



Introduction: CA Tomorrow's Community College Access and Equity Initiative

The goal of California Tomorrow's **Community College Access and Equity Initiative** is to help create community college systems with the policies, resources, planning approaches, academic, and support programs necessary to ensure that our most vulnerable students successfully complete community college programs. We help facilitate fundamental equity-driven shifts in thinking, planning and acting to promote institutional change at the programmatic, campus, and systems change levels. We have a particular focus on strengthening the capacity of practitioners to improve success among students of color, first generation college-goers, low-income students, and immigrant students.

The Equity-Driven Systems Change (ESC) Model

In order to best support institutions in initiating campus-wide change efforts, we have developed a comprehensive approach to institutional change: our **Equity-driven Systems Change (ESC) Model**. The model supports practitioners to examine their institutions along four levels of change in order to better understand the context and factors under which their institutions function, identify high leverage change areas and strategies, and analyze and evaluate the impact of their work. Our model broadens and specifies understandings of the factors that determine the outcomes students achieve. Our *four levels of change* include:

1. Organizational Policies & Practices such as leadership, planning, curriculum, instruction, and professional development.
2. Campus Environment & Political Climate, including the political context and campus culture which can impede or support change processes and improvement efforts, including organizational principles; history of the college's inclusion efforts, ethnic and race relations, and opportunities for deeper mutual understanding and collaboration; and community context e.g., college and community demographics, history with improvement efforts, and state and national political context.
3. Access, Supports & Opportunities including outreach, orientation, hiring, facilities and materials for students, and academic supports, counseling, and advising.
4. Student Outcomes including course completion, advancement from developmental education courses, persistence, and graduation, and the institution's approach to data-gathering and use, measures of success, reflection and evaluation.

We have found that it is critical to focus on two essential dimensions of organizational functioning: the *structural* dimensions of change including formal institutional systems and processes and quantitative outcomes; and the *cultural* dimensions of change including attitudes and beliefs, degree of collaboration across a campus, and infusing culturally responsive practice into an institution's policies, hiring, curriculum, instruction, and support services, as well as qualitative impacts. Using the ESC Model, these two dimensions are the lenses through which we support colleges to analyze their progress and develop strategies along each of the four levels above.

Often other models, frameworks and approaches to institutional change support colleges, policymakers, and other change agents to focus on one or more of these levels and dimensions, but typically not all of them. Many models focus on the *structural* dimensions of change, while others may focus on the *cultural* dimensions of change. California Tomorrow's model focuses on *both* of these areas – structural and cultural – supporting colleges and other change agents to develop more integrated and precise understandings of the factors that contribute to institutional improvement and powerful student outcomes.

It can be particularly difficult for practitioners and systems leaders to grapple with the delicate aspects of racial, ethnic, and class relations and how these impact instruction, policy development, and provision of supports and resources on campuses and in systems. Our strategy with colleges helps them to prioritize the changes they can make at the first three levels of change in order to improve student outcomes. We additionally support colleges to measure the impact at these three levels as intermediate outcomes and indicators of success, and at the fourth level as ultimate outcomes.

A diagram of the ESC model showing the relationship between the structural and cultural dimensions and the four levels of change is provided on page 4.

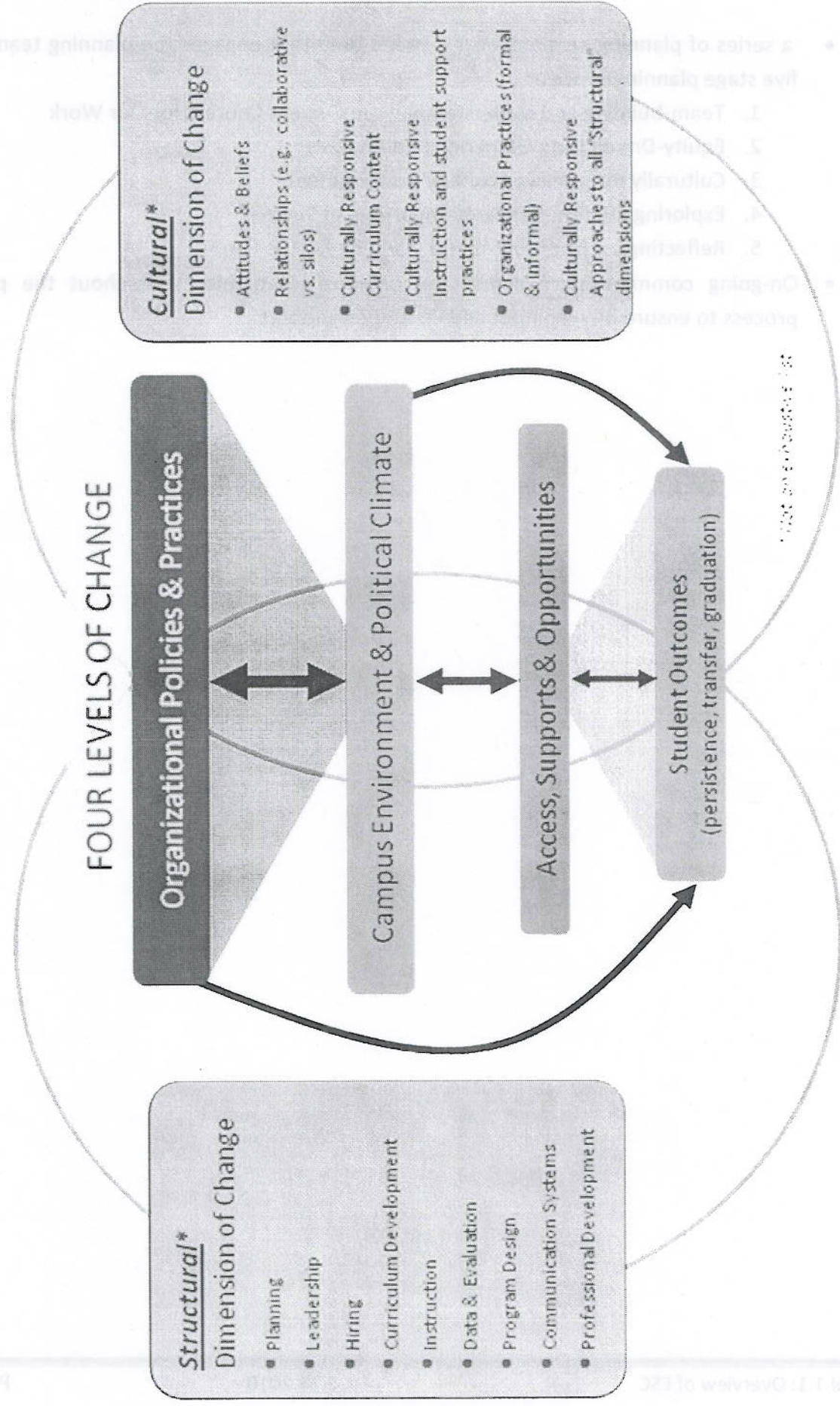
Overview of CA Tomorrow's Change Management Process

The Equity-Driven Systems Change (ESC) model is the cornerstone of our approach to long-lasting institutional change designed to support community colleges in change management processes that are collaborative, data-driven, and produce measurable results over time. Our process values shifts in thinking, planning and acting towards a more collaborative, culturally-responsive, student-centered, and reflective institution. The process includes the following:

- the development of a design team to oversee the entire planning process
- the development of a planning team of key stakeholders across the campus community that participates in the entire planning process

- a series of planning sessions over a year's time that engages the planning team in our five stage planning process:
 1. Team-building and Understanding the Current Context for Our Work
 2. Equity-Driven Data Gathering and Analysis
 3. Culturally Responsive Strategy Development
 4. Exploring Student-Centered Measures of Success
 5. Reflecting on Our Process and Planning for the Future
- On-going communication across the campus community throughout the planning process to ensure buy-in, input and continued support.

Equity-Driven Systems Change (ESC) Model





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Ground Rules for Authentic Dialogue

Developed collectively by California Tomorrow staff and practitioners from community colleges participating in the Campus Change Network.

These ground rules were designed to help set the right tone and create a safe environment for creating change. They are meant to be modified, clarified, added to, and agreed upon by meeting participants.

- ✓ Speak from your own experience
- ✓ Be aware of how you are using air space and help create space for everyone to share
- ✓ Expect and be willing to explore differences of experience and opinion
- ✓ Make a commitment to one another's development and learning
- ✓ Respect confidentiality
- ✓ Listen actively
- ✓ Keep an open mind
- ✓ Be passionate
- ✓ Commit to being authentic
- ✓ Be honest



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From Soup to Nuts: A Comprehensive Approach to Institutional Change and Student Success

Take a few moments to reflect on how change happens at your institution using the following guiding questions.

1. What are some major changes that have taken place at your college?
2. Reflecting on one of the changes above, who led the change? Who else was involved?
3. How did the change happen?
4. How did you experience the change? What, if any, impact did it have on you?
5. What was successful about the change? What was more difficult?
6. What was the impact on students?