

Postsecondary Value: Improving Equitable Outcomes through Data and Action

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Postsecondary Value Commission

DEFINE

A shared definition of college value that can inform both programmatic and policy efforts in the field.

1.

MEASURE

A measurement framework for how individual colleges and universities create equitable value for students.

2.

ACT

A policy, advocacy, and communications action agenda to encourage widespread application of the value definition and measurement framework.

3.

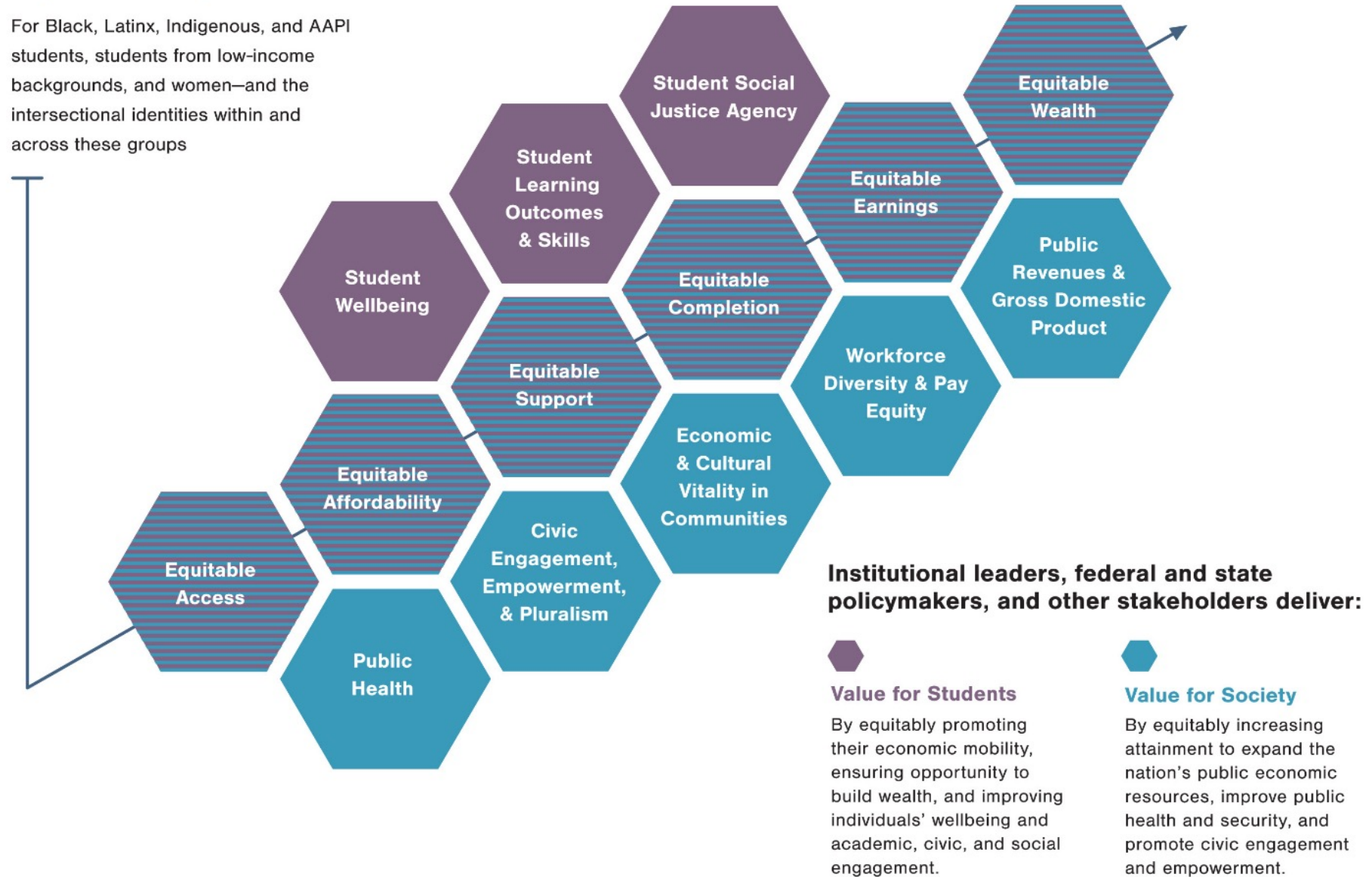
Postsecondary Value Definition

Students experience **postsecondary value** when provided equitable access and support to complete quality, affordable credentials that offer economic mobility and prepare them to advance racial and economic justice in our society.

The Postsecondary Value Framework

Pipeline to Equitable Value

For Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and AAPI students, students from low-income backgrounds, and women—and the intersectional identities within and across these groups



Measuring Economic Returns via Thresholds

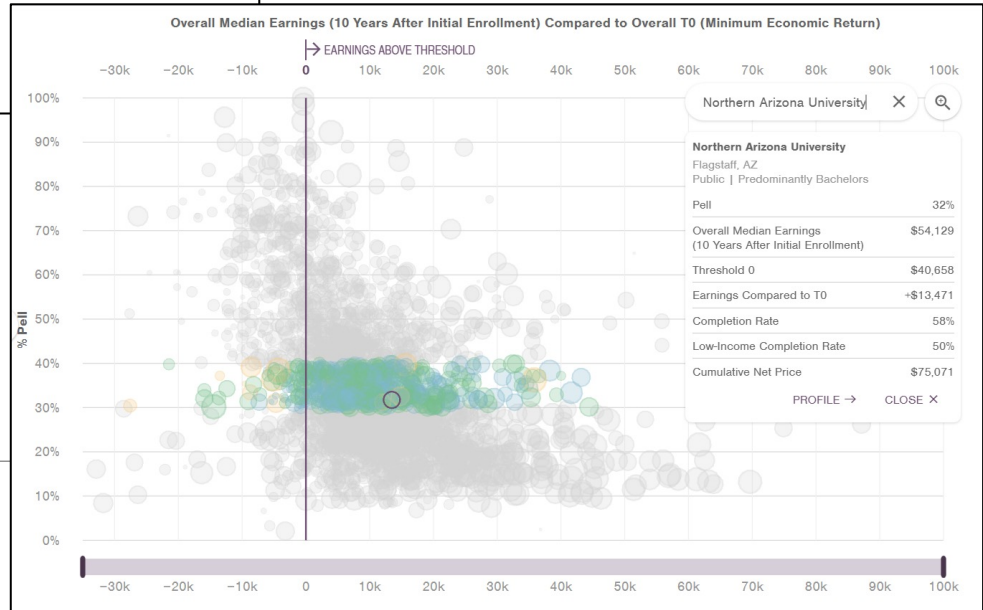
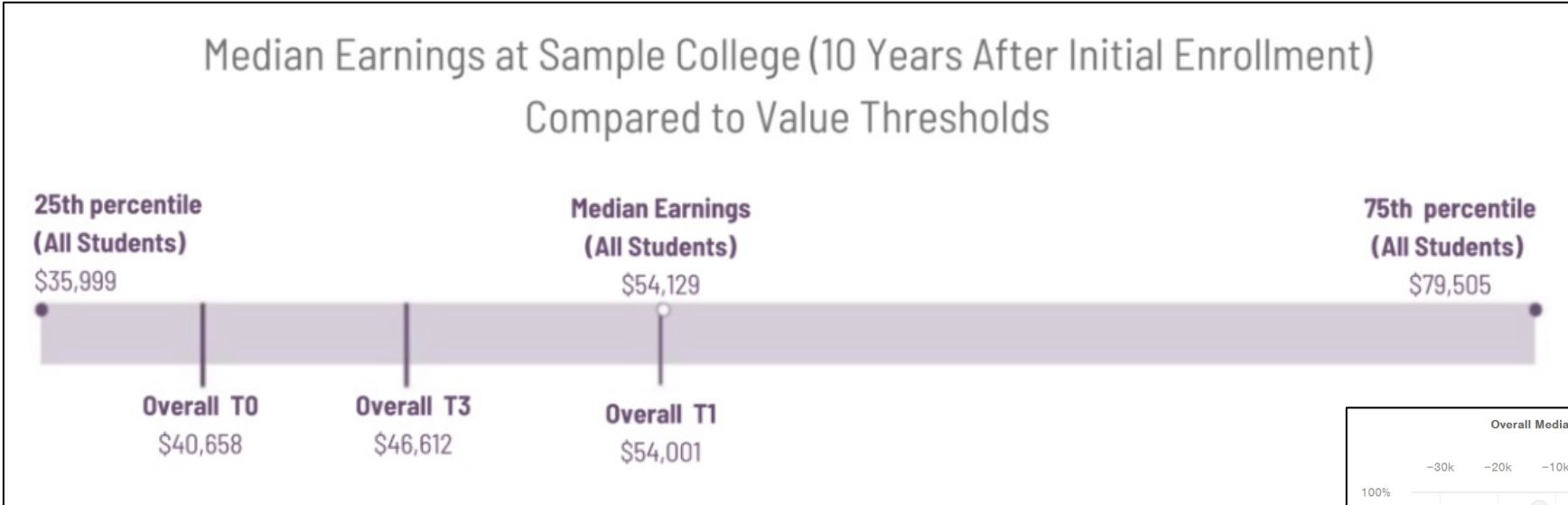
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|---|--|
| 0 | Minimum Economic Return: A student meets this threshold if they earn at least as much as a high school graduate plus enough to recoup their total net price within ten years. |
| 1 | Earnings Premium: A student meets this threshold if they reach at least the median earnings in their field of study, which accounts for expected variations in pay across fields. |
| 2 | Earnings Parity: Informed by the University of Texas System's research on in-field pay inequities, this threshold measures whether students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, and women meet the median earnings of their more advantaged peers (White students, high-income students, or men). |
| 3 | Economic Mobility: Informed by Opportunity Insights' measurement of economic mobility across institutions, this threshold measures whether students earn enough to enter the fourth (upper middle) income quintile regardless of field of study. |
| 4 | Economic Security*: While sufficient earnings can create a stable life, wealth is key to building the type of security needed to withstand life's financial shocks, so this threshold measures whether students reach median levels of wealth. |
| 5 | Wealth Parity*: Mirroring the earnings parity threshold, this threshold measures whether students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, and women reach the level of wealth attained by their more privileged White, high-income, or male peers. |



Note: Thresholds 0-3 can be estimated at the national level using College Scorecard data with some caveats. Institutions and systems with advanced data collections can measure these thresholds with greater specificity. Due to a lack of quality data to measure wealth, Thresholds 4 and 5 are currently understood as conceptual goals rather than operable analyses.

Equitable Value Explorer

equity.postsecondaryvalue.org/



Action Agenda

Five actions that span key stakeholder groups

