



Equitable Placement & Completion: **Action Guide**

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STEP 1:

Problem of Practice Worksheet

This worksheet is an initial guide to help your team identify a problem of practice related to your college's equitable placement and completion implementation. It offers a space for your team to organize thoughts after reflecting on (1) your college's data as reflected in the [Chancellor's Office Transfer-Level Data Dashboard](#), (2) your college's responses to the [Equitable Placement and Completion checklist](#), and (3) current individual and team practices and outcomes.

What Is a Problem of Practice?

A problem of practice is a real-world challenge faced by a community. It requires collaboration and diverse perspectives to solve and serves as a focus for learning and innovation.

As a team, discuss themes that prompt further inquiry and document the ideas that arise.

Themes:

A theme is a recurring topic or pattern arising from more than one source of information.

Sample themes:

We need disaggregated data to ensure that we develop equitable placement and completion goals.
We have not fully implemented co-requisite support courses to meet need.

Theme 1:

Theme 2

Theme 3

Individually, brainstorm potential problems of practice from the perspective of your role and document your initial thoughts in the space below.

As a team, develop a draft problem of practice (or multiple problems of practice, if applicable) using the following criteria. Use the sentence stem to form the problem of practice into a statement.

- ▶ Specify a central problem contributing to the topic/issue area.
- ▶ Ensure that the central problem is within institutional control.
- ▶ Note how resolving the problem will move toward equitable experiences and outcomes and will have a clear impact on students
- ▶ *Problem Statement Template:* If we address _____ (problem related to equitable placement and completion), then students will _____.

Record the final draft version of the statement below.

If we address...

Then students will...

STEP 2:

Root Cause Analysis: Five Whys

Problem Statement: Insert from Step 1

▶ **Why is it happening? (1)** *Start with a causal statement:*

▶ **Why is that? (2)**

▶ **Why is that? (3)**

▶ **Why is that? (4)**

▶ **Why is that? (5)**

Caution: *If your last answer is something the college cannot control, go back to the previous answer.*

Questions to determine if you have reached the root cause:

- ▶ Would the problem have occurred if the cause had not been present?
- ▶ Will the same problem happen again if the cause is corrected?
- ▶ Will the correction of the cause lead to similar events?

If the answer to all three questions is *NO*, you have your root cause.

STEP 3:

Brainstorming Actions

1. Idea Generation

List as many possible actions as you can to address your problem of practice. Aim for at least five ideas; focus on creativity without worrying about feasibility!

Guidelines:

- ▶ Aim for quantity
- ▶ Set a time limit
- ▶ Defer judgment
- ▶ Build on others' ideas
- ▶ Encourage wild ideas

2. Reflection on Ideas

Review your ideas and answer the following questions to clarify your thinking.

Which ideas stand out as most promising? Why?

What surprised you during this brainstorm? Did any unexpected themes or insights emerge?

How might these ideas shift or enhance your current approach to the problem of practice?

3. Select two to three priority actions, considering how impactful, feasible (e.g., budget, time), measurable, and aligned they are with your goals.

Priority Action 1:

Priority Action 2:

Priority Action 3:

STEP 4:

Blueprint Action Plan: Equitable Course

Directions

This blueprint action plan supports your team in building specific goals and actions that advance equity-based progress and completion at your college. Answers should be brief and specific (one to three paragraphs per section). To develop the blueprint, leverage information and discussion from previous sections, as well as the Action Resource Bank.

- ▶ **Part A:** Project Goals and Objectives
- ▶ **Part B:** Action Planning

Part A: Project Goals and Objectives

These goals and actions will direct the design and implementation stage of this work throughout the life of this project. Other goals can be added as needed based on your institution's unique needs.

Note: Goals are the outcome(s) you intend to achieve, whereas actions are the activities that help you achieve a goal.

1. Problem Definition

What specific problem or challenge are you aiming to address? Who is the primary audience/focus? Share any additional context, including root causes, that informs this problem of practice. How might these ideas shift or enhance your current approach to the problem of practice?

2. Goal

What do you aim to achieve upon successful implementation? What outcomes will result for other stakeholders (e.g., faculty, staff, administrators)?

3. Strategic Alignment

How does this project align with the college's mission, vision, or strategic priorities and, if applicable, Vision 2030?

4. Student Outcomes

How will your efforts contribute to improving student outcomes? For which students? What tangible student outcomes will result from these actions?

5. Engagement

Who are the key stakeholders (e.g., specific faculty groups, specific student groups), and how will they be engaged throughout the project?

6. Equity

How will this project address equitable course placement and completion across student groups and ensure that students benefit equitably? How are students and those most affected by the change included in the decision-making process? What political, social, and/or cultural impacts might this action have that need to be addressed to ensure it succeeds?

7. Data

What data sources will you use to measure implementation and progress to ensure you have the desired impact? Consider quantitative and qualitative data sources, disaggregated to monitor impacts across different groups.

- ▶ **Will any new and/or additional data need to be collected to monitor potential inequitable unintended consequences?**
- ▶ **What structures or tools will you use to gather feedback across different groups?**

8. Resources

What resources (e.g., financial, human, physical) are needed to implement the action(s) successfully? What resources are available or could be accessed within the next one to three years?



Part B: Action Planning

This section focuses on the specific, measurable actions that your college team will implement that will contribute to achieving the outcomes you described in Part A. Actions can design new practices or redesign existing practices that will address your problem of practice. Break down each key action into smaller, actionable tasks. Each task should be achievable, straightforward, and contribute to the completion of the larger action.

Note: Feel free to use the draft action planning template below or any similar approach to action planning that fits your team's needs.

Action 1:

Action 2:

Action 3

Task For each identified action, list the tasks that will contribute to completing the action. One action can have multiple tasks.	Metrics Identify what data (e.g., quantitative, qualitative) will help measure progress	Resources Identify which resource(s) will facilitate completing the task.	Lead Identify a specific team member to ensure accountability. Each team member should clearly understand their role and responsibilities.	Due Date Set a realistic deadline for each task. This creates a project timeline and helps keep the team on track.
Action 1:				
TASK 1:				
TASK 2:				
TASK 3:				
Action 2:				
TASK 1:				
TASK 2:				
TASK 3:				
Action 3:				
TASK 1:				
TASK 2:				
TASK 3:				

RESOURCES

Equitable Placement and Completion Action Resource Bank

Keywords	Title, Source, and Link	Description
Casemaking	RP Group AB 705: Long-Term Impact on Student Completion of Transfer-Level Requirements and Education Goals	"This brief presents results for students' completion of transfer-level English and math within one year, and transfer and associate's degree attainment within two years of their first California Community College (CCC) enrollment."
Driving Equity, Placement	Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness Bringing Equity Into College Placement Reforms	This blog post highlights strategies from a longer brief that focuses on placement students who are multilingual learners. "In response to the limited potential of broad-based reforms to address the needs and experiences of historically minoritized, low-income, English learner, and first-generation students, institutions have started thinking about ways to augment their placement systems with equity in mind. In a new brief from the Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness (CAPR) , researchers outline strategies to help institutions drive more equitable outcomes in the placement of students into college-level coursework."
Driving Equity, Faculty and Staff Mindsets	Cuyamaca College Equity-Minded Teaching and Learning Institute (EMLTI)	This is an example of one type of professional learning practice: Cuyamaca College offers a professional development institute that works to shift culture and mindsets. "What is EMLTI? A year-long cohort model of professional development for full- and part-time faculty grounded in equity-minded approaches, including Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Gloria Ladson-Billings), Culturally Responsive Teaching (Geneva Gay), and Community Cultural Wealth (Tara Yosso). The institute is firmly committed to social justice education and views the classroom as a site for social change."
Race Consciousness, Leadership, Faculty and Staff Mindsets	University of Southern California Race and Equity Center Race-Conscious Implementation of a Developmental Education of Reform in California Community Colleges	This report examines the historical racial inequities that led to the need for equitable placement and completion reforms. Then, using two case studies, it identifies critical levers and barriers for improving racial equity in equitable placement and completion reform.

Keywords	Title, Source, and Link	Description
Support, Tutoring, Math, English	Community College Research Center Text for Success: Moorpark College's Innovative Tutoring Program Improves Math and English Completion Rates	This is an example of practices to support students in math and English at Moorpark College. Practices include encouraging students to access tutoring, increasing faculty-tutor collaboration, and communicating via text to provide support. "By implementing new practices, including the use of a program that makes reaching out for support as simple as sending a quick text, Moorpark saw a 760% increase in tutoring attendance and a double-digit increase in completion rates over the course of just one semester."
Leadership, Support, Math	EdTrust-West Ventura College Eliminates Remedial Math and Improves Student Success	This is a case study on Ventura College implementing AB 705 and its strategies for success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Administrative leadership ▶ Professional development and communities of practice ▶ Student supports
Casemaking, Faculty and Staff Mindsets, Math	Just Equations The Odd Math on Calculus Prerequisites	This blog post explores prerequisite placement at the California State University (CSU) and California Community Colleges. It asks critical questions about how the community colleges should approach the experimental window during AB 1705 implementation.
Communications, Math	Just Equations Executive Summary Crossing Signals: What College Websites Tell Students About Taking Mathematics	This report examined how college websites support or hinder students' ability to make informed choices about their math courses and pathways. In particular, the report focused on how that guidance supports equitable outcomes
English as a Second Language (ESL), English	California Acceleration Project CAPacity Gazette – October 2022	This newsletter includes context-setting of multilingual learners and AB 705 research. It provides a statewide scan of models across California community colleges to support students who are English learners in college composition.
ESL, English, Student support	California Acceleration Project (CAP) – Irvine Valley College Window Into a Co-requisite Classroom	This is an example from Irvine Valley College providing a course overview.
ESL	RP Group MMAP Webinar Emerging Practices and Resources to Support ESL Placement and Throughput: Guided Self Placement	This slide deck is from the RP Group MMAP webinar, highlighting Laney College and Berkeley City College.

Keywords	Title, Source, and Link	Description
<i>ESL, Placement</i>	RP Group Maximizing Gateway English Throughput for International Students in the California Community Colleges: Understanding the Predictive Validity of Common ESL Tests	“This technical report summarizes findings on how well information about international students’ initial curricular pathway (English or ESL), level of placement in the pathway, and ESL placement test score(s) can predict their throughput in gateway English. We specifically focus on the value of different commonly used ESL placement tests to this process, including the Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CESLA) and multiple types of ACCUPLACER tests.”
<i>Calculus, Casemaking</i>	California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office & RP Group Preparatory Pathways and STEM Calculus Completion: Implications of the AB 1705 Standards	This report examines AB 1705 standards and the completion of STEM Calculus courses for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs across the California Community Colleges.
<i>Calculus, Casemaking</i>	RP Group Maximizing Calculus Completion for Students Seeking the Business Administration Degree	“The Multiple Measures Assessment Project (MMAP) used the criteria in AB 1705 to analyze calculus completion outcomes for students pursuing the Business Administration degree. The analysis seeks to determine if (1) students with lower levels of high school math preparation are highly unlikely to succeed when directly enrolled in Business Calculus and if (2) placing and enrolling students into transfer-level prerequisite math courses improves their likelihood of completing calculus.”

Additional References

What are AB 705 and AB 1705?

- ▶ Knowledge building on AB 1705: [Fact Sheet](#)
- ▶ Knowledge building on AB 705: [Frequently Asked Questions About AB 705](#)
- ▶ Knowledge building on AB 705/AB 1705: [Overview](#)

Chancellor’s Office Guidance:

- ▶ AB 1705 Implementation [Guide](#)
- ▶ Equitable Placement & Completion [Grants](#) & Funding Allocation and the Submission of Funding [Plans](#)
- ▶ AB 1705 [Validation](#) for Non-STEM Programs
- ▶ AB 1705 [Validation](#) for STEM Programs



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