

College of Alameda Student Equity & Achievement Committee

Student-Centered Equity Planning Fall 2022

Empathy Interview Guide

GOAL

To support the planning process to develop COA's Student Equity Plan, the committee plans to conduct empathy interviews to gain a deeper understanding of COA students' experiences. Given the nature of the complex systems at COA, it is difficult to see beyond our own unique vantage point within the college.

TIPS

- Be curious and take a learning stance
- Listen more than you speak
- Be fully present, without distractions
- Don't challenge, correct, or interrupt
- Express gratitude
- Embrace a beginner's mindset – let go of your assumptions
- Ask open-ended questions that provide insight into students' goals, values, and experiences
- Ask for specific stories and examples
- When in doubt, ask 'why'
- If meeting face to face, consider meeting in neutral but private location that helps minimize the potential power differential

ENGAGEMENT PLAN

After reviewing the relevant data SEA decided to focus on the persistence from first semester to the second of Black/African American or Hispanic/Latinx students. We ask each SEA member to speak with 4-5 COA students who identify as Black/African American or Hispanic/Latinx, with a priority of reaching students who are first time COA students in Fall 2022. If you are unable to speak with new students, there are alternative questions for current students who have attended COA prior to 2022, but ask that students have attended COA and/or other Peralta colleges in the last 3 years (fall 2019).

How will you reach target students?

Who else can help?

Are there courses, learning committees or programs where target students are already engaged?

When will you conduct the interviews?

SCRIPT

The ask: I am a part of a group who are working together to understand how COA can best support you during your time in college. I would like to speak with you about what your experiences are at COA. It should take 15-20 minutes and as a thank you you'll get lunch on us (DoorDash GC). Are you willing to share your experiences and thoughts with me? We'd really like to hear your honest thoughts about your time in Community College so far, so we appreciate you being honest and telling us whatever is on your mind.

QUESTIONS

These should be tested with a few students to check for improvements to wording, etc. before they are considered finalized.

What is your name/preferred name?

When was the first time you attended COA?

(if it's fall 2023 then use the first set of questions , if it's before then use the second set)

First-term students

- Why did you decide to enroll at CoA?
- What are your goals for the future?
- What are you most concerned about?
- What has been your favorite part about CoA so far?
- What has been the most challenging part of college so far?
- What are your plans for next term? Why? How do you feel when you think about next term?

Returning students

- Why did you decide to enroll at CoA?
- What are your goals for the future?
- What keeps you up at night?
- Can you tell me about the last time you decided to enroll in classes at CoA? How did you feel when making that decision? What information or people were most helpful to you in making that decision?
- What are your plans for next term? Why? How do you feel when you think about next term?

DOCUMENTATION PLAN

Be prepared to capture data. Strongly encourage you to interview in pairs. If this is not possible, bring a recording device and – it is impossible to properly engage a user and take

detailed notes at the same time. Be sure to tell your user that the recording will not be shared and is only for your own purposes to make sure you don't miss any details.

[You can use this template to write notes](#) - make a copy in Google or download as a Word doc.

Write down what you heard: include quotes, stories, anecdotes. Be specific and aim to capture as much of what your interviewee said directly. Avoid drawing conclusions or insights at this stage - just focus on listening and absorbing. This will prepare you to engage in the meaning making session we'll have next where you'll work in small groups to theme the data points you collected in the interviews.

REFLECTION

What surprised you? What tensions or contradictions did you hear? What quotes or stories stick with you the most, and why?

Notes: Anna O'Neal Interview

Student Name: Chanceline Zannou First