

Return to Campus Discussion @ Academic Senate November 8, 2021
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At the November 8, 2021 meeting, we did a 5-minute brainstorming exercise where everyone present in the Zoom room was given access to an Office 365 document with 5 questions, and asked to “start anywhere” with contributing their answers to the questions.

The questions asked were:

- 1) What are the different factors that should influence our return to campus decisions?
- 2) What do you care most about “safeguarding” in our return to campus planning?
- 3) What goals do you have for our “fully returned” campus? (Another way of asking this: What will be in place when we are no longer talking about Return to Campus?)
- 4) Based on what you have heard directly from students, or witnessed in your interactions with them in and out of the classroom, what are the most pressing student needs that should drive our planning efforts?
- 5) What else would you like to say or ask about “Return to Campus”?

Here are the points shared (in some cases edited/summarized):

1) There are many factors we need to be considering in the Return to Campus discussion:

- Physical health & safety
 - CDC and County recommendations around COVID-19
 - New facilities & maintenance needs to reduce the spread of the virus
 - Infrastructure needed to implement & enforce vaccination requirements for many more students
- Constituent needs – some shared, some distinct:
 - Student needs
 - Employee (faculty, staff and administrators) needs
- Long-term effects of the pandemic
 - People (students and staff) moving out of the Bay Area, or so far away that commuting is not an option on a daily or regular basis
 - Shifting priorities around life decisions
 - Greater awareness of the oppressiveness of commuting, and its tremendous negative impact on the environment
 - Families with more precarious economic situations, lost homes, loved ones, etc.
 - Feelings of isolation, loneliness, anxiety, depression
 - Loss of a sense of community
- Instruction needs
 - Long-term effect on programs with courses that couldn’t be taught fully/well in the virtual environment
 - Lessons learned that can improve the way we teach and how we schedule classes

- We need to know how learning compares by modality (online vs hybrid vs in-person) and plan around that
- We need to feel more confident in measures to protect academic integrity
 - In online classes, how can we really certify that a particular flesh-and-blood person really knows the topic, if we've only interacted with them through an exchange of files?
- Student Supports/Services needs
 - Students need both on campus and remote services
- College administration needs
- Technology needs
 - Better grasp on how to utilize technology to teach our classes, administer services, communicate, present, provide access to knowledge/information, resources, etc.
 - Streamlined and pared down tech resources (we have too many apps, too many systems to learn)

2) What do you care most about "safeguarding" in our return to campus planning?

- Physical health and safety of each individual-student, faculty, staff, admin must come first – minimize risk for outbreaks/spread of disease
 - Be mindful of our particularly vulnerable student populations, e.g. seniors, compromised immune systems, etc.
- Feeling secure
- Quality of the student experience
 - Face-to-face access to things like A&R, emergency psych services, testing center with full hours, library with full hours, tutoring with full hours, access to food on campus, interactions with other students, etc.
- Student learning
- Academic integrity
- Student success
- Student's mental health needs
- Flexibility

3) What goals do you have for our "fully returned" campus? (Another way of asking this: What will be in place when we are no longer talking about Return to Campus?)

- A mix of face-to-face classes and online classes and student support services so that students have choices in what modality works best for them.
- As many classes and events as we can have in-person. There is no doubt that some online activities have now become the norm. Supporting the re-introduction of activities that are in-person for all cohorts
- A human-friendly "remote work" policy that allows campus employees some flexibility to continue to work from home

- A better sense of where we are headed in a post-pandemic world. How we want to integrate what we've learned into what we do – including bridging the virtual and physical campuses.

4) Based on what you have heard directly from students, or witnessed in your interactions with them in and out of the classroom, what are the most pressing student needs that should drive our planning efforts?

- Students need a place to work and study, both alone and in groups, with computers and wifi, and with more accessible/expanded hours
- Access to open lab for art and digital art classes with accessible hours
- Students who are on campus need access to all of the services that support their learning: Psych services, library, printing!!, tutoring, A&R, DRC, etc.
- Students in online and hybrid classes need a place to attend the online portion of their classes, including Zoom sessions. These services need to be available whenever students are on campus, not just in the mornings and early afternoons
- A service where they can have their computers fixed and tech questions answered
- Students feel stressed about not being able to get into classes they need to transfer, because the classes are full or only offered one quarter per year
- Opportunities for engaging in events like research symposiums in person and online
- Helping students feel a sense of belonging at Foothill, whether in-person or online
- Students need academic support in person such as tutoring
- Strong internet connection
- A computer loaning program (if there isn't one already)

5) What else would you like to say or ask about "Return to Campus"?

- I have been teaching on campus (three classes) since Fall 2021 and check-in process for student health self-assessment has been relatively smooth with minimal conflicts/issues
- How can this discussion be cojoined with Judy's Education in the Future discussion? I'm only hearing a return to what existed before covid. Why are we not thinking about what we learned from covid about teaching and learning? How can what we learned about what "really" requires in-person instruction shape how we return to classrooms and other instructional spaces.
- Let's not conflate "return to campus" with "return to what was before."
- Students learned a lot about their options during the pandemic and Foothill can no longer rely on its reputation to attract students; we have to openly compete with private colleges and other educational institutions.
- Are students ready and wanting to come back?
- Are certain student service offices safe for both students and staff (given the very small rooms, requiring doors and windows to be shut due to privacy laws, ventilation concerns, etc.)

- Where's the district's leadership in this? It feels too much like we're left to figure this out college by college. What happened to the district providing direction on a timeline for return to campus?
- How do we bridge virtual and in person in new and creative ways? The world has changed, have we?