Brunty	Director of Admissions Whitesburg
Dr. Joel Michaelis	Chief Academic Officer
Sherry Clark	Interim Workforce Development Officer
Lisa Clay	Minority Community Committee
<i>Tammie Chapman</i>	Faculty (Minority)
Clara Clements	Retired Teacher (Minority)
<i>Paige Cloud</i>	<i>Assistant Professor Middlesboro</i>
<i>Dr. Herbert Douglas</i>	<i>Retired Professor</i>
<i>Jerry Edwards</i>	Harlan High School Teacher
Billie Franks	Chief HR Officer
Buffy Henry	Business Owner
Dr. Deborah Hodge	Student Support Services Academic Coordinator
<i>Deron Major</i>	<i>Former Student</i>
Dr. Rick Mason	Chief Institutional Effectiveness Officer
Mary Jo O'Bradovich	Retired School Teacher
Dr. Rebecca Parrott	Chief Student Affairs Officer
Joy Pennington	Nursing Coordinator
<i>Rajiv Singh</i>	<i>Faculty Middlesboro</i>
<i>Dr. Carolyn Sundy, Chair</i>	Chief Diversity Officer
<i>Tony Sweatt</i>	Director of Admissions
<i>Ronnie Walker</i>	<i>Community Member (retired nurse)</i>

One of the main goals of SKCTC recruiters is to increase the number of minority students. Recruiting ensures the enrollment process is clearly communicated and prospective

students know about admissions, financial aid, advising, and registration. The College Recruiter is the face of SKCTC in many aspects and is the facilitator for coordinating events and campus tours. Several other common responsibilities are: visiting all area high schools; attend college fairs; target non-traditional and traditional students; develop relationships with high school counselors; speak at public events; and provide follow-up communications. The College is dedicated to ensure the communities we serve know why we are the best choice in the region and provide efficient student access by providing support and information regardless of age and background.

### **Goals for SKCTC Recruiting Include: SKCTC SEM plan**

1. Provide support, assistance, guidance, and resources for potential students to meet their higher education needs.
2. Provide timely college information: policies, admission procedures, and enrollment.
3. Educate the community about the College and its programs and benefits through presentations, personal contact, visits, mailings, and on campus events.
4. Promote, and support a culture of higher education in the College's service area through outreach and recruiting activities including: college fairs, business fairs, community fairs, career fairs, local mall activities, community outreach events, and high school visits.
5. Work as a team with SKCTC faculty, staff, students, and alumni to attract new students.

### **Goals for SKCTC Retention Include: SKCTC SEM plan**

1. Advance the quality and management of the student advising process.
2. Establish a successful transition from secondary education, transfer, readmits or first-time college students to SKCTC by means of a Student Success Center.
3. Develop Individual Graduation Plans ensuring academic, transfer, and career success.

### **Marketing and Public Relations**

The SKCTC Marketing and Public Relations Office is designed to support the mission by enhancing public awareness and participation in college programs, services, and activities. It seeks to increase the overall visibility of the college and reinforce its brand and reputation. The Marketing & Public Relations Office Supports the Chief Diversity Officer by:

1. **Graphic Design Support** for events
  - International Entertainment & Food Festival, Super Someday, Black History Month Celebrations, Community Diversity Breakfast

2. **Marketing Support** for events through internal E-Blasts to faculty, staff, & students as well as press releases to local media outlets.
  - Photographs, graphics, program videos, student testimonials, and commercials designed to showcase student diversity.
  - Targeted messaging to specific disadvantaged groups, including URMs.
3. **Internal Coverage** for events with correlating news releases to local media with photographs. Southeast TV, streamed live and viewable worldwide, provides video coverage of events when possible.

#### **Recruitment, Enrollment, and Retention Strategies:**

- Strategic use of faculty in recruiting efforts.
- Establish community partnerships for recruiting non-traditional students
- Redesign Orientation to include more student resources for tutoring and campus tours.
- Develop targeted outreach plan to build pipelines, broaden the applicant pool, and admit an increased number of qualified students from underrepresented groups.
- Increase diversity competency of Office of Admissions staff.
- Increase financial aid resources to support the under-represented minority.
- Develop a strategic response team and response plans for bias-related incidents.
- Include a focus on diversity when building and strengthening university partnerships— alumni, business, community and government—to enhance diversity initiatives.
- Conduct research and identify relevant best practices that facilitate equitable student success.

#### **Success**

Research on high impact practices are identified in this section. Retention is defined as the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall. SKCTC has shifted focus toward advising and student accountability as the primary means for retention. The main goal is a campus environment where students can successfully complete their academic, transfer, and career goals that lead to successful completion of their academic program/certificate/diploma or transfer to another institution.

The Education Trust confirms that some colleges are more effective at defining and supporting student success, even when holding institutional and student characteristics constant. For instance, some small private colleges have retention rates of 95% for first-time, full-time

students, and larger, public institutions that provide support initiatives have achieved retention rates around 90%. While community colleges serve a wider variety of students, several Aspen Institute College Excellence Program finalists graduated 35–40% of their fall 2007 first-time, full-time student cohorts, several percentage points higher than the national average. What sets these institutions apart? While the programs they have created to support student success vary, they have made a commitment to student success.

### **Starfish Student Retention Software**

All faculty are encouraged to utilize Starfish software, which provides a personal student success network to faculty and staff. KCTCS uses Starfish to enhance the communications for students, instructors, and advisors by sending flags, referrals, kudos, and to-do's. If a faculty member believes a student in their class needs extra assistance, they can refer the student via Starfish to access tutoring. If the student has stopped responding to communication and has disconnected from the class, the instructor can recommend withdrawing from the course. The admissions staff has played an active role in assisting students with withdrawing from a course to prevent failing.

### **Faculty Engagement and Mentoring**

**“Students who are in more frequent contact with faculty members and receive more feedback on their performance show remarkable improvement in communicating in a group, competence in their specific field, awareness about their future occupation, and general problem-solving skills.”** (Bjorkland, Parente, & Sathiyathan, 2002).

Student engagement has focused on increasing achievement, positive behaviors, and a sense of belonging in students so they might remain in school (Taylor & Parsons, 2011). More recently, student engagement has been constructed around the goal of improving all students' abilities to learn how to learn or become lifelong learners in a knowledge-based society (Gilbert, 2007, p. 1). The more intensely students are engaged and involved in their own education, the more likely they are to do well, be satisfied with their educational experience, and stay in school (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Astin defined involvement as “the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience” (1984, p. 297).

One way to improve faculty-student engagement and feedback regarding classroom progress is to utilize Starfish software. Faculty, advisors, and counselors may send students flags, referrals, kudos, and to-do's, which are also visible to other employees who work with that student. For example, if a professor sends a red flag to a student for a need for tutoring to avoid

failing a course, the student's advisor and the staff of the Academic Support Center (tutoring lab) will be alerted and can reach out to the student for remediation. If a student receives a kudo for doing well in class, his or her advisor can also compliment the student on work well done, building relationships at a deeper level.

Research has shown that a teacher expectations have a powerful effect on student performance (Forsyth and McMillan, 1991). Teachers may create a warmer socioemotional climate for students for whom they have high expectations and also may give such students progressively more difficult and challenging learning materials. Similarly, teachers may provide those students for whom they have high expectations more opportunities to respond and increased informative feedback (Rosenthal, 1994).

*Faculty build a sense of community in and out of the classroom by:*

- Provide opportunities for students to get to know and learn from other students in the class.
- Use collaborative/cooperative assignments to foster social and academic integration.
- Use service-learning to create and emphasize community and to truly engage students.
- Require that students participate in online discussion groups.
- Provide academic advising in classes and teach students about other campus resources.
- Make sure counselors and advisors have information to work with students.
- Have a counselor and representatives from various student support services visit class.
- If syllabus is posted on the web, include links to various campus offices.
- If a student needs help, walk him or her to the proper office and make an introduction.
- If a research paper is required, arrange for a library orientation.
- Have a draft of the paper due early and make necessary referrals to tutoring.
- If computer use is required, schedule a session in the computer labs to familiarize students with hardware and software on campus.
- Provide extra credit for participating in on-campus activities and discipline-related clubs.

### **Developmental Education**

In October 2010, SKCTC was awarded a Title III Grant to Transform Developmental Education that ended September 30, 2015. According to CPE and 2014 ACT statistics, the average ACT score in Kentucky is 20.6. The average ACT score is 19.8 in Bell County, 18.2 in Harlan County and 19.2 in Letcher County. In Kentucky, only 31% of high school graduates met the math benchmark; 37% met the reading benchmark and 59% met the English benchmark.

Nationally, only 26% of high school graduates met all four of ACT's college readiness benchmarks; moreover, an even more astounding figure is that 31% of high school graduates did not meet any benchmarks. There is much work to do to close the gap of under-preparedness for incoming college students. For this reason, developmental education is continually being evaluated for effectiveness.

Faculty who teach developmental courses must encourage students to persist throughout their remedial work and assist in the transition to college-level courses. A Michigan State University (1998) study showed that students who take and complete developmental courses have greater retention rates than their peers. According to Saret, (2007) developmental education should be required for all underprepared students and that they be allowed to enroll in college-level courses simultaneously. The exception is that students underprepared in reading and writing should be required to complete developmental courses before beginning college-level work. Tinto (2002) argues that developmental programs have lower retention unless they are connected to the student's major and particularly to the skills the student needs to be successful in that curriculum. He advocates learning communities in which students obtain academic support and make progress toward degree completion at the same time.

Advising plays an integral role in the retention and graduation rates of all students, but particularly so for disadvantaged groups such as minority populations. A key component of advising that is often forgotten is career counseling. Conversations about life goals, careers, and suitable majors should occur at the first meeting between the student and advisor and continue through graduation. Doing so lessens time spent to attaining a credential as well as college expenses, while building stronger relationships between student and advisor.

### **Student and Employee Climate Surveys**

Research shows student perception of their learning environment and other college experiences influence persistence. All students are members of one or more cultural groups (e.g., URM and LGBTQ). If students experience a college culture very different from their own, they will have difficulty becoming connected. This is the situation in which many minority and first-generation students find themselves when embarking on a college experience (Saret, 2007). Students worry that in order to be successful in college they will have to abandon their group identity. They fear that their educational experiences will change them so that they will no longer "fit in" with their families or friends. Instead of demanding that students renounce

their previous relationships and cultural norms, faculty should assist students in becoming bicultural. Institutions and faculty must help students make connections by providing people, experiences and objects in the college culture that have linkages with students’ earlier cultural upbringing. For example, SKCTC has both a Black Student Union and LGBTQ group that support students and allows them to make connections with students and staff like themselves during their time at the college. There are also safe spaces on every campus that are clearly marked among faculty, staff, and administration. It is important to administer student surveys to determine practices students feel have either helped or hindered their progress and success. Often forgotten but equally important is to reach out to the students who stopped out to determine their perception of both barriers and supports while at SKCTC.

It is important to stay up to date regarding methods that both faculty and staff utilize to support underrepresented minority students. There may be employees who use innovative best practices that prove effective in improving retention and success rates of this population. It is also important to determine how the campus feels to minority staff. They should feel welcomed and valued, without hostility. Therefore, regular surveys comprised of both quantitative and qualitative data should be administered to faculty and staff.

Workshops and activities provided by faculty, counselors, advisors, and student educators will cover a range of diversity topics, including gender identity and inequalities, race, ethnicity, color, nationality, religion, disabilities, sexual orientation, inclusion, privilege, intercultural communication. The ultimate goal is to spur action and positive change to the campus climate through increased awareness, knowledge, and skills.

**Goal: 1% Enrollment Growth - Identify, recruit and enroll a diverse student body, guided by SKCTC enrollment targets.**

Table 3: Headcount by Race/Ethnicity, 2012-2016					
Race/ Ethnicity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 (Baseline)
African American/ Black	2.2%	2.11%	2.13%	1.94%	2.41%
Hispanic	0.4%	0.39%	0.42%	0.57%	0.58%
URM	3.7%	3.88%	3.73%	3.99%	4.82%

Table 3 reveals that the Black enrollment peaked in 2013-14, with Hispanic enrollment increasing slightly. STEM-H

Enrollment in Fall 2016: Non-Minority is 328 (95.3%) and Minority is 16 (4.7%). Enrollment comes principally from three counties: Bell, with the largest enrollment, Harlan, which is second largest number of enrollees, and Letcher, whose enrollment is slightly below that of Harlan County. Total enrollment declined in fall 2014, due primarily to a drop in Workforce. Even with this drop in total enrollment, percentages of minority enrollment remained stable. SKCTC’s overarching goal is to have 3.0% of its population represented by racial/ethnic minorities, which it has exceeded. Table 4 shows the goal set as a percentage increase in recruitment and enrollment for each category, according to the SEM Plan.

Table 4: SKCTC Percentage Range Goals for Recruitment and Enrollment						
Performance Metric: Undergraduate Enrollment	Baseline 15-16	Actual Fall 2016	Target Fall 2017	Target Fall 2018	Target Fall 2019	Target Fall 2020
African American	2.41%	2.17%	2.3%	2.3%	2.4%	2.4%
Hispanic	0.58%	0.70%	0.8%	0.9%	1.1%	1.2%
URM	4.82%	4.72%	5.1%	5.3%	5.6%	5.9%

According to the SEM Plan, Table 5 shows the goal set for retention and graduation for URM, this aligns with KCTC Strategic Plan 2016-22.

Table 5. URM Retention and Graduation Rates					
Measure: Student Success					
Metric	Definition	Baseline	Target	Objective	Strategies
1st to 2nd Year retention – URM	<i>Fall-to-fall retention rates of first-time, credential-seeking students by URM (American Indian/ Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and Two or More Races).</i>	39.6%	41.6%	Increase URM retention rate by 1.0 percentage points each year.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Actively target and recruit URM students through the following means/programs:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Dual Credit</li> <li>b. Southeast Scholars</li> <li>c. Upward Bound Math &amp; Science</li> <li>d. General Junior &amp; High School Recruitment</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Design and implement Student Success (Peer “Buddy System.”)</li> </ol>

					3. Target/Market to KTAP/D2P students and work to engage them in College activities.
Graduation rate - URM	<i>Cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who complete their program within 150% of normal time as reported to IPEDS limited to URM.</i>	22.0%	23.0%	Increase URM graduation rate by 1.0 percentage points each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Strategies above for URM retention. Graduation rate is closely related to retention.</li> </ul>

Table 6 lists the success rates and projected targets of URM students.

Table 6: URM Success Rates and Projected Targets										
Metric	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Baseline 2015-16	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
<b>3-Year Grad. Rate</b>										
Low-income	N/A%	23.7%	26.6%	29.2%	32.5%	30.2%	31.2%	32.2%	33.2%	34.2%
URM	50%	12.5%	10%	25%	30.8%	26%	27%	28%	29%	30%
<b>1st to 2nd-Year Retention</b>										
Low-income	60.6%	55.7%	57.6%	56.5%	61.6%	57.5%	58.5%	59.5%	60.5%	63%
URM	29.6%	40%	53.8%	61.1%	66.7%	62.1%	63.1%	64.1%	65.1%	70%
<b>Certificates/Diplomas/Associates Conferred</b>										
Low-income	839	766	919	804	725	764	773	783	793	803
URM	38	35	49	36	26	39	40	41	42	43

## IMPACT

Community colleges are a vital part of postsecondary education system. They serve almost half of the undergraduate students in the United States, providing open access to postsecondary education, preparing students for transfer to 4-year institutions, providing workforce development and skills training, and offering noncredit programs ranging from English as a second language to skills retraining to community enrichment programs or cultural activities. Globalization is driving changes in our economy, and the need for an educated workforce has never been greater. The majority of new jobs that will be created by 2020 will require some postsecondary education. Without community colleges, millions of students and adult learners would not be able to access the education they need to be prepared for further education or the workplace.

Campuses are complex social systems defined by relationships between the people, bureaucratic procedures, structural arrangements, institutional goals and values, traditions, and larger socio-historical environments. Therefore, any effort to redesign campuses with the goal of improving the climate for diversity must be comprehensive and long term. Institutions change slowly. Therefore, the success of efforts to achieve institutional change will rely on leadership, firm commitment, adequate resources, collaboration, monitoring, and long-range planning. Institutional change can be implemented at several levels.

Most important is the structural level. An institution should increase at all levels the number of previously excluded and underrepresented racial/ethnic minorities (i.e., students, faculty, staff, and administrators). Ideally minorities should be represented on the campus in proportionate numbers. While efforts to increase the representation of minorities on campus and to remove barriers to their participation are crucial, these steps alone are not sufficient to achieve the goal of improving the climate for diversity. Beyond the observable make-up of the students and faculty are the attitudinal and behavioral characteristics of how particular groups of individuals "feel" about and relate to one another. How does the campus "feel" to minority individuals (e.g., Do they feel welcome? Do they sense hostility? Do they feel valued?). How does the campus respond to racially and culturally different groups (e.g., Does the campus strive to change to incorporate these students or does the campus communicate that adaptation is the job of only the minority students? Does the campus genuinely value diversity?).

**Increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of faculty and staff.**

**Goal: 1% Increasing Minority Faculty and Staff. Identify, recruit, hire each year.**

The Chief Diversify Officer strongly encourages the college to aggressively and publicly defend principles of affirmative action in admissions, financial aid, and hiring decisions. One of the greatest challenges facing SKCTC involves creating and maintaining a campus community that reflects diversity. Diversity helps to:

1. Enrich the educational experience by providing students with the opportunity to learn from individuals who differ from them.
2. Promote personal growth and a healthy society by challenging stereotyped preconceptions, encouraging critical thinking and helping students learn to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds.
3. Strengthen communities and the workplace by preparing students for citizenship in an increasingly complex, pluralistic society, and fostering mutual respect and teamwork.

Table 7 demonstrates the diversity of SKCTC faculty and staff.

Table 7: SKCTC Faculty and Staff Diversity Rates						
Workforce Diversity	AA/Black	Hispanic	Two or More Races	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White
Instructional Faculty	3 (3.5%)	0	0	0	0	82 (96.4%)
Management Occupations	3 (13%)	0	0	0	0	20 (86.8%)

Table 8 lists projected targets of SKCTC faculty and staff diversity rates.

Table 8: SKCTC Faculty and Staff Diversity Projections						
Performance Metric: URM Workforce Diversity	Baseline 2015-16	Actual Fall 2016	Target Fall 2017	Target 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020
Instructional Faculty	3.8%	3.7%	4%	4.2%	4.5%	4.7%
Management Occupations	11.5%	13%	14.1%	15.2%	16.3%	17.4%

### **Strategies to increase and promote diverse faculty and staff.**

1. Select a diverse search committee, or a committee which includes at least one individual who would be at least an institutional peer to the position to be filled to serve as a diversity advocate empowered to promote and keep diversity goals active during the search
2. Consider Diversity training and unconscious bias awareness support for every search committee
3. Develop position descriptions and qualifying criteria that highlight a commitment to diversity, and interview questions and assessment instruments that evaluate candidates' commitment to and experience with diversity and inclusion
4. Network to build a deep and viable diverse pool of applicants- Networking must happen!
5. Contact existing professional and personal networks or seek assistance from AEO.
6. Examine campus customs which appear diversity neutral but might have the effect of limiting access to diverse candidates, including.
7. Grow your own minority faculty and staff.

### **Strategies to retain diverse staff at SKCTC**

1. Encourage everyone in the community to take responsibility for making the community welcome to all.
2. Establish networking and support groups for new faculty members. This is different than providing mentors for faculty of color exclusively, which might unintentionally lead to feelings of marginalization or a sense of being less qualified or need greater support.
3. Provide cross-cultural coaching and awareness for in faculty development workshops and employee orientation and professional development programs to increase retention by developing a diversity-friendly culture
4. Establish and strengthen cultural competency and multicultural respect.
5. Exit Interviews should be required for faculty and staff who leave the college– especially those considered diverse, and including tenure-track faculty who do not receive promotion and tenure, to gather information on potential climate issues
6. Make attendance at annual diversity professional development seminars and workshops part of annual staff performance reviews.

**Strategies to promote equity and inclusion and monitor the campus and community environment.**

1. Intentionally include historically, numerically, or culturally marginalized groups in planning, resource allocation, or decision-making teams to be inclusive.
2. Ask what appeals or is important to multicultural groups.
3. Encourage and support the participation and creation of academic, professional, cultural, and social activities that connect potentially marginalized individuals to the institution at large.

**Initiatives designed to increase the cultural competency of its student, faculty, and staff.**

While the term *cultural competence* first emerged over a decade ago, training is still not provided to all faculty, staff and students at most universities even though it is a crucial skill set for everyone. SKCTC will provide students opportunities to engage in group dialogue and workshops focused on diversity and inclusion and learn to recognize social, cultural and historical inequities. Applicable to students in all majors, cultural competency skills lend themselves to both professional as well as civic engagement later as alumni. Cultural competency among 21<sup>st</sup> Century graduates has become imperative as the job market globalizes. Workshops and activities provided by student peer educators will cover a range of diversity topics, including gender identity, gender inequalities, race, ethnicity, color, nationality, religion, disabilities, sexual orientation, privilege, intercultural communication. The ultimate goal of the training is to spur action and positive change to the campus climate through increased awareness, knowledge and skills.

**SKCTC will train faculty to infuse culture the curriculum by using these strategies:**

- Commit human and budgetary resources to infusing culture into the curriculum
- Offer incentives for faculty to infuse culture into the curriculum
- Help faculty to evaluate their own consciousness and awareness about race in order to remove barriers.
- Create a Cultural Competency Professional Development and Implementation Committee, consisting of students, staff, faculty, and administrators who will bring a vital cross section of interests, experience, and expertise.

**PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT**

The assessment plan is designed to determine effectiveness in meeting diversity goals. The President and Chief Diversity Officer will initiate the Plan and receive input from the Cross-

Functional Team, faculty, and staff. To have a positive outcome, diversity must be supported by strong leadership and management and appropriate policies and procedures. Table 9 reflects the owners, leaders, and collaborators to carry out the Diversity Plan and ensure that targets are being met.

The assessment plan will consist of both formative and summative, qualitative and quantitative data. Utilizing the Decision Support System (DSS), reports will be run quarterly to determine if SKCTC is on track to meet each goal. If benchmarks are not met at any point during the year, the Cross-Functional Team will determine how best to ensure success. One way to do that is to administer climate surveys to both students and employees.

**Climate Surveys**

Student and employee climate surveys will be completed

by all college personnel, students, and community stakeholders in Fall 2017. The Chief Diversity Officer will release the final report to faculty, staff, and students during Spring 2018. The survey will be re-administered at regular intervals. Student Affairs and Diversity will develop a comprehensive bias response protocol and present the guidelines to SKCTC leadership in Spring 2018. SKCTC will continue to build its resource collection by featuring campus “success stories” and developing tools that reflect the latest research in fostering inclusive and educationally powerful learning environments.

**CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS**

The efforts needed to make increase diversity cannot be done by any person, unit, or campus alone. It will look differently everywhere. What individuals and institutions will share are its hallmarks - an ongoing, systemic awareness of the “state of the campus” regarding the interconnectedness of diversity.

<b>Table 9: Owners and Collaborators of Plan</b>	
<b>Owners/Leaders</b>	<b>Collaborators</b>
President	President Cabinet; Community Stakeholders
Chief Academic Affairs Officer	Division Chairs; Faculty; Information Technology
Chief Student Affairs Officer	Recruiters; Scholarship Committee
Chief Diversity Officer	Campus Directors; Professional Development Chair; TRIO Programs; Human Resources
Chief Institutional Advancement Officer	Public Relations and Marketing; Fundraising
Chief Workforce Officer	Small Business Development Center; EPIC
Community & Civic Organizations	Officers and Members
SKCTC Alumni	Former Graduates

## **Summarize the Plan and Intended Outcomes**

Creating a Diversity Plan will improve and evaluate practices that increase the success and retention of a diverse student population and faculty.

**OPPORTUNITY:** Review the demographics of the most recent undergraduates and compare to 2015 demographics. Review specific recruitment strategies and who is responsible for monitoring and implementing the plan. Once the student demographics has been completed, analyze data to determine if there has been 1% enrollment increase in the minority and URM.

**Strategies:** Use market and institutional research resources to identify prospective students within service area (ACT, HS graduation list, previous students who did not complete, students who have applied and not registered, students who have applied and not completed FAFSA, etc. Incorporate the strategic use of faculty in recruiting efforts. Identify the number of students who have applied with SKCTC each semester. Identify key areas for non-traditional students. Identify all local businesses, community outreach partners, churches, educational institutions to establish partners for recruiting throughout each community.

**SUCCESS:** Review high impact practices. Provide data to measure student success metrics of retention from 1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> year and graduation data to measure 3-year graduation rate at SKCTC. Increase undergraduate/graduate retention and graduation rates. Revise faculty, staff and advisor counselor training. Develop and advising syllabus. Develop goal-based Individual Graduation Plan template. Revise Advising Manual and advising webpage.

**IMPACT:** Review and monitor annual goals for increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of faculty. The Promotion and Tenure committee will review promotion notebooks submitted by diverse faculty. The committee will provide a workshop prior to going for tenure to inform the faculty of the procedures, formatting and information that must be collected and included in the notebook. A survey to measure campus climate will be distributed to the faculty, staff and students. The plan will be reviewed to increase cultural competency of students, faculty, and staff and make needed adjustments to improve the plan. SKCTC will improve and support the entire student experience from recruitment to graduation day by embracing and supporting a strategic enrollment management approach.

### **Barriers to Success and Proactive steps to minimize/overcome the barriers.**

To overcome barriers in the aftermath of anti-affirmative action legislation, colleges, corporations, organizations, and professional associations have a renewed interest in the best

recruitment and retention practices and programs to prepare ethnically and racially diverse students to enter professional careers. Students of color, males in particular, face significant challenges in higher education. African American male students, on average, are less successful than other racial/ethnic groups, including African American women. Compared to Asian/Pacific Islander or White/Non-Hispanic students, they are less likely to succeed in both developmental and college-level coursework and are more likely to drop out. Latino students are the least likely of all racial/ethnic groups to transfer. African American students and Latino males have the lowest persistence rates (Elgin Community College, 2010).

Several barriers affect retaining diverse groups. One is the inability to pay for college. Even when financial aid is available, barriers surface in other ways—from a misunderstanding of how to use funds to confounding awards. College readiness is another barrier. This includes being unprepared for placement tests, poor computer skills, poor writing skills, poor time management, unfamiliar with technology, no access to computers at home, don't know what to study, test anxiety, fear of the unknown, general anxiety, and classmates not prepared with the basics.

A major barrier is balancing college with work and family life. This includes time management, goal setting, making priorities, unmotivated to attend class, lack of interest in class, and childcare. Many students are the first generation to attend college and “have no role models,” a finding recently highlighted in a College Board report (2010). With no assistance or little knowledge of the educational system, it is perhaps not surprising that minority named lack of self-motivation as another major barrier. The final barrier for minorities was a lack of engagement between some students and instructors, counselors, and tutors.

### **Next Steps**

SKCTC will provide diversity training at the Fall 2017 In-Service for all employees, with regular updates throughout the year. The Chief Diversity Officer, President, and Director of Human Resources will collaborate on creating a competitive package to attract a more diverse applicant pool for future open positions. Faculty will include a mandatory anti-discrimination statement on all syllabi and refer students to the Chief Diversity Officer and Chief Student Affairs Officer for any bias offenses. SKCTC is fully committed to create a safe environment and culture of inclusion for all students and employees.

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