

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging

To support the Mission, Vision, and Goals of the Institution, the Plaza College community conducts a comprehensive strategic planning process every four years. During this process, we establish a list of overarching pillars to serve as a guide for the institution to grow and fulfill its mandates. One of these pillars is diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). The inclusion of this pillar in the college's strategic plan is reflective of the immense impact DEIB has on student persistence and satisfaction; research demonstrates that diverse and inclusive campuses foment a greater sense of belonging, which in turn positively impacts student performance and retention.

The College is proud of its local roots and is committed to celebrating diversity of all kinds as it endeavors to advance the needs of the those residing in the Borough of Queens and surrounding New York City region. Queens, NY has been referred to as "The World's Borough" because of its reputation as the most ethnically diverse county in the United States. Included among many impressive statistics that reflect the true context of its diversity, the US census states that 47.2% of its residents were born outside the USA. Like the borough it serves, Plaza College has always been recognized as a leading center of education that supports diversity and inclusion among underserved communities.

To promote the advancement of its DEIB pillar, the College established the following executive committee; The Committee on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging. The fundamental purpose of this committee is to research, conceptualize, recommend, and integrate DEIB practices into the college's day to day operations. These areas include, but are not limited to, curriculum development, academic programming, hiring practices, recruitment strategies, and student services. The responsibilities of the committee will include:

- Review the curriculum to increase racial and cultural awareness, enrich classroom dialogue, improve critical thinking skills, result in greater service to community, and prepare students for success in an increasingly diverse workforce.
- Coordinating with the Offices of Student Life and Academic Affairs to ensure adequate opportunities each semester are introduced to promote DEIB on the Plaza College campus and across all virtual platforms.
- Ensure that there are campus-based activities that honor the cultures and identities that reflect the Plaza College community of learners.
- Exploring methodologies to increase college access to adult working communities through Multi modal learning
- Researching the incorporation of additional part-time and evening-based programs for licensed based clinical programs that are under-represented by the communities that Plaza College serves

- Planning and implementing initiatives designed to improve or introduce inclusive practices in the areas of hiring, pedagogy, and student support services, among others.
- Providing DEIB-focused educational opportunities for faculty and staff, including workshops, activities, and guest speakers.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the DEIB Committee will report to the Committee of Institutional Effectiveness on their efforts to ensure proper incorporation and implementation of DEIB principals are upheld throughout the Plaza College community. The departments that are represented on the Committee of Institutional Effectiveness include, but are not limited to, Academic Affairs, Admissions, Career Services, Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, Human Resources, the Provosts Office, Student Services, Student Life, and the Office of the President. By empowering these departments and their constituents to employ DEIB practices, the Committee will help ensure that the Plaza College environment is able to create a sense of belonging among all parties.