

Shoreline

COMMUNITY COLLEGE



PROCEDURE

Policy Name:	College-Authorized Affinity Groups
Policy Number:	1013
Applicable Code/Law:	N/A

Affinity group benefits include increases in employee retention, satisfaction and moral along with the promotion of a practice that supports an inclusive work environment and the fostering of employee learning, development and sense of community.

Definitions

Affinity Groups – Voluntary associations of College employees with shared identities, characteristics, and/or life experiences, whose purpose support or align with the College’s mission and goals.

Authorized Employee Affinity Groups – Those which meet the affinity group requirements, have been approved by the President or designee, and eligible to use College resources under the guidelines below.

Procedural Guidelines

Affinity groups are intended to be a method for employees to connect in a way that supports their well-being in the workplace and provides dialogue to learn and be in a community.

1. Affinity Group Requirements

- a. The purpose of the group is to help members increase their sense of inclusion, belonging, and engagement at the College.
- b. The purpose of the group supports or aligns with the College’s mission and goals.
- c. The group provides an opportunity for connection, learning and development, and/or support not otherwise already available through another College recognized group.
- d. A primary point of contact is identified for the group who will hold responsibility to respond to group inquiries and schedule group meetings within College approved guidelines.
- e. Groups may be formed around a protected category, but membership may not be limited based on an employee’s race, national origin, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, or other protected statuses.
- f. Participation by employees occurs in compliance with affinity group policy and procedure.

2. Operational Requirements

- a. Employees
 - i. Employees may meet during College work time under the following conditions:
 1. Business needs continue to be met as determined by the employee’s supervisor.

2. Employees request the ability to participate from their supervisor in advance of the affinity group meeting(s).
 - a. Employees are not required to specify to their supervisor which group they wish to participate in.
 3. Employees notify HR of participation in an affinity group.
 - a. Notification should be made by email to hr@shoreline.edu and include the name of the group joined as well as confirmation of supervisor approval to participate.
 4. Attendance at an affinity group meeting causes no overtime accrual for participants.
 5. Employees may participate in a maximum of two (2) affinity groups at any given time.
 6. Membership in an affinity group does not constitute “service to the College” as outlined in the faculty collective bargaining agreement.
- b. Groups
- i. Groups may only meet on campus and/or through College-authorized remote work applications during College worktimes under the following conditions:
 1. Groups may meet no more than 1-2 hours per month during work time, with meeting times scheduled in advance and posted to the College employee calendar for open attendance to the campus community.
 2. Groups must be self-sustaining in that they manage their own meetings and determine their own agendas and discussion topics.

Failure to adhere to the eligibility and operational requirements identified in this procedure may result in the College rescinding authorization for employee participation or for affinity group meetings to occur.

3. College Support

- a. Affinity groups authorized by the College are eligible for organizational support which includes:
 - i. The ability to meet during work time using available College space and technology for the group meeting.
 1. College space and technology is available as long as it does not disrupt the business operations of the College.
 - ii. The ability to post group meeting times on the College’s employee calendar of events.
 - iii. Coaching or other support in meeting management and/or group facilities if needed.

4. Forming a College-Authorized Affinity Group

- a. To request the formation of an officially authorized College affinity group and be eligible for College support items listed above, employees should complete the following steps.
 - i. Complete the Affinity Group Authorization request form.
 - ii. Send the completed Affinity Group Authorization request form to hr@shoreline.edu.
 - iii. Following review by the Executive Team and approval by the President or designee, the identified point of contact for the group will be notified regarding the outcome of their request.
 - iv. Once approved, the affinity group meetings times may be added to the College employee calendar and the group may start meeting/soliciting members.

NOTE: This procedure does not prohibit people who share similar interests from meeting on their own time, however only authorized affinity groups may meet during work time and have access to College resources.