

Coaching for Change
**Rubric of Equity-Minded
Coaching Domains and Practices**

by Community College Research Initiatives

Purpose:

Equity is not just about what colleges do: it is also about who they are, what they believe, and how they are situated within society at large. Equity-minded coaching seeks to make visible the social and structural context of exclusionary practices embedded within the leadership and institutions of American higher education. Equity-minded coaches do this by demonstrating proficiency in integrating race-conscious strategies into organizational-change practices. This tool is designed to assist coaches and Student Success Center (SSC) leadership by drawing awareness to coaching domains and coaching practices that can advance equity-driven inquiry, dialogue, and decision making within campus-wide reform efforts. For more discussion on what race-conscious equity work means for guided pathways, organizational change, and coaching, please see CCRI's briefs, *Coaching for More Equitable Student Outcomes* and *Integrating Racial Equity into Guided Pathways*.

Key Concepts:

1. **Equity-mindedness** is a framework developed by the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California that centers awareness of how institutional structures, policies, and practices that appear to be race-neutral in fact disadvantage underserved individuals and groups (Bensimon and Malcom 2012).
2. **Equity-minded** coaching incorporates the principles of equity-mindedness into the practices that a coach uses to support colleges in examining, understanding, and addressing institutional outcomes. Equity-minded coaches are able to support organizational change through four key coaching domains.
3. **Coaching domains** are the broad categories through which organizational change processes can be identified. This rubric explores the domains of data use, critical analysis, organizational learning, and systems thinking. These domains encompass processes through which organizational practices, policies, structures, and norms are reconsidered, modified, or transformed.

4. **Coaching practices** are the activities, approaches, and techniques a coach utilizes in supporting organizations as well as the practitioners, students, and stakeholders who work within those organizations.

Strategies for Coaches and SSCs to Maximize Use of this Tool:

1. Coaches should begin by reviewing the associated *Glossary of Terms for Equity-Minded Coaching Domains and Practices*.
2. Note that each domain includes a related rubric of coaching practices, example coaching questions, selected resources, and recommended readings. The resources and readings are by no means exhaustive, but provide a solid foundation for further learning and dialogue.
3. Coaches and SSC leadership may choose to review all four domains of this rubric together or separately, depending on the needs of the state system or the role of the coaches.
4. Coaches may choose to use this rubric as a self-assessment to identify areas of professional strengths and professional development needs, knowing that proficiency will vary within and between practices and domains.
5. Coaching teams may choose to use this rubric to inventory or assess the capacity of the coaching cohort. Teams may also consider using the related resources, guides, or recommended readings within each domain to inform group discussion or build on group proficiencies.
6. Coaches and SSC leadership may choose to use this rubric to reflect on how equity-mindedness is or isn't a part of the state-specific coaching role. SSC leadership may facilitate discussion or professional development opportunities that build awareness and capacity around these concepts and practices in a customized way.

Domains and Practices | Data Use

Data use is the interpretive process that involves noticing or recognizing data, making meaning of it, and constructing implications for action (Coburn and Turner 2011). Coaches versed in practices of data use are prepared to assist colleges in translating disaggregated data from diverse sources into actionable knowledge.

Instructions: Review the coaching practices in the rubric below. For each practice, reflect on your level of proficiency. As you move through the rubric, consider the knowledge and experiences that support your self-identified level of proficiency as well as the knowledge and experiences you may need to seek out to progress through proficiency levels. Use the selected coaching questions, resources, and readings on the next page to explore practices and concepts within this domain. Definitions of **bolded terms** are listed in the *Glossary of Terms for Equity-Minded Coaching Practices*.

Coaching Domain	Emerging Practice Building Awareness and Skills	Developing Practice Applying Awareness and Skills	Proficient Practice Reflecting on Practice and Context
Data Use	<p>Coach is familiar with principles of data-informed decision making and understands the basic processes of disaggregated data use.</p> <p>Coach is familiar with mental models that assist individuals and groups in drawing inferences from data.</p>	<p>Coach can identify how the data source (account-ability vs. administrative) and data type (quantitative vs. qualitative) can inform and broaden equity inquiry. Coach offers feedback based on observations of data use to support the data-informed decision making processes of colleges.</p> <p>Coach utilizes and provides resources on mental models to help colleges connect data to beliefs and assumptions about equity challenges and opportunities.</p>	<p>Coach takes the time to understand the data context (access, authority, and culture) of an institution and how this context impacts data use. Coach provides feedback concerning observations of data use and data context to ensure data is being used in ways that lead to sustained organizational learning.</p> <p>Coach provides observations and feedback that promote and make visible a culture of inquiry. Coach selects and provides reflective resources, tools, and discussion protocols that help the college move from data information to actionable knowledge.</p>

Notes on Data Use:

Equity-Minded Coaching Questions for Data Use

- What type(s) of data is the institution using for exploring equity outcomes (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, accountability)? What type(s) of data has the leadership team not looked at or had limited access to? Why?
- Which populations are centered or included in the data that is being reviewed? Who is not centered or not visible in the data? How has the institution considered how racial or ethnic subgroups are aggregated in ways that may skew or magnify equity outcomes?
- Is the data offered to members of the institution or community partners in ways that gather diverse and culturally relevant inferences? What are the mechanisms or channels for sharing, discussing, or gathering insight about the data from folks not in the room?

Data Use Resources and Examples

- Video | “Rethinking Thinking” | TED Ed
[youtube.com/watch?time_continue=281&v=KJLqOclPqis](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=281&v=KJLqOclPqis) This short animated video describes the cognitive processes that influence how data leads to decision making.
- Toolkit | “Data Driven Dialogue Protocol” | Network for College Success
https://ncs.uchicago.edu/sites/ncs.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/tools/NCS_PS_Toolkit_BST_Set_C_DataDrivenDialogue.pdf
This toolkit includes discussion protocols, prompts, and templates for collaborative data inquiry.
- Data Tool | The State Equity Report Card | The Education Trust
[Truststateequity.org](http://truststateequity.org)
This tool uses disaggregated state-level data to explore who has a college degree, who enrolls in college, and who graduates.

Data Use Recommended Readings

Achieving the Dream (AtD) and Public Agenda. Building Institutional Capacity for Data-Informed Decision Making (Cutting Edge Series, No. 3). New York, NY, AtD (2012).

Chaplot, P., R. Johnstone, and K. Booth. “Building a Culture of Inquiry and Using Data Effectively.” *NASPA Leadership Exchange* 10, no. 3 (2012): 10-13. *Measurement: Interdisciplinary Research & Perspective* 9, no. 4: 173-206.

Coburn, C. E., and E. O. Turner. “Research on Data Use: A Framework and Analysis.”

Measurement: Interdisciplinary Research & Perspective 9, no. 4 (2011): 173-206.

Datnow, A., and V. Park. “Data Use—For Equity.” Educational Leadership 72, no. 5 (2015): 48-54.

Dowd, A., and R. Liera. “Sustaining Change towards Racial Equity through Cycles of Inquiry.” Education Policy Analysis Archives 26, no. 65 (2018). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.26.3274>.

Quality Information Partners, Inc., and National Forum on Education Statistics. Forum Guide to Collecting and Using Disaggregated Data on Racial/Ethnic Subgroups (Washington, DC: National Forum on Education Statistics, 2016).

Domains and Practices | Critical Analysis

Critical analysis is a framework that acknowledges the design and implementation of institutional policy and practice as a political and value-laden process (Allen et al. 2010). Coaches utilizing critical analysis practices are able to help colleges examine the role of identity, oppression, and the historical context of race and exclusion to assess the efficacy of equity reform practices and policies.

Instructions: Review the coaching practices in the rubric below. For each practice, reflect on your level of proficiency. As you move through the rubric, consider the knowledge and experiences that support your self-identified level of proficiency as well as the knowledge and experiences you may need to seek out to progress among proficiency levels. Use the selected coaching questions, resources, and readings on the next page to explore practices and concepts within this domain. Definitions of **bolded terms** are listed in the *Glossary of Terms for Equity-Minded Coaching Practices*.

Coaching Domain	Emerging Practice <i>Building Awareness and Skills</i>	Developing Practice <i>Applying Awareness and Skills</i>	Proficient Practice <i>Reflecting on Practice and Context</i>
Critical Analysis	<p>Coach is aware of their racial identity and has reflected on how this identity factors into their role as a coach supporting equity inquiry.</p> <p>Coach is familiar with concepts and terms related to discrimination (e.g., implicit bias, microaggressions, stereotyping).</p> <p>Coach is familiar with the history of exclusionary practices and policies in higher education. Coach understands how historical practices have influenced current-day student success challenges.</p>	<p>Coach is able to articulate the importance of their racial identity and perspective in supporting the college to advance equity outcomes. Coach engages college in discussing the salience of race in addressing inequitable policies and practices.</p> <p>Coach is able to identify when discriminatory practices occur and provides resources and reflective questions that help the college identify how discrimination can be analyzed at the individual, interpersonal, and institutional levels.</p> <p>Coach can articulate how models of diversity in higher education have evolved over time to address exclusionary practices and policies. Coach helps to identify models of diversity currently in use by the college, and to surface important beliefs and assumptions that sustain the model.</p>	<p>Coach demonstrates and models cultural competence. Coach has established relationships and networks that help continuously inform their equity perspective and illuminate their knowledge gaps. Coach is comfortable and strategic in assisting college with initiating dialogue concerning racial identity as it applies to equity goals.</p> <p>Coach models using equity assessment tools (e.g. the Equity Scorecard™, equity effort assessment) to examine organizational reports and action plans for evidence of progress and achievement. Coach provides feedback that helps colleges address and anticipate how racial oppression impacts reform efforts.</p> <p>Coach is familiar with the history of the college and encourages the college to consider historical context when examining equity through organizational structures and culture. Coach uses history of the college and higher education to assist college's understanding of the past and current implications of who stands to gain or lose in proposed changes.</p>

Notes on Critical Analysis:

Equity-Minded Coaching Questions for Critical Analysis

- How has identity been considered in who has been offered the opportunity to participate in reform efforts and leadership? Who has been invited to a seat at the table and who has not? How has this process been expressed and rationalized?
- Which student groups do institutional reform efforts focus on? How has the institution considered the implications of this focus?
- Has the institution adopted specific strategies or processes to explore inequities? What resources, leadership, and prioritization have these strategies been given?
- How does the institution acknowledge and incorporate lessons from its previous diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts? In what ways does the institution acknowledge who has been previously excluded or marginalized through institutional action or inaction?

Critical Analysis Resources and Examples

- **Video** | “Episode 3: Racialized Realities on Community College Campuses” | Office of Community College Research and Leadership
mediaspace.illinois.edu/media/t/1_yn3o02fo
This video explores the historical context and many of the current issues surrounding race on college campuses.
- **Toolkit** | “Policy Equity Analysis Toolkit” | Great Lakes Equity Center
greatlakesequity.org/sites/default/files/201625031354_equity_tool.pdf
This toolkit provides resources, tools, and processes for conducting equity-oriented policy review and analysis.
- **Resources** | “Resistance and Retrenchment” | Racial Equity Tools
racialequitytools.org/act/sustaining/resistance-and-retrenchment
This website provides links to online resources that include insights and strategies concerning topics of resistance and retrenchment.

Critical Analysis Recommended Readings

Allan, E., S. Iverson, and R. Ropers-Huilman, eds. *Reconstructing Policy in Higher Education: Feminist Poststructural Perspectives* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010).

Bensimon, E. M., and L. Malcom. *Confronting Equity Issues on Campus: Implementing the Equity Scorecard in Theory and Practice* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2012).

Museus, S., M. Ledesma, and T. Parker. "Racism and Racial Equity in Higher Education." *ASHE Higher Education Report* 42, no. 1 (2015): 1-112.

Williams, D. A., and C. Clowney. "Strategic Planning for Diversity and Organizational Change." *Effective Practices for Academic Leaders* 2, no. 3 (2007): 1-16.

Domains and Practices | Organizational Learning

Through organizational learning, “whole organizations or their components adapt to changing environments by generating and selectively adopting organizational routines” (Argyris 1999). Coaches versed in the practices of organizational learning aid individuals and groups in identifying and advancing organizational goals through dynamic, inquiry-based processes. Members of the organization work together to create meaning and move the organization forward based on what is gleaned through the discovery and learning processes.

Instructions: Review the coaching practices in the rubric below. For each practice, reflect on your level of proficiency. As you move through the rubric, consider the knowledge and experiences that support your self-identified level of proficiency as well as the knowledge and experiences you may need to seek out to progress among proficiency levels. Use the selected coaching questions, resources, and readings on the next page to explore practices and concepts within this domain. Definitions of **bolded terms** are listed in the *Glossary of Terms for Equity-Minded Coaching Practices*.

Coaching Domain	Emerging Practice <i>Building Awareness and Skills</i>	Developing Practice <i>Applying Awareness and Skills</i>	Proficient Practice <i>Reflecting on Practice and Context</i>
Organizational Learning	<p>Coach is aware of how critical reflective practice techniques support individual and group learning. Coach is familiar with reflective practices resources that can help organizations explore the why, what, and how of equity initiatives.</p> <p>Coach is familiar with the definitions and relationships between concepts of equity, diversity, and inclusion as they apply to education policy and practice.</p>	<p>Coach has utilized more than one reflective practice technique (discussion protocols, self-assessment, etc.). Coach has identified techniques that work best for their communication strengths and background. Coach can clearly articulate how their preferred techniques align with their beliefs and values concerning equity.</p> <p>Coach encourages clarity and shared understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion in college language and documents. Coach helps college understand terms as shared cognitive frameworks or frames through which groups and individuals can make sense of equity challenges and opportunities.</p>	<p>Coach is experienced in multiple reflective practice techniques and can create custom approaches based on the needs and capacity of the college as well as the type of cognitive conflict or dissonance witnessed. Coach utilizes techniques that align with their personal theory of change concerning the role of coaches in advancing equity.</p> <p>Coach can recognize and provide guidance to college in using asset-based language and the equity-mindedness framework to clarify institutional commitment to define practices of equity, diversity, and inclusion.</p>

Notes on Organizational Learning:

Equity-Minded Coaching Questions for Organizational Learning

- How are diversity, equity, and inclusion defined by the institution? In what ways are these definitions disseminated? Do these definitions have a shared understanding across institutional groups?
- What strategies or structures does the institution use to routinely discuss and examine their assumptions behind the why, what, and how of institutional change? How does the institution discuss equity as a part of the organizational change process?
- In what ways has the institution adopted equity-minded principles or strategies in advancing reform efforts? In what ways have equity strategies been met with acceptance and/or resistance?

Organizational Learning Resources and Examples

- **Database and Book** | “Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education” | SAGE Reference (edited by J. Banks)
sk.sagepub.com/reference/diversityineducation
This searchable database provides cross-references and recommended readings for over 700 diversity-related terms and issues.
- **Guide** | “Racial Equity and Inclusion Action Guide” | Annie E. Casey Foundation
aecf.org/resources/race-equity-and-inclusion-action-guide/
This seven-step guide provides recommendations, prompts, and resources for undertaking racial equity work at any organization.
- **Toolkit** | “Liberating Structures Menu” | Liberating Structures
liberatingstructures.com/ls-menu/
This menu of simple, facilitated exercises has been curated to inspire engagement, discussion, and participation amongst groups.

Organizational Learning Recommended Readings

Argyris, C., and D. A. Schön. 1978. *Organizational Learning*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishers.

Argyris, C. *On Organizational Learning* (2nd Edition) (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999).

Bensimon, E. M. 2005. "Closing the Achievement Gap in Higher Education: An Organizational Learning Perspective." *New Directions for Higher Education*, no. 131 (2005): 99-111.

Bragg, D. D., and G. Gerhard. 2017. "Memorandum for the Record #3—Adaptive Leadership & Reflective Practice." Memo, July 17, 2017. <https://www.washington.edu/ccri/memo-3-reflective-practice-2017-07-17/>.

Easton, L. B. 2009. *Protocols for Professional Learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. <http://static1.squarespace.com/static/55560e1ae4b0cf3d98431253/t/5666742c0e4c1145da0f1f78/>.

Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Domains and Practices | Systems Thinking

A method of analysis that connects seemingly disparate elements of a complex system to better understand how connections and interrelatedness impact change within context and over time (Senge 2006). Coaches versed in systems thinking support colleges in extending discussions and inquiry beyond just equity-focused programmatic solutions to analysis and reflection on the college's commitment to equity within a larger historical, political, and social context. As stakeholders better understand their interdependence, they shift mental models to accommodate the development and implementation of institutional plans.

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Coaching Domain	Emerging Practice <i>Building Awareness and Skills</i>	Developing Practice <i>Applying Awareness and Skills</i>	Proficient Practice <i>Reflecting on Practice and Context</i>
Systems Thinking	Coach understands how the parts, processes, and structures of an organization work to produce inequitable student outcomes and experiences.	Coach understands inequity as entrenched in the parts, processes, and structures of the college. Coach provides feedback and observations that help the college move from single-loop to double-loop learning. Coach facilitates conversations that focus on student-centered barriers and practice-centered solutions.	Coach understands proposed change at the organization and systems level. Coach helps college to strengthen networks and partnerships concerning equity reforms with trustees, funders, the local community, and workforce partners. Coach facilitates conversations that focus on practice-centered solutions in terms of democracy and justice.
	Coach is familiar with the differences between technical and adaptive challenges and solutions to address equity outcomes.	Coach provides feedback that helps colleges distinguish between proposed first-order changes (e.g., focus on efficiency and effectiveness) and second-order changes (focus on fundamental purpose and role) that address institutional racism .	Coach has knowledge and experiences about how to address structural racism through transformative change . Coach is able to anticipate and identify patterns of progress and retrenchment in ways that help colleges adopt iterative rather than linear change strategies.

Notes on Systems Thinking:

Equity-Minded Coaching Questions for Systems Thinking

- How have historical, political, and cultural forces that contribute to structural inequities been identified? How is the institution reflecting and processing what it has found?
- What has the institution done to understand the assumptions behind their policies, practices, and solutions?
- What processes or approaches are utilized by the institution in constructing a shared understanding of technical versus adaptive solutions?
- What relationships, communities, and external networks has the institution called on in order to define equity challenges or explore equity strategies?

Systems Thinking Resources and Examples

- **Tool** | “Developing a Practice of Equity Minded Indicators” | Center for Urban Education
cue.usc.edu/files/2016/02/Developing-a-Practice-of-Equity-Mindedness.pdf
This tool includes 12 questions centered on institutional readiness for equity-minded practices.
- **Tool** | “Lens of Systemic Oppression” | National Equity Project
nationalequityproject.org/wp-content/uploads/Lens-of-Systemic-Oppression.pdf
This handout provides definitions, examples, and reflective questions to help users consider the complexity of oppression.

Systems-Thinking Recommended Reading

- Fullan, M. 1999. *Change Forces: The Sequel*. (London: Falmer Press, 1999).
- McCambly, H., and D. D. Bragg. 2017. *Equity-Minded Change Leadership*. Olympia, WA: SBCT. <https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uw-s3-cdn/wp-content/uploads/sites/158/2018/07/16014609/cfc-equitybrief.pdf>
- Gorski, P. 2019. “Avoiding Racial Equity Detours.” *Educational Leadership* (April 2019): 56-61 <http://edchange.org/publications/Avoiding-Racial-Equity-Detours-Gorski.pdf>
- Heifetz, R., A. Grashow, and M. Linsky. 2009. *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2009).
- Senge, P. M. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 2006).

Allan, E., S. Iverson, and R. Ropers-Huilman, eds. *Reconstructing Policy in Higher Education: Feminist Poststructural Perspectives* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010).

Argyris, C. *On Organizational Learning* (2nd Edition) (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999).

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Coburn, C. E., and E. O. Turner. "Research on Data Use: A Framework and Analysis," *Measurement: Interdisciplinary Research & Perspective* 9, no. 4 (2011): 173-206.

Senge, P. M. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 2006).

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