



Foothill College Academic Senate
Executive Committee 2020-21

January 6, 2021

Dear President Nguyen:

I am following up on the [Academic Senate's response](#) of December 11 to the students' [October 2020 Open Letter to Foothill College Governance](#). As you will read in our response, we support the students' letter and demands, and we have proposed next steps we might take as a senate, and a college, in support of these demands. In this letter I summarize the actions we are committing to within the senate, and also work we would like to see our college and/or district prioritize in different shared governance arenas. By way of this letter, we would like to request your support and advocacy of this work.

General Response:

The students' letter prompted vigorous discussions in many different (virtual) campus spaces this fall. In addition to "digging in" to the twelve demands, these conversations also touched upon campus reactions to the receipt of a student demand letter with an equity focus addressed to "shared governance." In the faculty-led spaces (meetings of the Academic Senate and an ad hoc workgroup formed to develop our response, division conversations between senators and their constituents, email responses sent to Academic Senate officers from faculty, etc.), we heard overwhelming support for the students and their demands alongside faculty concerns with institutional structures and campus climate potentially affecting our ability to be effective in our response to these demands.

In our letter to the students, we shared a number of the questions and concerns that were raised by faculty. We would like an opportunity to have a conversation with you and the other recipients of the students' letter to debrief these conversations, and attempt to answer some of these questions. We would like to ask you to convene this group sometime in Winter 2021, and lead us in this conversation.

Demand-Specific Responses:

#1 Ethnic Studies

We support this demand, and we recognize our role and responsibility in leading the effort to create a new instructional program (a series of courses supporting a new CSU graduation requirement, and likely soon to be CCC graduation requirement). We are excited to have senate-appointed faculty leads working with administrative leads and student leaders in the creation of the new Foothill Ethnic Studies program. We also reaffirm our advocacy for resources for this new program in the form of a full-time, tenure-track faculty position and the

scheduling of the new courses as soon as we receive the necessary approvals to include them in our catalog. We hope to count on your support for these as well.

#2 Diversifying Curriculum

We support this demand and recognize our role and responsibility in addressing it. To this end we have committed to developing an Academic Senate/CCC/COOL Equity Action Plan by June 2021. In addition, we reaffirm the academic senate's role in faculty evaluation, another area called out by the students in this section of their letter. While we recognize that faculty evaluation is a negotiated item between the Faculty Association (FA) and the College/District Administration, we also recognize that per California Education Code, "[i]n those districts where faculty evaluation procedures are collectively bargained, the faculty's exclusive representative shall consult with the academic senate prior to engaging in collective bargaining regarding those procedures" (Section 87663). We kindly ask for your support in confirming this consultation with the senate has taken place prior to any future negotiations regarding faculty evaluation procedures.

#3 Mandatory Training

We support the students' demand for frequent and ongoing professional development opportunities for all full- and part-time faculty covering the topics of implicit bias, systemic racism, White supremacy, White privilege, and social activism, and we ask for your ongoing support of the professional development faculty coordinator position to help coordinate a robust set of yearly offerings. We also ask for ongoing support of our faculty to attend these sessions, including the dedication of resources to compensate our part-time faculty with stipends for attendance. Last, we share directly with you that we are cautious about taking a position in support of mandatory trainings, due to research that questions the efficacy of mandatory diversity trainings in addition to concerns raised by our part-time faculty who often have scheduling conflicts due to other professional commitments.

#4 Faculty Diversity

We support this demand and we ask for your support of the Academic Senate Ad Hoc workgroup we will be forming in Winter 2021 to further analyze this demand by facilitating information and data that may help us in our analysis and development of our action plan. We also would appreciate assistance with proposing linkages between our planning efforts to address this demand with other conversations you may be aware of at the College and/or in the District.

#5 Outreach to Black & African American Students

We support this demand, and we advocate for the creation of a Study Group under one of the governance councils and/or the Guided Pathways Team to further analyze this demand and the proposed strategies. We also recognize the potential for a (stronger) partnership between Counseling faculty and our Outreach offices that we would be excited to explore further if the appropriate resources are identified to compensate this work.

#6 Supporting Indigenous & Native Students and Communities

We support this demand and we advocate for the creation of a Study Group under one of the governance councils and/or a Districtwide Task Force be formed to further analyze this demand and the proposed strategies.

#7 Mental Health

We support this demand and in addition to Senate actions we have proposed in our response to the students, we also advocate for the creation of a Study Group under one of the governance councils to further analyze this demand and the proposed strategies.

#8 Basic Needs

We support this demand, and we advocate for the creation of a Districtwide Task Force to further analyze this demand and the proposed strategies.

#9 Financial Literacy

We support this demand, and in addition to our statements made in support of it in our response to the student letter, we ask for your support of the Academic Senate Ad Hoc workgroup we will be forming in Winter 2021 to further analyze this demand by facilitating information and data that may help us in our analysis and development of our action plan. We also would appreciate assistance with proposing linkages between our planning efforts to address this demand with other conversations you may be aware of at the College and/or in the District.

#10 Reimagining Campus Safety

We support this demand, and we advocate for the creation of a Districtwide Task Force to further analyze this demand and some of the proposed strategies.

#11 Observing Juneteenth

We support districtwide conversations around the Juneteenth holiday to explore options to add this observance to the academic calendar.

#12 Student Activism

We support this demand and in addition to the comments made in our response to the students, we also advocate for the creation of a Study Group under one of the governance councils to further analyze this demand and some of the proposed strategies.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Maurer, PhD.
Foothill College Academic Senate President

Attachment: Academic Senate Response to the Student Letter Dec 2020.pdf

CC: Foothill College Student Leaders: Jayme Albritton, Josh Contreras, Moremi Mabogunje, Abhiraj Muhar, Mariam Touni, and Priya Vasu; Executive Committee of the Academic Senate; Tri-Chairs, Facilitators and Ex-Officios of Advisory Council, E&E, R&R and C&C; Classified Senate President, Josh Pelletier; District Academic Senate President, Isaac Escoto; FA President & Chief Negotiator, Tim Shively and Amy Edwards; Simon Pennington