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Subject: Fall Quarter launching!
Attachments: FOOTHILL COLLEGE Course 101[1].docx



September 26, 2022

Hello, all,

Well, we've done it! We have launched Fall Quarter with our Flex Day last Thurs. and our Opening Day on Friday! Though there was/is debate about our masking approach over the weekend, hopefully this dialogue will help us reach new common ground. If we are a college that believes in trust, transparency, openness, and forgiveness, this would be the time for us to exhibit it. In the end, we will focus on what is best for our students and their welfare and the environment in which they can learn.

But getting back to Friday - Hope you enjoyed the entertainment, the food and treats, learning more about Foothill's past, dating back to the **Muwekma Ohlone Tribe**, and the importance of growth mindset and sense of belonging as we move forward in serving our students. I was especially taken by the relationship our mindset has to our students' success. Many of you joined our speaker, David Yeager, after his presentation. ***If you are interested in his work and working with him as a fellow in a community of practice on growth and mentor mindset, please let me know ASAP by return email (no obligation intended).*** After his presentation, he asked me what I thought of his *Enforcer, Mentor, Protector Mindset* approach, so I know that this is definitely a work in progress and an area where we can contribute to the discussion. I will have more details soon, so let me know of your interest. Here is David's definition of **Mentor Mindset**: "the belief that people are capable of impressive and extraordinary accomplishments when we give them the necessary supports." Definitely something for us to ponder.

Now on to planning for Halloween! Details under development.

Earlier this month, we hosted two one-day retreats in Half Moon Bay. The first one was for onboarding our new full-time faculty and administrators, and to create a palpable sense of belonging and community, we also included our recent faculty hires undergoing the tenure process from 2019 since they were hired during the "Covid" isolation years. (For our pre-2006 faculty, think Asilomar retreats). Our new probationary faculty cohort has already been engaged with Carolyn Holcroft and our professional development office that assures them the supports they should have as they transition into their new positions, teaching, as well as non-teaching, and Natalia Menendez, our tenure coordinator. Attached is our "course syllabus" for all Foothill employees for this year and which we shared at the retreat. The syllabus will also be posted in our Admin Building, along with the chronology photos of Foothill's history.

Our second retreat was for our leaderships teams, including officers of our two Senates, ASFC and members of our governance group, MIP-C: Mission (I'm) Possible Council, as well as our directors, deans, and cabinet. Our task was to get a sense of the challenges ahead by identifying our strengths and weaknesses as a college and developing tentative goals that might counteract or address our weaknesses with our strengths. This dialogue will be continued collegewide in the next few months. One recurring theme is the perception of inaccessibility, being on a hill "surrounded by a moat."

Both of these retreats were designed to develop a sense of community and bonding to provide the foundation for healthy and vibrant working relationships with one another. Some of the outcomes of these retreats (I hope), is that participants gained a sense of empowerment and confidence that it is better to try (an idea) and fail, than not try at all; that they understand what it means to be open and transparent, and that they begin to develop a mutual sense of trust with each other and camaraderie. Some of you may remember that I took members of our various leadership groups to an equinimity retreat last December, to accomplish similar goals, particularly at a time when the college seemed particularly fractured.

It is my hope that we have all turned the corner, and citing our ***Back to the Future*** theme, we take lessons learned from the past to improve ourselves for the future. Watching our video of Foothill's past, I was struck by the homogeneity of the early Foothill employees and students in the founding years, and how far we have come in reflecting the communities we serve, but have so much more to do. Attached is the "course outline" for *Foothill 101*, used to frame our retreat in terms of background reading. I share these with everyone so we can begin to extend our sense of community beyond those who were in Half Moon Bay. What makes Foothill unique and stand out from other community colleges? We might think of Foothill as a classroom in which all the members of the Foothill community can learn from one another. Foothill encourages dialogue and conversation as a primary teaching and learning tool. As a *learning organization*, we rely on:

- The College's values of honesty, integrity, trust, openness, forgiveness, transparency and sustainability.
- The College's purpose to practice the philosophy and ideas it teaches in an innovative and distinctive way.
- The College's mission is to exceed our students' expectations in recruiting, retaining, and assisting them in attaining their academic goals.

This core ideology is best learned through examples which *consistently* demonstrate the high standards, commitment to excellence and innovation, and extra effort that captures the distinctiveness and essence of Foothill.

As Foothill emerges from the pandemic, it will be a college that prides itself in being an educational leader and begins to distinguish itself with its focus on *institutional transformation*, especially with respect to race and equity, experiential learning, and digital education. Can we do it?

That will be up to each of us. However, the Foothill culture of innovation and spirit is very much alive and well, as witnessed by our **Metaverse Institute**, which started as a loosely formed group of volunteer faculty and staff interested in virtual and augmented reality. The group has taken on a life of its own, formed a user's group, developed a website, and created its own learning community. They have also had dialogue with Morehouse College which is also involved in VR and is an HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) from which we can learn a lot, not just in the VR field. What I have learned, is to stay out of their way, and let their imagination and creativity take the college to another level.

However, there are many, many other examples of this entrepreneurial spirit including the initiative to seek a **second baccalaureate degree** for the college (**Respiratory Therapy**); nearly twenty partnerships with Stanford University, including working with Stanford's nano labs; and the multiple **work force, CTE programs** that are increasing in demand because of the rise of the **New Collar worker**. Our **Global Experiential Learning** program has gotten lift off with definite plans for a campus abroad student experience in Florence in Spring 2023 and London Fall 2023. The ultimate goal is to grow our program so that it will also give students, particularly our African American students, the opportunity to study in Africa, and our Latinx students to study in appropriate Spanish speaking countries. We are developing a new partnership with DreamPower Horsemanship in Gilroy with our **Tools for Transition to Work** program for neurodiverse young adults. These students will serve as interns to experience a unique work environment while bonding with farm animals. These are only the ones that I am currently aware of, feel free to help me increase the list!

BTW, our football team of nearly 90 players, (all full-time students, BTW) has been practically invisible to the rest of the college, though they have been practicing since July and playing their games well before classes have even started. However, their undefeated record over four games is 182-24! The largest margin of victory was 79-0.

Thank you to all of the classified professionals, faculty, and administrators who made our Parent Night, NSO, Dual Enrollment Welcome Night, Flex Day and College Opening Day such a success in every way. Judging from the flow of traffic on Friday, the *Animal Assisted Happiness* group got the most votes, over the ice cream truck (which was still wonderful), the snow cone dispenser, and popcorn machine. However, the bubble blowing did get a lot of takers. And the Opening Day video was very special and thank you to Laurie Scolari and Antoinette Chavez and their team for the script, the costuming, and the production, including the photos and recognition of all of our colleagues hired since Covid or had a position change, as well as arranging all the fun activities.

Wishing you a happy Fall Quarter and a Happy New Year for those who are celebrating Rosh Hashanah through Tuesday.

P.S. And don't forget to download the course syllabus which was shared at our onboarding retreat which will give you an overview of the college, our students, and our overall goals and objectives for ourselves.

P.S.S. Dusters are available in the Admin building foyer for those who have a need. Since the drought, dust is becoming our new best friend! And we have candy.

Best regards,

Bernadine

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