Resolution Encouraging Faculty Adoption of Simple Syllabus

Whereas, Foothill College's Strategic Vision for Equity Issue 10[i] aims to improve the lack, or underutilization, of campus support resources, the Open Letter to Foothill College Governance[ii] calls for improvement of basic needs programs to ensure awareness and access, the COOL Equity Action Plan[iii] calls for the adoption of Simple Syllabus to confront this issue because the Simple Syllabus tool allows faculty to auto populate information regarding campus support resources into course syllabi which exposes students to this information;

Whereas, research[iv] has shown that offering a table of contents in a syllabus reduces the cognitive load and makes it easier for students to navigate and can improve accessibility, and simple syllabus allows faculty to easily integrate a table of contents into their syllabus providing consistent tables of contents across course syllabi;

Whereas, accreditation requires every student in every section receive a "course syllabus that includes learning outcomes from the institution's officially approved course outline,"[v] the Agreement[vi] requires inclusion of SLOs in all course syllabi, and Simple Syllabus auto populates the appropriate learning outcomes into each syllabus;

Whereas, institutional review, reporting, and articulation require the collection and storage of all course syllabi, and Simple Syllabus archives all syllabi in a digital syllabus library for easy retrieval and analysis;

Whereas, the Simple Syllabus pilot faculty cohort and the Committee on Online Learning support the widespread adoption of Simple Syllabus;

Whereas, individual faculty and the Academic Senate maintain a right to academic freedom which includes control over their syllabi,[vii] and the Simple Syllabus tool has the potential to filter syllabi and collect big data on syllabi content and use, which opens major ethical, privacy, and academic freedom concerns;

Whereas, third party tools have the capability to collect student data, and the Office of Online Learning has had the tool verified by ETS and risk management to ensure it operates in compliance with our district guidelines; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Foothill Simple Syllabus tool remain in control of the faculty Academic Senate and its subcommittee the Committee on Online Learning; and

Resolved, that the Committee on Online Learning work with the Office of Online Learning to auto populate the Simple Syllabus tool into every course shell, with the clear opportunity for faculty to choose to opt-out; and

Resolved, that the Committee on Online Learning work with the office of Professional Development and Online Learning to provide opportunities for faculty training on adoption of Simple Syllabus; and

Resolved, that the Academic Senate encourage widespread faculty adoption of the Simple Syllabus tool; and

Resolved, that the Academic Senate advocate for the appropriate resources needed to support successful adoption of Simple Syllabus including stipends for faculty to engage in the necessary professional development, and the office of Online Learning to provide appropriate supports and maintenance.

i Foothill College *Strategic Vision For Equity* 2021-2025.

ii Open Letter to Foothill College Governance, October 2020.

iii *COOL Equity Action Plan* May 2022.

iv Ludy, M., et al. (2016) "Student Impressions of Syllabus Design: Engaging Versus Contractual Syllabus," *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*: Vol. 10: No. 2, Article 6. DOI:https://doi.org/10.20429/ijsotl.2016.100206

v Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Standard II A(3).

vi The Agreement between Foothill-De Anza Community College District and the Foothill – De Anza Faculty Association July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2022.

vii The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Position Paper, Protecting the Future of Academic Freedom During a Time of Significant Change, Adopted Fall 2020, P. 12.