



Office of Equity and Inclusion

Minnesota State Equity Scorecard: User Guide and Facilitation Tool

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Minnesota State Equity Scorecard

Purpose & Overview

The Equity Scorecard is a tool for creating greater awareness of, and accountability for, equity gaps across key facets of our institutions and system relevant to improving equity, diversity, and inclusion. The Equity Scorecard provides a holistic view of measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which together aim to help campus leaders make data-informed decisions to foster institutional change and close equity gaps for students and employees.

Using this guide: This guide serves as a resource for understanding and leveraging the Minnesota State Equity Scorecard to prompt inquiry and inform strategic equity efforts.

You can find this guide and accompanying Equity Scorecard information and resources on the [Equity Scorecard SharePoint Page](#).

Background:

Conceptualization of the Equity Scorecard began in 2019. The Board of Trustees, Chancellor, and Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) recognized the need for an integrated approach which utilizes data in a strategic manner to help Minnesota State understand the “health” of our institutions and system from an equity standpoint. The research of the USC Rossier Center for Urban Education (CUE) and their adaptive Equity Scorecard process, Dr. Damon Williams’ work on Strategic Diversity Leadership (2013), and the examination of various higher education and private industry scorecard models informed our approach.

In 2020, OEI established a cross-functional working group comprised of system- and campus-level partners from Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Legal, Human Resources, Finance, Equity & Inclusion, Enrollment Management, Institutional Research/Institutional Effectiveness, and Information Technology to undertake the development of the Equity Scorecard and corresponding Key Performance Indicators. The first prototype of the Equity Scorecard was brought to fruition in July 2021, with the subsequent release of a systemwide dashboard in July 2022. The Minnesota State Equity Scorecard is intended to evolve and work to continue refine the current dashboard is an ongoing process that is undertaken by the Equity Scorecard working group.

The Equity Scorecard Aims to:

1. Increase Transparency: Increase institutional responsibility, monitoring, and accountability necessary to realize our Equity 2030 goals.
2. Make Disparities Evident: Provide clear and readily understandable picture of disparities for key dimensions of equity, diversity, and inclusion relevant to colleges and universities.
3. Facilitate Improvement Process: Inform strategy and facilitate process of holistically identifying areas of need, opportunities for improvement, and existing areas of success pertinent to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion.
4. Encourage Inquiry & Targeted Action: Prompt further questions about the conditions and factors which impede equitable outcomes for all students and employees.
5. Monitor Progress & Support Assessment: Assess progress in, and impact of strategy on, pursuing equity, diversity, and inclusion objectives and goals.

Audiences & Intended Use of the Equity Scorecard

The Equity Scorecard is currently available to all Minnesota State employees. Work is underway to establish a public-facing version of the Equity Scorecard that will be available to all students, employees, and the public.

Key audiences for the Equity Scorecard include:

- Leadership teams across Minnesota State’s colleges, universities, & system office
- Leadership of various constituent groups (e.g., student organizations, bargaining units, deans)
- Colleagues and partners working to advance equity within Minnesota State

Equity Scorecard Use Considerations

1. Facilitating Campus Level Discussion Using System Level Scorecards: Campuses have access to college, university, and system rollup data, their own institutions data, well as data for other colleges and universities in Minnesota State. Employees at all levels are encouraged to use the tool to initiate and inform conversations about understanding and addressing equity gaps that we know exist across our system. If conversations at the institution-level are not progressing, or there is resistance to examining data more close-to-practice, we recommend using college or university rollup data as an initial step to foster more meaningful dialogues centered around addressing inequities.
2. Establishing Baselines: We must be able to demonstrate what are the current (baseline) equity gaps in order to determine where we are and where do need to go.

3. “Admiring the Problem”: We do not want to see the gaps and simply admire the problem. Which institutional factors could be influencing the observed disparities, and how can we proactively improve upon them?
4. Scorecard Will Not Diagnose the Source of Equity Gaps: The Equity Scorecard serves as a mechanism to look inward and prompt institutions to consider why equity gaps exist and how they can be addressed. However, it's essential to note that while this tool informs and aids the process of examination, it does not act as a diagnostic tool for identifying the specific factors shaping these disparity patterns.
5. No One Cause of Equity Gaps: There are numerous factors contributing to inequities, including some that lie beyond our institutional boundaries. While we may not have direct control over these external elements, it is crucial to acknowledge them. Instead, our primary focus should be on the aspects we can influence, those that lead to disparate outcomes. By being intentional in addressing these internal factors, we can foster positive change and strive for greater equity. While there is no one metric we can look at and be able to pinpoint the cause of inequity, the scorecard should prompt a deeper dive to examine how our institution’s practices, processes, policies, pedagogy, and engagement of students and employees contribute to the disparate outcomes.
6. The Equity Scorecard Does Not Seek to Compete with Existing Efforts: Please note, it is important to consider what efforts, strategies, and tools are already in place at your institution for assessing and monitoring disparities in student and employee outcomes and experiences. The Equity Scorecard does not seek to compete or outright supplant your existing efforts. The scorecard may offer insight into how existing efforts may be enhanced by placing an emphasis on holistically viewing equity and inclusion as well as disaggregating data.

“THERE IS NO ONE METRIC WE CAN LOOK AT AND BE ABLE TO PINPOINT THE CAUSE OF INEQUITY. THE SCORECARD SHOULD PROMPT A DEEPER DIVE TO EXAMINE HOW OUR INSTITUTION’S PRACTICES, PROCESSES, POLICIES, PEDAGOGY, AND ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES CONTRIBUTE TO DISPARATE OUTCOMES.”

Key Performance Indicators

Broadly speaking, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are the critical aspects by which we can assess and monitor progress toward a specific objective or organizational priority. KPIs enable leaders to focus on strategic and operational measures that are essential for advancing or impacting outcomes.

Conceptual Background for Minnesota State's Equity Scorecard KPIs

Advancing equity is often discussed in the context of student success outcomes and rightly so, given education is central to the mission of Minnesota State. You will notice, however, that the indicators and metrics on the Minnesota State Equity Scorecard focus beyond student success. Our collective equity improvement efforts require a holistic and multifaceted approach for understanding equity, diversity, and inclusion.

We know that student success is shaped by several interlinked factors and facets of our institutions, system, and society at large. For example, disparities in student success are tied to the compositional diversity of faculty and staff, the professional development of all employees, the campus climate experienced by our students and colleagues, in addition to other factors. For the Equity Scorecard there is a key overarching aim for holistically considering how greater equity is realized and brought to fruition across multiple fronts. This is yet another reason why each of the KPIs represented are conceptually and intrinsically linked to one another.

It is important to note that we recognize the need to examine inequities for other identities beyond race, gender, and socioeconomic status. For example, ability status, LGBTQ+ identity, gender beyond binary M/F, veterans, different ethnicities, and others all warrant attention. Collectively, the Minnesota State system and the Equity Scorecard working group are examining considerations related to data privacy as well as gaps in our systemwide data collection practices for various groups.

Equity Scorecard KPI Overview

Due to the scale of our system and the complex nature of equity work, it necessitated taking a phased approach to this work. Key considerations included: fostering understanding around basic principles, key terms, and tenants of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI); building capacity to engage in conversations tied to equity, at both an individual and organizational level; acclimating constituents to equity-minded data disaggregation; and examining our data infrastructure and data needs.

The Minnesota State Equity Scorecard focuses on six (6) KPIs, two (2) of which are still in development. The KPIs include:

- KPI 1: Student Success
- KPI 2: Compositional Diversity
- KPI 3: Employee Retention and Development
- KPI 4: Supplier Diversity
- KPI 5: Equity Strategy & Action (in development)
- KPI 6: Campus Climate (in development)

For several of the KPIs we've leveraged existing and readily available Minnesota State data. The difference for the Equity Scorecard, however, is that we are focusing on disparities between groups and subsequent progress toward closing equity gaps and realizing greater equity across multiple interlinked facets.

As noted above, KPIs 5 and 6 remain in development with integration taking place in 2024.

KPI 1: Student Success

Ensuring our students succeed, regardless of their career path, degree/certificate program, or entry point into our colleges and universities is central to the mission of Minnesota State. When our students succeed, our communities and the economy of Minnesota prospers.

KPI 1 is centered on identifying equity gaps for key indicators of academic success in efforts to improve the learning & outcomes of students. This indicator builds off the current student success metrics that our system generates annually and is an established practice of measuring outcomes through Persistence, Retention, & Completion (PRC) rates.

KPI 2: Compositional Diversity

As Minnesota State's student body continues to diversify, it is important to have a workforce that reflects and understands the identities and experiences of our students. Representation and richness in diversity helps foster a sense of belonging, inclusion, community, and brings with it varying perspectives and experience that are beneficial to the success of students and employees.

KPI 2 measures student and employee racial demographics and trends in order to identify disparities between faculty/student and staff/student demographic composition. Additionally, KPI 2 highlights various aspects of employee diversity to identify potential representational disparities across our different employee groups.

KPI 3: Employee Retention & Development

The ability of institutions to retain their employees, particularly employees from marginalized communities, shapes the college's or university's compositional diversity, as well as the experiences and outcomes of employee and students. The ability to retain employees can result from many factors, including (but not limited to) climate and culture, opportunities for advancement and development, salary/benefits, options for flexible work environments, job markets opportunities, and more.

KPI 3 aims to assess our institutional ability to retain employees & support their development needs, with particular focus on diverse/marginalized populations. Minnesota State must be poised to not only attract talent, but also retain our employees and support their professional development needs.

KPI 4: Supplier Diversity

Minnesota State's footprint spans 47 distinctive communities and is woven into the economic, social, and cultural fabric of Minnesota. A [report](#) found that in FY2022 Minnesota State contributed \$8.4 billion to Minnesota's economy, which included \$4.7 billion direct and \$3.7 billion indirect and induced spending. Our commitment to equity extends to our procurement practices and supports our goal of Equity 2030. Inclusive and equitable procurement directly impacts our local economy and provides economic opportunity for underrepresented communities. Furthermore, inclusive procurement helps elevate Minnesota State as a viable pathway to college for communities that have historically had a low proportion of their population with higher education credentials.

KPI 4 provides a mechanism to increase accountability for the betterment of our supply chain and ensures that our spending practices match the values of Minnesota State and our commitment to Equity 2030.

Additionally, procurement processes that are more inclusive and equitable help build bridges to the communities across the state and region. Those connections and relationships create greater awareness of colleges and universities, which can also create opportunities for recruiting future students and employees from diverse and underrepresented communities.

KPI 5: Equity Structures, Strategies, and Actions

*Note: Integration of the finalized KPI 5 elements will take place in a phased approach. At this time, **the KPI 5 elements are not fixed**, but rather intended to aid college and university leadership in acclimating to and planning for establishing and/or maturing efforts tied to these elements at the institutional level.*

KPI 5 aims to provide a view into the presences of key institution level strategies and structures that are needed to address equity gaps. The objectives are to:

1. Provide baseline view of the presence of requisite strategic elements for advancing equity and realizing Equity 2030.
2. Facilitate strategic consideration of actions and structures that need to be established or matured to address matters of equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
3. Support prioritization & decision making for ensuring strategic opportunities and structures are being cultivated to close equity gaps in institutional outcomes.
4. Support Accreditation (HLC & others) by providing evidence of strategic structures and efforts instrumental to improving equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

Equity Scorecard Layout & Orientation

Reference [Appendix C](#) for information on how to find and view the Equity Scorecard within PowerBI.

This section provides a brief overview of the Equity Scorecard’s layout. The two visualizations (Figures 1 & 2) below assist in orienting the reader to the scorecard.

Upon opening the Equity Scorecard in PowerBI, the welcome page displays an overview and background information for the tool. The menu on the left allows users to select and navigate each Key Performance Indicator (Box A, Figure 1). The “Export” button on the top menu allows the Equity Scorecard to render a paginated report in either PDF or PowerPoint format (Box B, Figure 1).

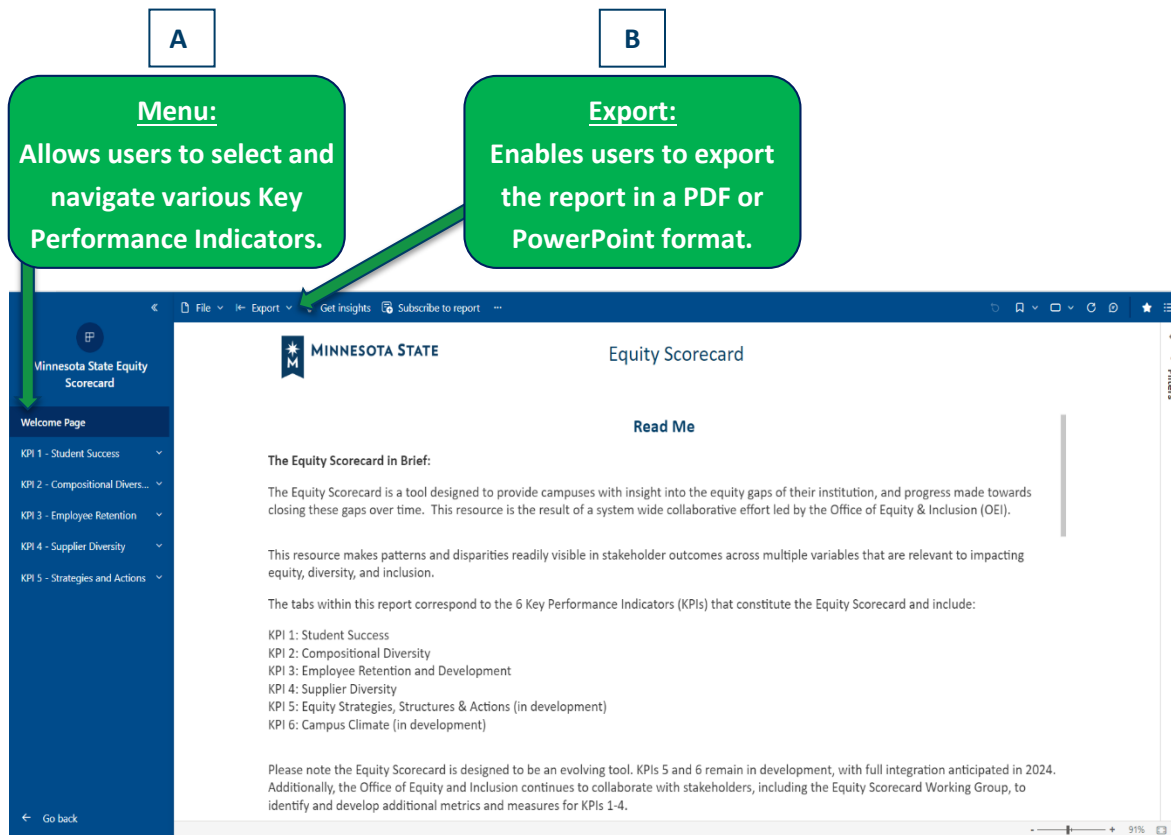


Figure 1: Equity Scorecard PowerBI Landing Page

Please see the next page for additional layout information and Figure 2.

By expanding the chevron on the left side menu, users can navigate through each KPI and the respective metrics within each KPI (Box C, Figure 2). Each metric includes the title and respective institution above the graph (Box D, Figure 2), with the data represented in a graph format and disaggregated by various characteristics (Box E, Figure 2). A table is included below each graph and displays the corresponding equity gaps trends, change over time for each group, cohort count, and number to reach parity (eliminate the equity gap) (Box E, Figure 2).

To the left of the graph and table there are various slicers users can utilize to examine equity gaps by various characteristics (Box F, Figure 2)

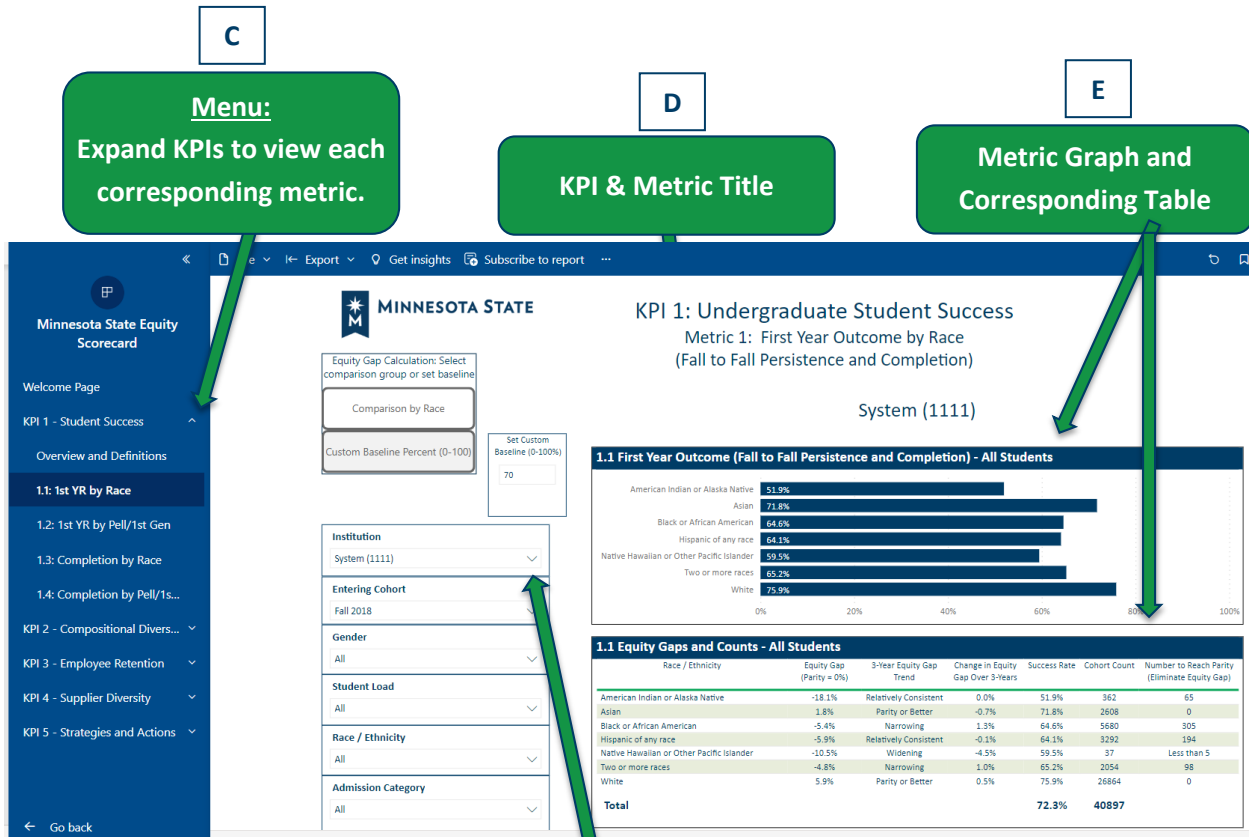


Figure 1: Equity Scorecard Visual Walkthrough Part 2

Slicers:
Various slicers enable users to view the data for different groups, cohort years, admission categories, etc.

F

Reading the Equity Scorecard

This section offers guidance on how to read the information provided on the Equity Scorecard. Below, Figure 3 provides an example of how to read the Equity Scorecard.

For this example, we are looking at a systemwide rollup of comparison by race, with White being selected as the comparison group for which the equity gaps will be calculated off.

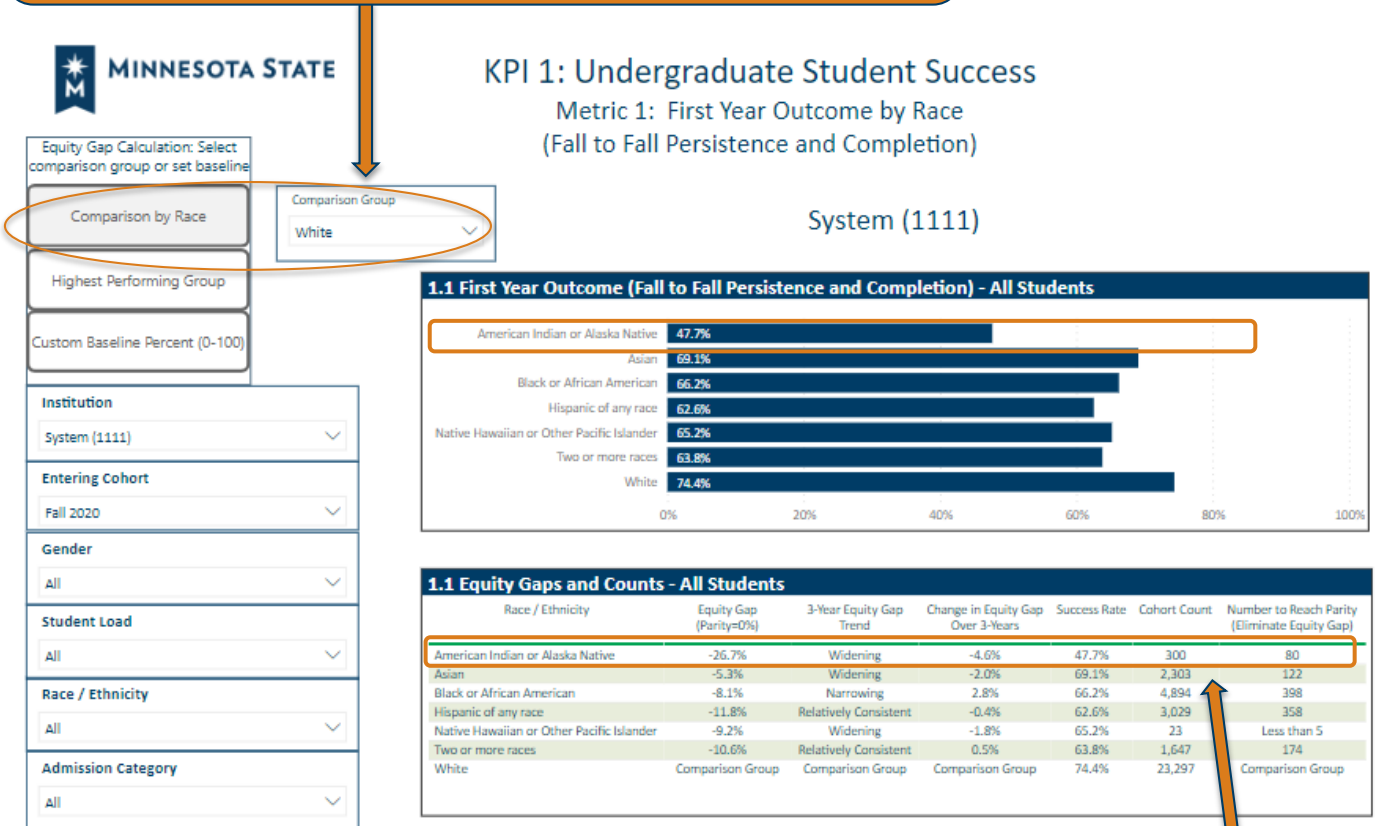


Figure 2: Visual outline for reading the Equity Scorecard

There is a sizable disparity in the first-year outcome of American Indian / Alaska Native students relative to the comparison group, White Students. The equity gap has gotten worse (widening) in recent years, with no improvement. To eliminate the equity gap for American Indian / Alaska Native students, it would require 80 additional American Indian / Alaska Native students to persist or complete.

Comparison Groups

For several of the KPIs, the racial category of White and/or male can be set as the comparison group for calculating equity gaps. By selecting the white and/or male as the reference point, it can serve two primary reasons: 1) To acknowledge the long-standing history of exclusionary practices in higher education and larger North American society; and 2) To maintain consistency for measuring equity gaps across multiple indicators and institutions.

1. Exclusionary Practices

Historically, the formation of social-economic structures and institutions of higher education were built to serve economic and social prosperity for white heteronormative men and the white race, collectively. Higher education has a long history of excluding and underserving students who are not White, male, or affluent. Moreover, students [and employees] of color pay a cultural tax as a result of being burdened by legacies of social and educational discrimination (Dowd & Bensimon). Unfortunately, these legacies continue to have a profound impact on educational outcomes in addition to the ongoing policies, practices, and procedures which are contributing to the equity gaps we see. Finally, by setting White and/or male as the comparison group, we **are not** implying that White/male is the “standard” by which other identities and groups should assimilate, nor is it the ceiling for outcomes and opportunities.

2. Consistency in Measurement

By setting White and/or male as the comparison group, it enables our system to maintain consistency in our measurements across several different indicators and across institutions. It also ensures that we collectively have the same reference point when discussing equity gaps to minimize confusion or misunderstanding. In other words, we are all “speaking the same language” and will not get mired down by referencing different points which can quickly derail the conversation.

For some KPIs, different race groups can be set as the comparison, as well as selecting comparisons relative to the group with the highest outcome. Additionally, within KPI 1 users can set their own custom baseline for calculating equity gaps.

Appendices

Appendix A: [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

Appendix B: [Equity Scorecard Information Sheet](#)

Appendix C: [Accessing the Equity Scorecard - “How-To Guide”](#)

Appendix D: [Equity Scorecard Layout Visual Walkthrough](#)

Appendix E: [Introducing & Orienting Audiences to the Equity Scorecard](#)

Appendix F: [“How To” - Equity Scorecard Conversation Prompts & Guiding Inquiry Questions](#)

Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Intended Use

This appendix serves as supplemental information for the Minnesota State Equity Scorecard. This list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) should not be considered exhaustive or comprehensive. This appendix will be updated on an ongoing basis, so feedback is encouraged and welcomed.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q: What was the genesis of the Minnesota State Equity Scorecard?

Conceptualization of the Equity Scorecard began in 2019. The Board of Trustees, Chancellor, and Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) recognized the need for an integrated approach which utilizes data in a strategic manner to help Minnesota State understand the “health” of our institutions and system from an equity standpoint. The research of the USC Rossier Center for Urban Education (CUE) and their adaptive Equity Scorecard process, Dr. Damon Williams’ work on Strategic Diversity Leadership (2013), and the examination of various higher education and private industry scorecard models informed our approach.

2. Q: How often will the Equity Scorecard be updated? Will additional indicators be added?

The Equity Scorecard data will be refreshed on a monthly and semesterly basis depending on when new data is available for the specific metrics/indicators. . Currently most metrics are updated annually, at the beginning of each Fiscal Year (July). As the need for additional metrics and indicators evolves, so too will the Equity Scorecard. Refining indicators and/or adding additional metrics will be undertaken by the Equity Scorecard working group. New indicators/metrics or refinements will be vetted through various channels prior to being formally adopted with every annual update.

3. Q: When will users be able to see data for every institution, not just their own?

Users will have the ability to select any institution with the first round of annual updates taking place in mid-fall 2023.

4. Q: How will the Equity Scorecard be used?

The Equity Scorecard is designed to develop awareness of equity gaps across varying measurable areas, with a specific focus on fostering institutional change through data-informed decision making to address disparities and close equity gaps. The Equity Scorecard seeks to prompt our leaders and other constituent groups to meaningfully consider how equity and inclusion can be strategically and practically advanced. Using the Equity Scorecard as a tool, leaders can integrate and normalize strategies to advance equity in outcomes while monitoring progress towards equity and creating greater

accountability. The system office will also consider how to align and integrate the Equity Scorecard with existing annual institutional performance monitoring and accountability processes (e.g. Performance Measures).

5. Q: How will data privacy be handled? Who will have access to the underlying data?

As the system office team continues to refine the Equity Scorecard, we prioritize the importance and need for protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of our students and employees. Protecting the identify-ability of employees and students is a priority for any data-informed effort. The system office team will work determine how to share information where there are small counts for a given outcome for demographic group in a responsible manner.

6. Q: Why aren't other marginalized identity groups beyond race, Pell-eligibility, and first-generation status included?

We acknowledge the need for examining equity in outcomes for other marginalized identities as a critical component to assessing the equity health of our system and institutions. Currently, there are limitations in the availability of data for various identity groups. Understanding this shortfall, the Office of Equity and Inclusion is partnering with system office IR to explore options for capturing additional data points. Furthermore, there are considerations related to data privacy and protecting the anonymity of various protected classes which warrant consideration to ensure that individual students and employees are not compromised.

7. Q: What is the Equity Scorecard working group responsible for? What constituent groups are a part of the Equity Scorecard working group?

Members of the Equity Scorecard working group meet approximately monthly and are responsible for advancing Key Performance Indicator (KPI) development, providing subject matter expertise, assisting in strategy development, and working on project deliverables. The working group is comprised of a variety of system office and campus constituents from: Academic Affairs and Student Affairs; Institutional Research/Institutional Effectiveness; IT; Human Resources; Legal; Finance/Procurement; Diversity Officers; Enrollment Management; and Statewide Student Associations.

8. Q: How will the elements of KPI 5 be measured?

Development methods of measuring and visualizing are the next steps in the development process, which will be undertaken by the Equity Scorecard workgroup. After the draft elements of KPI 5 are integrated into the dashboard (July 2023), the next phase will focus on operationalizing the elements (2024).

9. Q: Who can I contact if I have questions about the Equity Scorecard?

For questions related to access, use, and considerations leveraging the Equity Scorecard for data-informed decisions, contact Tarnjeet Kang, Director of Equity Assessment, at Tarnjeet.kang@minnstate.edu, and/or Tarrence Robertson, Project Director for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, at tarrence.robertson@minnstate.edu.

Appendix B: Equity Scorecard Information Sheet

This one-page summary provides a succinct high-level overview of the Minnesota State Equity Scorecard.

Equity Scorecard Objectives and Aims

- Provide clear picture of disparities in student and employee outcomes.
- Make equity gaps readily visible & understood.
- Encourage holistic understanding of interlinked nature of equity, diversity, & inclusion facets
- Prompt consideration & inquiry of conditions/factors impeding equitable outcomes.
- Inform strategies & facilitate processes for identifying opportunities to pursue equity.
- Increase transparency in progress towards advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Key Performance Indicators

- KPI-1 Student Success: Measures of academic success outcomes
- KPI-2 Compositional Diversity: Representational alignment of employee & student demographic groups
- KPI-3 Employee Retention: Assess ability to retain & support development needs of employees.
- KPI-4 Supplier Diversity: Assess diversity in supply chain & public expenditures to support economic growth in a socially responsible & equitable manner.
- KPI-5 Equity Structures, Strategies, & Actions: Measure progress toward pursuing and maturing the requisite elements, structures, and strategies that are instrumental to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- KPI 6 Campus Climate: Assess the sense of inclusion, belonging, and safety for students and employees.

Audiences for the Equity Scorecard

- Leadership teams across Minnesota State colleges, universities, & system office
- Leadership of various constituent groups (e.g., student organizations, bargaining units)
- Colleagues and partners working to advance equity within Minnesota State

Initial Considerations & Intended Use of the Equity Scorecard

- Becoming familiar with disparity patterns and equity gaps.
- Consider the extent of awareness of equity gaps among your colleagues and leadership team.
- Normalize understanding and engagement of equity-related needs & issues.
- Facilitate discussion of considerations, questions, & concerns that arise for you.
- Consideration of efforts underway to impact equity gaps.
- Prompt inquiry into how scorecard can help facilitate/inform strategies for realizing greater equity.
- Consideration of major challenges & barriers for advancing equity.
- Reflection on how Minnesota State can support your equity efforts & strategies.
- Illuminate concerns or considerations with development of institution-level scorecards.

Equity Scorecards Are Not Intended to Be:

- “Written in stone” instruments for assessing equity.
- Diagnostic tools for determining definitive or “root causes” of equity gaps.

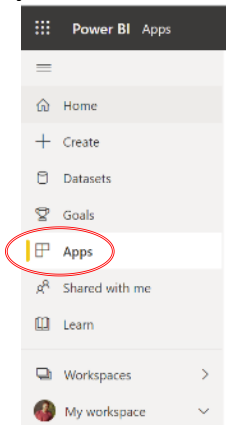
Appendix C: Accessing the Equity Scorecard - “How-to Guide”

The following instructions will allow you to access the Equity Scorecard, which is included in a Power BI app entitled ‘Minnesota State Equity Scorecard’.

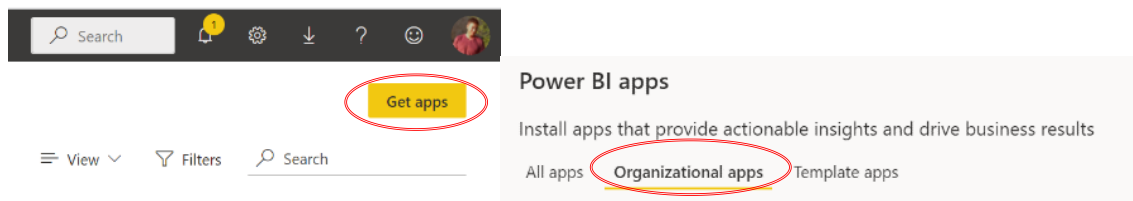
Step 1: Open a web browser and login to PowerBI using your starID@minnstate.edu and password at <https://powerbi.microsoft.com/en-us/landing/signin/>

Note: You do NOT need a Pro license to access Enterprise reports, but you will need to log in to PowerBI through your Microsoft 365 portal.

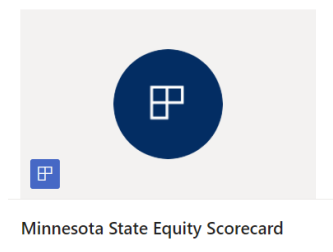
Step 2: Within PowerBI, click on the Apps menu on the left-hand side of the screen.



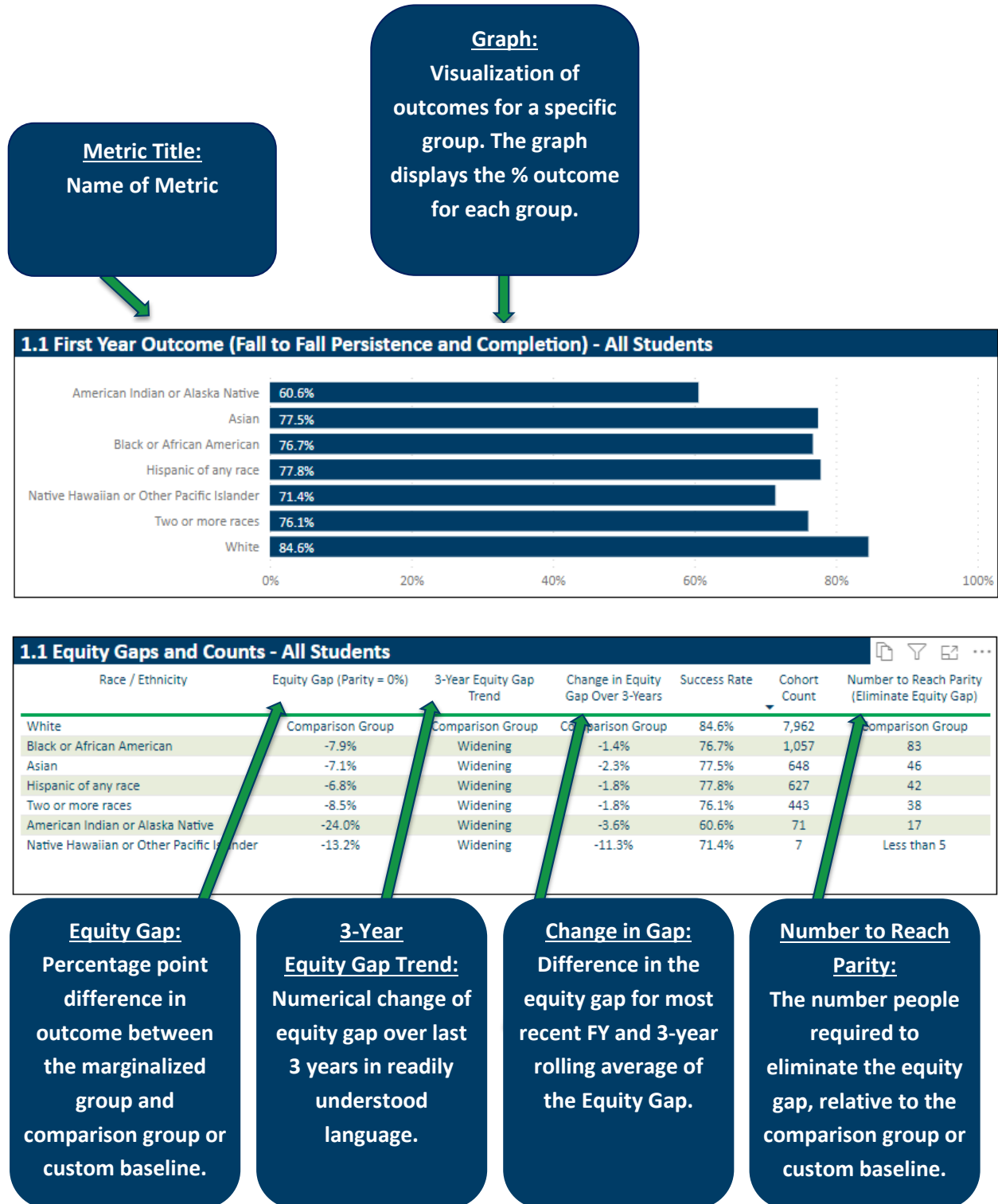
Step 3: Click the yellow ‘Get apps’ button in the upper right corner of the screen, then select ‘Organizational Apps’ in the popup.



Step 4: Select the ‘Minnesota State Equity Scorecard. Once you click the app, it will load, and you can now open it to access the report.



Appendix D: Equity Scorecard Layout & Visual Walkthrough



Appendix E: Introducing & Orienting Audiences to the Equity Scorecard

This section offers guidance on how to introduce the Equity Scorecard to your colleagues and constituents, in efforts to help orient them and build understanding of the scorecard.

Please note, the orientation to the Equity Scorecard may take 30 to 45 minutes.

Steps for Orienting Audiences to the Equity Scorecard

1. Before sharing the Equity Scorecard with your audience, distribute the Equity Scorecard Information Sheet ([Appendix B](#)).
2. Discuss with the audience the following foundational information:
 - a. Purpose of the Equity Scorecard
 - b. Origin of the Equity Scorecard
 - c. Structure of the Equity Scorecard
 - d. What are the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
3. Distribute the Equity *Scorecard Layout Walkthrough Visual* ([Appendix D](#)) to the audience. Alternatively, the visual can be projected onto a screen or shared on video-call. This resource will help orient your group to layout of the scorecard and introduce to them to key elements for “reading” the scorecard. Have colleagues review the visual and walk through it as a group.
4. Share the Equity Scorecard with your group (project on to screen or present a hardcopy). Walk through the Equity Scorecard with your colleagues referencing the *Equity Scorecard Layout Walkthrough Visual* handout. It may be necessary to allow time for walking through the entire scorecard at first, before engaging in discussion, in effort to orient your colleagues to the scorecard and create familiarity with the layout.
5. Discussing the equity gap patterns observed on the Equity Scorecard is certainly part of the orientation process. [Appendix F](#) offers some guidance and questions to help facilitate discussions tied to making sense of the Equity Scorecard, and how to use it to prompt deeper inquiry.

Appendix F: “How To” – Equity Scorecard Conversation Prompts and Guiding Inquiry Questions

The Equity Scorecard aims to prompt consideration of the disparate outcomes of your students and employees, in efforts to encourage meaningful conversation between you and your colleagues about how the disparities can be addressed and narrowed. Below, you will find a set of questions which can help facilitate your conversations about the patterns presented in the Equity Scorecard.

In facilitating use of the Equity Scorecard, you are encouraged to:

- Begin conversations from a place of inquiry about what the scorecard is conveying, what do colleague’s notice, and what questions come up for them.
- First seek to understand the equity gap patterns and avoid the common initial response of “finger pointing” and allocating blame for the disparities.
- Recognize that developing an understanding of the equity gaps and determining impactful approaches for addressing disparities will not happen in one conversation.
- Introduce the Equity Scorecard to your colleagues and walk them through the “Equity Scorecard Orientation Guide” ([Appendix E](#)).

Initiating Conversation about the Equity Scorecard

The following questions offer some starting points for your conversations about becoming familiar with the Equity Scorecard, observing equity gap patterns, and beginning to meaningfully consider how your college or university can undertake efforts to bring about greater equity.

Consideration Questions:

1. In looking at the information presented for a given KPI (Key Performance Indicator) and metric what do you notice?
 - a. What patterns do you observe?
2. What comes up for you and your group when looking at the KPI’s and differing outcome patterns across groups?
 - a. What questions come up for you and your colleagues?
3. How familiar or aware do you think your colleagues and leaders are with the disparate outcomes and equity gaps for student success?
4. How would you go about sharing this information with your colleagues?

Addressing Equity Gap Inquiry Questions

1. How does the institution shape, contribute to, exacerbate, or mitigate equity gaps?
 - a. What is the institution's role?
2. What existing strategies, initiatives, and efforts at your campus are tied advancing equity or may impact equity gaps observed for a given KPI?

For example: In looking at Student Success metrics, consider what strategies, undertakings, and continuous improvement processes already exist that aim to improve student academic outcomes? Is there an intentional focus on equity in outcomes of these efforts?

Examples of Improvement Efforts: Academic Program Review, Strategic Enrollment Management, Accreditation (e.g., HLC) related improvement processes, Equity by Design, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy & Curriculum trainings, professional development, assessment of student learning, student life programming, student support service efforts (e.g., advising).

3. Are the existing strategies, initiatives, and efforts impactful for narrowing equity gaps?
 - a. What else could be done to make these efforts more effective?
4. Consider discussing with various groups what are potential opportunities from a particular group's perspective for advancing equity? In particular, what challenges impede equity in student success.
 - a. Follow up questions and consideration, what are you and your colleagues willing to take on or focus on to address disparity patterns observed on the Equity Scorecard?
5. What are some potential strategies and efforts that could be introduced to address equity gaps observed?
6. As a corollary to existing strategies and efforts does your current strategic plan or planning efforts include equity focused elements that align to the Equity Scorecard KPI's?

Equity Scorecard Use Considerations

Facilitating Campus Level Discussion Using System Level Scorecards: Campuses have access to college, university, and system rollup data, their own institutions data, well as data for all other colleges and universities in Minnesota State. Employees at all levels are encouraged to use the tool to initiate and inform conversations about understanding and addressing equity gaps that we know exist across our system. If conversations at the institution-level are not progressing, or there is resistance to examining data more close-to-practice, we recommend using the rollup data as an initial step to foster more meaningful dialogues centered around addressing inequities.

Establishing Baselines: We must be able to demonstrate what are the current (baseline) equity gaps in order to determine where we are and where do need to go.

“Admiring the Problem”: We do not want to see the gaps and simply admire the problem. Which institutional factors could be influencing the observed disparities, and how can we proactively improve upon them?

Scorecard Will Not Diagnose the Source of Equity Gaps: The Equity Scorecard serves as mechanism to look inward and prompt institutions to consider why equity gaps exist and how they can be addressed. However, it's essential to note that while this tool informs and aids the process of examination, it does not act as a diagnostic tool for identifying the specific factors shaping these disparity patterns.

No One Cause of Equity Gaps: There are numerous factors contributing to inequities, including some that lie beyond our institutional boundaries. While we may not have direct control over these external elements, it is crucial to acknowledge them. Instead, our primary focus should be on the aspects we can influence, those that lead to disparate outcomes. By being intentional in addressing these internal factors, we can foster positive change and strive for greater equity. While there is no one metric we can look at and be able to pinpoint the cause of inequity, the scorecard should prompt a deeper dive to examine how our institution’s practices, processes, policies, pedagogy, and engagement of students and employees contribute to the disparate outcomes.

Scorecard Does Not Seek to Compete with Existing Efforts: Please note, it is important to consider what efforts, strategies, and tools are already in place at your institution for assessing and monitoring disparities in student and employee outcomes and experiences. The Equity Scorecard does not seek to compete or outright supplant your existing efforts. The scorecard may offer insight into how existing efforts may be enhanced by placing an emphasis on holistically viewing equity and inclusion as well as disaggregating data.



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