



WASHINGTON’S EQUITY IN LEADERSHIP SYSTEMS INSTITUTE

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What’s the mission of the Washington Equity in Leadership Systems Institute?

The mission of the Washington Equity in Leadership Systems Institute (WELS) is to develop authentic systems-thinking leaders who are equipped to enact adaptive solutions that advance educational equity and social justice.

This work is grounded in our systemwide vision statement: “Leading with racial equity, our colleges maximize student potential and transform lives within a culture of belonging that advances racial, social, and economic justice in service to our diverse communities.”

WELS replaces the Washington Executive Leadership Academy (WELA) program.

What will participants learn?

In the WELS Institute, participants with executive potential will learn how to enact adaptive solutions to advance educational equity and social justice within our community and technical colleges.

The WELS Institute defines “adaptive solution” as an answer to a problem that requires a shift in values in order to solve. In contrast, a technical solution is an answer to a problem that requires implementing a known solution.

Often, technical solutions involve working within past decisions, entrenched systems and attitudes, and hierarchical leadership. Organizations that focus solely on technical solutions, without adaptive solutions, can inadvertently perpetuate structural and institutional racism. Adaptive solutions create the global environments that allow effective and equitable technical solutions to take root.

Below is a chart of general learning objectives for the WELS Institute.

	Adaptive	Technical	End State
Ethics	Adapt ethical theories to authentic leadership	Apply technical skill to structure equity	Participants will be able to: 1. Describe self-to-group dynamics when BIPOC social identities are centered. 2. Describe a mental model of their executive leadership identity. 3. Describe an executive action plan to address an adaptive challenge to advance racial, social, and economic justice at their colleges.
Leadership	Adapt leadership theories to authentic leadership	Apply technical skill to lead diversity	
Development	Adapt development theories to authentic leadership	Apply technical skill to develop inclusion	

By the end of the institute, participants will present action plans to address adaptive challenges to advance the SBCTC vision. The institute is working towards offering a credential upon completion, such as a badge, in order to recognize enhanced capabilities to advance the SBCTC Vision.

Who should participate in the WELS Institute?

The WELS Institute will use a cohort model, with at least one participant from each college. SBCTC recommends enrolling people who are changemakers, who have executive potential, and who are in authorized roles to solve challenges related to the SBCTC vision around racial equity. It will be up to each college to decide who to enroll in the WELS Institute. Suggested criteria include:

- **Experience:** Actively working to advance racial, social, economic justice.
- **Authority:** Has decision-making responsibility to change structures to advance racial, social, economic justice.
- **Type of learner:** Reflective learner, action learner, reflection in action.
- **Personality:** Open to experience; agreeable; *genuinely wants this experience*.
- **Leadership:** Shows tenets of transformational leadership.

When will the WELS Institute launch?

The WELS Institute is on pace to launch in late January 2024 or February 2024. The launch date is flexible, however, to accommodate any additional feedback presidents may have.

What are the details? How long will it take? How much will it cost?

- **Time:** The WELS institute will last for 12 weeks, two hours per week, for a total of 24 hours of direct instruction time. Additional time will be spent on:
 - Reflection (12 hours total, approximately one hour per week)
 - Coaching (one hour total/approximately two 30-minute sessions per person) throughout the course.
- **Cost:** The cost will be \$3,000 per person.
- **Teaching mode:** The institute will be taught primarily on Zoom to:
 - Support social and economic equity for participants who do not have the funds or time to travel
 - Allow flexibility for in-person instruction and coaching.
- **Result:** Persons with executive potential will present action plans to address an adaptive challenge to advance the SBCTC vision.

Who provided input for this project?

SBCTC's Director of Leadership Development spent more than a year listening to several conversations involving trustees, the State Board, the SBCTC agency, presidents, WACTC, DEOC, and former WELA graduates via Zoom meetings, in-person meetings, conferences, campus site visits, and posted EDI strategies.

A smaller group of system stakeholders also provided advice, including a trustee, two presidents, DEOC chair and board member, the SBCTC executive director, and SBCTC directors of EDI, Tribal Government Affairs, and Student Services.

When needed, contacts were also made to a former SBCTC executive director, a trustee, two presidents, DEOC chair, and SBCTC agency staff to get historical and current context on the design. Finally, two pilot institutes were designed and executed both within the SBCTC agency and Seattle Colleges in summer 2023.