

# Foothill Annual Program Review 2024

Annual Program Review Template 2024

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1. Number of full-time faculty in the program.

4

2. Number of part-time faculty in the program.

17

3. Number of staff in the program.

21

4. Do the above numbers reflect any staffing changes?

We were fortunate to gain 1 full-time faculty member; this individual was previously one of our part-time faculty. Last year, we noted that our classes, particularly fully-online sections, were filling quickly and had wait lists. Our full-time faculty were teaching up to six overloads each year, and 3 of our 12 part-time faculty members were teaching full-time loads. We were unable to meet student demand, especially in online courses, and looked forward to returning the department to 4 full-time instructors as well as adding part-time instructors. As noted, we have successfully hired a new full-time instructor as well as 5 more part-time instructors. However, it is worth noting that our courses, especially online, are still filling quickly with waitlists, and we are still not able to meet student demand.

5. Refer to the most recent Comprehensive Program Review, what were the identified actions for improvement? Identify any current and/or new Strategic Goals.

Our goals included improving course success rates and retention as well as increasing certificates/degrees awarded. We emphasized the need for increased division- and campus-wide 13-55 collaboration. We requested additional fully-online course sections to meet student demand. We prioritized reestablishment of Foothill's presence on the intercollegiate speech/debate circuit, creating an avenue for students to engage in competitive forensics. Now that we have successfully hired our new coach/ faculty member who has restarted our forensics team, our goals include creating and strengthening a speech/debate community, participating in tournaments, and building a pathway for interested high school students to seamlessly transition to our team and to the Communication Studies program at Foothill. To accomplish these goals, we will need Foundation and FAC Division funding. We aim to increase the visibility of the department and team through our certificate program, the Foothill website, program cards, and various public performances, workshops, and activities.

6. What actions identified in the Comprehensive Program Review (or most recent Annual Program Review if no Comprehensive Program Review) have you completed this year?

The Communication Studies Department is committed to improving student retention, fostering success, and addressing equity gaps. Two of our courses, COMM 1A Public Speaking and COMM 1AH Public Speaking Honors, have recently undergone Common Course Numbering (CCN) updates, which will help increase student enrollment and transfer opportunities.

We continue to work with part-time faculty to implement best practices. Both full-time and part-time faculty participate in Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) training at the District, College, and Division levels to ensure compliance with federal distance education requirements and promote meaningful engagement among students, instructors, and peers.

This year, in collaboration with Umoja, we established a certificate path for all Umoja scholars.

In Fall 2024, the department added a new full-time faculty member with experience in intercollegiate speech/debate, including coaching and judging competitions. This addition will provide students with opportunities to participate in forensics, enhance the curriculum, and support students preparing for university transfer.

7. Explain your implementation timeline and if there have been any changes or updates.

**2024-25:** Continue work on increasing retention and closing success gaps, particularly within the Black, Latinx, and Pacific Islander communities. Continue active division- and campus-wide 13-55 collaboration. Reinstate Foothill Forensics Team in the form of a club. Rejoin Northern California Forensics Association (NCFA). Conduct team workshops for campus community on such topics as Impromptu Speeches and Parliamentary Debate. In partnership with Writing and Learning Center (WLC), offer public speaking workshops to the campus community. Attend intercollegiate tournament(s). Formally reopen the Forensics Team's Foothill Foundation account. Two decades ago, the team budget was \$8,500/year, a minimum present-day funding requirement. Update departmental website; establish team website. Create program cards.

**2025-26:** Continue goals articulated above. Attempt to recruit a pool of Foothill Faculty and Staff to serve as tournament adjudicators, to meet our judging burden. Take steps toward reactivating the Forensics course offerings (COMM 54A, 54B, 54C) and returning the team from club to academic.

8. Explain the evidence the program used to evaluate progress and provide an update on progress.

The Communication Studies Department remained committed to addressing achievement gaps for disproportionately impacted groups. Notable progress was achieved between 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, as the Black student gap improved from -10% to -3%, and the Pacific Islander gap decreased from -14% to -8%. In 2024, Black students experienced a success gap of -5%, Latinx students faced a larger gap of -9%, and Pacific Islander students had the highest gap at -13%. Persistent gaps for traditionally marginalized student groups highlight the need for continued targeted interventions. The department remains dedicated to enhancing student retention and success through robust communication strategies. These efforts include the implementation of comprehensive RSI internal and external communication plans in all Communication Studies courses, designed to strengthen outreach and provide tailored support and intervention for students who face greater challenges in achieving college success.

9. Click the link and follow the instructions to the Disproportionate Impact dataset, then respond to the prompt below.

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Identify the groups that are experiencing a disproportionate impact in the most recent year (highlighted in orange). In the text box below, provide the percentage point gap and the number of additional successes needed to erase the percentage point gap for each group.

For non-instructional programs that do not have program specific disproportionate impact student data, please provide an update on the program's 13-55 project (i.e., project description, students served, implementation timeline).

Four groups experienced a disproportionate impact in our program in 2023-24:

**Black students:** Success rate: 76% (Gap = -5). Program impact: 173 successful students; 6 additional successes needed to close the gap. Comparative context: Foothill College gap = -8 (indicating stronger performance in our program).

**Latinx students:** Success rate: 75% (Gap = -9). Program impact: 847 successful students; 101 additional successes needed to close the gap. Comparative context: Foothill College gap = -7 (indicating a need for for our concentrated attention).

**Pacific Islander students:** Success rate: 67% (Gap = -13). Program impact: 40 successful students; 2 additional successes needed to close the gap. Comparative context: Foothill College gap = -6 (indicating a need for our concentrated attention).

**Low income students:** Success rate: 77% (Gap = -7). Program impact: 1,119 successful students, 87 additional successes needed to close the gap. Comparative context: Foothill College gap = -9 (indicating stronger performance in our program).

10. Use this opportunity to reflect on your responses in this document. Include your closing thoughts.

The Communication Studies Department continues to be a vibrant and highly successful program, serving students throughout Foothill College through degrees, certificates, and coursework required for various pre-professional programs. We are committed to improving student retention and success while addressing equity gaps. Efforts to close achievement gaps have shown progress, with improvements in the success rates of Black and Pacific Islander students. Despite persistent gaps for marginalized groups, the department remains focused on providing targeted interventions and support, enhancing communication strategies to help all students succeed and thrive in their academic journeys.

In response to the growing demand for public speaking training, we have launched a series of workshops designed to help students overcome public speaking anxiety and refine their presentation skills. These initiatives, along with updates to the department's website and program cards, will significantly increase our visibility across campus.

We have worked closely with part-time faculty to implement best practices, ensuring compliance with federal distance education requirements through Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) training. This training fosters meaningful engagement between students, instructors, and peers.

Our department remains a vital part of the Foothill College Umoja program, and one of our instructors is the only remaining original Umoja faculty or staff member at Foothill College. We have established a certificate pathway for all Umoja scholars, and continue to see many members of the program choosing to major in Communication Studies.

In the years since disbanding our award-winning intercollegiate forensics team (due to the combination of a major state budget crisis and changes in course repeatability), there has been strong student interest in restarting the team. Now, having hired a new coach/ faculty member and having reestablished the Foothill Speech and Debate Team at the club level, we are providing our talented students with the opportunity to once again engage in intercollegiate competition. We are currently taking steps to reactivate the courses associated with competition, since intercollegiate forensics teams are actual academic courses at the community college level, and tournaments are treated as class field trips.

This year, one of our faculty attended the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE), and we continue to work with Foothill's Office of Retention and Foothill Connect to address attrition and to close achievement and equity gaps. Our department was also a fundamental part of the Fall 2024 Global Experiential Learning in London.

Our department continues to offer one of the most popular certificate programs at Foothill, with students able to earn one or both transcriptable Certificates of Achievement. This program leads many to go on to major in and/or earn an Associate's degree in Communication Studies, with many choosing to double-major

after completing the certificate, underscoring the relevance and value of our program to students with a diverse range of academic and professional interests.

As noted in prior department-to-division communication and Program Reviews, student demand for fully-online communication studies courses is consistently so high that we are unable to serve a significant portion of our students. Early in Spring Quarter 2024, for example, we noted that there were 134 open spaces in our online and online-hybrid sections, and 0 open spaces in our fully-online sections. At the same time, there were 3 students waitlisted for our online and online-hybrid sections, and 55 students waitlisted for our fully online sections, with some waitlists maxed out, and therefore an unknown number of additional students completely shut out. We continue to need a higher percentage of online course sections in order to support our students. As stated in prior Program Reviews, we fully support Foothill College's return to campus efforts, but we must balance these with our responsibility to meet student needs.

Click on the link below to view the Annual Program Review Rubric.

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End of Annual Program Review Template 2024

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This form is completed and ready for acceptance.

# Rubric Annual Program Review

## Criteria

The program's responses...

- align with the program's goals
- align with data
- are informed by data
- are within the control of the program
- have measurable outcomes

- Meets Expectations  
 Needs Improvement

## Feedback

The Communication Studies department continues to make great strides in addressing challenges and meeting student needs. Adding a new full-time faculty member and restarting the forensics team as a club are fantastic accomplishments, and I know how much work went into making that happen. The focus on equity, like establishing the Umoja scholars' certificate pathway and addressing disproportionate impacts for Black, Latinx, and Pacific Islander students, reflects the department's deep commitment to supporting all students. The proactive steps in RSI training, curriculum updates, and outreach, paired with the success of your certificate programs, really highlight the strength and relevance of what you're doing.

That said, I think there's room to grow in a couple of areas. For one, continuing to target those success gaps with specific interventions and support will make a big difference for our students. Also, the demand for fully online courses is clearly through the roof, and finding ways to meet that need will take some pressure off and serve more students, especially those unable to add classes despite available open seats. Lastly, I'd encourage the team to think about how on-campus visibility and engagement from full-time faculty can make a real impact on the culture of the department. Having a strong presence on campus not only helps build connections with students but also reinforces the collaborative spirit of the department. You've already done a lot to move things forward, and I'm excited to see how you continue to build on this momentum. Keep up the amazing work!

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This form is completed and ready for acceptance.