

Topics to be Addressed in Agency Equity Action Plans

Due Date: Thursday, January 20th, 2022 (Upload by 5:00 PM)
Method of Submission: MAX: <https://collect.max.gov/x/Ms6gnO>
Maximum Length of Report: See guidance below.
Format: Microsoft Word Document, 12 pt. font, normal margins
Release: This document, per Executive Order (EO) 13985, contains an Equity Action Plan (“Plan”) to meaningfully address the barriers and opportunities identified through the agency’s equity assessment. The Plan will be used to help set public expectations and promote accountability, and inform the agency’s longer-term equity planning and implementation strategy. The Plan should be reviewed by the agency’s Office of General Counsel (OGC) prior to submission, and may be used to inform public documents released by the Domestic Policy Council (DPC).

(1) **Executive summary** (Max length: One page)

- Agency name and mission

Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA)

Mission (’22 Strategic Plan): “To empower creativity and leadership in Native Arts and cultures through higher education, life-long learning, and outreach.”

This report begins with a discussion on equity in an Indigenous context. IAIA is a multi-Nation institution with Indigenous students representing 90% of the student body and coming from more than 90 tribal Nations. Indigenous people are not a monolith and though most of our students are American Indian or Alaska Native, it would be a mistake to assume that there are no “within-group” differences as every tribe has its own history and culture. And though IAIA believes in an inter-sectional approach to equity, with so many tribes represented this can be very difficult. Therefore, conceptualizing equity from an Indigenous perspective may look different than in a majority serving institution. In an Indigenous-majority space, taking a racial equity approach is not practical. An Indigenous approach to equity includes restoring and promoting Indigenous cultures, supporting nation building, as well as reducing attainment gap inequities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. “Native nation building is the process by which a Native nation strengthens its own capacity for effective and culturally relevant self-government and for self-determined and sustainable community development.¹”

We have chosen to complete three distinct yet related Actions for Executive Order 13985. We believe Student Success is an equity issue and therefore, each of our Actions has the goal of increasing the number of students who are successful while honoring the different cultures of our students. Student success relies on the academic achievement of our students, as well as building trust, celebrating culture, and honoring Indigenous values.

Action 1: Integrate Equity into the Strategic Plan

1. <https://nni.arizona.edu/programs-projects/what-native-nation-building>

The Strategic Planning Committee was deployed in the Summer of 2021 to begin working on IAIA's 2025 Strategic Plan. The committee has made significant progress in crafting its recommendations for our Mission, Vision, and Values statements, as well as our four Strategic Directions. The committee is currently in the process of gathering feedback from our stakeholders by way of focus groups, presentations, surveys, and town halls. The committee will meet again in the spring to integrate feedback and finalize the plan. The addition of a statement that IAIA fosters a culture that values diversity, equity, and inclusion was a high priority for the committee. We anticipate that a strategic plan centered on equity and student success will provide a framework to conduct future equity work, increase the percent of students who are successful, and build upon IAIA's work of cultural preservation and revitalization. We chose this Action because the timing of the EO aligned well with our internal priorities and because we have already made great strides towards equitable student success outcomes.

Action 2: Indigenous Student Success

An Indigenous Student Success (ISS) Committee was developed and deployed in the Summer of 2021 to begin the important work of reframing student success through an Indigenous lens. The committee has identified and discussed culturally appropriate initiatives that will allow IAIA to assess the success of our students in meeting their academic goals as well as their own personal goals. In the spring the ISS committee will forward recommendations of initiatives and strategies that are culturally appropriate to support students in their learning journey. The committee will also identify quantitative and qualitative metrics that will allow us to assess the impact of those activities utilizing the Indigenous Assessment model. The Indigenous Assessment model was developed in-house and was vetted and approved by the Higher Learning Commission. The committee will track how these initiatives impact IAIA's retention and completion rates. And the committee will work with our Alumni office to better communicate with our alumni and learn the role IAIA played in their successful careers.

Action 3: Development Education Redesign

IAIA piloted a program for Developmental Education (DevEd) Math in Spring 2021 and scaled the program in Fall 2021. We are currently scaling its sister program for DevEd English. These new DevEd initiatives, (internally known as 1UP) support students through "barrier courses" and help provide the students momentum towards attaining their degree. We have already seen improvements in enrollment and pass rates of college level Math and expect to see similar results in English. Success in these courses will likely lead to improved persistence, retention, and completion rates.

(2) Summary of early accomplishments (Max length: One page)

- Please highlight any equity-related achievements or successes (e.g., innovative stakeholder engagement, notable changes in policies or operations, new partnerships, etc.) since EO 13985 was released on January 20, 2021

With the onset of the pandemic, IAIA's Online Learning Department worked intensely to move classes online and ensure a continuous, quality experience for our students. Twenty-six (26)

students in need of technology support were provided with laptops and many more students were offered assistance setting up internet access from their homes. Additionally, in Fall 2021, 50 new laptops were purchased and lent out to students.

In the 2021 Spring semester, IAIA's Faculty Council adopted the Learning Management System (LMS) Baseline Standards in Fall 2020. These standards provide consistent means of transitioning from an in-person to an online educational environment for both students and faculty. These standards ensure that students understand the work that is expected of them, allows faculty and students to track the student's progress, and provides access to our LMS support team. IAIA utilizes meeting towers that allow faculty the option of a HyFlex delivery. In this modality, students attend classes remotely and/or in-person, with an equally valuable learning experience from either vantage. This has proved crucial as we continue to experience rolling quarantines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The HyFlex courses allow students who have been exposed to COVID-19 to quarantine in accordance with IAIA's policy and at the same time continue to be active members of their classes. Going forward, IAIA will continue to offer online and HyFlex courses so that we will be able to better serve the diverse educational needs of our students.

During the 2021 Spring semester, the Online Learning office assisted faculty and adjuncts in creating educational videos, leading to more equitable remote learning opportunities. Additionally, Online Learning supported the IAIA Land Grant's 4 Directions Projections program in utilizing online resources to reach an international audience of hundreds with their Traditional Knowledge speakers. Online Learning continues to provide and build upon these services to our faculty and adjuncts.

IAIA strives to ensure that all courses meet the Universal Design standards for accessibility throughout our LMS environment. For example, videos are edited to include closed captioning and students have the ability to access and review transcripts of their online classes and lectures at any time. The Tech Tutor program provides additional support to students in need of one-on-one guidance.

(3) Equity action plan 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING (Max length *PER ACTION*: Two pages)

A. Barrier to Equitable Outcome(s)

- *Describe the barrier you are trying to address.*

Historic disparities in access to and quality of education in Indigenous communities is well documented. Indigenous people are the least likely to enroll in any form of higher education and their persistence rates and completion rates in higher education are significantly lower than the national average. Nineteen percent (19%) of Native people aged 16-24 are enrolled in an institution of higher education, compared to the national average of 41%. Additionally, 14.5% of Native adults have earned a bachelor's degree or higher, as compared to 31.3% of the overall population². Achievement gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are entrenched and have cultural, economic, and geographic roots. It is also well documented that until very recently, educational institutions have had a disproportionately harmful effect on Indigenous communities. Historically, educational institutions stripped young people of their culture and

2. <https://pnpi.org/native-american-students/>

inflicted violence upon them³. It is, therefore, the responsibility of today's institutions of higher education to mitigate the past harms and to promote Indigenous culture so Indigenous young people can meet the challenges of today and still maintain their Indigenous identity.

When considering equity work in an Indigenous-majority institution like IAIA, where nearly 90% of our students are Indigenous and represent over 90 Tribal Nations, it is clear that equity work must be two pronged; 1) reduce attainment gaps between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students, and 2) promote, bolster and revitalize Indigenous culture. Indigenous students at majority serving institutions rarely see themselves reflected in their learning materials or see their values reflected in the organization and management of the school. This lack of "belongingness" is a barrier to student success⁴. "Students who report a higher sense of belonging at the end of the first year ...do better than their counterparts". Those students persist more in their second and third years and report lower rates of mental health issues. Clearly, the two elements of equity in an Indigenous space reinforce each other. This Indigenous definition of equity is one we take throughout this initiative.

- *Specify the program, policy, or regulation that contributes to this barrier.*

There is no single policy or regulation that contributes to this barrier. Rather, it is a network of many overlapping policies and regulations that have collectively, over centuries, entrenched equity gaps in education⁵. The students who attend IAIA come shaped by numerous policies and programs from the underfunding and management of Bureau of Indian Education, Indian Health Service, Bureau of Land Management, etc. However, a few prominent examples of policies that contribute to these barriers include education funding by both state and federal government agencies, curricula that are not culturally appropriate and perpetuate stereotypes of Indigenous peoples, and the undercounting of Indigenous people from national and regional censuses. The consequences of an undercount results in reduced federal funding for infrastructure, health care, schools, and housing in tribal communities. It also makes it more difficult for tribal communities to advocate for themselves.

- *Indicate which populations are most impacted by this barrier.*

Indigenous peoples are a prime example of a population impacted by this barrier, however rural and undocumented people are also disproportionately impacted by the policies enumerated above.

- *List the evidence indicating that this barrier meaningfully impacts full and equal participation.*

As discussed above, achievement gaps among Indigenous and non-Indigenous students are stark. Forty-one percent (41%) of first-time Indigenous students graduate with a bachelors within six

3. <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/03/traumatic-legacy-indian-boarding-schools/584293/>

4. <https://www.studyinternational.com/news/sense-of-belonging/>

5. <https://laist.com/news/native-americans-are-almost-invisible-on-college-campuses-and-its-hurting-their-chances-for-success>

years, compared with 62% of all students nationally⁶. However, some of these statistics can be misleading. Indigenous people are so frequently invisible in the literature, that there is now a name for this phenomenon. It is known as the “American Indian research asterisk”, (Garland, 2007). “Due to low populations enrolled, statistical analysis is problematic; hence, [Indigenous students] are often omitted from national and institutional reports” (Waterman, et a., 2018, p.10). A small population is also an issue when conducting quantitative research at Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). TCUs will, therefore, routinely use qualitative measures in Indigenous research design methodologies and in methods where the ontologies, experiences, and cultures of Indigenous people are centered. Indigenous and community-based research is conducted within a community setting and includes members of the community in the design and implementation of a research project. An important part of community-based research is that it is founded in respect for the contributions of success that are made by community partners, as well as respect for the principle of "doing no harm" to the communities involved.

B. Action and Intended Impact on Barrier

- *Describe the actions the agency will take to eliminate/reduce the barrier.*

The role of the TCUs is to maintain, preserve, and restore Native languages and cultural traditions, but they also are an important part in closing the attainment gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Equity is an existential question for the Institute of American Indian Arts and is integral to our mission, vision, and values. However, not all of our students complete their academic goals, which is why Student Success is the theme of our Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Planning Committee met on October 22, and November 10 of 2021, and drafted recommendations for IAIA’s Strategic Plan 2025. In November and December 2021, the Facilitating Team met with Faculty Council, Staff Council and the Student Government Association and shared the Committee’s recommendations to gather feedback from those groups. The Facilitating Team also shared a feedback survey with IAIA stakeholders. The IAIA stakeholders include students, staff, faculty, Board of Trustee members, Foundation Board members, and alumni. As of December 15, 2021, we have received feedback from 153 stakeholders. The agreement rate among our stakeholders of the recommendations ranged from 69% to 86%. The inclusion of the statement, “Respect: Foster understanding of culture, perspectives and identities through diversity, equity and inclusion” had the highest rate of support among our stakeholders. Some comments in support of this value statement include:

- “I think that respect and understanding are crucial in today’s political landscape.”
- “IAIA is based on a multi-national, including tribes, model. Failure to include this would go against the very lifeblood of IAIA.”
- “Yes! We have over 500 federally recognized tribes with different languages and belief systems that all bring something to the table.”

6. <https://www.aigcs.org/news/higher-education-rates-for-native-americans-remain-low-but-unique-scholarships-helping/>

- *Why did you prioritize these actions?*

Higher Education is leading the way in addressing equity as a student success concern. Achieving the Dream, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and many other organizations are meaningfully and intentionally addressing equity gaps between marginalized students and non-marginalized students. Marginalized students include students might be racially, economically, or geographically marginalized. However, equity has been a foundation of IAIA's work since its inception. Equity work at IAIA did not begin with this Executive Order and it will not end once this Executive Order is completed. However, we are using this Executive Order as an additional opportunity to formally integrate and assess equity as a cross cutting issue throughout our work. For the Strategic Plan specifically, the Executive Order provides a structure and accountability to center equity at the highest level. Centering equity in this way offers a structure for top-down continued programming, measurement, and dialogue.

- *Indicate how the actions are expected to result in reducing or eliminating the barrier to equitable outcomes. If not identified above, please indicate what evidence supports this connection.*

Strategic Planning communicates to the college and our community at-large the roadmap we will use to achieve our goal of greater Student Success and it provides a top-down, systems level approach to supporting Student Success and Cultural Revitalization.

C. Tracking Progress

- *Describe what factors you will use to determine whether the agency action(s) has eliminated or substantially reduced the barrier to equitable access identified above in the near- to mid-term (2-4 years out).*

The best way to learn if we are cultivating an environment that values diversity, equity, and inclusion will be to ask our students, faculty, and staff. We will continue to gather feedback from our stakeholders through our annual student satisfaction surveys, our campus sponsored Talking Circle, employee satisfaction surveys, and focus groups.

- *Indicate what success might ultimately look like in the long-term (5-8 years out).*

Long-term success will be measured in increased graduation rates as well as increased feelings of Tribal community engagement and satisfaction among alumni as measured in the tri-annual Alumni survey.

D. Accountability

- *Describe how the agency will hold itself accountable to implementing this action. Consider potential internal and external mechanisms (e.g., aligning with the Agency Strategic Plan and/or other public-facing documents, embedding equity-related goals in performance plans, holding virtual town halls, etc.) and how and when the agency will communicate progress to stakeholders.*

We are accountable to our students and their families, as well as to all members of our community which is why we took a community-based approach to the development of the 2025 Strategic Plan. We are also accountable to the Board of Trustees (appointed by the President of the United States) and each department within the college submits quarterly reports to the Board of trustees that demonstrate their progress on the Strategic Plan. Furthermore, with the exception of the Executive Session, the Board meetings are open to the public and all members of the community are encouraged to attend. Additionally, we are required to report our enrollment and student success data to both state and federal governments, which are also external facing reports. Lastly, we have existing internal reporting mechanisms to collect student complaints and grievances including ADA reporting, safety, and Title IX⁷.

(4) Equity action plan 2: Indigenizing Student Success (Max length *PER ACTION: Two pages*)

E. Barrier to Equitable Outcome(s)

- Describe the barrier you are trying to address.

Some of the barriers to equitable Student Success outcomes for Indigenous students are discussed above, however when assessing attainment gaps from an Indigenous point of view, curricula, education programming, and assessment must also be investigated. Historically these practices come from a western and standardized approach meaning it can be culturally misaligned for our Indigenous students. Not seeing themselves in their curricula or learning materials, and not having their values and epistemologies reflected in their education is often cited as the reason an Indigenous college student chooses to leave. A sense of belongingness, as defined as being accepted, valued, and included in the classroom and within the college community and environment, is proven to be a predictor of student success. This is a challenge even the TCUs face as we are accountable to two groups of constituents: our students, and our accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission. We therefore took this as an opportunity to Indigenize our accreditation work.

- *Specify the program, policy, or regulation that contributes to this barrier.*

Higher Learning Commission's Quality Initiative as part of the 10-year reaccreditation process.

- *Indicate which populations are most impacted by this barrier.*

Indigenous Populations

- *List the evidence indicating that this barrier meaningfully impacts full and equal participation.*

7. <https://iaia.edu/accessibility/>
<https://iaia.edu/student-life/forms-regulations-and-rules/>
<https://iaia.edu/about/title-ix/>
https://iaia.edu/student-life/activities-and-services/#et_pb_contact_form_0

As stated in Action 1, first-time Indigenous students graduate at a rate that is 21 percentage points below the national average. However, we also receive feedback from students and faculty that they want to see their cultures, values and ontologies reflected more in the curriculum as well as all aspects of IAIA programming. “Honoring Indigenous Values” was a theme in our most recent Student Satisfaction survey. We believe that by developing more initiatives that are culturally relevant to our students, our students will “see themselves” as a successful student in a way that was not possible using a western paradigm.

The literature suggests that education also plays a unique role in the lives of Indigenous students, namely as a mechanism for nation building. As discussed above, nation building involves expanding the capacity of tribal communities to promote sovereignty. “The majority of [Native students] have been told throughout their lives that education is ‘a ladder’ or a ‘weapon,’ a tool their communities need to combat historical atrocities and identify and create solutions to the challenges facing their tribal nations. The encouragement to seek higher education is often given with statements such as, ‘Go to college, get your degree, then come back home and help us.’” (Waterman, et al., 2018, p.2). This is born out quantitatively as well. Seventy-four (74%) of TCU graduates work in service of their communities⁸. However, if Indigenous students are systematically excluded from systems of Higher Education, then they are denied an opportunity to fulfill this responsibility.

F. Action and Intended Impact on Barrier

- *Describe the actions the agency will take to eliminate/reduce the barrier.*

Historically Indigenous people have been exploited in the name of education and research. The Indigenizing Student Success (ISS) initiative is our attempt at taking an Indigenous approach in defining and assessing student success in an academic setting, in a manner that is sensitive and meaningful to the Indigenous communities we serve. This initiative will have a complementary relationship (top-down and bottom up) with the work being done by the Strategic Planning Committee by allowing the Institution to take a holistic perspective towards student success. To do this, a standing “Indigenizing Student Success” committee has been deployed and has begun meeting to define Indigenous student success, develop metrics that will track the initiatives progress towards its goals, and develop and implement culturally relevant programming and a decision-making framework.

During our October 2021 meeting, the ISS Committee, met with Stephen Wall and Dr. Lara Evans, designers of the Indigenous Assessment (IA)⁹ model, to discuss how the ISS Committee can learn from their experience to identify culturally appropriate initiatives that will help IAIA assess the success of our students in meeting their academic goals as well as in the student’s own personal learning journey. In our November 2021 meeting, the committee identified three important concepts: any research conducted by the ISS Committee should meet the needs of our community, our community’s cultural values are built into the research, and IAIA ensures that community is an integral part of the research process. We also identified several initiatives that

8. <https://www.ccdaily.com/2019/09/survey-supports-success-tribal-colleges/>

9. This model has been approved by our accreditors, the Higher Learning Commission as a culturally appropriate mechanism to assess student learning outcomes. This model was published in Exemplars of Assessment in Higher Education: Diverse Approaches to Addressing Accreditation Standards” in 2021.

we believe will assess the needs of the students so that IAIA can best support them to become successful graduates and members of their own community. Those initiatives include:

- Utilize Talking Circles¹⁰ to understand how students define success and how their community affects their success.
- Meet with faculty and staff to gather their perspectives on what services best support our students.
- Offer student activities with a theme of Student Success.

As a community-led enterprise, the specifics of this program will be formally presented by the ISS committee to the IAIA community in Spring 2022. We did receive approval from the HLC to move forward with the ISS project and we anticipate that the IAIA community will embrace the ISS project. In 2024, the ISS Committee will use the Indigenous Assessment model to identify successes, challenges, and recommendations for future improvements of the ISS initiative.

- *Why did you prioritize these actions?*

As discussed above, we recognize that there are unmet needs of our students and the Institution is committed to continue the work to meet those needs, building on the student-success work that came before. We are implementing this program because we believe it is necessary and imperative to our students that our curricula or learning materials are based in Indigenous cultures. The ISS initiative also fulfills the Quality Initiative requirement from the HLC and as such, we have a two-year horizon for this Action and expect to see improvements within that timeline. The timing of the Executive Order coincided well with our timeline on reaccreditation and most importantly, it is IAIA's current mission "To empower creativity and leadership in Native Arts and cultures through higher education, life-long learning, and outreach."

- *Indicate how the actions are expected to result in reducing or eliminating the barrier to equitable outcomes. If not identified above, please indicate what evidence supports this connection.*

The mission of the ISS Committee is to improve Student Success through culturally relevant programming and initiatives and as such, we believe that this program will reduce attainment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

G. Tracking Progress

- *Describe what factors you will use to determine whether the agency action(s) has eliminated or substantially reduced the barrier to equitable access identified above in the near- to mid-term (2-4 years out).*

A key activity of the ISS committee is to develop, test and deploy Indigenous Student Success initiatives centered around personhood and community. The committee has identified a few

10. <https://attcnetwork.org/centers/national-american-indian-and-alaska-native-attc/traditional-talking-circle-or-healing>

qualitative measures to assess the impact these initiatives have on the success of our students. These measures include; tracking the number of students who participate in student activities such as tutoring and Talking Circle, including ISS specific questions in the annual student satisfaction survey, conducting focus groups, with some of these led by current IAIA students who will receive training in facilitating a focus group.

The immediate improvements will be an increased sense of community and belongingness among our students which will be measured using a student satisfaction survey in Spring 2022. It is our theory of change that sense of belonging and community are imperative for student success. Some metrics we will use to measure student success include:

- Percent of new degree-seeking students who earn 24 credit hours in the first year.
- Percent of new degree-seeking students who end their first year with a balance owed.
- Retention rates (both second and third year).
- Graduation and transfer rates

- *Indicate what success might ultimately look like in the long-term (5-8 years out).*

We expect to see an increase in graduation rates as well as an increase in the percent of our alumni participating in nation building and giving back to their communities as tracked through our tri-annual Alumni survey.

H. Accountability

- *Describe how the agency will hold itself accountable to implementing this action. Consider potential internal and external mechanisms (e.g., aligning with the Agency Strategic Plan and/or other public-facing documents, embedding equity-related goals in performance plans, holding virtual town halls, etc.) and how and when the agency will communicate progress to stakeholders.*

As always, the group we are most accountable to is our students. However, for this project we have both internal and external accountability mechanisms. Internally, we will ensure accountability by; having student representation on the ISS committee, routinely collaborating with the Talking Circle program to gather input and continual feedback from students through iterative and on-going dialogue, regularly meet with Staff and Faculty Councils to get their feedback, display Student Success dashboards, and invite students to write their Success Stories. Externally, as stated above, this is part of our re-accreditation process and will be reported to the Higher Learning Commission in 2024. As equity is a criterion¹¹ for accreditation, we believe that we are firmly accountable to both our internal and external stakeholders.

(5) Equity action plan: Developmental Education Redesign (Max length **PER ACTION: Two pages)**

I. Barrier to Equitable Outcome(s)

11. <https://www.hlcommission.org/About-HLC/evolve-2025-equity.html>, <https://www.hlcommission.org/About-HLC/evolve-2025-equity.html>, <https://www.hlcommission.org/Publications/Leaflet/March-2021/new-resource-equity-report.html>, https://download.hlcommission.org/initiatives/EquityReport_2021.pdf

- *Describe the barrier you are trying to address.*

The barriers addressed in this action are the same as above but also include a phenomenon called the “Preparedness Gap”. This is the gap between college-ready and non-college-ready students as defined by the student’s math and English placement scores. Indigenous students and those who are Pell eligible are more likely to be placed in Developmental Math and English courses than non-Indigenous students. However, it is understood in the higher education community that developmental education (DevEd) courses are “barrier courses” and institutions of higher education are reconsidering how best to support students while they attempt to pass these courses¹². This is largely because DevEd courses are significant commitments with high-opportunity costs and are financially burdensome to the student. And yet they do not count for college level credit¹³. The impact on the students who require DevEd courses is that they are less likely to persist or graduate. At IAIA, over the past five years 36% of our new freshman placed into DevEd Math and of those students who enrolled within their first year passed the course at a rate of 73%. However only 37% of the new freshman enrolled in DevEd Math their first year, and only 27% of our New Freshman completed DevEd Math during their first year. Similarly, 18% of our New Freshman placed into DevEd English. Of those 44% enrolled in DevEd English in their first year, 75% passed. But only 33% of the students who placed in DevEd English completed it in their first year. Many of our new students are delaying their enrollment into DevEd courses. The literature suggests that the longer it takes to complete DevEd courses, the more likely students will be required to repeat them.¹⁴ The literature suggests that minority students are more likely to be required to take DevEd coursework, and that these are less likely to complete their degree. The “American Indian Research Asterisk” phenomenon is glaringly present in many of the studies as “Native Americans are often excluded from data reporting and research on college students.”¹⁵ The number of indigenous students who are affected by the burden of completing DevEd courses may be grossly underestimated due to this phenomenon.

- *Specify the program, policy, or regulation that contributes to this barrier.*

The specific programs or policies that contribute to this barrier include those listed above (educational funding, quality of primary and secondary education in Indigenous and “poor” communities, etc.) encountering college graduate requirements set by the Department of Education.

- *Indicate which populations are most impacted by this barrier.*

The “preparedness gap” can be seen between Indigenous and White communities as well as rural vs. urban and between “poor” and not-poor students.

- *List the evidence indicating that this barrier meaningfully impacts full and equal participation.*

12. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/obstacle-courses-community-college-completion.html>, <https://edsources.org/2016/remedial-courses-are-barriers-for-many-community-college-students-report-says/572483>

13. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/education-strategies.pdf>

14. <https://west.edtrust.org/eliminate-remedial-courses/>

15. “Beyond the Asterisk: Understanding Native Students in Higher Education”, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED528283>

According to the U.S Department of Education, research indicates that enrolling in developmental education courses may “increase students’ time to degree attainment and decrease their likelihood of completion.” At IAIA, the retention rate for students who are required to take DevEd courses is 47% compared to 68% for all our undergraduate degree-seeking students. Across the higher-education community, steps are being taken to assess the best way to support students on their way to enrolling and passing college-level English and Math courses.

J. Action and Intended Impact on Barrier

- *Describe the actions the agency will take to eliminate/reduce the barrier.*

We continue to take major steps to redesign our DevEd program. Recently IAIA began enrolling students into college level math or English if the student’s placement score was at the higher end of our DevEd placement score range. These students are provided additional support in the form of extra tutoring, a scholarship to alleviate some of the financial burden, counseling services, and community-support. In the spring 2021 semester, we implemented this pilot program for our math students and 100% of those students passed their college-level math course. We scaled this program in the Fall 2021 semester and began piloting a sister program in the English Department. We will have more results of this initiative in January 2022.

- *Why did you prioritize these actions?*

This initiative is the result of several years of IAIA’s participation in the Achieving the Dream’s Student Success work and the college recognizes the importance of addressing this issue. We are aware that succeeding in developmental education courses is related to timely completion of a degree. Because of this, we have the support of the faculty and staff in implementing this institutional change.

- *Indicate how the actions are expected to result in reducing or eliminating the barrier to equitable outcomes. If not identified above, please indicate what evidence supports this connection.*

We now know that with extra support, “threshold students” will pass college-level courses at a greater rate. The test will be to scale this initiative college-wide. In the coming semester we expect to see increases in enrollment and improvement in pass-rates for college-level math and English courses. We also anticipate seeing improvements in our persistence, retention, and graduation rates.

K. Tracking Progress

- *Describe what factors you will use to determine whether the agency action(s) has eliminated or substantially reduced the barrier to equitable access identified above in the near- to mid-term (2-4 years out).*

In the short term, we should see an increased number of New Freshman enrolled in college-level Math and English within their first year. We should also see an increase in enrollment and pass-

rates in college-level Math and English courses. We will track the first-term completion rates for our new degree-seeking students who require developmental English or developmental math. And we will track that cohort's first-year completion rates of gateway English and math. And finally, we will assess the success of these students using Indigenous methodologies by inviting IUP scholars to write their stories. In the medium-term, we will assess the impact through persistence and retention rates.

- *Indicate what success might ultimately look like in the long-term (5-8 years out).*

In the long-term, we expect to see improved graduation rates.

L. Accountability

- *Describe how the agency will hold itself accountable to implementing this action. Consider potential internal and external mechanisms (e.g., aligning with the Agency Strategic Plan and/or other public-facing documents, embedding equity-related goals in performance plans, holding virtual town halls, etc.) and how and when the agency will communicate progress to stakeholders.*

First and foremost, we are accountable to our students. However, we are in collaboration with Achieving the Dream and routinely report our Student Success metrics to them as well as to our state's Higher Education Department and Federal Departments of Education. Internally, we have a dedicated committee to student success called the Pathways Council that oversees and advises on this initiative. Lastly, as stated above, our Student Success dashboards will be live and accessible to all IAIA community members.