
From: Bernadine Fong <fongbernadine@fhda.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 31, 2022 11:39 AM
To: foothill; ASFC Elected & Appointed
Cc: centralservices
Subject: "What you know today, can help what you do tomorrow, but not what you did yesterday."

"What you know today, can help what you do tomorrow, but not what you did yesterday."

The 49ers are probably thinking this very same thing. However, I am struck by this quote as we struggle with how to best serve our students and assure the safety of everyone amid the Omicron surge. We do know we can respond to a surge, as you did in March 2020 when there were no other options. We also know that even after dealing with Covid for nearly two years, that we are still in ambiguous territory with the advent of the Omicron variant. We also know that our students are increasingly at risk without more robust educational opportunities. So, at least in my mind, what we do tomorrow needs to be part of a longer strategy to address the possibility that there may be more variants to come and how do we cope with each new challenge, while at the same time, getting on with our educational mission.

What is our mission? While the obvious answer would be to enable students to transfer, acquire a job, obtain a degree or certificate, representatives of the academic and classified senates and the ASFC have been meeting with me for the last two Fridays to think more broadly and meaningfully. As a result, we have tentatively added equity, empowerment, access and community as part of our mission. These thoughts were developed over our discussion of a new shared governance model that is inclusive and forthright and *will be shared with our various constituent groups for feedback*. Collectively, we are looking for a student-focused model that is not only inclusive, but impactful, simple in form and function, and transparent.

Governance is about sharing leadership but not totally, because what comes with leadership is accountability. The ultimate accountability lies with the president, so when we talk about "shared" or "participatory" governance we are talking about sharing input, challenging ideas, and in most cases, coming to consensus. Shared governance is not the same as a democratic process, because our different roles at the college have different responsibilities, some of which overlap and some which do not. So, the democratic principle of "majority rules" is not appropriate in a shared governance setting. Administrators have the overall responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the college, assuring that operates smoothly, is sound fiscally, and is focused on student outcomes. The staff are essential to not only the smooth operation of the college, but to providing the "face" of our college to our students, to the public, whether at the Admission and Records office, the Financial Aid office, or any department where phone calls or emails are received, from the public. The faculty are responsible for providing the educational programs and opportunities for our students, assessing their performance, and ultimately giving them the credentials, they are seeking, whether it is a certificate, a degree, or grades that enable them to transfer to a university. The students are not only the recipients of our educational offerings but are also the active voice in a continual feedback loop of what is working and what is not. None of these groups operates in silos but synergistically. And when they are operating synergistically, they are carrying out the respective missions of the college.

Foothill has been at the forefront of community colleges since it was founded in 1957. When Foothill was featured in *Time Magazine* (3/5/62) it was described as a model community college "prodding other California

community colleges to imitation." Alan Temko, architectural critic, described Foothill as "the most beautiful community college ever built."

Foothill will continue its distinctive and innovative reputation in the 21st century guided by a vision that encompasses its core values, purpose, and mission. Decisions and actions of Foothill College will be collaborative and focused on its vision and mission. More later.

P.S. Packs of 10 KN95 masks are available through the respective division deans' offices or the president's office area.

Best regards,

Bernadine

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