

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON PROPOSED NEW OR REVISED POLICIES

BP 2.01: Diversity and Inclusion		
Date Comment Received	Comment	Response
4-25-2025	<p>I write to you with concern about the decision to remove language about diversity and equity in hiring from BP 2.01. I assume this stems from recent federal and state “mandates.” However, there is no reason to comply in advance, especially since the federal executive order has been blocked (see https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/politics-elections/2025/04/24/education-departments-anti-dei-guidance-blocked) and the state effort was vetoed (see https://apps.azleg.gov/BillStatus/BillOverview/83026?SessionId=129). We know that diversity is a strength, and we know the difference it makes in the success of our students. Please do not let empty and illegal threats interfere with our internal processes and values for hiring.</p>	See unified response below
4-28-2025	<p>I would like to know why this change is being considered because it worries me that this is the first of many changes to remove DEI from college policy, which doesn't promote a culture of care.</p> <p>If the removal is an attempt to make this policy more clear, I can understand removing the "The same value will be utilized by PCC in employee recruitment and hiring." since it is somewhat redundant. However, I think that PCC should make an effort to have their employee base to reflect the community we serve as a community college, and therefore, the beginning of the next sentence should be kept as a part of policy.</p>	See unified response below
4-28-2025	<p>I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed removal of language in the College's Diversity & Inclusion policy related to employee recruitment and hiring. Specifically, the deletion of the statement:</p> <p><i>"The same value will be utilized by PCC in employee recruitment and hiring. In order that College employees reflect the diversity of the students and its community..."</i></p> <p>This change is not merely a matter of wording — it represents a significant shift in the College's commitment to fostering a truly inclusive and representative workforce. Replacing this clear</p>	See unified response below

	<p>and intentional commitment with the vague phrase "<i>reasonable good faith efforts</i>" weakens the foundation of accountability and transparency that marginalized employees rely on for safety, support, and equity in the workplace.</p> <p>As a queer, nonbinary employee, I can attest that explicit commitments to diversity in hiring practices are not symbolic — they are essential. They signal to current and prospective employees that this institution recognizes the importance of representation, actively works to ensure it, and understands that diverse perspectives are critical to serving our equally diverse student body and community.</p> <p>Removing this language sends a troubling message: that diversity in recruitment and hiring is no longer a core value, but merely an aspirational goal without clear direction. This is particularly alarming in a time when LGBTQIA+ individuals, people of color, and other marginalized groups continue to face systemic barriers in employment and advancement.</p> <p>An inclusive environment starts with intentional hiring practices that ensure employees reflect the diversity of those we serve. Without this, we risk fostering a workplace where marginalized employees feel isolated, unsupported, and unsafe — undermining both employee well-being and the College's mission.</p> <p>I urge the Board to reconsider this proposed change and retain the original language that affirms PCC's active commitment to diversity in recruitment and hiring. This clarity is vital not only for compliance but for cultivating a culture where all employees feel seen, valued, and protected.</p>	
5-5-2025	<p>I am writing to express concern over the proposed changes to BP 2.01: Diversity and Inclusion. While national pressure is forcing organizations to change their diversity hiring qualifications, I do not believe it is in PCC's best interest to cave to these pressures. I would like clearer information about why these changes are being made--are there impending consequences if they are not made? I believe the idea that our faculty and staff reflect the diversity of our students should be upheld at Pima. Studies show that students thrive in an environment where they are able to have teachers who look like them. If we really are a student-focused institution, we would do well to keep the ideals that focus on students.</p>	See unified response below

5-9-25	Please include suggested wording for BP 2.01 (in red text): Reasonable good faith efforts will be made to recruit and hire highly qualified and diverse applicants.	See unified response below
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Unified Response to Comments:

Clarification of Governing Board Policy on Hiring Practices

The recent review of the Governing Board Policy regarding hiring practices was initiated due to changes in federal policy. However, it's essential to recognize that the College's policy has not changed. The revision aims to ensure the policy statement is clear, legal, and consistent with our actual practices, particularly concerning the role of diversity in hiring and admissions.

Understanding Diversity and Non-Discrimination

The College values diversity and is committed to fostering an inclusive environment for employees and students. We actively work to identify and eliminate any discrimination that might arise in hiring and the workplace. Our prohibition against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is broader than what federal and state laws require.

Several federal laws prohibit discrimination based on various characteristics:

- **Title VI** addresses discrimination based on race, color, and national origin.
- **Title VII** addresses discrimination in employment based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin.
- **Title IX** addresses participation on the basis of sex in educational settings for both employees and students.

Recruitment Versus Selection

A key point of clarification is the distinction between *recruitment efforts* and *hiring or admission decisions*. The College strives to broaden its recruitment efforts for employees and students, actively reaching out to populations who may not have previously considered the College for their education or employment. We recognize that having an employee and student population that mirrors the community is a laudable objective. If our demographics vary noticeably from the community, it prompts us to evaluate potential barriers or perceptions and improve our recruitment strategies.

However, it is crucial to understand that *hiring and admission decisions cannot include recognition of demographics or diversity as part of the selection process*. While we can take extra steps to reach a broader audience during recruitment, federal law and College policy prohibit hiring or admission decisions based on demographic information or diversity goals. This means that just as the College cannot discriminate against a person based on a personal characteristic or demographic, we also cannot discriminate in favor of a person based on such characteristics. With the proposed change, the College policy language will better align with long-established legal standards.

Addressing Misinterpretations

The removal of specific language from the policy, specifically a reference to "hiring" that

caused confusion, does not indicate that the College no longer recognizes the value of a diverse employee and student population. Instead, it removes language that has been misinterpreted as stating that the College's policy is to consider diversity in the hiring interview and selection process. Such a practice would be inconsistent with federal law and College policy.

Ultimately, the College values all employees for who they are, our shared values, and our collective ability to support a healthy work and education environment that encourages student success. Our commitment remains to non-discriminatory practices while actively working to broaden our reach and attract a diverse pool of applicants.