

January 4, 2021

Dear Jayme, Josh, Moremi, Abhiraj, Mariam, and Priya,

This letter is in response to your October 2020 Open Letter to Foothill Governance. On behalf of the Equity and Education Council, thank you for writing this letter and holding Foothill accountable to its role in fighting against racism and oppressive systems on our campus that maintain it. We are grateful that you all have exhibited such strong student activism and providing the necessary leadership in making change happen.

The Equity and Education Committee has been working hard on the first demand listed in your letter, Ethnic Studies. To date, both a steering committee and an advisory committee have been created specifically to address Ethnic Studies. The steering committee works on the operational aspects related to getting Ethnic Studies classes taught at Foothill, including curriculum. It reports to the Ethnic Studies advisory committee which discusses the larger aspects such as hiring of faculty and where the Ethnic Studies department should be housed. The Ethnic Studies advisory committee reports to both Academic Senate and E & E.

So far, there have been four course outlines submitted for CSU GE approval starting in fall of 2021. The courses are ETHN 51, Introduction to Ethnic Studies, ETHN 52, Introduction to African American Studies, ETHN 53, Introduction to Latinx Studies, and ETHN 55, Introduction to Asian American Studies. At this time, the approval would be for Area D of CSU GE. In February, the course outlines will be submitted for approval in Area F of CSU GE. The course numbers will change when the outlines are submitted for UC articulation. Due to the timeline set by the UC's, the college can not submit for UC articulation until June 2021.

Additionally, the college has selected a faculty member to write a course outline for ETHN 54, Introduction to Native American Studies. Although that course will miss the timeline for CSU GE Area D, the steering and advisory committees are hoping that the ETHN 54 course outline will meet the timeline to be submitted for Fall 2021 approval in Area F of CSU GE.

The ES steering committee also submitted a request for a tenure-track FT Ethnic Studies faculty member, which was ranked as the top priority for hiring by the FT Faculty Prioritization committee. This priority list has gone to the Advisory Council for a first read and will be voted

on in January. The prioritization list will then be forwarded as a recommendation to President Nguyen.

The ES advisory committee discussed the question of where the Ethnic Studies Department should be housed. The committee recognized the need for Ethnic Studies to have autonomy and to have room to grow. In light of the fact that the department would be in its infancy and have only one FT faculty if there is a successful search, the committee thought that for the department should be housed temporarily in an existing division. However, when the department starts to grow, the college should revisit the discussion of Ethnic Studies being in its own division.

Furthermore, E & E has been providing guidance and working on the Equity Plan 2.0 for the last two years. In this plan, several issues included in this plan address the asks listed in your letter including:

- Diversifying curriculum
- Mandatory training on implicit bias
- Outreach to Black and African American students
- Basic Needs
- Mental Health

Lastly, E & E has just started the conversation on financial literacy. The Office of Financial Aid presented at the December 13th E & E meeting, a set of comprehensive plans on what their office will be doing to reach out to students and educate them on financial literacy including a series of workshops on financial literacy. E & E will be discussing in a future meeting how the committee could contribute further on this issue.

Although E & E was not able to tackle the other issues listed in your letter, we do feel that we are making meaningful strides toward addressing these issues. We are focused on making decisions that are lasting and impactful rather than performative and short-lived. We look forward to continuing our work towards racial equity at Foothill.