# Red Rocks Community College Equity & Inclusion Council 2021

After a year-long hiatus, the E&I Council will be reconvening, and will be meeting on a Monthly Basis.

The Equity & Inclusion (E&I) Council is charged by the President to develop and support diversity strategies, policies, and programs on behalf of the college and to assist the administrators, faculty, staff, and students in realizing the potential benefits of a diverse workforce.

The E&I Council at Red Rocks Community College serves as a vehicle for discussion, assessment, and guidance on issues of inclusion for our college. Members of the council are expected to engage in respectful dialogue in order to address needs in the following areas:

* Attend monthly E&I Council meetings
* Serve on one E&I Council Project or Partner Committee
* Serve as an advisory board for the Center for Inclusion and Diversity and Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
* Act as liaisons for college outreach regarding diversity initiatives
* Assist on special projects as necessary

## Who serves on the E&I Council?

Membership on the E&I Council is open to Red Rocks faculty, staff, and students, as well as alumni and community members. Current members will be listed on the Inclusion & Diversity website. All who are in alignment with the goals of the E&I council, and wish to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community are invited to join. The following community members are strongly encouraged to participate:

* Community members (Students, Faculty, Staff, Alumni, Community Members) who are members of underserved and underrepresented communities, including people of color, immigrants, LGBTQIA+ individuals, people with disabilities, veterans, and people who belong to a minority religion.
* Representatives from the following departments, committees, and constituencies:
  + Departments: Accessibility Department, International Student Services, Veteran Services, TRIO, Inclusion and Diversity, Campus Life
  + Committees: Dream Team, Web Accessibility, Housing and Food Insecurity Council, Racial Equity & Equity and Policy PLCs
  + Constituencies: Classified, ATP, Faculty, Students

The Executive Team will meet quarterly with E&I representatives, and participate in monthly meetings as needed, by invitation.

## When are the meetings held?

Meetings have historically been held on the first Friday of the month.

## What is the E&I Council leadership structure?

E&I Council will adopt a yearly election of 2 RRCC community members to serve as chairs of the Council, alongside the Executive Director of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity.

## Upcoming projects:

* E&I Council will create a charter to support its continuous functioning and establish a steering/advisory committee to support the work of the new Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion when they come on.
* E&I Council will review and update the Equity Strategic Plan for the College
* E&I Council will review and comment on Executive Team proposal for Police Advisory Board
* Complete Bias Reporting System project
* Reinvigorate community connections
* Support the work of partner committees

## E&I Council definitions:

As part of their work in 2019, the Council developed the following definitions to facilitate clear communication about these issues across the college:

**Diversity**: the broadest spectrum of humanity which include individual differences (e.g., personality, prior knowledge, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations)

**Inclusion**:  Active, intentional, and ongoing efforts to create a culture of belonging where individuals feel welcome, valued, and supported

**Equity**: the creation of opportunities, systems, and structures which remove barriers and close gaps in outcomes for those from historically underrepresented groups

**Equity-Mindedness:** "The term 'Equity-Mindedness' refers to the perspective or mode of thinking exhibited by practitioners who call attention to patterns of inequity in student outcomes. These practitioners are willing to take personal and institutional responsibility for the success of their students, and critically reassess their own practices. It also requires that practitioners are race-conscious and aware of the social and historical context of exclusionary practices in American Higher Education." (Center for Urban Education, USC)

## E&I Council Commitments:

Members of E&I Council:

1. Principles of Equity and Inclusion work
   1. Affirm that the richness of our RRCC culture comes from diversity of our community.
   2. Agree that inclusion must be active, intentional, and ongoing work at our college.
   3. Work to identify and mitigate structural and cultural inequities at our college, with attention to race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and disability/ability, as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations
   4. Denounce White supremacy, Toxic Masculinity, Transphobia, Homophobia, Xenophobia, Class Dominance, and other ideologies which promote inequity
2. Principles of Equity & Inclusion Co-Working
   1. Come to E&I Council with an awareness of their identities and experiences, and how their social location shapes one’s relative power and privilege in the space
   2. Create a culture of ‘affirming inquiry,’ by practicing openness, humility, and reciprocity in our sharing, while avoiding suspicion, defensiveness, and tokenization
   3. Are open to discomfort, acknowledge that they may sometimes be challenged, and knowledge that they may not find closure
   4. Commit to creating and recreating a supportive and compassionate community within our Council
   5. Strive to provide evidence and/or reasoning for ideas and challenges
3. Supporting the Success of the Council
   1. Regular attendance (inclusive of sending apologies if absent)
   2. Completion of commitments (inclusive of requesting support and/or more time)
   3. Support of decisions of the council

## Application:

In the past, members have been added to the council through nominations and self-expressed interest. Because of our commitment to transparency, we have decided to solicit members from the entire college, giving anyone who wants to serve on the council the option to come forward. We hope to create a council with representation from a variety of groups and backgrounds.

Our application process ensures that participants have an opportunity to assess whether the E&I Council approaches and goals are a good fit for them. For the E&I Council to thrive, we will be working within shared boundaries, definitions, and commitments. While debate of these foundational concepts is welcome outside of the council, the functioning of this council depends upon our ability to work from a unified understanding of what Equity and Inclusion means at RRCC. Additionally, creating an equitable and inclusive environment requires an ability to work collaboratively and respectfully, while also fostering vulnerability and holding discomfort. Adherence to the stated E&I Council Commitments, as well as any group guidelines, charters, or structures that are created hereafter, is necessary for continued participation in the E&I Council.

[**E&I Council 2021 Application**](https://rrcc.formstack.com/forms/rrcc_equity_inclusion_council)