

Foothill College Target Equity Outcomes for 2022-2025 Executive Summary

Successful Enrollment

Team Leads:

Dean of Enrollment Services

Associate Vice President, College & Community Relations, Marketing & Communications

Friction Points: The current onboarding process is overly complicated, and disproportionately impacts African American students. Students are in contact with multiple offices from the beginning of the onboarding process to the end, which leads them in different directions and makes it harder to find the information they need. In addition, the current website is labyrinthine, tedious, not intuitive, and unfriendly, much like our application forms. Students often give up trying to find contacts they need to remain in school or access basic services. Our enrollment structure and poor communication processes are a major reason why we believe only 50% of African American students who complete the application process ultimately register for classes.

Current Structure: Foothill relies heavily on automated processes to communicate information to a large population of students. Priority registration requires that a student select a major, have an educational goal, complete an orientation and assessment, and have an education plan completed. For first-time students to the college this process is often confusing and complicated. Our enrollment communication tells students to complete one of the aforementioned steps but does not explain how to complete that step or what will come after. Students are getting lost in the process and getting frustrated with the additional work they need to do in order to complete the process. Also, if students complete all the necessary steps too early, they may need to wait a month or more in order to register.

Ideal Structure: Outreach, Marketing, Enrollment Services, and Counseling must better collaborate to provide new students with complete support as they enroll and register. The revised tactic must be guided by a student-centered approach to communication. For the website, the challenge is to reorganize and repackage information to promote optimal usability for students.

Necessary Transformations to Reach Ideals:

- Integrate Outreach, Enrollment, Registration, and Counseling student communication efforts, and mind the gaps between steps.
- Redesign the website to facilitate a student's ease of access to information and services.
- Increase staffing at all contact points with students, so we have 'warm hand-offs;' Increased staffing is always an issue, but we must find ways to place our limited resources where they can best support student success.

Strategic Vision for Equity Alignment: The onboarding process disproportionately impacts African American students (Issue 1). The application to registration pipeline is transparent and intuitive to students. Foothill retains student through the onboarding process, particularly those disproportionately impacted in the process, which often includes African American students (Goal 1).

Retention from Primary to Secondary Term

Team Leads:

Dean of Counseling
Counseling Faculty
Student Success Specialist

Friction Points: The underutilization of campus support resources by our disproportionately impacted students, especially in fully online classes. Many faculty members are hesitant to adopt Foothill Connect, which they view automates some of the strategies they use to increase course success.

Current Structure: To increase retention from the primary to the secondary term, we are focusing on increasing student utilization of campus support services by expanding the Foothill Connect program and targeting African American and Latinx students who are exclusively online. Students can access an array of support services both on campus and online, which gives them a greater sense of connection to the campus. A sense of belonging has been shown to increase retention. However, these services are often presented in an uncoordinated fashion, leaving many students unclear of what services are right for them, and faculty confused about how to connect students to these resources. Using the Foothill Connect tool provides a hub of support to faculty, staff, and students.

Ideal Structure: After the events of 2020, Foothill met its goal to offer all tutoring, transfer help, career guidance, writing services, and counseling (both academic and psychological), online. We need to ensure students are aware of these services and help students access them. This is where faculty engagement is critical. Faculty providing targeted and timely referrals shows students that faculty personally want them to succeed. Mass communication informing students about services doesn't create that same feeling of care and concern. An area of value provided by Foothill Connect is the nationwide database of Foothill Connect schools and the interventions they used. Once we identify the disproportionately impacted group of students and study their unique characteristics and needs, we can develop a more robust retention program that takes their cultural needs into account.

Necessary Transformations to Reach Ideals:

- Foothill Connect will facilitate communication between faculty, students, and the Office of Retention while educating students on the services that will be most beneficial to them, as well as collecting valuable data on the types of services students need.
- Foothill Connect emails the student a “welcome email” and encourages students to use the service; however, some of the students who require these services most, might need an additional push. One way to do this is put resources towards in-reach. This can be specific personnel, whether faculty or staff, directly assigned to follow up on referrals to the Office of Instruction.

Strategic Vision for Equity Alignment: Lack, or underutilization of campus support resources (Issue 10). The college is able to identify and address the challenges in accessing resources and supports that are unique to students who engage with our campus exclusively online (Goal 4).

Complete Transfer Level Math & English

Team Leads:

Dean of Language Arts

Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

English Faculty

Math Faculty

Friction Points: The promising practices of existing retention programs have not yet been thoroughly incorporated across the English department.

Math is one of the subjects that perpetuates structural racism by failing to educate students in the history and ongoing racism implicit and explicit in the discipline. Feeling that you belong and have the support to accomplish your goals can feel challenging when you don't see yourself, your race, and your culture reflected in your coursework.

Current Structure: While English faculty engage in numerous equity-focused professional development and culturally responsive curricular projects, these efforts are largely disconnected and lack comprehensive participation, as well as a process for assessing the effectiveness of policies, praxis, development activities, and curricular revisions. Approximately half of the English courses are taught by part-time faculty. Many teach for multiple institutions and may not have the capacity to participate in department-sponsored professional development activities, despite Foothill's commitment to paying part-time faculty for doing so. In sections outside learning communities and corequisites, faculty do not have the time, resources, and support to address student needs beyond the scope of course content.

Faculty education grounded in a Eurocentric view of mathematics perpetuates that narrative and bias, both in curriculum and pedagogy. Math curriculum is, historically, designed to prepare students for calculus, even though many of our students don't need calculus. This means that we are not designing curriculum for a large percentage of the Foothill population. Course objectives and outcomes focus on computation, communication, critical and creative thinking, and mathematical practices and habits of mind. No explicit reference is made to the biases and subjectivity inherent in the use of math.

Ideal Structure: All faculty, full- and part-time, must have the conditions they need not only to participate in race-conscious and equity-driven professional development, but to implement and assess new curriculum, teaching practices, and policies derived from professional development activities.

Department offerings and course outlines of record in the math department should be re-evaluated through an equity lens, while also considering and exploring new courses that meet our students' needs. We will employ curriculum development, team building, professional learning, and curriculum review/updates with the goal of achieving more equitable outcomes.

Necessary Transformations to Reach Ideals:

- English faculty will continue to be at the forefront of promoting a race-conscious culture at Foothill, having completed the Courageous Conversations protocol and substantial professional development focused on equity-driven assessment, as well as serving as a campus resource for the cultural shift required by the de-centering of grades and working with the Online Learning Team's efforts for equity-driven course design and assessment.

- Such efforts require a re-envisioning of the Course Outlines of Record process, which the English department will continue to formalize and share with the campus.
- In the classroom, faculty practice race-conscious content and pedagogy, centering linguistic justice and the racism implicit and explicit in the mathematics discipline.

Strategic Vision for Equity Alignment: Many programs perpetuate structural racism by failing to educate students in the history and ongoing racism implicit and explicit in their disciplines (Issue 6). Curriculum and Pedagogy are explicitly race conscious (Goals 1 & 2).

Completion & Transfer

Team Leads:

Vice President of Instruction
Associate Vice President of Instruction
Academic Senate President
Academic Senate Executive President

Friction Points: Many programs perpetuate structural racism by failing to educate students in the history and ongoing racism implicit and explicit in their disciplines. Students often only have siloed opportunities to explore and understand systemic racism, and typically only within disciplines that focus on social and human behavior. Leaving students unprepared for racism in their fields can suppress their desires to be leaders in disrupting it, and lead to feelings of not belonging and increased stress.

Current Structure: The current curriculum approval process is done by a curriculum committee made up of both faculty and administrators from multiple levels. The process adheres to a set of policies and guidelines that are either legislated, and/or created and approved by the committee.

Ideal Structure: The curriculum approval process is the best opportunity to ensure that courses are race conscious. Administrators and students who serve on the college-wide curriculum committee must also analyze the Course Outline of Record (COR) up for review and work towards making improvements. Administrators on the committee will communicate with the faculty and other education professionals to ensure an accurate analysis is made, and provide resources for guiding and supporting this process.

Necessary Transformations to Reach Ideals:

- Identify the structural racism that exists in various disciplines through the different elements of the COR, such as the course objectives, course content, the method of evaluation, and/or the representative texts used.
- Those involved in the curriculum process, from the course author to the sub-committee and the Academic Senate, should create a process that supports the creation of a race-conscious course outline that educates students in the history and ongoing racism in different disciplines.
- To empower and prepare the curriculum committee and faculty, they will need to have more frequent trainings, resources, and professional development to better analyze and review new course proposals, updated course outlines, and current curriculum.

Strategic Vision for Equity Alignment: Many programs perpetuate structural racism by failing to educate students in the history and ongoing racism implicit and explicit in their disciplines (Issue 6). Curriculum is explicitly race conscious (Goal 1). Course outlines in every discipline include the epistemology of the field, highlighting the contributions of racially diverse scholars, and address the discipline’s historical and contemporary racial equity issues (Section D). Pedagogy is race conscious (Goal 2). Faculty are knowledgeable about historical and contemporary racial equity issues in their disciplines, and they effectively educate students on these issues (Section B). Faculty use culturally responsive pedagogy and engage in ongoing professional development around their teaching practices (Section D).

Action Steps

Across all sections, the Office of Equity has identified four approaches that will be used to support the college’s commitment to moving current practices towards more equitable outcomes.

1. Section leads with content or discipline expertise are identified, consisting of at least one administrator, paired with at least one faculty or staff colleague.
2. Teams will act as points of contact for the various sections identified within the Equity Plan 2.0 (i.e., Successful Enrollment, Complete Transfer-Level Math and English, Retention from Primary to Secondary Term, Transfer and Completion) and will work with various stakeholder groups to develop specific action plans that make intentional connections to the Strategic Vision for Equity plan.
3. Action plans, created by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, will be used by section leads organize and identify resources, activities, milestones and evidence in pursuit of creating more equitable structures that support student success.
4. Over the next three academic years (i.e., 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025) section leads will create follow up action plans. Plans will build off past actions and ensure we are closing the assessment cycle and applying new knowledge to future endeavors. Promoting transparency and accountability, progress and milestones will be shared on the Office of Equity webpage (<https://foothill.edu/equity/>).