



President's Communiqué

FROM THE DESK OF THUY THI NGUYEN

Student-Centeredness, Empathy, and Innovation

"We Are Foothill Family"

We are Foothill family
I got all my owls with me
We are Foothill family
Come on everybody, let's sing

Want to sing-along to "We Are Foothill Family" with **Janie Garcia**? Want to laugh until you cry (or watch the scene that zoom caught of me almost falling out of my chair from laughing so hard)? Watch Friday's End-of-the-Quarter zoom party hosted by the Outreach team **Adiel Velasquez**, **Michelle Channel**, and **Alejandro Favela**: https://cccconfer.zoom.us/rec/share/opVbL67J3UdOZdbRwmP4X7IIL53FX6a81iYf8vYKyE0tn-hBidmpPILISUi7Wl_n

It would be safe to say that Winter Quarter 2020 was the most challenging, consequential quarter to-date in our college's 62-year history. The student-centeredness, empathy, and innovation (inventiveness / resourcefulness) that you exemplified these past 2-3 weeks in particular will carry us through spring quarter.

There are so many faculty, classified professionals, and administrators to thank. Just look around (virtually, of course): each colleague has played a role in our college's collective sheer determination to continue instruction and services for our students. Our college was moving already with the large majority of classified professionals, faculty, and administrators working virtually even before the chancellor's directive and the subsequent county/state orders to do so. The fact that Foothill moved so quickly to the virtual space is a true testament to each of you and your awesomeness.

Thank YOU!

Knowing you, the best thank-you gift I could give you is these pictures from last year.





Self-Care

What is most extraordinary about each of you is that you came through for our students while you are also personally affected, with many of us taking care of children / older family members and managing our own health and wellness.



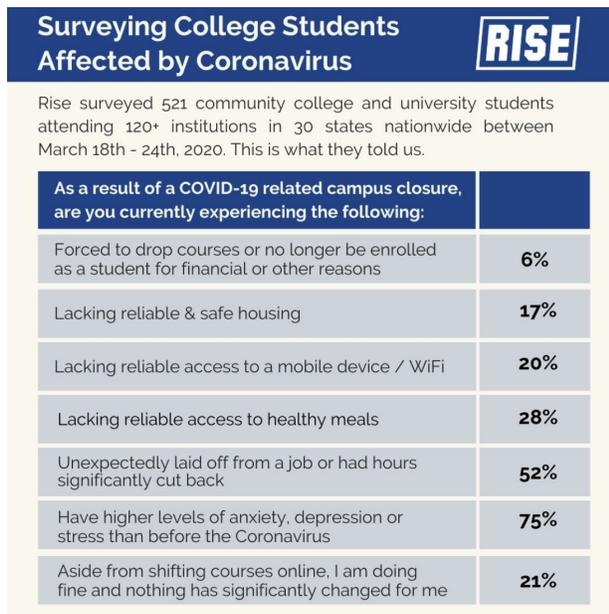
Foothill College President @FoothillPrez · 3m

The past two+ weeks feels as though time slowed down. It is a like being in a surreal situation (e.g., an accident) when the event happened in 10sec yet felt like 10min. So, I calculated my time-lapse: I am experiencing 3.3-factor slowness of time. [#Nerding](#) [#CoronavirusPandemic](#)

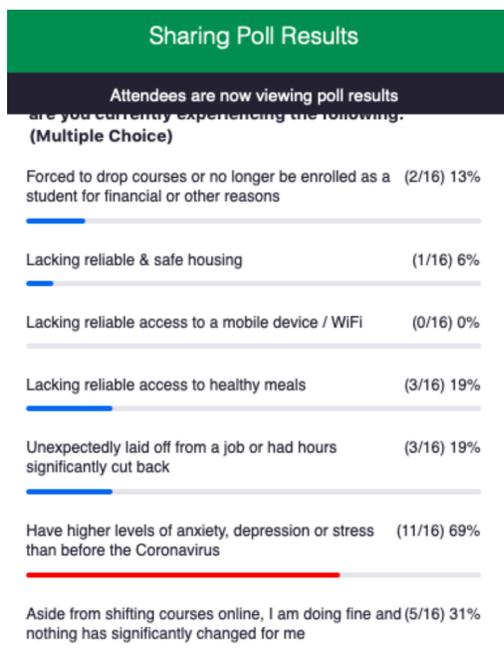


Our college's Psychological Services team is also helping students through

these times while putting together something for us as employees. In the meantime, Adjunct Communications Professor **Doug Threet** who is also a licensed marriage/family therapist sent me and the Fine Arts/Communications Division tips on managing stress. See attachments.



I did an informal survey of our students who were on one of the “Tea with President Thuy” zooms during finals week.



**Keep in mind these are Foothill students who participated via zoom, so they already have access to mobile device and wifi.

As you know, we have been providing laptop loaners and wifi hot-spots

through the Virtual Student Hub's Emergency Relief Fund. Foothill's Emergency Relief Fund was mentioned [in an article](#) by the American Association of Community Colleges as an example of a college taking proactive (and early) steps to support students. The Virtual Student Hub has been led and staffed by our Equity Office, and we hope to expand to include "Student Tech Ambassadors" and other colleagues.

Our college's mindfulness on equity has also demonstrated itself.



A group of us during the Equity Retreat in late January/early February (which feels like ages ago) discussed the need to focus on equity in online courses at Foothill as noted in our draft Equity Plan 2.0. We also talked about the definition/scope of equity:

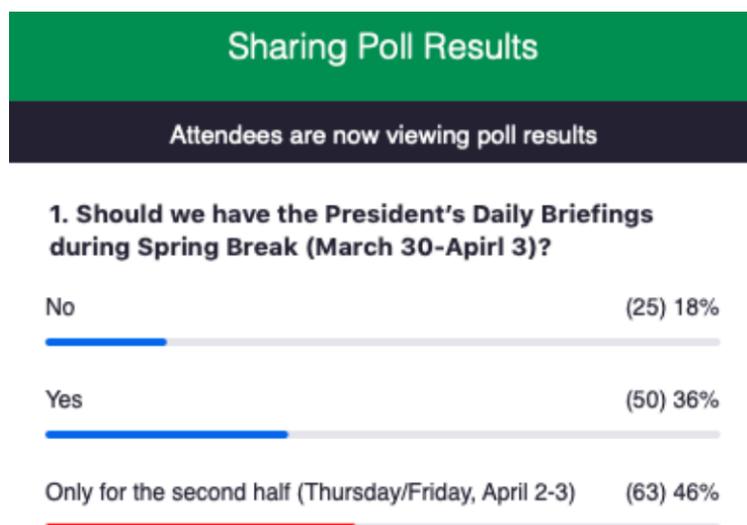
“Believing a well-educated population is essential to sustaining a democratic and just society, we commit to the work of equity, which is to dismantle oppressive systems (structural, cultural, and individual) and create a college community where success is not predictable by race.”

There is no doubt that the move to virtual learning during this pandemic is a major disrupter in higher education. Will it be one that would widen the racial gap, or is this a rare window of opportunity to accelerate our efforts on racial equity online so we build a system that, at the very least, does no harm – and possibly improve conditions and outcomes for student communities of color?

I recognize that it is hard to ask faculty and staff to do more in these already stressful times, yet we need to make sure we are not doing harm unintentionally. It is a general rule of thumb that if one is not intentional, the system will default to racial bias -- almost like the laws of inertia. Furthermore, neuroscience research shows that during periods of stress, time constraints, and information-void, unconscious bias gets more triggered in our brain. Mindfulness is needed – racial equity mindfulness, that is.

This [90-minute webinar](#) on community college online classes last week was quite enlightening, even on the difference in equity gap between synchronous and asynchronous courses. I have asked Cabinet to watch it, and look forward to equity-mindfulness (with tools) guiding our college for both types of courses.

Note also that 80% of the approximately 888 scheduled courses this spring quarter have an e-textbook option. **Faculty: please email Bookstore Manager Romy Paule** at pauleromeo@fhda.edu if you wish to provide that e-textbook option for students, in order to lessen the need for book pick-ups/delivery and minimize physical contact for our bookstore colleagues. Thank you to the Academic Senate Prez **Isaac Escoto** and Library, Financial Aid, and Finance colleagues for leading the online textbook discussion during Friday's briefing.



Speaking of briefings, thank you to all those who joined the eleven President's Daily Briefings we conducted via zoom. Each briefing had around 180 - 205 folks participating. We will take a little break during Spring Break. In the meantime, enjoy the informal "coffee break" zoom gathering at that time.

As we witness and instill resiliency in our students, we are also demonstrating resiliency for them.

And as we witness and instill *Service Leadership* in our students, we are also demonstrating service leadership.

The fundraiser for our friends at Pacific Dining Hall and KJs Café has raised nearly \$5,000 (with an initial goal of only \$2k). Thank you, Dean **Kurt Hweg** for leading the charge!

Our respiratory therapy program is [in the news](#). The program has contributed ventilators and masks, along with second-year program students getting ready to go to the hospitals for support. Program Director / Professor **Brenda “Hanning** and other respiratory therapists throughout the Bay Area, who some call ‘unsung heroes,’ work with patients most in distress from COVID-19 — the ones who have severe pneumonia.”

Also got news that the Biology Department gathered and donated these items to Valley Medical Center Foundation for use in their hospitals and clinics: 105 boxes of gloves, 10 boxes of sterile swabs and 15 boxes of alcohol wipes. Special thanks to **Amy Edwards, Sara Cooper**, Campus Police, Dean **Ram Subramaniam**, and the entire biology department for making this happen.

Vice President **Bret Watson** and team are also going through our college inventory and orders prior to shelter to donate to the hospitals, while leaving some for our campus police as they continue to provide service on campus.

Of course, one of the best ways to “serve” our community is to stay at home and wash those hands. And don’t forget the thumbs! Gel-in, Gel-out.

Of Service,



Thuy

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