

RCW 28B.10.145 Diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism—Professional development. (1) Each institution of higher education must:

(a) Provide professional development, either existing or new, focused on diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism for faculty and staff. This program must be developed in partnership with the institution's administration, faculty, staff, and student leadership groups. Efforts must be made to ensure the program is developed and delivered by individuals with innate and acquired experience and expertise in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The content framework for professional development must be posted on each institution's public website for parents and community members. The professional development must begin in the 2022-23 academic year;

(b) Create an evaluation for professional development participants. The evaluations must, at minimum, capture a participant's level of satisfaction with the professional development opportunity, the degree to which the learning objectives were achieved, and how the knowledge gained may be applied to their work;

(c) (i) Share completed evaluations of program participants annually with either the state board for community and technical colleges or an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education, depending on the institution; and (ii) submit curriculum and other pertinent information regarding the program beginning July 1, 2023, and, subsequently, if there is a meaningful change or by request of the reporting entity.

(2) The purpose of each professional development program curriculum must be rooted in eliminating structural racism against all races and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion while improving academic, social, and health and wellness outcomes for students from historically marginalized communities. The program must also include elements that focus on commonalities and humanity. Institutions of higher education may further develop a curriculum that is reflective of the needs of the campus community.

(3) (a) Beginning with the 2022-23 academic year, every new faculty and staff member at an institution of higher education must participate in the program, regardless of whether they are a full-time or part-time employee. All faculty and staff participating in the professional development program must complete an evaluation. Other faculty and staff may participate in the professional development program as needed or required by their institution. Each institution must develop a goal of at least 80 percent of their total faculty and staff completing the professional development program every two years and report on their goal's progress in the report established in RCW 28B.10.151. Each institution may determine how to show progress towards their goal. Part-time faculty and staff who are employed at more than one institution of higher education are only required to complete the professional development program at one institution if they provide proof of completion to their other institution of higher education employers to receive credit for participation.

(b) Beginning with the 2024-25 academic year, 35 percent of tenured faculty and 35 percent of administrators at each institution of higher education must complete the professional development program every two years, regardless of whether they are a full-time or part-time employee.

(4) The state board for community and technical colleges and an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education may conduct further analysis of the professional development programs through participant evaluation data, use of focus groups, or other methods to determine promising practices. The state board for community and technical colleges and an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education must post a list of model standards and promising practices for professional development on their public websites for parents and community members.

(5) The institutions of higher education shall adopt rules as necessary or appropriate for effecting the provisions of this section, not in conflict with this chapter, and in accordance with the provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW, the administrative procedure act. [2021 c 275 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2021 c 275: "The legislature finds that a postsecondary credential such as a degree, apprenticeship, or certificate is increasingly necessary to obtain a job that offers a good salary and advancement opportunities and that increasing the number of students in Washington who obtain such a credential is essential to the state's economic success. The legislature also recognizes that equity gaps remain among postsecondary students and that those gaps particularly impact students from historically marginalized communities.

The legislature finds that developing and maintaining a culture of belonging and support for students, faculty, and staff at institutions of higher education is essential to student success, and that faculty and staff play a key role. The legislature therefore seeks to ensure that public institutions of higher education provide faculty and staff, as well as students, with training to give them tools to address matters related to antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The legislature further finds it necessary to regularly analyze the impact of that training on the campus community and to identify any measures needed to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion. Accordingly, the legislature intends that each public institution of higher education assess the learning, working, and living environment on campus that students, faculty, and staff experience to better understand the evolving state of diversity, equity, and inclusion." [2021 c 275 § 1.]

Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 275: "If any part of this act is found to be in conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and with respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does not affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its application to the agencies concerned. Rules adopted under this act must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state." [2021 c 275 § 6.]