

H. Quality Focus Essay

Introduction and Rationale

Foothill College experienced enrollment decline since its last accreditation site visit. Like many other institutions, the pandemic accelerated this downward pattern. Between Fall 2018 and Fall 2022, enrollment dropped by over 10,000 students, resulting in a decrease of more than 800 full-time equivalent students (FTES). The impact of this decline is not insignificant but currently has measured effect due to the hold harmless clause in the state's Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF). [ADD RETENTION AND PERSISTENCE DATA—INCLUDING DISAGGREGATION; Decline in fall-to-winter quarter persistence by two-percentage points between 2016-17 to 2021-22] The loss of students, combined with recent retention and persistence data, suggests that XXXX.

Past enrollment management sought to increase student enrollment to help bolster FTES-generation, which would affect the annual apportionment allocation. As the College continues to emerge from the pandemic, the resources needed to increase enrollment by simply identifying new, more, and different student populations (or attempting to bring back those who left) is limited and less strategic as students' educational needs and goals continue to evolve.

One approach adopted by Foothill is to focus on those students who are already enrolled at the institution. Ongoing and continuous efforts to clarify and identify student educational pathways with sustained support from onboarding to completion, established various initiatives including meta-majors, program maps, and XXXX [ANY OTHER GP EFFORTS?]. In making sure the College is ready for students, the institution should consider how to ensure these students are retained.

The institution engaged in a series of campus wide events focused on open dialogue about how to serve (current) students better. Robust discussions were framed using the lens of the four key student completion metrics as identified by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office's (CCCCO) Student Equity Plan: Enrollment, Retention, Transfer Level English and Math, and Completion. Participants in these conversations were asked to prioritize these four metrics of the student pathway continuum in terms of perceived urgency, impact, (and available resources?).

As retention emerged as the main theme across the multiple sessions, the Accreditation Steering Committee agreed retention improvement efforts should be prioritized by the

College. This decision aligns with the College's Strategic Vision for Equity in its aim to minimize disproportionate impact and to ensure that student outcomes are not predictable by race.

By referencing the [Loss/Momentum Framework](#), as well as the College's [Strategic Vision for Equity \(SVE\)](#) and [Equity Plan 2.0](#), Foothill identified two retention action projects that will be undertaken at the institutional level over this upcoming accreditation cycle. These projects are grounded in the College's long-term, ongoing, and continuous efforts to foster equitable opportunities for learning, and represent the intentional alignment of equity efforts across all constituencies and through the greater campus community. An anticipated outcome of these action plans is improved communication and messaging to students and a more defined infrastructure to teach and support students.

Project 1: Explicitly Race-Conscious: A Review of Course Outlines of Record

Introduction and Rationale

As stated in Foothill College's [Strategic Vision for Equity](#):

“Racism exists in every field, career path, and industry, and all our students are and will be immersed in these racialized environments when they leave us. A survey of the curriculum at Foothill suggests that many disciplines are taught as if they are race-neutral, and they fail to identify the explicitly racist historical and societal context underlying the epistemology of their discipline, as well as ongoing implicit biases in their fields,”

Aligned with its commitment to creating a college community where success is not predictable by race, Foothill College will implement Project 1 to ensure that Course Outlines of Record (CORs) are race-conscious at the institution, in alignment with the Strategic Vision for Equity, the College's Equity Plan, and the Guided Pathways Initiative. CORs define the content, objectives, learning outcomes, methods of instruction and evaluation, and identify instructional materials for any course at Foothill College. The college's Strategic Vision for Equity outlines a plan to dismantle oppressive systems (structural, cultural, and individual) and create a more equitable learning environment for all students. Project 1 is an important step in the college's efforts to achieve these goals.

Anticipated Impact on Student Learning and Achievement

In an education system that grants access to all who want it but that was not created to serve students of color, Project 1 will ensure that faculty examine the foundations of all courses to make them race-conscious and thus more equity-minded. As the basis and guidelines for how

both faculty and students approach a course, from learning outcomes to required texts, ensuring equity-mindedness in CORs is critical to students' sense of belonging at Foothill College. Addressing issues of race explicitly in each discipline through the CORs will prepare students of color to better disrupt the disciplines that have historically oppressed them while also allowing them the opportunity to become an integral part of their classroom communities and the greater campus.

Project 1 is expected to have the following impacts on student learning and achievement:

- Increased student engagement and motivation: When students see themselves reflected in the curriculum, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated to learn. Project 1 will help to create a more inclusive learning environment for students of color by centering race and ethnicity in the curriculum.
- Improved academic performance: Studies have shown that students who are exposed to diverse perspectives and learn about different cultures tend to perform better academically. Project 1 will help to prepare students of color for success in college and beyond by providing them with the knowledge and skills they need to navigate a diverse world.
- Increased sense of belonging: When students feel like they belong, they are more likely to persist in school and achieve their academic goals. Project 1 will help to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for students of color by addressing issues of race and ethnicity in the curriculum.

In addition to the above, Project 1 is also expected to impact student learning and achievement in the following ways:

- Reduced stress and anxiety: Students of color are disproportionately affected by stress and anxiety. Project 1 will help to reduce stress and anxiety among students of color by creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment in every classroom.
- Increased self-esteem: Seeing themselves reflected in curricula can help to boost students' self-esteem. Project 1 will help to increase self-esteem among students of color by centering race and ethnicity in the curriculum.
- Improved critical thinking skills: When students are exposed to diverse perspectives, it can help them to develop critical thinking skills. Project 1 will help to improve critical thinking skills among students of color by providing them with the opportunity to learn about different cultures and perspectives.
- Increased community engagement: When students feel like they belong, they are more likely to be engaged in their communities, which is critical to accomplishing the college's mission of encouraging global citizenship. Project 1 will help to increase community

engagement among students of color by creating a more inclusive and welcoming environment.

Overall, Project 1 is expected to have a positive impact on student learning and achievement by creating a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for students of color.

Outcome Measures

After the college-wide implementation of guidelines as described in the Action Plan below, Foothill College, its constituents, and community will expect to see that 100% of the Course Outlines of Record will become race-conscious over a five-year period.

Project Action Plan

Currently, the college-wide College Curriculum Committee (CCC) reviews and discusses Course Outlines of Records (CORs) prior to sending a course for approval to the Foothill De Anza Board of Trustees. Given this important role in the curriculum process, this decision body can develop COR guidelines which can then be approved by the Academic Senate. Discussions on how to introduce a race conscious COR started in the academic year 2021-22. In the academic year 2022-23, CCC will take the lead in creating the guidelines for course authors and elicit feedback from constituents for suggestions and revisions for approval by the end of the academic year. Implementation will begin starting the academic year 2023-24 with the goal of 20% of the college’s CORs subject to the new guidelines. Every academic year thereafter, an additional 20% will be subject to the guidelines, with the goal of achieving 100% at the end of the fifth year of implementation.

Activity	Responsible Party	Resources Required	Timeline
Academic Senate Meetings – vet guidelines	Academic Senate Chair	Academic Senate and Office of Retention Services	Yearly beginning Spring 2023 and through 2023-24
CCC Meetings to review and approve guidelines for CORs	Curriculum Committee Chair	Instructional Divisions	Spring 2023 and through 2023-24
Deans and Instructional Managers Meetings	Vice President of Instruction	College Curriculum Committee and Division Curriculum Representatives	Ongoing

Workshops and Trainings Developed by the Office of Professional Development	Associate Vice President of Instruction; Faculty Professional Development Coordinator; Dean of Online Learning	Professional Development	Ongoing
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Project 2: Development of Annual Academic Course Schedule

Introduction and Rationale

The data that led to developing an annual academic course schedule (as opposed to the current quarterly course schedule) stemmed from students who are unable to successfully navigate all discipline coursework within two years as full-time students or within six years as part-time students. Reducing time to completion would position the college to fulfill the goals of Guided Pathways while also addressing that in California Community Colleges, not all students are succeeding at comparable rates, thus meeting the State Chancellor’s Office’s localized Vision Goals to simplify paths for students and do everything possible to help them enter, stay on, and complete the goals as related to their chosen paths.

Anticipated Impact on Student Learning and Achievement

Project 2 seeks to align practices to policies in place to decrease the average number of units accumulated by all associate degree earners to reduce students’ time to completion.

By knowing what classes they need to take and when they will be offered, students will be less likely to take unnecessary classes or to fall behind in their chosen studies. Secondly, a Future Academic Course Schedule will help students to stay on track. By having a clear plan for their education, students will be more likely to persist and complete their degrees. Finally, the ability to plan in advance will help students to more easily transfer or pursue future paths after their time at Foothill has concluded.

Outcome Measures

In alignment with the SVE Issue 13, Goal 54 and with Guided Pathways Pillar “Stay on the Path” Practice E, Foothill College has sought to decrease the average number of units accumulated by all associate degree earners by 10%. reducing their time to completion of their goals and allowing them to better plan their lives from one quarter to the next.

By engaging in academic schedule planning one year ahead, students will be able to take the classes they need when they need them and avoid taking classes that result in an accumulation of units outside of their target pathway or educational goals.

Project Action Plan

Year 1: Develop guiding principles of how to implement future scheduling process

Year 2: draft tentative annual schedule

Year 3: draft annual schedule, finalized annual schedule, complete all required trainings for various parties; post entire year calendar

Activity	Responsible Party	Resources Required	Timeline
Planning Meeting with stakeholders	Vice President of Instruction	Collaboration between key stakeholders/groups: 1. Enrollment Services 2. Guided Pathways Coordinators 3. Learning Communities (Puente, Umoja, Honors) 4. Instructional Deans 5. Dual Enrollment 6. Athletics 7. Scheduling staff	Publish Academic Year Course Schedule for 2025-2026 by Spring Quarter 2024
Retreat with instructional deans	Associate Vice President of Instruction	-Attendance of stakeholders -Clerical staff to schedule retreats	Winter 2023 -February 1st -March 2nd -March 31st
Training for department chairs and department schedulers	Associate Vice President of Instruction	-Attendance of stakeholders -Clerical staff to schedule meetings	Spring 2023