



Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center

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2023 Bellingham Technical College Listening Session Report

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1. Purpose

As part of a continuing commitment to create a more equitable, safe, and just campus environment, Bellingham Technical College (BTC) convened the 2023 Listening Sessions to deepen understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)-related experiences and perceptions at BTC's campus. The sessions emphasized input from the respondent and demographic groups facing greater exclusion, discrimination, or lack of personal safety, based on the [Spring 2022 Campus Climate Survey findings](#).

Identity-focused sessions provided employee and students the opportunity to share information through a confidential process, and prompted folks to reflect on ways that campus resources and learning experiences can be more respectful, welcoming, and uphold the dignity of each member of the BTC community. Identify group sessions included: women identifying; Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) identifying; LGBTQ+ identifying employees and students. All campus employee and all campus student sessions were also offered.

BTC contracted with the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center (WDRC) to: (i) design and facilitate a series of DEI-focused listening sessions in May 2023; (ii) review responses and identify key themes; and (iii) submit a summary 2023 Listening Session Report on June 30, 2023 . The WDRC presented key themes and findings to the BTC President's Leadership Team on June 20th; the Offices of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Accreditation and Institutional Planning and Assessment will use the final report to inform strategic plan goals and action steps.

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The 2023 Listening Session Report was prepared by WDRC and seeks to: (i) align the information with 2022 Climate Survey themes; (ii) highlight key takeaways that were raised by more than one participant or identity group; and (iii) name and frame input into actionable ideas for improvement as identified by students and employees. The information gathered in these sessions will provide BTC's DEI Committee and Institutional Planning & Assessment leadership teams insight on ways to focus strategic policy, process, and structural improvements to catalyze a more supportive and equitable campus climate.

2. Methods & Acknowledgements

The campus climate listening sessions provided an opportunity for BTC students, staff, and faculty (employees) to reflect on findings from the Spring 2022 Campus Climate Survey and share additional insights or concerns. As per state expectations, BTC will conduct a Campus Climate Survey at least every five years and hold listening sessions, such as the ones just completed, during each intervening year that BTC does not conduct a campus climate survey. In alignment with RCW 28B.10.147 BTC provided compensation for students at all focus groups through BTC gear and door prizes.

BTC's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion conducted campus-wide outreach to employees and students through campus emails, Canvas postings, reader board fliers, direct emails, and one-to-one recruitment. Session participants also recruited their peers and colleagues to attend sessions. BTC staff managed all site logistics and hospitality for these sessions including door prizes for student participants.

As requested, the WDRC shared key findings of the 2022 Climate Survey in each listening session, including information specific to each identity group. The sessions typically allotted two-thirds of the time on questions specific to each identity group. (See Appendix 1. 2023 Listening Session Schedule and Questions for lists of questions by session). Participants were invited to: (i) reflect on the 2022 Climate Survey findings through their own, lived experiences; (ii) explore issues they experience or witness related to the question; and (iii) identify actionable ideas for improvement and advancement of BTC's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

The WDRC would like to thank the 45 BTC Campus Community Members, employees and students who engaged in the 2023 Spring listening sessions, as well as the BTC Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for their warm hospitality in providing welcoming spaces for these important conversations. We also are grateful for the BTC DEI Committee and leadership teams who will receive and review the 2023 Spring Listening Session Report as part of BTC's continuing journey of learning and improvement towards greater equity, diversity, and belonging.

3. Executive Summary of Key Findings

Participants in the 2023 Listening Session Series expressed an open attitude to the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives at the BTC campus. Students were especially appreciative of the many programs and efforts underway to integrate DEI values into administrative forms, processes, clubs, and communications. While employees also expressed support and appreciation for the DEI-related changes that BTC has implemented over the past two years, they expressed concern that there is insufficient commitment at upper leadership levels to DEI efforts beyond compliance.

Call for more commitment to DEI at leadership levels. Across all student sessions, participants expressed positive sentiments about the DEI climate while also emphasizing that there is room to grow among employees and students. Respondents shared that legacy issues arising from the history of Bellingham and the trade industries are part of the progress challenge on BTC diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals and mandates. Employees see a need for stronger leadership commitment and supporting practices, given this is a predominately White campus, coupled with employee recruitment from traditional, gendered industries/professional tracks.

Call to transform words and messaging into action – to go beyond the "performance" of DEI into commitment, action, and accountability. Participants expressed an interest in continued professional development experiences in DEI values and process improvements (e.g. teaching, advising, administration) that can contribute to the creation of a more welcoming campus community. Shared expectations and transparent, equitable access to professional development resources were raised in all student and employee sessions. BTC's current approach to engagement in DEI programs relies on a some, but not all approach. For example, some departments, programs, buildings, or employees engage while others do not -- with no expectation or apparent consequence. Employees noted this makes DEI efforts feel performative and not fully integrated into the BTC values, budget, standard processes, and practices.

Call for more recruitment and retention of faculty and staff of diverse identities (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, Women). Employees and students described different experiences about DEI progress at BTC and whether they are experiencing a sense of respect, belonging, and being valued.

Employees often feel pressured to conform and/or undervalued, particularly based on racial and/or gender stereotypes. A culture that allows microaggressions and passive-aggressive communication persists. Employees, across all sessions, noted experiences of isolation and limited access to build a BTC community of colleagues that are more diverse and inclusive of a BIPOC, LGBTQ+ identities from across BTC's campus and programs. BTC needs systemic training to support working with diverse leaders and leadership should prioritize increasing the number of BIPOC employees at all levels.

Employees expressed feeling some level of risk to raise concerns or seek additional resources/support. Many shared examples about improper conduct and practices that supervisors or leaders failed to intervene on. This gap in accountability raised concerns about mixed messages being given to employees about what it means to work with or serve all identity groups respectfully and without bias.

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Students describe a uniquely welcoming BTC campus community, with a few exceptions across all identity groups. Students overwhelmingly indicated they felt fortunate to be in their chosen program, accepted by employees and peers, and see that student initiatives are being supported.

Both students and employees suggested improvements to recruitment and retention of more diverse staff and faculty, agreeing there are just too few BIPOC employees at all levels. Historically BTC employees have been predominantly White, and male.

Actionable ideas and strategies for DEI improvement are featured in each theme area and focus on:

- Actions for leadership and supervisors to strengthen BTC DEI practices campus-wide;
- Ideas for policy and employee retention strategies to foster growth, respect, and value of all identities; and,
- Safety strategies for BTC, addressing both process/communication systems and infrastructure.

4. Key Themes and Topic Areas

The responses highlighted in this section are aggregated across all identity groups and employee and student responses and are organized according to key themes identified in the Spring 2022 Campus Climate Survey. Actionable ideas are aggregated across employee and student responses for each theme. The listening session input shared in this report has been edited to de-identify individuals and to aggregate responses across identity groups, including: women-identifying; Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) identifying; and LGBTQ+ identifying, and all campus community. Examples from participant input describe features in place at BTC that contribute to the DEI climate (both positively and negatively). Examples are also provided for missing elements in BTC's approach that are impacting DEI growth and progress.

Themes include:

- Experience in relation to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at BTC
- Value, Respect, and Belonging
- Opportunities for Growth
- Safety: Processes/Communications
- Safety: Campus Infrastructure

4.1. Experience in relation to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at BTC

Participants in all sessions were active in sharing responses during the introductory reflection question asking about their experience of DEI at BTC. Both written and verbal input from students and employees referenced recent DEI Office events or initiatives on campus such as the Racial History of Whatcom County, Women in the Trades, bathroom changes, TRIO, and learning modules for employees. Students were enthusiastic about being involved in listening sessions. Many employees expressed speculation about the overall commitment at BTC to the positive changes and work coming from the Office of DEI, citing a lack of participation by some

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employees, supervisors' different approaches, a slow pace of change (e.g., how long it has taken to get Affinity Groups started). Their hope for and love of BTC is what brought many to attend.

To better understand elements that contributed to related 2022 Climate Survey findings, answers to the following questions are aggregated in this theme:

- The 2022 Campus Climate Survey suggests that women employees less frequently endorse positive statements about BTC's DEI commitment, programs, and resources. Why do you think that is?
- Overall, the Campus Climate Survey suggest the weakest DEI attribute at BTC is: diversity (4.1-5.3 on scale of 1-7), with faculty and staff in particular reporting BTC to be more homogeneous compared to students. Why do you think that is?

4.1.1. Participants were open to the BTC DEI programs and experiences at BTC. DEI is a positive and we have room to grow.

- Experience so far at Bellingham Technical College (BTC) has been very inclusive for me as a student.
- I have yet to experience a time of not being included by my classmates and study groups. This is a first for me, to experience something like this, and it is a very warm feeling.
- So many times, I have needed financial aid information and help. I participated in TRIO, then my teachers helped me. Teachers are really very nice here. Whoever I have, helping is happening.
- DEI events and programs have shown me that there's a bigger world with more opinions. The Racial History of Whatcom County and the regional area was eye opening. It puts a new lens to the world and was a good experience.
- It has only been two years for me at BTC, so this is all very new and encouraging.
- BTC's Board is male-heavy. The President's Leadership Team is a close-knit, very White group. There is an incongruence between who is included at the table and who is not. BTC is a very insular, top-down institution.

4.1.2. Legacy issues arising from the history of Bellingham and the trade industries are a part of the progress equation at BTC.

Present:

- It is all well and good that BTC is committed to DEI, and it is harder to do it in a community that is so White. I keep coming back to the fact that Bellingham is an extremely White community. That was the intention of this community from 100 years ago, to make it for White people. We are dealing with the ramifications of that and trying to counter that and make it a safer space. It is nice to see we are committed to it, but I'd like to see more tangible dividends, more diversity here.
- All departments are not valued the same, so the system is not inclusive or equitable yet, which is not really a DEI issue. It feels like some departments have to justify and fight for their budgets, while others accomplish things with less of a struggle or with much more support from leadership.

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- There is a strong traditional, conservative culture on campus. A cultural way of looking at the world, maybe because we teach trades that have been male-dominated. Even at a tech meeting the only woman ended up being the one who is taking notes for the group. This is common.

Missing:

- There is an amazing incongruence between the pretty words on paper and the organizational chart, and what is happening. Why aren't the leadership willing to invite the "stranger" – someone with different perspectives that might shed light from a wider lens --- into the room? A huge part of diversity is seeing that there are many places where practices are lacking.
- The Women in the Trades program was cool. I loved that event! It was well put together with women in positions that you would not normally see women in. There was a good turn-out, but not many male faculty were there. I wish more had come as these are such important opportunities to train up the new folks going out into these fields to be ready. It is a professional skill to know how to be prepared to be successful in a world filled with different types of people.
- Some people on campus (students, employees, faculty) are not taken seriously; they are not believed for their experience. For example, situations where the other person does not recognize or debates the presence of a disability (minimizes); regularly does not use my stated, preferred pronouns during routine work tasks and meetings.

4.1.3. A some, but not all, engagement approach to BTC's DEI programs makes DEI feel performative and not fully integrated (i.e. some departments, programs, buildings, or employees engage, while others do not engage).

Present:

- Seems BTC is just getting on board with DEI work on campus due to Washington State requirements. Things always seems to be a work in progress and slow to come, from a staff perspective.
- I will be glad to have affinity groups on campus at BTC. It is not a safety thing - it is a balance issue.
- People here, and the way that the school talks about equality was not in my previous experiences. It was not talked about and makes me feel like I don't belong.

Missing:

- I am still processing that the DEI Office Director is not on the BTC President's Leadership Team. How can we be committed to it if there is not a place on the President's Leadership Team?
- In BTC assemblies they describe policies taking place to include more people on campus. Between faculty and staff it all sound great as ideas, but in action they're not as great as they sound.
- To me it does not feel like I have the freedom to speak directly. I still need to placate or play into a certain kind of role to have belonging. Fighting the trope of the "angry Person of Color."
- There is an unequal number of women in the classrooms compared to men; more male faculty than women-identifying faculty.

4.1.4. Employees and students describe different experiences about progress on active DEI practices at BTC. Some conduct and practices are left unchecked by others in the community or the system.

Present

- As a predominately White campus, most here see things in a different light. Those with different experiences are not understood, and it is most often expressed through passive aggressive statements.
- Microaggressions happen every day for me, starting with some sort of comment from a co-worker. It does not make me feel safe and supported. I don't feel it is worth addressing. It takes a lot of energy, along with the energy that it takes to do my regular job.
- People talking over each other in the culture of discussions. One person in a small department can dominate. I cannot get a word in and often walk away exhausted trying to find a way to talk. There is a burden to figure out a strategy to be heard, seen, recognized.

Missing

- Accountability. No one else said anything to inappropriate comments. I do not have the extra energy to educate – that shouldn't have to be on me.
- For me it feels hierarchical; work extra hard to earn respect or validation because there's subconscious expectation of how I present as an LGBTQ+ and trans/nonbinary identifying person.
- Many failed efforts are based a lot in ignorance. People mean well, but don't realize what they're saying or what their identity is compared to mine.
- On-campus discrimination takes place regularly. I am thinking it might be a mistaken compliment or inappropriate question, people do it anyway (e.g. assume gender, language).
- Online application is fully English without any way of translating it. The BTC website is fully English and Department answers are in English. Non-English speakers must communicate they need help filling out application and then BTC employees are left to pick up the pieces, without appropriate resources. People ask for and pay for services and they expect to have access to bilingual resources at BTC.

4.2. Value, Respect, and Belonging

Participants in all sessions offered experiences related to value, respect and belonging that were personal, many painful, and some still unresolved. Identity-groups described smaller networks of belonging and people are often working isolated in different buildings, programs, and sites. Intentional practices, spaces and time allowed by supervisors are needed in order to create better connections that build experiences of being seen, valued, respected, and belonging. Responses aggregated under this theme also include insights on possible contributors to the 2022 Climate Survey findings about the value, respect, and belonging at BTC:

- The 2022 Campus Climate survey saw that women faculty had fewer positive ratings of work aspects (value, respect, belonging, and opportunities for growth) compared to men. Why do you think that might be?

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- In the Campus Climate Survey, we saw that staff gave a lower score on the sexist/anti-sexist scale (4.9) compared to students (5.7) and faculty (5.4). Why do you think that might be?
- A slightly higher percentage of women students stated they faced discrimination in the last 12 months at BTC as compared to their men student counterparts. Why do you think this is?
- The 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 58% of Transgender/Non-Binary staff felt their ideas are seriously considered in their area compared to 80% of Women and 82% of Men. Why do you think this is?
- In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 24% of Transgender and nonbinary students felt like they must work harder to be valued compared to 12% of Men and 10% of Women. Why do you think this is?
- In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, notably, Transgender/Non-Binary students tended to more negatively rate BTC on campus and classroom aspects, with 58% reporting they felt they belonged at BTC, compared to 73% of Men and 80% of Women. Why do you think this is?
- In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 50% of Transgender/Non-Binary staff felt they have to work harder than others to be valued equally at BTC compared to 18% of both Women and Men. Why do you think that is?

Features at BTC that are present and helping to create experiences of value, respect and belonging are highlighted by excerpted input from students and employees. Examples of what is missing at BTC and potentially contributing to negative experiences of value, respect and belonging are presented next.

4.2.1. Employees and students described different experiences about progress on active Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices at BTC that would increase value, respect and belonging.

Present:

- The multi-cultural events taking place (e.g. Mexican, Salvadorian celebrations) are 90% positive.
- So far BTC has been very inclusive. It has been a very welcoming experience. My instructor steered me toward a work study position, giving me a lot of experience.
- Chefs in my program are very respectful. They take notice of you and talk about career paths you may fit into. This gives you a sense of belonging.
- I appreciate that BTC doesn't make me feel weird for re-entering as a student. It is not the easiest thing to do. Nobody second guessed it, and I am not thinking about how old I am.
- More male faculty than male staff creates an imbalance that reinforces gendered roles. Predominately women in helping roles with students and higher-level staff and faculty.
- Some faculty and students are conservative/masculine and may come into an office and talk about clothing instructors were wearing to say the clothes were distracting. I try to redirect. It is hard to know that some students are objectifying women faculty members.

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- There are a lot of closed-minded people at BTC that think that transgender is a state someone is just going through or a mental illness. It is a disrespectful line of thinking.

Missing:

- I'm 50/50 on feeling valued and respected. This is due to little comments and other things where I feel like I'm just there to help others, disconnected from feeling linked to BTC as whole. It is hard to feel connected when I'm not feeling valued and respected in my position.
- At BTC, I'm trying to have a thick skin, as one can be the only person in an identity group per department or office building.
- Non-traditional women or students are having the same issues as many women at BTC. We are not being heard quite as much; male voices are amplified more than women. Women fall into traditional, normed, gendered places in many groups. For example, at faculty meeting -- men's voices are out there more, expectation is that you would take the notes as a woman in the room.
- As a woman in tech here at BTC, I have struggled to be taken seriously in terms of my experience, education, and knowledge. Same goes for most of my female staff no matter their professional or academic backgrounds.

4.3. Opportunities for Growth and Advancement

Participants were asked to reflect on experiences at BTC that related to opportunities for growth on campus in their learning, employment, and professional development. Students described a very welcoming, and growth-promoting BTC campus environment. Input in this section aggregates employee input across identity groups and describes a system that was not fully accessible and equitable to all programs, and employee levels. Participants shared personal stories about attempting to access resources and raised concerns about pathways that can be difficult to navigate.

Responses aggregated in this theme provide examples to better understand what might be a contributor to the following 2022 Climate Survey findings about the opportunities for growth at BTC:

- Campus Climate Survey suggests that while BTC's approach to providing support was fair and equitable, staff reported much lower rates of fairness and equity across: workload, compensation determination processes, rewards for work performance and campus/community service expectations. Why do you think that is?

Features that are present at BTC and helping with professional development and growth are highlighted by session input, followed by examples of what is missing at BTC and potentially limiting equitable awareness of and access to opportunities for growth and professional development across all programs.

4.3.1. It is not easy to navigate access to programs, time release/credits, and ways to gain experience leading teams while at BTC.

Present:

- As a student, from the advisor level, coming in to look at programs and talking about the idea, I felt like I belonged. All through admissions, the whole building instilled a sense of belonging and wanted me to succeed. But, there are also specific instructors who have not given me the feeling that they want me to succeed – by questioning my competence for taking harder courses, for example.
- Even with Program changes, BTC is doing a good job laying out dates/details you need as a learner so you have a chance to plan it into your life (e.g. classes and grades I need to get).
- It is hard to replace a worker, so leaders are not motivated to develop staff and have them move up.
- Concern about equity regarding a situation in which an instructor was going to start locking the door at the start of class. If the teacher cannot hold themselves to that standard to be on-time, every time, then this is not fair, particularly in a technical college environment where people are coming from all over the place; we aren't in kindergarten.
- Sometimes a sense of being patronized, not being valued. Is it my role? Is it because I look young? There is a sense of being talked to as if I am less knowledgeable. It is yet another area where you have to put your energy that is outside of doing your job, having to figure out some nuanced, inexplicable system. We can dismiss it in the short-term and over time it actually does seem intentional.

Missing:

- BTC's English speaking assumptions are an impediment to accessing placements and programs (Accuplacer, advisors, faculty).
- Some faculty and employees make themselves unapproachable, so you don't ask them questions or seek their help. Faculty not making time for students, not grading things on time, or not showing up on time is disrespectful. They are not holding themselves to the same accountability they hold students.
- There are many hurdles for some students (parents, mid-30s returning and first-generation college students) like childcare, food access on campus while classes are offered, transportation.
- Folks get an idea about you and what you're capable of. It is hard to break out of these assumptions.
- It is harder to imagine a trajectory to move up when I don't have anyone in my department who shares my identity given such a small proportion of people of color here. It would be so much work.
- Many employees share the experience of being told to stay in my lane, and being talked to as if I am less knowledgeable. It is an ongoing sense of being patronized, not being valued, having to be more serious than natural. I often question myself, is it my role, age? Yet another area where you have to put energy outside of doing your job! Figuring out some nuanced, inexplicable system.

4.4. Safety on Campus

Participants were active in sharing responses during questions regarding safety. While many did not attend night classes and a few were unaware they were offered, all student participants could identify ways to improve safety regarding campus infrastructure (e.g. improve lighting in stairwells, doorways, parking lot, especially by the trail access points into the open BTC campus). Employees and students also saw safety on campus as a need for communication and process safety in the policies and practices BTC relies on to address conduct and issues of concern.

This theme includes aggregated responses to better understand what might be a contributor to the following 2022 Climate Survey findings about fairness, isolation, and safety at BTC:

- The Campus Climate Survey suggests that while BTC's approach to providing support was fair and equitable, staff reported much lower rates of fairness and equity across: workload, compensation determination processes, rewards for work performance and campus/community service expectations. Why do you think that is?
- In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey 27% of BIPOC faculty reported having considered leaving BTC because they felt isolated or unwelcome compared to only 15% of White faculty. Why do you think this might be?
- In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 50% of Transgender/Non-Binary staff reported having considered leaving BTC due to feeling isolated or unwelcome compared to 6% of Women and 5% of Men. Why do you think this might be?

Features that are present at BTC and helping with safety and positive communication processes are described with session input, followed by examples of what participants think is missing at BTC and potentially limiting fairness, access to resources and safety.

4.4.1. Safety on the BTC campus includes process/communication systems

Present

- DEI Office is new and doing so much, from big program events, to models and bathroom and reporting transparency changes.
- Public spaces like the Serenity Space, to have a quiet, private location to process something with a friend or alone if you want.
- Food access on campus via food pantry, and other student-services related resources really help those who have hurdles just to get here, and afford BTC courses.

Missing

- To have a place, or known person, identified as okay, to touch base with when an upsetting event takes place on the BTC campus or the world.

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- Recently a student talked to us about there being a sexual predator in their class. They were not notified ahead of time. They could not stay in the class – the predator got to stay but the other student had to leave.
- There is no protection for employees or students who raise issues regarding discrimination by colleague, professor, or student. It is a fear-based setting. Some positions just dissolve and are eliminated. Nobody knows why. Information is withheld and that creates a fear-based atmosphere.

4.4.2. Safety on the BTC campus includes campus infrastructure.

Present

- The fact that there are not police on campus is a good thing for me, as a BIPOC person. I do not assume that an encounter will be positive, there must be something going wrong if they are here. I don't want to get mixed up in it as a BIPOC person, as a DACA recipient, etc.
- The public can access the BTC campus from all the corners and a dog park where people can wander by. This makes it a very open campus. It was sketchy when I had night classes.
- It is creepy in the student parking lot in the back. Sometimes there are tall creepy looking guys in corners of the parking lot, in cars, or walking around. Sometimes mentally unstable people come up to you and do not leave you alone; it's hard to get distance while waiting.
- Security in general is a very important topic. Employees (not students) have access to a green code button when they sign onto the computer to click if there is an emergency. It may not be monitored. Students can only call 911 if there's an emergency.

Missing

- Transportation, it takes hours to get to BTC on public transportation.
- I hear there's parking security but I've never seen it. That's what we've been told by our bosses. I have never seen a security officer here at BTC while at classes or working.
- At the student center in the daytime, a non-student came up to group, asked a question, and would not leave. So many red flags, stayed too close, made an inappropriate comment, was really in my bubble/boundary. Not sure what to do, who to call.

5. Actionable Ideas by Key Themes

Key Takeaways:

- Increase commitment to DEI at leadership levels
- Transform words and messaging into action – to go beyond the "performance" of DEI into commitment, action, and accountability
- Bring more consistency to DEI implementation and follow-through across departments
- Tackle the challenges that come from a legacy of male-dominated trades and history of discriminatory practices in the Pacific NW
- Prioritize the recruiting and retention of faculty and staff of Color
- Create affinity groups and other support networks that align with identity
- Develop and support more professional development opportunities around diversity and equity
- Create safe and reliable pathways for addressing poor conduct, microaggressions, and/or discrimination and hold people and departments accountable to values and appropriate behavior.
- Make campus processes and infrastructure for security and access to emergency help highly visible

5.1. DEI Climate & Commitment Improvements and Actionable Ideas

Employee Ideas

1. Have Human Resources re-consider and re-write: i) What qualifies as supervisory experience; ii) How positions are posted with minimum experience notations; and iii) Talent retainment strategy given limited number of positions to move up into.
2. Slow down cycle of having great BTC employees (exempt, non-exempt faculty, and adjunct) leave the BTC community. As a technical school, create ways to invite internal growth, educational pursuit, and leadership experiences for existing staff.
3. Build DEI Pods across many departments (instruction, non-exempt, exempt) to look at different DEI ideas, modalities, and strategies for BTC to lift up from the floor of compliance.
4. Activate the Affinity Groups with no further delays. These are not a safety thing. It is about a balance of attitudes and general energies (dominating versus cooperating).

Student Ideas

1. Continue with good steps already underway, e.g. TRIO, GSA Club process of integrating PRIDE; more listening sessions like this; BTC serenity space; and on campus food pantry.
2. Actively acknowledge there is a culture of queer students and not so welcoming students at BTC and build connection amongst programs and among queer students in general. Use a "not queer" event approach, e.g. plant swap meet.
3. Have first contact with BTC be more friendly. If not discriminated against in first interaction maybe more people would come. e.g. translatable forms, all genders on forms/syllabi.
4. Create more food access on campus especially for students that use public transportation, come from long distances, have children to manage off-campus. Keep café open longer.

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5. Provide for childcare or children on campus so students who are also parents can access the campus resources with more ease and flexibility to get to classes.

5.2.Value, Respect and Belonging Improvements and Actionable Ideas

Employee Ideas

1. Demonstrate at leadership levels a commitment to secure DEI resources and build the necessary capacity for deeper commitment to DEI efforts across all programs (time, funding, time release).
2. Create and hold shared expectations and transparent, equitable access to professional development resources that build DEI awareness, growth in leading, and discuss implementation of emerging modalities and strategic goals for BTC.
3. Continue the many programs and efforts underway to integrate DEI values into administrative forms, processes, clubs, and continue the work of the Office of DEI.
4. Activate Affinity Groups to reduce isolation and limited access by building a BTC community of colleagues that are more diverse and inclusive of a BIPOC, LGBTQ+ identities from across BTC's campus and programs.
5. Create transparent processes to ask about progress, seek additional resources or support when experiencing conduct and practices left unchecked by supervisors and leaders.

Student Ideas

1. Create shared expectations across employees and programs regarding DEI awareness and growth in leading, discussing, modeling, and intervening per BTC DEI values and goals.
2. Continue the many programs and efforts underway to integrate DEI values into administrative forms, processes, clubs, and communications, e.g. TRIO a non-binary/transgender event.
3. Recruit more faculty and employees from the BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and women-identifying communities so there is more diversity in the BTC leadership groups.

5.3.Opportunities for Growth Improvements and Actionable Ideas

Employee ideas

1. Improve recruitment and retention of more diverse staff and faculty, there are just too few BIPOC employees at all levels. Historically BTC's college leadership was overly White, overly male. BTC needs systemic training of working with diverse leaders.
2. Create equitable representation for clerical staff at the table on committees. Increase opportunities for professional development so it is equitable with faculty.
3. Create improved accounting process and definitions for internal BTC work experience roles that oversee other members of the BTC community so that these areas of professional development and leadership experiences are valued and documented in employee records:
 - Account for professional development that requires specific licensing or certification and compensate adjunct faculty for all their professional development work while at BTC.

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- Make it easier for staff to participate in professional development, via an automated schedule that supervisors will adhere to and plan secure time for staff to leave the office.
- Prioritize annual reviews within the supervisors' hierarchy of duties.
- Find *automated* ways to make it easier for supervisors to keep up an equitable distribution of access to resources and development of professional growth plans.
- If you're seeking a higher degree/certification, someone should be able to choose if they want to use all their vacation or leave time, to do it as leave without pay for a training outside of BTC's campus system.
- Conduct 360-degree reviews so your performance and growth are not siloed under one supervisor/director relationship that can tie your hands for opportunity in a small system.

Student ideas

1. Host career fairs featuring BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and women-owned businesses in the Pacific Northwest and with all students welcome.
2. Screen vendors for equity values and practices (e.g. student went to a job fair at BTC and a women-identifying student was offered reception or accounting positions, while male student from the same program had offers not mentioned to her).

5.4. BTC Safety Improvements and Actionable Ideas

Employee Ideas on Process/Communications

1. Create transparent, equitable access and track how professional development funds are distributed across BTC programs, supervisors, and employee levels to reduce possible instances of having opportunities blocked, delayed, etc. due to a personality or identity-related issue. Account for professional development funds spent/remaining and the diversity, equity, and inclusion of percentages of employee types and programs.
2. Identify safe people and places to connect with others when BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and other identity-related encounters arise, on campus or in the world community, that are upsetting and benefiting from an informed, listening ear, without judgement or repercussions.

Student Ideas on Process / Communication Safety

1. Create better protection for students or employees who raise issues regarding discrimination by colleague, professor, or another student.
2. Outline a process to hold faculty and professors accountable when they are not making time for students, not grading things on time, or not showing up on time, etc.
3. Update forms and processes, and have the faculty use open language re: gender and sexuality.
4. Identify safe people within identity groups and places to connect with others when BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and other issues come up, on campus or in the world community, that are upsetting and benefiting from an informed, listening ear, without judgement or repercussions.
5. Provide practical supports for students returning in mid-30s, first generation students, parents so they do not fall through the cracks of class planning, advisor matching, and encouragements.

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Aligned Employee and Student Ideas on Campus Infrastructure

1. Create a community campus wide safety plan, no drills please. Just information on how to get alerts, who to contact, routes to exit buildings under different safety conditions.
2. Improve lighting after office hours in the administration building.
3. Brighten the lights in stairwells and doorways.
4. Continue food pantry and thoughtfully consider unbiased guidelines on how to care for it without making assumptions about potential or former students.

6. Intended Uses and Limitations

The 2023 Listening Session series was designed with a focus on quality improvement, not research. Participants self-selected engagement in the sessions of their choice following campus-wide outreach prepared by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, as well recruitment by prior Listening Session participants. The hour-long sessions were designed for 5-10 participants to allow time for each person to share a response to each question prompt. Responses used in this report were edited to de-identify input as outlined in the consent to participate form, which defined the confidentiality structure that would be used given the small population (average 6 participants per session). See Appendix 2. 2023 Listening Session Themes and Related Questions for the list of the questions aggregated within the themes highlighted in this report.

Listening Sessions Project Sequence**1. Design Process & Prepare Series Framework: April 2023**

- Review campus climate survey results and identify preliminary list of questions for listening sessions.
- Meet with BTC DEI and Institutional Planning & Assessment leadership to:
 - Confirm engagement framework and establish approved confidentiality terms for sessions and resulting data
 - Revise/finalize question selection
 - Review logistics and schedule to clarify documentation needs

2. Facilitate Listening Sessions: May 2023

- Facilitate eight group listening sessions segmented by respondent (staff/faculty, student) and demographic groups (e.g., BIPOC, Transgender/non-binary, women), one-hour long, in- person.
- Participants must sign informed consent agreements.
- Participants may choose to respond aloud to questions or pass. It is a participant's choice to share verbally, or not, and to do so on a level of observation or information of their choosing for disclosure.
- The WDRC facilitator acknowledges that all information obtained during the conversations remains confidential in nature. After the Summary Document is produced, the facilitator will destroy all notes taken during the conversations and information in the report will not be attributed to individual participants.

• Session Schedule:Employee Listening Sessions

- May 8, 11:30-12:30: Woman Identifying Employees
- May 10, 11:30-12:30: All Campus Employees
- May 16, 3:00-4:00: Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Identifying Employees
- May 22, 3:00-4:00: LGBTQ+ Identifying Employees

Student Listening Sessions

- May 10, 3:00-4:00: All Campus Students
- May 15, 11:30-12:30: Woman Identifying Students
- May 22, 11:30-12:30: Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Identifying Students
- May 23, 3:00-4:00: LGBTQ+ Identifying Students

3. Summarize and present findings: June

- The WDRC Facilitator will prepare and present a summary report synthesizing themes and findings from the listening sessions. No information in the summaries will be connected to individual participants.
- Outcomes of these sessions will be used by the BTC Leadership to inform activities and steps geared toward improving campus climate, with a particular interest in making progress on issues identified within the BTC 2022 campus climate survey.

Listening Sessions Agenda and Questions by Identity Group

APPENDIX 1.

2023 Listening Session Agenda & Questions

Session # – Group:	Session questions listed in sequence for all identity groups
Date and Time:	11:30am-12:30pm or 3:00-4:00pm sessions offered
Locations used:	Morse Center 210 or Settlemeyer Hall

Welcome and opening introduction: Purpose and structure (5 minutes)

1. Distribute Listening Session Informed Consent Forms
2. Collect Listening Session Informed Consent Forms *while reading aloud and addressing questions.*
3. Provide instructions for hospitality and opt-in or students.

Settling In...what is important to you? Opening question.

Question 1	Identity Group	Question Prompt
	All Identity Groups	You are all here as a part of the BTC community on campus: Let us start with what is your experience like here at BTC in relation to Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI)?

1. Notecard and pen provided to write down a few thoughts you want to share today. (3 minutes max). A getting settled time to collect thoughts before start.
2. Optional: Provide note-taker your card to add into input, non-identified.

Group Specific Questions (per 2022 Campus Climate Survey results. 10 min each

Question 2	Identity Group	Question Prompt
	Women Identifying Employees	In the Campus Climate survey, we saw that women faculty had fewer positive ratings of work aspects (value, respect, belonging, and opportunities for growth) compared to men. Why do you think that might be? [Session1:Q2]
	Women Identifying Students	A slightly higher percentage of women students stated they faced discrimination in the last 12 months at BTC as compared to the men student counterparts. Why do you think that is? (Survey results: 7.4% females said yes, they experienced discrimination in the last 12 months where 4.5% of males said yes) [Session 4: Q2]
	All Campus Employees	In the Campus Climate Survey, we saw that staff gave a lower score on the sexist/anti-sexist scale (4.9) compared to students (5.7) and faculty (5.4). Why do you think that might be? [Session 2: Q2]
	All Campus Students	A slightly higher percentage of women students stated they faced discrimination in the last 12 months at BTC as compared to their men student counterparts. Why do you think this is? [Session 3: Q2]
	BIPOC Identifying Employees	In the Campus Climate Survey Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) staff more negatively rated the DEI climate on campus compared to White staff. BIPOC staff felt more undervalued, more like they do not belong at BTC, more like their work area is less fair and equitable, and reported higher rates of discrimination. Why do you think this might be? [Session 5: Q2]
	BIPOC Identifying Students	[Session 6: Q2]
	LGBTQ+ Identifying Employees	In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 58% of Transgender/Non-Binary staff felt their ideas are seriously considered in their area compared to 80% of Women and 82% of Men. Why do you think this is? [Session 7: Q2]
	LGBTQ+ Identifying Students	In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, notably, Transgender/Non-Binary students tended to more negatively rate BTC on campus and classroom aspects, with 58% reporting they felt they belonged at BTC, compared to 73% of Men and 80% of Women. Why do you think this is? [Session 8: Q2]

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Question 3	Identity Group	Question Prompt
	Women Identifying Employees	What are your experiences in relation to value, respect, belonging, and/or opportunities for growth on campus as women? [Session 1: Q3]
	Women Identifying Students	What are your experiences in relation to discrimination on campus as a woman-identifying person? [Session 4: Q3]
	All Campus Employees	What are your experiences in relation to value, respect, belong, and/or opportunities for growth on campus? [Session 2: Q2]
	All Campus Students	What are your experiences in relation to discrimination related racial/ethnic identity, national origination, gender identity/expression, sex, mental health status and/or accessibility accommodations on campus? [Session 3: Q3]
	BIPOC Identifying Employees	What are your experiences in relation to value, respect, belonging, and/or opportunities for growth on campus as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) identifying employee? [Session 4: Q3]
	BIPOC Identifying Students	What are your experiences in relation to value, respect, belonging, and/or opportunities for growth on campus as BIPOC identifying student? [Session 6: Q3]
	LGBTQ+ Identifying Employees	What are your experiences in relation to value, respect, belonging, and/or opportunities for growth on campus as LGBTQ+ Identifying Employees? [Session 7: Q3]
	LGBTQ+ Identifying Students	What are your experiences in relation to value, respect, belonging, and/or opportunities for growth on campus as an LGBTQ+ identifying student? [Session 8: Q3]

Question 4	Identity Group	Prompt
	Women Identifying Employees	The 2022 Campus Climate Survey suggests that women employees less frequently endorse positive statements about BTC’s DEI commitment, programs, and resources. Why do you think that is? [Session 1: Q4]
	Women Identifying Students	The Campus Climate Survey suggests that women-identifying students and trans-identifying students have concern for physical safety when walking around BTC’s campus at night. Why do you think that is? [Session 4: Q4]
	All Campus Employees	The Campus Climate Survey suggests that while BTC’s approach to providing support was fair and equitable, staff reported much lower rates of fairness and equity across: workload, compensation determination processes, rewards for work performance and campus/community service expectations. Why do you think that is? [Session 2: Q4]
	All Campus Students	The Campus Climate Survey suggests that women-identifying students and trans-identifying students have concern for physical safety when walking around BTC’s campus at night. Why do you think that is? [Session 3: Q4]
	BIPOC Identifying Employees	In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey findings most respondents did not express feeling frequently concerned about their safety on campus, the most frequently avoided areas due to concern for physical safety were walking around campus at night and secluded areas of campus. Transgender/Non-Binary respondents and BIPOC staff reported greater concern for their physical safety on campus compared to Women, Men, and White respondents. Why do you think this might be? [Session 5: Q4]
	BIPOC Identifying Students	In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey a majority of respondents did not express feeling frequently concerned about their safety on campus, the most frequently avoided areas due to concern for physical safety were walking around campus at night and secluded areas of campus, with 13.9% BIPOC students sharing a concern. Why do you think this is? [Session 6: Q4]
	LGBTQ+ identifying Employees	In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 50% of Transgender/Non-Binary staff reported having considered leaving BTC due to feeling isolated or unwelcome compared to 6% of Women and 5% of Men. Why do you think this might be? [Session 7: Q4]

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	LGBTQ+ Identifying Students	<p>In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey findings a majority of respondents did not express feeling frequently concerned about their safety on campus, the most frequently avoided areas due to concern for physical safety were walking around campus at night and secluded areas of campus.</p> <p>Transgender/Non-Binary respondents reported greater concern for their physical safety on campus compared to Women, and Men respondents. Why do you think this might be? [Session 8: Q4]</p>
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Question 5	Identity Group	Question Prompt
	Women Identifying Employees	What are your experiences in relation to BTC’s DEI commitment, programs, and resources? [Session 1: Q5]
	Women Identifying Students	What are your experiences in relation to safety concerns on BTC’s campus? [Session 4: Q5]
	All Campus Employees	Overall, the Campus Climate Survey suggest the weakest DEI attribute at BTC is: diversity (4.1-5.3 on scale of 1-7), with faculty and staff in particular reporting BTC to be more homogeneous compared to students. Why do you think that is? [Session 2: Q5]
	All Campus Students	What are your experiences in relation to safety concerns on BTC’s campus? [Session 3: Q5]
	BIPOC Identifying Employees	In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey 27% of BIPOC faculty reported having considered leaving BTC because they felt isolated or unwelcome compared to only 15% of White faculty. Why do you think this might be? [Session 5: Q5]
	BIPOC Identifying Students	What are your experiences in relation to safety concerns on BTC’s campus? [Session 6: Q5]
	LGBTQ+ Identifying Students	In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 24% of Transgender and nonbinary students felt like they must work harder to be valued compared to 12% of Men and 10% of Women. Why do you think this is? [Session 7: Q5]
	LGBTQ+ Identifying Employees	In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 50% of Transgender /non-Binary staff felt they have to work harder than others to be valued equally at BTC compared to 18% of both Women and Men. Why do you think that is? [Session 8: Q5]

Reflection question:

Question 6	Identity Group	Question Prompt
	All Identify Groups	What additional (or different) experiences resources or support will encourage you to be YOU while at BTC?

Thank you

Close of session

2023 Listening Session Themes and Related Questions

Report themes were identified with a quality-improvement approach and drawn from the 2022 Climate Survey Findings. No statistical data collection or analysis was conducted as part of 2023 Spring Listening Session methodology.

Participants self-selected attendance; engagement level (verbal and/or written); with an average of 5.6 per session (4 lowest number, and 8 highest number of participants in a session).

The confidential, de-identified responses were prepared for the summary report by:

- (1) Aggregate question responses across all Sessions 1-8 and Identity Groups* into Report theme sections. Themes were identified using the 2022 Climate Survey Results Themes. Identity Groups included: All campus employees and students; women; Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC); LGBTQ+ and Trans/Nonbinary identifying employee and student sessions.
- (2) Edit experiences described by participants to de-identify the input into excerpts for use in the final report.
- (3) Identify and clarify suggested resources, ideas, and actions for improvement for use in the final report.

Report Theme	Questions aggregated across Identity Groups [Session#: Question #]
<p>Experience of DEI Climate at BTC</p>	<p>What is your experience like at BTC in relation to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion? [All Sessions: Q1]</p> <p>The 2022 Campus Climate Survey suggests that women employees less frequently endorse positive statements about BTC’s DEI commitment, programs, and resources. Why do you think that is? [Session 1: Q4]</p> <p>What are your experiences in relation to BTC’s DEI commitment, programs, and resources? [Session 1: Q5]</p> <p>Overall, the Campus Climate Survey suggest the weakest DEI attribute at BTC is: diversity (4.1-5.3 on scale of 1-7), with faculty and staff in particular reporting BTC to be more homogeneous compared to students. Why do you think that is? [Session 2: Q5]</p> <p>The Campus Climate Survey suggests that women-identifying students and trans-identifying students have concern for physical safety when walking around BTC’s campus at night. Why do you think that is? [Session 4: Q4]</p>

<p>Value, Respect, and Belonging</p>	<p>What are your experiences in relation to value, respect, and/or belonging on campus as women; BIPOC, LGBTQ+, Trans/Nonbinary identifying student or employee [All Groups: Q3]</p> <p>In the Campus Climate survey, we saw that women faculty had fewer positive ratings of work aspects (value, respect, belonging, and opportunities for growth) compared to men. Why do you think that might be? [Session1: Q2]</p> <p>In the Campus Climate Survey, we saw that staff gave a lower score on the sexist/anti-sexist scale (4.9) compared to students (5.7) and faculty (5.4). Why do you think that might be? [Session 2: Q2]</p> <p>A slightly higher percentage of women students stated they faced discrimination in the last 12 months at BTC as compared to their men student counterparts. Why do you think this is? [Session 3: Q2]</p> <p>A slightly higher percentage of women students stated they faced discrimination in the last 12 months at BTC as compared to the men student counterparts. Why do you think that is? (Survey results: 7.4% females said yes they experienced discrimination in the last 12 months where 4.5% of males said yes) [Session 4: Q2]</p> <p>the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 58% of Transgender/Non-Binary staff felt their ideas are seriously considered in their area compared to 80% of Women and 82% of Men. Why do you think this is? [Session 7: Q2]</p> <p>In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 24% of Transgender and nonbinary students felt like they must work harder to be valued compared to 12% of Men and 10% of Women. Why do you think this is? [Session 7: Q5]</p> <p>In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, notably, Transgender/Non-Binary students tended to more negatively rate BTC on campus and classroom aspects, with 58% reporting they felt they belonged at BTC, compared to 73% of Men and 80% of Women. Why do you think this is? [Session 8: Q2]</p> <p>In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 50% of Transgender /non-Binary staff felt they have to work harder than others to be valued equally at BTC compared to 18% of both Women and Men. Why do you think that is? [Session 8: Q5]</p>
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<p>Opportunities for Growth</p>	<p>What are your experiences in relation to opportunities for growth on campus as women; BIPOC, LGBTQ+, Trans/Nonbinary identifying student or employee [All Groups: Q3]</p> <p>Campus Climate Survey suggests that while BTC’s approach to providing support was fair and equitable, staff reported much lower rates of fairness and equity across: workload, compensation determination processes, rewards for work performance and campus/community service expectations. Why do you think that is? [Session 2: Q4]</p>
<p>Safety: Process/ Communications</p>	<p>The Campus Climate Survey suggests that while BTC’s approach to providing support was fair and equitable, staff reported much lower rates of fairness and equity across: workload, compensation determination processes, rewards for work performance and campus/community service expectations. Why do you think that is? [Session 2: Q4]</p> <p>In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey 27% of BIPOC faculty reported having considered leaving BTC because they felt isolated or unwelcome compared to only 15% of White faculty. Why do you think this might be? [Session 5: Q5]</p> <p>In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey, 50% of Transgender/Non-Binary staff reported having considered leaving BTC due to feeling isolated or unwelcome compared to 6% of Women and 5% of Men. Why do you think this might be? [Session 7: Q4]</p>
<p>Safety: Infrastructure</p>	<p>The Campus Climate Survey suggests that women-identifying students and trans-identifying students have concern for physical safety when walking around BTC’s campus at night. Why do you think that is? [Session 3: Q4]</p> <p>What are your experiences in relation to safety concerns on BTC’s campus? [Session 3: Q5]</p> <p>The Campus Climate Survey suggests that women-identifying students and trans-identifying students have concern for physical safety when walking around BTC’s campus at night. Why do you think that is? [Session 4: Q4]</p> <p>What are your experiences in relation to safety concerns on BTC’s campus? [Session 4: Q5]</p>

	<p>the 2022 Campus Climate Survey findings a majority of respondents did not express feeling frequently concerned about their safety on campus, the most frequently avoided areas due to concern for physical safety were walking around campus at night and secluded areas of campus. Transgender/Non-Binary respondents and BIPOC staff reported greater concern for their physical safety on campus compared to Women, Men, and White respondents. Why do you think this might be? [Session 5: Q4]</p> <p>the 2022 Campus Climate Survey a majority of respondents did not express feeling frequently concerned about their safety on campus, the most frequently avoided areas due to concern for physical safety were walking around campus at night and secluded areas of campus, with 13.9% BIPOC students sharing a concern. Why do you think this is? [Session 6: Q4] 2022 Climate Survey Results: 17.2% females, 11.8% of transgender/nonbinary, and 13.9% BIPOC students share a concern for safety when walking around campus at night, where 1.9% males, 8.7% Whites</p> <p>What are your experiences in relation to safety concerns on BTC’s campus? [Session 6: Q5]</p> <p>In the 2022 Campus Climate Survey findings a majority of respondents did not express feeling frequently concerned about their safety on campus, the most frequently avoided areas due to concern for physical safety were walking around campus at night and secluded areas of campus. Transgender/Non-Binary respondents reported greater concern for their physical safety on campus compared to Women, and Men respondents. Why do you think this might be? [Session 8: Q4]</p>
<p>Action Opportunities</p>	<p>What additional (or different) experiences resources or support will encourage you to be YOU while at BTC? [All Sessions: Q6]</p>