



Foothill College Academic Senate
Resolution on Ensuring Inclusive Academic Senate Meetings and Events
Post-COVID Emergency Orders Allowing for Remote Meeting Attendance
November 2021

WHEREAS, the Foothill College Academic Senate is committed to preserving and nurturing public access and participation in its meetings and senate-sponsored events; and

WHEREAS, all meetings of Foothill-De Anza Community College District’s legislative bodies, which include the Foothill Academic Senate and its autonomous subcommittee, the College Curriculum Committee, are open and public, as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Gov. Code 54950–54963), so that any member of the public may attend, participate, and watch the District’s legislative bodies conduct their business; and

WHEREAS, under current legislation, bodies subject to the Brown Act must meet in person or adhere to restrictive and impractical teleconferencing requirements unless they are able to invoke AB 361, requiring a declaration of a State of Emergency directly impacting the ability of members of the public to meet safely in person; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Governor of California’s emergency orders suspending the teleconferencing requirements of the Brown Act allowing for remote meeting attendance, and with Foothill-De Anza’s mandated shift to remote instruction, student services and college administration before starting a phased return to campus, provided our campus with the opportunity to expand the technology, tools and know-how needed to run effective fully remote and hybrid meetings and events; and

WHEREAS, the Foothill College Academic Senate aims to promote educational quality and equity at Foothill¹; and

WHEREAS, in September 2019 the Board of Governors issued the California Community Colleges Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Statement, in which it recommends that local academic senates engage all college and district stakeholders—including full-time and part-time faculty, students, staff, administrators, board members, and community—in critical conversations to shift ideologies to foster an equity-driven institution; and

¹ [Constitution & By-Laws](#) of the Foothill College Academic Senate, & [Resolution](#) in Support of Foothill College’s Strategic Vision for Equity.

WHEREAS, many Foothill students, community and public members, particularly members of disadvantaged groups whose voices are particularly important to elevate in equity conversations, do not have the resources available to attend in-person meetings and events, and it has been shown that hybrid meetings, where attendees have the option to attend either in-person or remotely, are more equitable²; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic most public meetings at Foothill-De Anza, including meetings of the Foothill College Academic Senate and its subcommittees, such as the Foothill College Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Online Learning, experienced significant and consistent increases in attendance in the fully virtual environment; and

WHEREAS, the FHDA Energy and Sustainability Master Plan aims to reduce vehicle miles traveled for students, faculty, and staff by 25 to 50% by 2035³, and remote access helps achieve this goal;

RESOLVED, that the Foothill College Academic Senate will make all meetings of the Academic Senate, including subcommittee and working group meetings, and senate-sponsored events hybrid (offering both face-to-face and remote attendance options) or fully remote, when allowed and desired; and further

RESOLVED that the Foothill College Academic Senate work with the Foothill College and FHDA District Administration and Central Services to secure and employ the necessary facilities, technology and training to ensure hybrid meetings are effective and foster interaction between in-person and remote attendees.

² Hanaei S, Takian A, Majdzadeh R, et al. Emerging standards and the hybrid model for organizing scientific events during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. *Disaster Med Public Health Prep*. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/dmp.2020.406>. COVID-19 Pandemic. Society for Disaster Medicine and Public Health.

³ FHDA Energy Master Plan Objectives May 20, 2021 [Final](#)