



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO

President's Commission on Equity  
and Inclusive Excellence

# What is your impact when leading with equity?



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# Agenda



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- Introductions
- Overview
- What is equity and inclusion?
- A&M strategic plan
- What is your role?
- How can you impact?
- Values and Practices Activity
- Q&A

# Introductions



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- Elizabeth Murakami, Ph.D., Special Assistant to the President on DEI
- Tamara Hinojosa, Ph.D., Inaugural Faculty Fellow on DEI
- Jessica Loudermilk, Chief of Staff/Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives



# Overview



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- ❖ Transforming Tomorrow Together: Strategic Plan Renewal 2022-2026
- ❖ The President's Commission on Equity and Inclusive Excellence (PCOE<sup>2</sup>)  
-- Established in 2017
- ❖ Including **Equity** in the Strategic Plan's values

# State of Affairs



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U.S.'s Gini coefficient increased 11% in relation to inequality (we are at .48 where 1.0 means "all wealth is in one person's hands" and 0 means "all the wealth is evenly distributed"). (Bersin, 2020; OECD, 2021)

Since 2013, the Human Rights Campaign recorded an increasing number of transgender and non-binary individuals suffering violent deaths.

2020 showed the highest number of violent deaths. Two thirds of deaths were of African American trans-gender women.

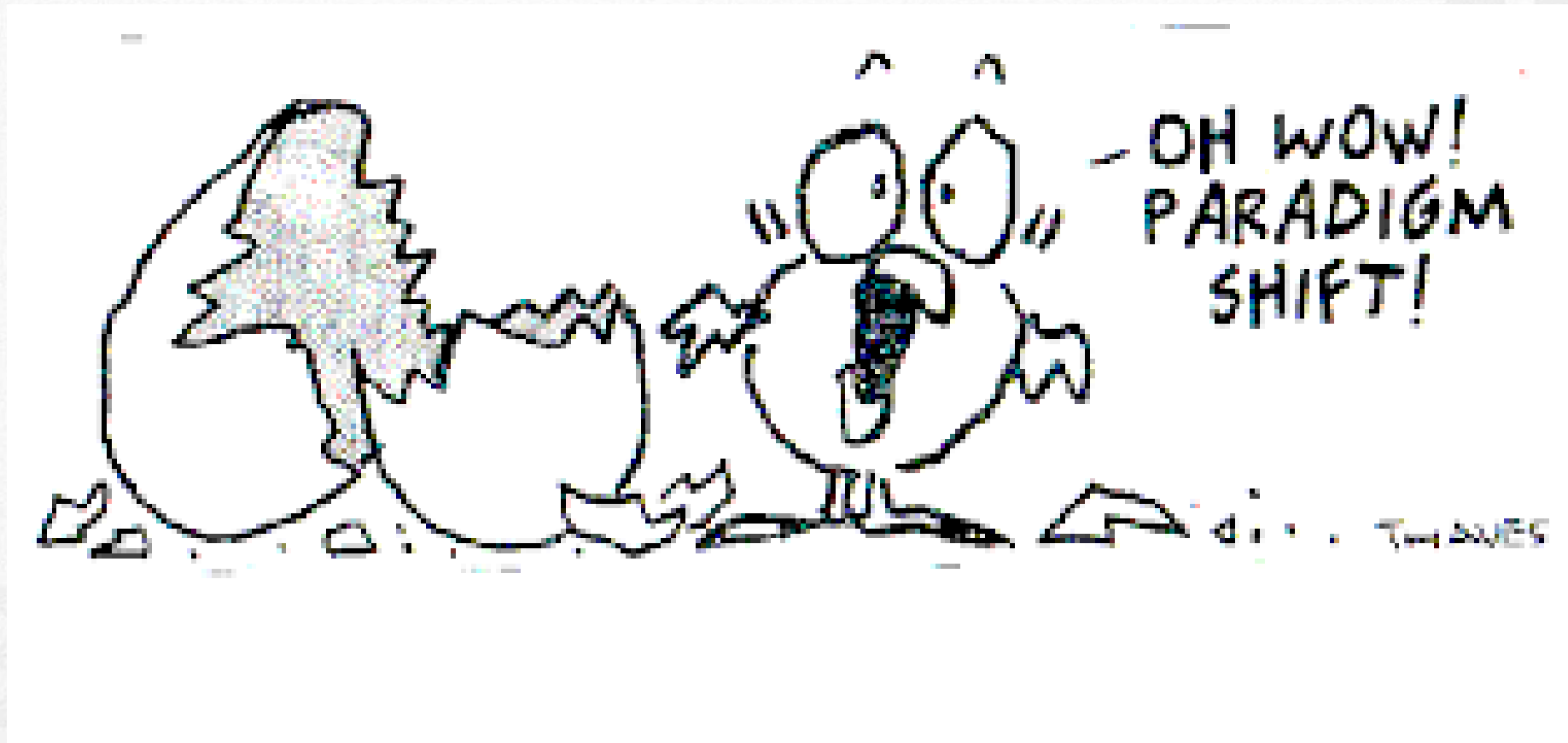
There was a 11.4% increase in high poverty high school graduates who decided not to go to college in 2020, compared to 2019.

(National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, March 2021)

# A paradigm shift



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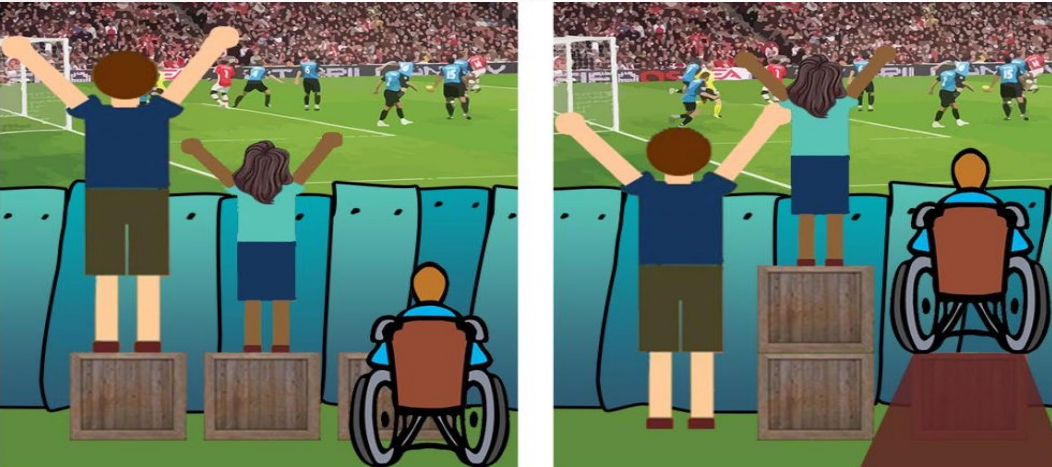




# What is equity?



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- Equity is a moral imperative

When achievement gaps continue to affect students, faculty and staff in colleges and universities

– “trickling into the national equity agenda designed to protect educational inequities” (Santamaria & Santamaria, 2016, Nervaes & Wood, 2014)

- PCOE<sup>2</sup> defined Equity as:

Providing equal access and opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to participate in educational programs that close the achievement gaps in student success and completion.

# What is Inclusion?



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- Diversity is being invited to the party; Inclusion is being asked to dance.

---Vernā Myers

- *Diversity is a fact. Inclusion is an act.*

The PCOE<sup>2</sup> defined Inclusion as: Active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within and change systems and institutions.



# How does the strategic plan reflect a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?



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## MISSION STATEMENT

*Our reason for being; what we exist to do*

### Our Mission

As a proud Hispanic-Serving and Military-Embracing Institution with a predominantly first-generation student population, Texas A&M University-San Antonio transforms lives and our community by **delivering a quality higher education experience that is accessible and inclusive**, and by empowering students for academic success, rewarding careers, and engaged global citizenship.

## VISION STATEMENT

*Our overall five-year aspiration; broad vision of what we want to accomplish over the life of the plan*

### Our Vision

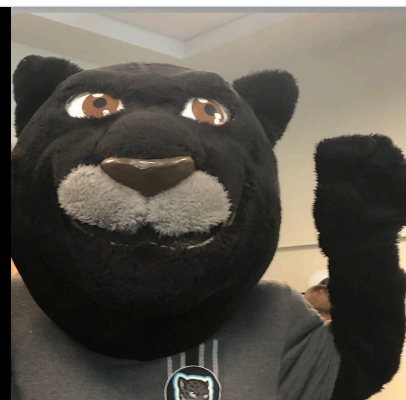
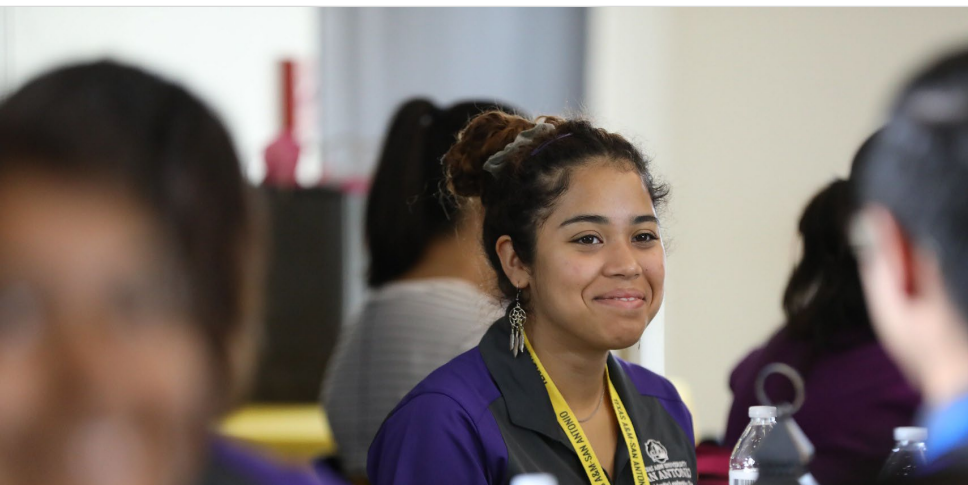
Texas A&M University-San Antonio will be a rising doctoral-granting university with a robust research portfolio, a national reputation for **fostering equitable learning experiences and outcomes**, and increasing influence as a catalyst for social, cultural and economic impact.



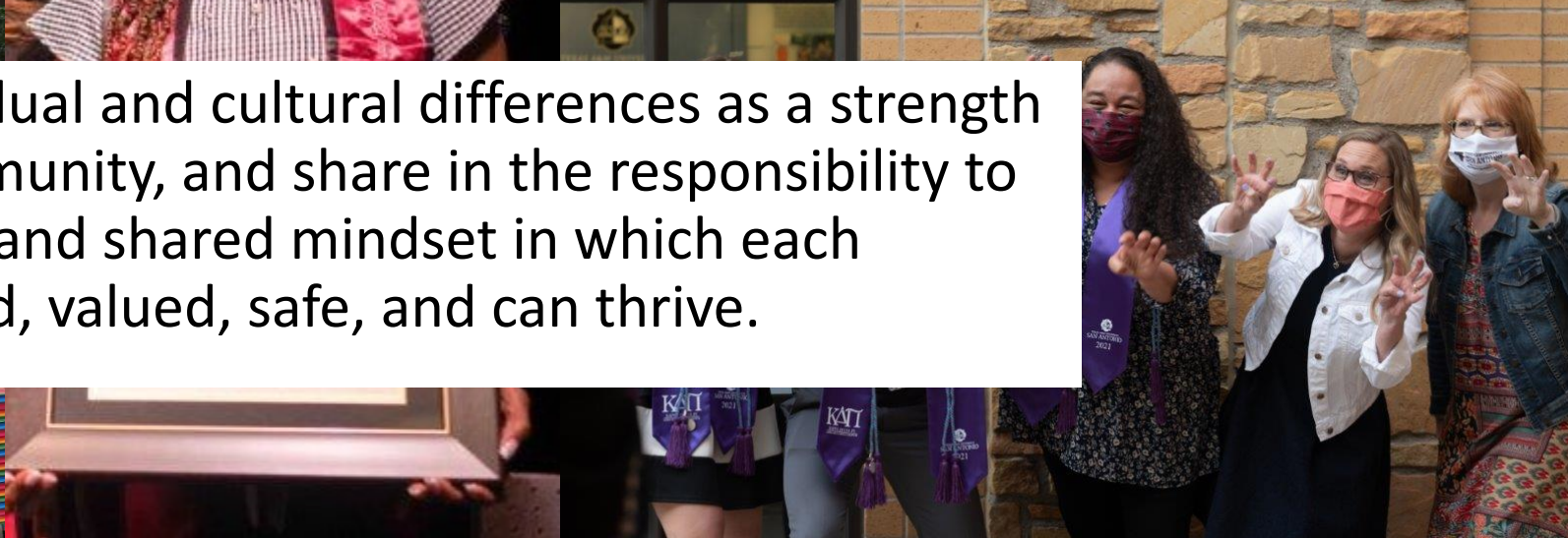
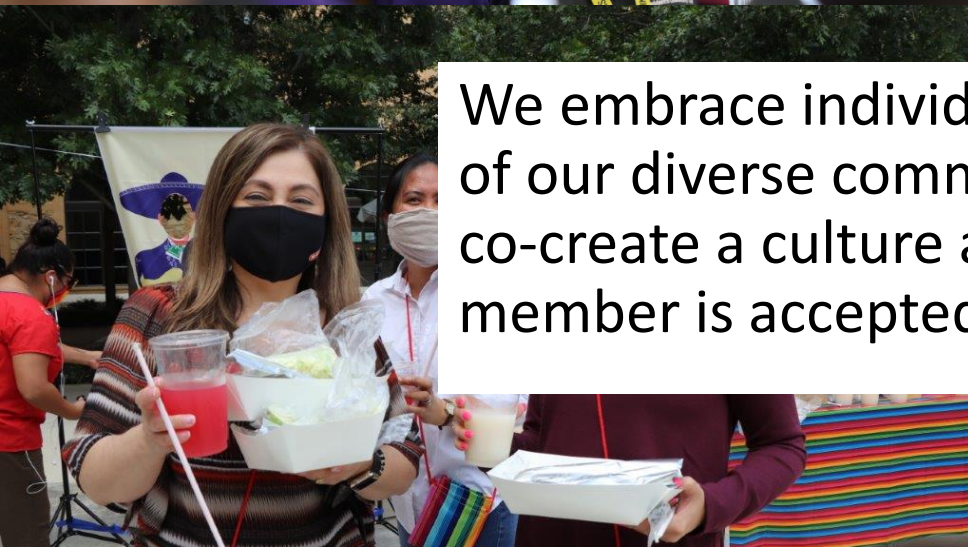
# We are equity-minded, inclusive, and respectful.



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We embrace individual and cultural differences as a strength of our diverse community, and share in the responsibility to co-create a culture and shared mindset in which each member is accepted, valued, safe, and can thrive.



# STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



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## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

**Deliver a premier academic experience characterized by outstanding teaching, high quality scholarship, and distinctive curricular and co-curricular programs**

## STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**Provide a holistic educational experience for students that will support their academic, professional, and personal success**

## ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

**Increase enrollment of a diverse student population, providing and expanding access to an affordable high quality university experience to students of all backgrounds and identities**

## IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

**Engage in collaborations and activities that meaningfully impact the student experience, advance our community and region, and boost institutional visibility and reputation**

## CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

**Strive for excellence, continuous improvement, and responsible stewardship in all that we do, on behalf of the campus community we serve**





# GOAL 1: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



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**Deliver a premier academic experience characterized by outstanding teaching, high quality scholarship, and distinctive curricular and co-curricular programs**

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- **Provide incentives for recognition and retention of high-performing faculty and staff.**
- **Increase high-quality faculty accomplishments in research, scholarship, and creative activity, year over year, as measured by disciplinary standards.**
- **Strategically grow new academic programs, especially those at the graduate level.**
- **Achieve AACSB accreditation by 2022, CACREP accreditation by 2024, and ABET accreditation by 2026.**
- **Actively maintain SACSCOC accreditation.**

# GOAL 2: STUDENT EXPERIENCE



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**Provide a holistic educational experience for students that will support their academic, professional, and personal success**

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- Increase meaningful student engagement on campus by exploring the growth of student space for campus events, as well as places to meet and socialize, which will promote a sense of belonging in a welcoming environment.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive plan that focuses on student success through a holistic approach using the wellness wheel.
- Develop a centralized, multi-faceted communication plan to inform students, families, and the community about campus programs and services by August 2023.
- Expand efforts to prevent enrollment interruptions and reduce the time to degree completion by improving retention rates by 3%.
- By August 2026, 50% of our undergraduate students will complete at least one internship, research experience, or other work-based learning experience by graduation.



## **GOAL 3: ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY**



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**Increase enrollment of a diverse student population, providing and expanding access to an affordable high quality university experience for students of all backgrounds and identities**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- **Grow overall headcount enrollment from 6,770 in Fall 2020 to 8,750 in Fall 2025.**
- **Increase enrollment in targeted student populations from 1,289 in Fall 2020 to 2,298 in Fall 2025.**
- **Increase visibility of A&M-San Antonio within the community to promote a college-bound culture through increasing pipeline program participation by 10% from 3,382 to 3,720 in Fall 2025.**
- **Establish seven new funding revenue sources to support student enrollment growth and student success for diverse student populations by Fall 2024.**



# GOAL 4: **IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT**



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**Engage in collaborations and activities that meaningfully impact the student experience, advance our community and region, and boost institutional visibility and reputation**

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- **Communicate the A&M-San Antonio HSI impact with a compelling, action-driven content strategy that fosters engagement with donors, alumni, and community.**
- **Implement a university-wide strategy to increase A&M-San Antonio's reputation through awards and designations that elevate A&M-San Antonio's distinctiveness.**
- **Build and enhance partnerships that support excellence and equitable access to education, community health, and economic development, and that leverage A&M-SA's HSI status, faculty expertise, and commitment to equity and social justice.**
- **Serving as a community anchor partner, enhance institutional relationships to lift collective impact.**

# **GOAL 5: CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE**



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**Strive for excellence, continuous improvement, and responsible stewardship in all that we do, on behalf of the campus community we serve**

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- **By May 2026, become a model of excellence through continuous improvement, assessment, and data informed practices in our services and systems.**
- **By August 2026, demonstrate excellent fiscal stewardship by building a sustainable funding model through the use of financial indicators, as well as growth in higher formula-funded semester credit hours.**
- **Enhance the institutional commitment to talent through a holistic compensation package, professional development, and career progression in a culture that values inclusion, diversity, and equity.**
- **Provide for greater employee engagement and satisfaction as a top priority by seeking and using formalized feedback systems to retain high performing faculty and staff.**



# Your role in shared equity leadership



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## **Living the values**

How do your day-to-day work practice reflect our commitment to being equity-minded, inclusive, and respectful?

## **Pushing the institution**

How do you contribute to ensuring that the work we do to achieve strategic plan goals also advances diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus?



# From What? to How?



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"I THINK YOU SHOULD BE MORE EXPLICIT HERE IN STEP TWO."

# What is your role as a member of the A&M community?



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- Generating inclusive excellence
- Leading in shared equity
- To “transformatively facilitate authentic change and progress toward re-envisioning a strengths-based and improvement-focused equity agenda in Higher Education contexts.” (Santamaria & Santamaria, 2016, p.2)

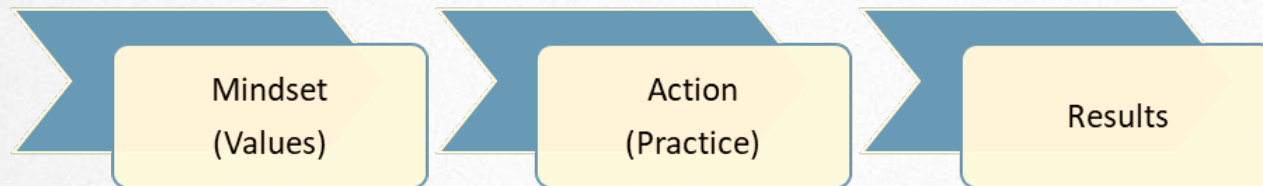


# Generating Inclusive Excellence



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- Begins with a personal journey



When considering equity-mindedness:

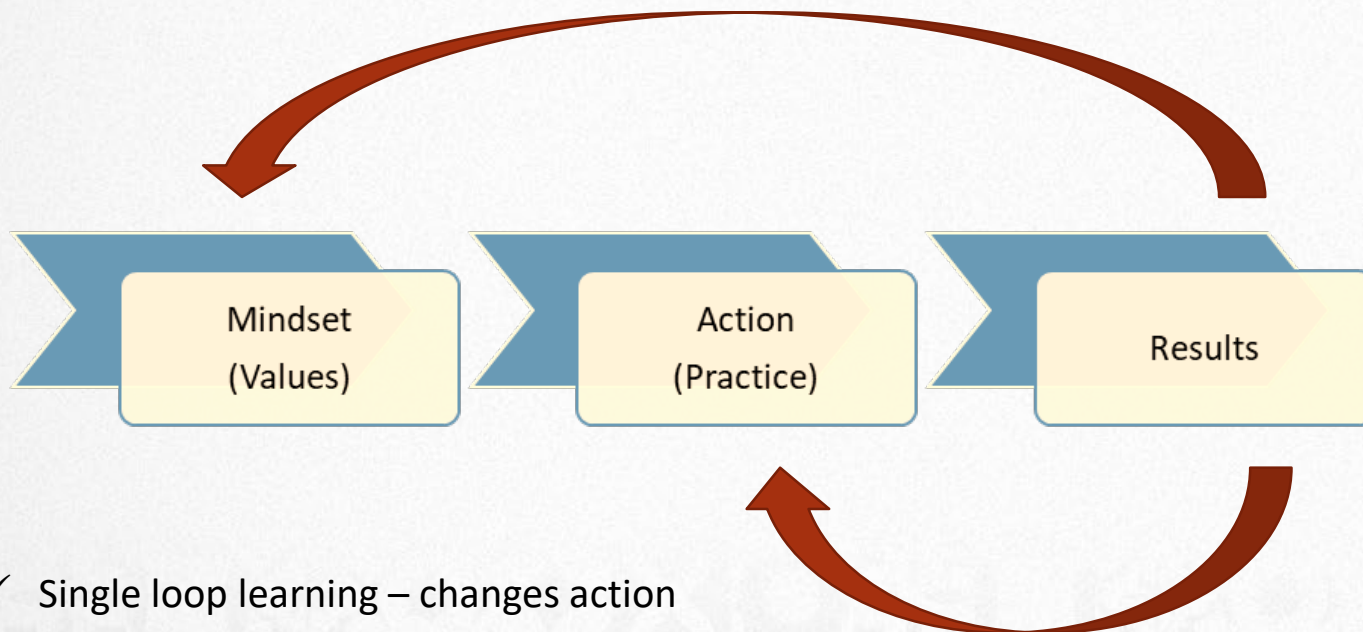
*In what ways does my identity (i.e., subjectivity, biases, assumptions, race, class, gender, and traditions) enhance my ability to see other perspectives?*

(Applied Critical Leadership as in Santamaria L.J., & Santamaria, A., 2016)

# Leading with Shared Equity



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- ✓ Single loop learning – changes action
- ✓ Double loop learning – revisit and reframe mindset to change action and transform practice and results

Considering your duties and responsibilities as administrator, faculty, staff, or student, you may ask:

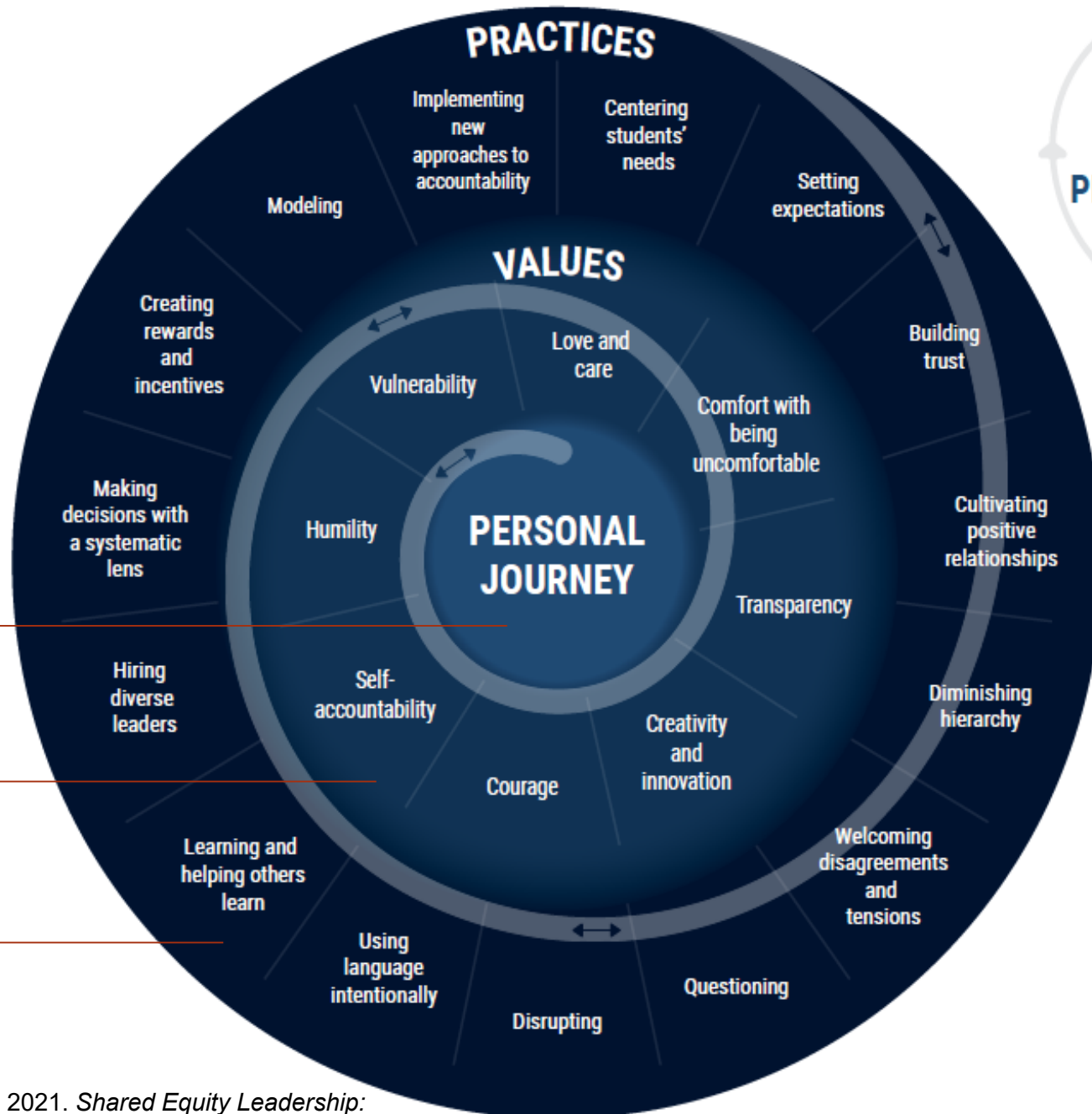
*What are the affirmative attributes that render me different and unique that might be explored and developed in order to build and improve my leadership practice?* (Applied Critical Leadership as in Santamaria L.J., & Santamaria, A., 2016)



# HOW can you Impact?

*Creating more just and equitable conditions on campus begins with:*

- A personal journey towards equity consciousness
- Sharing different values and expertise
- Leading outward through equitable practices



# For What?



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- Goals to implement shared equity:
  - Improve institutional effectiveness
  - Organizing teams across campus
  - Improve college experiences and outcomes
  
- Shared equity leadership initiatives that can improve the campus climate and culture:
  1. Engagement in professional development
  2. More diverse faculty and staff
  3. Decision-making governed by an equity mindset
  4. Having a greater critical mass of leaders focused on equity
  5. Greater capacity around doing the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion



# Being Equity Minded, Inclusive, & Respectful



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- We embrace individual and cultural differences as a strength of our diverse community, and share in the responsibility to create a positive culture in which each member is accepted, valued, and safe – and thrives.
- How does this look in everyday interactions?

# Being Equity Minded, Inclusive, & Respectful: Empathy



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**Empathy:** Understanding and sharing the emotions of another.

- Empathic Listening
- Empathic Communication

O'Connell, C., McCauley, J., & Herbert, L. (2021). Improvisation-Based Workshop to Build Empathy in Mentor-Mentee Relationships and Support Academic Equity. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 1-14.



# Being Equity Minded, Inclusive, & Respectful: Empathy in Action



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Pausing to listen, rather than thinking about what to say next.

Count 5-10 in your head before responding.

Seeking clarification.

This helps others feel heard and validated.

Paraphrase for clarification

Friend: "I didn't know what the professor was saying in class."

You: "So you were confused during the lecture?"

# Being Equity Minded, Inclusive, & Respectful: Empathy in Action



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## Using open Ended Questions

- Closed questions elicit yes or no responses.

Was the meeting boring? VS How was the meeting?

Do we have to go to the meeting? VS Can you tell me more about the goals for the meeting?

Use "I" statements, rather than making generalizations.

**Everyone** was frustrated at the meeting. VS **I** felt frustrated.

I think we can **all** agree that.....VS **I** think that.....



# Being Equity Minded, Inclusive, & Respectful: Empathy in Action



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- How might this look in your every day actions at A&M-SA?
  - Listening
  - Clarifying
  - Open-Ended Questions
  - I Statements
  
- Can you commit to practicing one of these skills at least once a day?

# Q&A



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# You Can Lead by Creating Shared Equity



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- ❖ By enacting diverse, equitable, and inclusive values and practices in your leadership; and
- ❖ By creating a just and equitable place for all members of the Texas A&M University - San Antonio community