



Foothill College Academic Senate  
Resolution on Supporting the Mental Health of Black Students  
May 2021

---

Whereas, the murder of George Floyd and continued police-involved killings of Black lives has reopened a psychological wound for Black students and revealed unique challenges within mental health services;

Whereas, the experience of racism – both direct and indirect in the form of microaggressions<sup>1</sup> or exposure to racism through course content – can have a devastating effect on the mental health of Black students<sup>2</sup>;

Whereas, predetermined consequences such as expulsions, suspensions, and referrals to law enforcement for specific offenses disproportionately affect Black students and often can lead to depression, anxiety or addiction as a result of zero-tolerance discipline policies;

Whereas, the [October 2020 Open Letter to Foothill College Governance](#) drafted by Foothill students and subsequently approved by the Associated Students of Foothill College (ASFC), provides a full scope of what students would like to see going forward to address the ongoing violence and systemic racism against the Black community, including a commitment to providing faculty with the professional development needed to lead with compassion and implement inclusive teaching practices<sup>3</sup>;

Whereas [Foothill College's Strategic Vision for Equity 2021-2025](#) has identified goals to address the mental health needs of students of color, including investigating and employing creative solutions on how to expand racial trauma-informed psychological services for students, and ensuring students of color have broad access to diverse mental health professionals, especially around trauma related to police interactions;  
**therefore be it**

**Resolved**, the Foothill College Academic Senate commits itself to the psychological well-being of Black students by recognizing that a trauma-informed practice recognizing signs, symptoms, and risks will better support the mental health needs of our Black students, and, be it further

---

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed explanation of microaggressions and their impact please see Issue #8 on page 33 of [Foothill College's Strategic Vision for Equity 2021-2025](#).

<sup>2</sup> For more information see ["The Emotional Toll of Racism" in Inside Higher Ed, October 2020](#)

<sup>3</sup> The authors of the letter refer us to the [University of Michigan's Inclusive Teaching website](#) for more guidance on how to implement inclusive teaching practices.

**Resolved**, the Foothill College Academic Senate creates conditions that strengthen anti-racism awareness by promoting on-going professional development for faculty in unconscious bias, racial trauma, and racial diversity, and, be it further

**Resolved**, that the Foothill Academic Senate work with administration and student groups to develop a responsible student conduct and disciplinary framework centered on restorative justice principles based on Inclusive Decision-making, Active Accountability, Repairing Harm, and Rebuilding Trust.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Karp, D. R., & Armour, M. (2019). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice for Colleges and Universities*.