

**2020-2025**

**EQUITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Foothill College**

**Final Content Draft Date: November 25, 2020**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*To be added. This will be a 2-3 page summary of the whole document.*

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*To be added.*

## **PART ONE**

### **EQUITY AT FOOTHILL COLLEGE, TODAY AND TOMORROW**

Foothill College has a history of providing transformative educational experiences that meet the goals for its students and produce outcomes that have served to lessen disparities among our most vulnerable populations. Individuals and areas of our campus have long sought to achieve student equity, whether on their own or in response to state-mandated equity plan requirements. While these state-mandated plans helped to fund equity activities on our campus and set goals to help move the work forward, those efforts have been relatively siloed, often intermittent, and sometimes were not interconnected with all areas of the campus to produce systemic impact on equity disparities. This Strategic Equity Plan is an effort to provide a sustainable, and systemic vision for achieving equity through eliminating demographically-predictable disparities at Foothill College. With a strong foundational vision, the college can then be guided toward action, collaboratively and within individual departments and areas. The Strategic Equity Plan will also serve as a partnering document to Foothill College's Educational Master Plan 2030, Facility Master Plan, and other planning documents.

#### **Equity Philosophy and Values**

In conversations with the campus, several things surfaced in regard to what our college community valued about equity. Our campus prides itself on being proactive versus reactive when addressing challenges. We appreciate spaces on campus that embody team, family, and community spirit. We recognize our students are continuously improving and developing. Perhaps most importantly, our college values and acknowledges individuals as whole people and sees their potential.

While our college is strong in the statement of our values, those values are not fully lived because we are still an institution existing within a social structure that is oppressive. The system of education itself has a long history of upholding an oppressive premise about who gets access to quality education, and what that looks like. However, our college has always found ways to persist and we continuously challenge and aim to change the oppressive structure of education because we still believe in the value of education. The California Community College (CCC) system offers high quality, post-secondary education to all who want it, regardless of personal circumstances. Truly embodying this intent of the CCC's original mission requires constant disruption of systemic oppression.

## **SCOPE OF EQUITY WORK**

One striking observation that surfaced during conversations with campus community was that we did not share a common understanding of equity. This made it challenging to 1) discern which students groups were being reached by our equity efforts; 2) help each member of the Foothill community conceptualize how they contribute to these efforts, and 3) demonstrate whether our myriad equity actions had local impact within a program and/or systemic impact across many areas of the college. The process to developing such a definition brought together college feedback, a common industry understanding of equity as described in educational code and scholarship on race and equity. The learnings from the culmination of the aforementioned areas are elaborated in the Process of the Plan Construction section of this document.

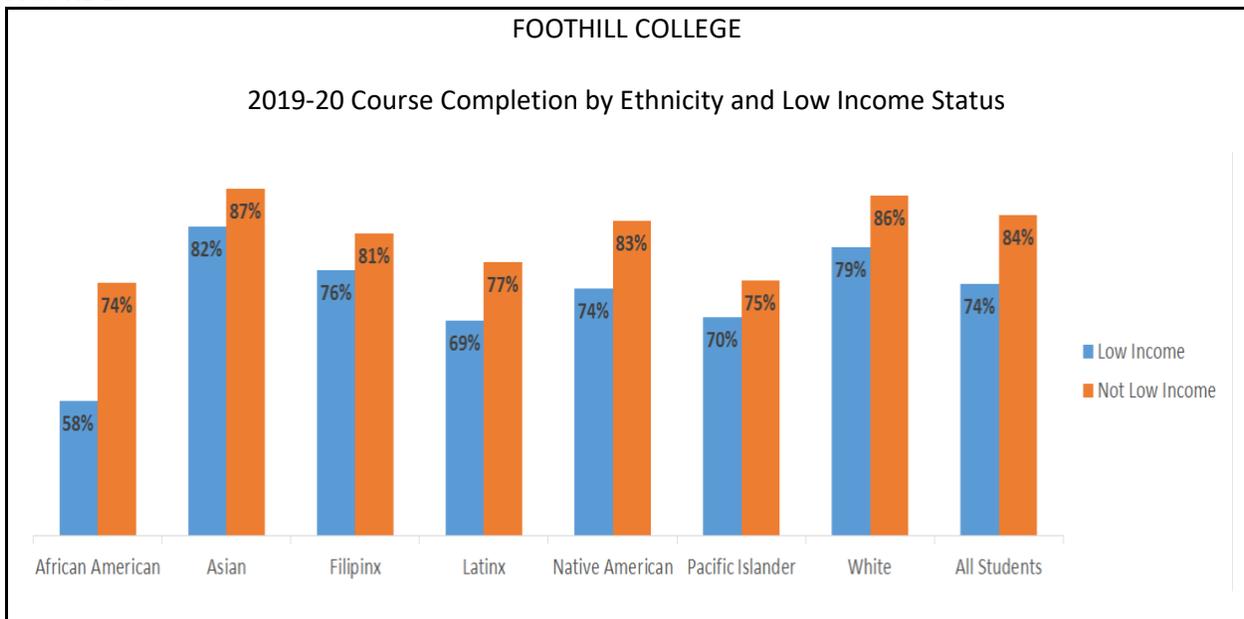
### **Why Center Race?**

At Foothill, when we talk about equity, we are intentional in our choice to center race. Since its inception, the system of education in the United States was never intended to serve all demographic groups and many continue to be marginalized, including but not limited to persons

of color, women, LGBTQ, veterans, disabled persons, and the economically disadvantaged. And, like most other institutions, despite our ongoing efforts over the years, Foothill continues to have demographically predictable disparities in student success.

We are mindful, though, that when we disaggregate our educational outcomes data by demographic group, we see *racial* disparity within all groups. For example, course completion is one indicator that is used to assess students' progress in the classroom as well as on their educational journey. In 2019-20, our college's course completion rate was 81%, with low-income students' course completion (74%) below non-low-income students (84%). One may assert that students with less financial means have fewer resources. With this assertion and assumption, the results from disaggregating our college's course completion by ethnicity is unsurprising; across all ethnic groups, students from low-income households complete their courses at a lower rate than compared to those who are not from low-income households.

**FIGURE 1:**

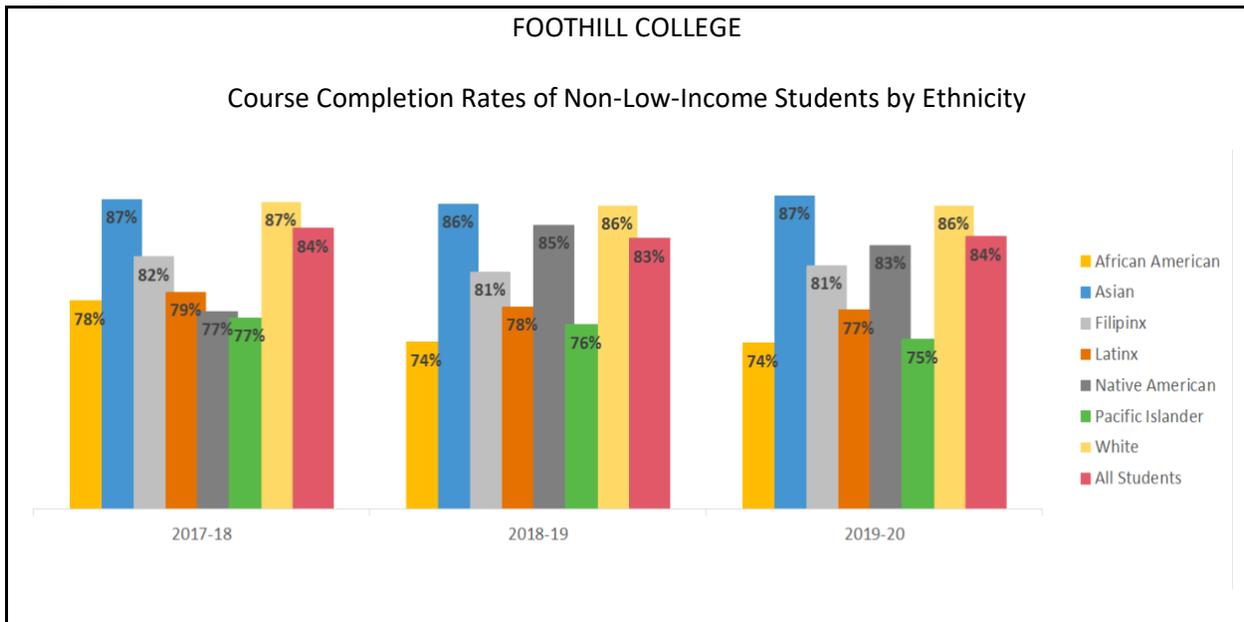


Source: FH IRP, Credit Enrollment

Low-income students are those whose household income is less than \$25,000.

However, further disheartening (and predictable) is that when we observe our non-low-income students, holding the assertion that they therefore are likely to have more resources, we see that not all students experience course success at comparable rates (Figure 2). Furthermore, when course completion is replaced with course retention, graduation or transfer, our results do not differ. By “predictable”, we are not making a claim about our students’ intelligence or ability to attain their education goal. Instead, what *is* predictable is our college’s completion outcomes and how they continue to reflect what we fall short in achieving. If we view course completion as an indicator of our college’s collective effort in helping students progress on their educational journey, which ethnic student groups do we do a better job at serving? Conversely, which student groups are we not serving as well?

**FIGURE 2:**



Source: FH IRP, Credit Enrollment

Non-low-income students are those whose household income is \$25,000 or more.

By shifting from a deficit lens, which focuses on which students may be deemed not college ready, to one that questions how we may be creating barriers with our current approach to serving students, and *who* is harmed by those barriers, the responsibility is then on us as a

college to instead be student ready. Identifying these racial disparities, and our hand in perpetuating them, then allows us to make the shift to meet students where they are. By centering race, we do not suggest to ignore disparities for women, disabled students, and all other marginalized groups. Instead, we suggest that as we attend to disparities for other groups we consistently and intentionally address students of color within those groups. We must center race in our work and discussions even as we act to mitigate other group disparities.

We realize the topic of race is the most difficult and uncomfortable to discuss. As humans who have been socialized to avoid the topic of race, we recognize our strong predisposition to shift focus away from race in our dialogues and planning efforts. However, if we are to dismantle systemic barriers at Foothill College, we must talk about race. Centering race is an attempt to focus rather than to exclude. By consistently centering race in our plan, even as we seek to eliminate inequity for all groups, we are holding ourselves unwaveringly accountable to our most historically underserved of groups. This college Strategic Equity Plan is one step along the path of that purpose and vision for the Foothill College community. Thus, an equity definition was proposed at College Opening Day 2019 and later revised to an equity scope of work by campus leadership at a January 2020. It states: *Believing a well-educated population is essential to sustaining a democratic and just society, we commit to the work of equity, which is to dismantle oppressive systems (structural, cultural, and individual) and create a college community where success is not predictable by race.*

## **PROCESS OF PLAN CONSTRUCTION**

### **Historical Context**

The work of equity and diversity is not new to the Foothill community. As the elements of the plan come together, there is a recognition of alignment across three areas aimed to inform the vision for equity at Foothill: campus feedback, scholarship on race and equity, and California state initiatives. Organically, these three areas revealed consistency in thought and focus, providing a common foundation from which to build.

The development of this Strategic Equity Plan began as an evaluation, charged to the Equity and Education governance council, of equity efforts named in the 2015-16 Student Equity Plan. The activities described in the plan were to be evaluated annually, with the desired goals to be achieved by the 2019-20 academic year. Due to its large and operational undertaking, Equity and Education tasked the Office of Equity to complete the evaluation and share its assessment with the council.

Through this process, some general observations surfaced. While it was proposed in the 2015-16 plan, our college lacked an entity overseeing the implementation and annual evaluation, and did not have a strategy to institutionalize this process. Furthermore, years of conversations in venues such as shared governance committees, program review, and professional development activities demonstrated a need for a shared vision of equity, anchored by a common definition or scope of work. While the metrics in the state-mandated plan meant to indicate progress of student outcomes, they ultimately were not sufficient in addressing the cultural and systemic change our college was asking for.

Previous state equity plans led with a particular set of metrics, whereas this Strategic Equity Plan has developed organically through campus inquiry and self-reflection, informed by issues surfaced from the campus community. We recognize as issues and needs evolve, so will our reflections on the work. As we move from strategy to action with each individual member

and department solidifying their contribution to address the issues raised in this document, annual assessments conducted in partnership with the Equity Office will help to elevate practices that are promising and need further examination and support. It is the intention of the Office Equity to serve as equity consultants to the campus, guiding the planning and implementation of each area's equity plan of action, as well as facilitating linkages to creating more synergetic and systemic impact. With each assessment, the progress and lessons learned will be documented and the Strategic Equity Plan can be updated accordingly, with results shared widely through governance and key events such as Opening Day, each year. In this way, this Strategic Equity Plan is not drafted and shelved, but rather is a living document that is continuously reflected and enacted.

### **State Legislation and Equity Initiatives**

As a public institution of higher education, our college shares in the state's goal to provide educational opportunity and success to the broadest possible range of our state's population. California education code 66010.2<sup>1</sup> leads with the idea that efforts should be made with regard to those who are historically and currently underrepresented, and affirms a commitment to academic excellence through quality teaching and programs. It goes on to address an aim to provide educational equity, not only through a "diverse and representative body and faculty, but also through educational environments in which each person, regardless of race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, or economic circumstances, has a reasonable chance to fully develop his or her potential." This code addresses concepts of fairness and inclusion, offering opportunities for all groups and ensuring

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<sup>1</sup> California Education Code: <https://codes.findlaw.com/ca/education-code/edc-sect-66010-2.html>

social, institutional, and/or personal circumstances don't prevent students from reaching academic goals.

The state has taken large strides to set forth systemic initiatives for local implementation, with a particular focus on institutionalizing campus equity efforts through mandated student equity plans. The most recent 2019-2022 Student Equity Plan was drafted largely by the Office of Equity in collaboration with and guidance from the Equity and Education governance council. The plan was shared across campus for discussion and feedback<sup>2</sup> and was presented to the District Board of Trustees in June 2019.

Additionally, part of the state's larger efforts to achieve equity are through initiatives intended to transform the experience of students at the community college and remove barriers to progress in their educational journey. Vision for Success is the state's effort to make sure students from all backgrounds succeed in reaching their goals and improving their families and communities, eliminating achievement gaps once and for all. It is a plan with bold goals to improve student outcomes, including closing achievement gaps, increasing degree and certificate attainment and transfers to four-year institutions, reducing excess unit accumulation by students, and securing gainful employment.

In that spirit, two of the most recent initiatives from the state are Guided Pathways and AB705. The Guided Pathways framework creates a highly structured approach to student success that provides students with a set of clear course-taking patterns to promote better enrollment decisions and completion of their educational goal at our college. At Foothill, we are

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<sup>2</sup> The 2019-2022 Student Equity Plan was presented to Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and President's Cabinet, as well as all governance councils (College Advisory Council, Community & Communication, and Revenue & Resources, with specific endorsement from Equity & Education), resulting in submission to the state with signatures from the College President, VP of Finance, EVP of Instruction and Student Services, and Academic Senate President.

approaching that effort through four teams: meta majors, onboarding, communication, and tech and data. AB705 is a bill that took effect in January 2018 and requires community colleges to maximize the probability that a student will enter and complete transfer-level coursework in English and math within a one-year timeframe and uses multiple measures vis-à-vis high school transcripts or self-guided placement, which research has shown are more effective of predicting course success than traditional assessment tests, in the placement of students into English and math courses.

Collectively, these efforts are guided by the core belief that colleges should simplify paths to educational goals and help students stay on those paths until completion.

### **Scholarship on Race and Equity**

The Office of Equity explored a number of seminal theories to inform the equity framework, paying particular attention to a few that are valued at Foothill College. Implicit bias and the practice of recognizing when and how bias comes up can inform our equity practices greatly. The success of our students is impacted by the attitudes of faculty, staff, and administrators, towards students and one another, as is the association of stereotypes with certain individuals or groups without conscious knowledge. It has been proven that implementing exercises to actively lower bias and directly challenge stereotypes are successful strategies within the research and are areas that the campus can explore. As such, our students led an implicit bias workshop at College Opening Day 2020 as a follow up to their open letter<sup>3</sup> where they had requested college staff and faculty be regularly trained and educated on implicit bias.

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<sup>3</sup> Open Letter to Foothill College's Academic Senate. June 12, 2020. <https://foothill.edu/gov/academic-senate/2019-20/jun15/OpenLetterToFoothillCollegeAcademicSenate.pdf>. Open Letter to Foothill College's Governance Councils and Senates. October 8, 2020. <https://foothill.edu/gov/equity-and-education/2020-21/oct16/Open-Student-Letter-to-FC-Governance-Oct2020.pdf>.

As we proactively seek to be of service to the most disenfranchised student populations in our college community, it is critical that we are well informed on how to appropriately approach, engage, care for, and validate<sup>4</sup> our students. This includes development of not only people but spaces. Creating spaces that eliminate stereotype threat<sup>5</sup>, a situation or action that puts students at risk of confirming to stereotypes about their culture or social group, and simultaneously forming a campus culture where our students are continuously validated and know they are valuable assets of our college learning community. Something as simple as learning a student's name and pronouncing it correctly, shifting curriculum to reflect students' backgrounds, or even engaging them in how the course develops over the term, can completely change the dynamic of a classroom. With these efforts, a student now knows they are seen and heard, and they can also then see themselves and their lived experiences in the learning.

Colleges up and down the state have racial disparities across multiple metrics. Foothill is no different in that no matter the metric or population of study, racial inequities are present. Over time, they continue to exist. This persistent disproportionality points to a systemic issue. To focus on racial equity, we engaged Critical Race Theory<sup>6</sup>, which uses the examination of race

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Laura Rendon developed her theory of validation in 1994, referring to the "intentional, proactive affirmation of students using both in- and out-of-class agents with the intent to: 1) validate students as creators of knowledge and as valuable members of the college learning community and 2) foster personal development and social adjustment." Dr. Rendon's lecture to the Foothill campus in April 2018 included strategies and recommendations for promoting an ethic of care, or *cariño*, for our students.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Claude Steele's visit to Foothill, known for his work on stereotype threat, prompted great energy and excitement, resulting in the work of many faculty examining their classroom practices to mitigate this threat.

<sup>6</sup> Critical race theory (CRT) is an intellectual movement that seeks to understand how white supremacy as a legal, cultural, and political condition is reproduced and maintained, primarily in the US context. While CRT is part of a much longer research tradition investigating race and racism, which includes such key figures as W. E. B. DuBois, Frantz Fanon, Angela Davis, Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherríe Moraga, and many more, CRT distinguishes itself as an approach that originated within legal studies (in part building from and responding to critical legal studies); aims to be a vehicle for social and political change; has been adopted interdisciplinary across many fields, including perhaps most notably education; and, in certain contexts, has come to be the umbrella term for studies of race and racism generally." De La Garza, Antonio & Ono, Kent. (2016). *Critical Race Theory*. 10.1002/9781118766804.wbiect260.

and racism across dominant culture as an approach to understanding structural racism to find justice-based solutions. If Foothill envisions our campus to be an equitable institution for higher education, it must be willing to upend its practices for vigorous examination of inequitable policy. In the development of this plan and the equity framework, many of the Critical Race Theory tenets felt especially relevant. In particular, the ubiquity of racism and how it undergirds many of our assumptions of how things operate within the status quo (Permanence of Racism), and the importance of elevating the voices and experiences of those most marginalized in our system (Counter Narratives). The incorporation of scholarly theory aids us in raising questions about things we may not have considered. It can also provide context to system and human behavior in this process, explaining how it can be that Foothill staff and faculty share similar values around the desire for equity, but work in an institution that has equity gaps. All the same, as a college we could not rely solely on state mandates nor scholarly theories in the development of this Strategic Equity Plan. We understood that actively engaging the Foothill community in our equity efforts would be critical.

### **Campus Feedback**

One of the vital foundational elements of our Strategic Equity Plan stemmed from the campus community. The vision, structure, and goals came organically through inquiry and discussion with the college. In the evaluation of the state-mandated 2015-16 Student Equity Plan, the Office of Equity learned many things were technically implemented, but people did not feel the campus culture changed nor that their equity work and efforts moved the mark. Changes occurred in pockets but the changes were not systemic. As our college moves forward from the evaluation of previous plans, this Strategic Equity Plan is also an effort to acknowledge where we fell short as a campus in reaching previous goals or addressing concerns. In crafting an

updated plan, the Office of Equity intentionally engaged students, staff, faculty, and administrators in a variety of spaces. The team led Opening Day workshops, conducted inquiry around professional development, held town halls, visited divisions and departments, engaged governance committees, conducted an online survey, held an equity retreat, and most importantly, listened to students. Over the course of time it took to collect input from the campus however, the world as we knew it experienced an abrupt change. A global pandemic followed by the senseless murders of George Floyd and other members of the black community forced us to reevaluate what we considered our most significant equity issues, our priorities once again driven by student voice.

In its early stages of the plan's development, students identified the need for academic resources and social support in particular. Issues of transportation and housing rose to the top as major student concerns, and they spoke at length about their desire for space and community. Communication was also a theme that emerged, forcing the college to think differently about how it reaches out to students while keeping them engaged and connected to campus support and resources. So as the world around us quickly changed and we adjusted to life in a pandemic, it became necessary to address issues of access and learning in regards to online education. Transitioning to a virtual campus in March 2020 required quick-thinking, extensive yet urgent training, and the implementation of critical services and support. Further, it amplified a number of inequities in our system and forced the campus to take note of potentially overlooked concerns experienced by Foothill students in online learning. Then, just as Foothill began to settle into a routine of our new normal, we received a glaring reminder that we live in a racist world. The tragic murder of George Floyd set the world afire and we saw communities come together through pain, from struggle, and in protest. And in that spirit, the voice of our students also rose

to challenge the college to take action. In their open letter to Academic Senate and administration in June 2020, individual members of the Black Student Union (BSU), the Puente program, Associated Students of Foothill College (ASFC), and student Trustees, collectively outlined what they needed to feel seen and validated as members of this college community. A subsequent letter addressed to College Governance in September 2020 further elaborated on student needs including demands relating to: diversifying curriculum and faculty, professional development, outreach to communities of color, and basic needs, to name a few<sup>7</sup>.

While a review of relevant literature helped to ground this strategic plan in research and bridge the operational with the theoretical, it is the voice of the campus community that breathes life and purpose into this plan. Not surprisingly, much of what we heard as campus concerns with equity are echoed in the literature as long-standing challenges in higher education, and are part of larger areas of concern being addressed through state initiatives, revealing an organic connection and alignment of state initiatives, relevant scholarship, and campus feedback. Not surprisingly however, the voice of the students has been the strongest impetus to move the campus toward its goal of racial equity.

## **A SYSTEMIC CHANGE FRAMEWORK FOR RACIAL EQUITY**

One result of surveying our institution's equity efforts is that it surfaced the many strategies and interventions already in play at Foothill, and highlighted areas on our campus and within our organizational structure that are not being addressed. For instance, in conversations with faculty, staff and students about equity, people clearly connected Foothill's ability to offer

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<sup>7</sup> Open Letter to Foothill College's Academic Senate. June 12, 2020. <https://foothill.edu/gov/academic-senate/2019-20/jun15/OpenLetterToFoothillCollegeAcademicSenate.pdf>. Open Letter to Foothill College's Governance Councils and Senates. October 8, 2020. <https://foothill.edu/gov/equity-and-education/2020-21/oct16/Open-Student-Letter-to-FC-Governance-Oct2020.pdf>.

resources and improve student outcomes as the institution's means and ways toward eliminating inequity. Yet, discussions of attempts to assess and revise structural policies, if needed, were infrequently mentioned. Furthermore, reflections on how the culture of our campus embodies an equity-mindset indicated an area of focus requiring more support and action.

It became clear that there was a need for an overarching framework as part of the plan to provide direction on how and where to move forward with our college's efforts. A framework could increase collaboration between people and areas on campus doing equity work, resulting in greater reach and impact on our student population. It also allows the college to move away from individual and/or localized "random acts of equity" to the systemic approach required to address systemic issues.

The Equity-Driven Systems Change model<sup>8</sup> developed by California Tomorrow<sup>9</sup>, a public organization formed around creating in-roads to equity and inclusion in a number of sectors across the state, including education, inspired the framework presented in this plan. While in existence, it worked extensively with community colleges to design a model for equity-based organizational change germane to the specific needs of the community college system. The Office of Equity found the Equity-Driven Systems Change model's "dimensions of change" a fitting explanation for how the Foothill community identified the equity work they were doing. The notion of "levels of impact", referred to within this document as areas of impact, helped to conceptualize a more holistic approach to our college's equity efforts; one that avoided concentrating strategies in particular areas, like student outcomes. In its feedback, the campus community expressed frustration with an over-reliance on student outcome metrics as the only

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<sup>8</sup> Gazmuri, S., Petty, S., Porter, E. (2010, December). The Equity-Driven Systems Change (ESC) Model: A Toolkit for Improving Institutional Practice and Student Outcomes. Retrieved from <https://skylinecollege.edu/seed/assets/resources/ESC-Toolkit.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://cainclusion.org/camap>

way to eradicate inequity, and there was agreement with the idea of employing comprehensive equity strategies to guide our work. The framework outlined in the next section sets the stage for strategic implementation of equitable, organizational change.

### **Dimensions of Change and Areas of Impact**

In order to employ a shift toward racial equity, there are three dimensions of change our college must engage: structural, cultural, and individual. Structural change speaks to the type of change that (minimally) seeks to remove the college-wide barriers that uphold the disenfranchisement of low-income students of color, and speaks to the thorough investigation of Foothill's policies, procedures, roles and responsibilities that govern how our college runs. The Equity-Driven Systems Change model explains that the dimension of cultural change uncovers and confronts the reasoning behind the inequities in our institution. What attitudes and beliefs do we employ as staff, faculty, and administrators in our interactions with students and one another? Creating a culture of equity may be the most difficult area of change to enact, as it requires our campus to come together under a common philosophy and desired vision, specifically around how we embody a culturally responsive, appreciative and equity-centered institution. While it will be the community-wide effort that will create the change we want to see, the change won't occur without individual responsibility. This leads to the third type of change: individual. Though the Equity-Driven Systems Change model does not identify this as a dimension of change, the Office of Equity felt it was important to acknowledge the opportunity to affect positive change in those areas within the realm of our college's control, but also as a reminder that we all own the responsibility to do so. The act of ongoing, recursive self-reflection is imperative in our equity efforts.

The Office of Equity posits that our college's equity efforts must impact four areas: 1) Access, Supports and Opportunities; 2) Organizational Policies and Practices; 3) Campus Climate; and, 4) Student Outcomes. Access, supports and opportunities references how we bring students onto our campus, set them up with the resources they need to be successful, and continue to look out for them by connecting them to opportunities that encourage their educational growth. The impact area of organizational policies and practices is concerned with looking at substructures within the college organization as well as overarching policy. Leadership and governance, budget and resource allocation, instructional policies and human resources would be topics of consideration within this area. Campus climate references the values, norms and history of our college, how we communicate within the college and how we work to prioritize and engage students. Finally, student outcomes refers to positive and equitable change in metrics like course completion, degree attainment, transfer rates, etc. From a foundational perspective, the Office of Equity believes framing the college's equity issues around these four areas will be important in discussion and practice as they represent a new approach to eliminating disparities that is intentionally comprehensive and does not ignore the systemic structures at play.

While this Strategic Equity Plan lays out the aforementioned framework in an ordered, sequential manner, in praxis, the framework does not adhere to the neatly confined categories of the three dimensions of change nor the four areas of impact. Some of our equity strategies will intermesh with more than one dimension of change; that is, some interventions will require individual, cultural and structural change. Some equity strategies will cross more than one area of impact. These realizations only amplify the interconnectedness of our institution relative to our equity efforts. Where areas of ambiguity may arise around who or what entity should be

responsible for certain equity strategies, an opportunity presents itself to engage in conversation with other people and areas on campus to team up to get the work done. Those collaborative efforts produce the most effective change and the Office of Equity could help facilitate those conversations.

### **A Tool for Facilitating Discussion and Processing Change**

A call for wide-sweeping assessment on how our college operates down to the very values we hold individually is a monumental ask. The process will be uncomfortable at times, and is likely to surface many feelings for all of us as we engage in this work. As the need for a framework to provide direction was identified, the campus community could also benefit from having tools to help process the change our institution is undergoing and to help keep difficult dialogues moving ahead in a productive way. Since 2014, Foothill has partnered with the Pacific Educational Group to provide racial literacy seminars, which have included training on the Courageous Conversation About Race<sup>®</sup> protocol. It prompts users to be conscious of their own mindset as they enter the work, outlines four agreements<sup>10</sup> to use during discussions, and offers six conditions<sup>11</sup> to help individuals engage, sustain, and deepen conversation. Our efforts to train colleagues in using the protocol are intended to help individuals enter conversations with shared understanding of common terminology and norms. At the same time, the Office of Equity fully acknowledges there may be other robust strategies to have effective dialogues about racial equity. What is most important to us is that individuals are able to engage in racial equity conversations in a sustained and productive way. As a community, we must understand that while the Equity-Driven Systems Change framework may help provide direction on where our

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<sup>10</sup> Stay engaged, speak your truth, experience discomfort, and expect/accept non-closure

<sup>11</sup> Focus on personal, local, and immediate; isolate race; ensure multiple perspectives; use CCAR protocol with intentionality; establish a working definition of race; surface the presence and role of Whiteness

change efforts should be focused and how to pursue them, it will ultimately fail if we cannot engage and sustain difficult conversations and do the affective work that is intertwined with the equity work.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT**

With the tremendous efforts that must occur to provide more equitable student experiences, accountability becomes an important element in that process toward change. To be accountable is essentially taking initiative and ownership of the work to create equitable outcomes. This can be accomplished individually within one's day-to-day responsibilities, culturally within the practices of one's department and in collaboration with colleagues, and structurally through administrative procedures, policies, and strategic planning.

The Foothill community will establish their role in the plan toward equity by defining what actions they can take to address issues laid out in the plan – individually, culturally, and structurally. As The Office of Equity will partner to brainstorm and refine ideas, bring in additional stakeholders who have power to concretize those ideas and ensure the college remains focused on students and continues to center race. The Office of Equity will be responsible for checking-in with the campus community to help them assess their implementation efforts, and provide support with further consultation and advocacy for resources needed. As implementation, assessment, and sharing of lessons learned occurs, so will opportunities for synergy and coordination of efforts.

We as a college commit to the Equity Strategic Plan as a living, ongoing vision. Planning, implementation, and evaluation are ongoing and dynamic, allowing the college to pivot and shift as we learn what works. As the campus moves from planning to action, it will be essential to

create appropriate milestones that will determine our timeline for evaluation. Some milestones will be checked annually or even on a quarterly basis, while others may require a longer timeline.

Communication will be key in moving the work forward as folks are all in different points in their efforts. Some, having already implemented a number of interventions over the years, may need less consultation or direction, while others will desire a more substantial partnership to get their activities off the ground. Wherever an individual or area may be in the work, it will be important that the campus community be kept abreast of what is occurring and any results that are being produced. This could occur at events as large as Opening Day, or in more focused spaces such as division meetings or governance. Appropriate venues for providing updates on progress of work, along with timelines for assessment and reporting, can be established as part of action plan development.

This plan will be a significant shift from the siloed work that has historically occurred but cross-campus engagement, assessment, and reporting can only improve our understanding of how students are served and help to prevent duplication of efforts. Given the Strategic Equity Plan has come together as a collaborative effort, constructed by the voice of the campus community, it provides a unique opportunity to hold ourselves accountable for our vision, demonstrated in our commitment and accountability to our values, our personal growth, and to results.