Foothill College Quality Focus Essay

Introduction

Foothill College's Quality Focus Essay (QFE) was developed from the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report. It provides the College with an opportunity to delve more deeply into areas of improvement that are aligned with the mission in order to have a greater impact on student outcomes.

Topics for the QFE were identified during the Accreditation Leadership Summit held November 25-26, 2016, which was attended by approximately 75 individuals including faculty, staff, administrators, and students. During the summit, teams reviewed the Accreditation Standard findings and developed themes that were presented and discussed. At the conclusion of the event, the group had agreed on several possible themes. The Accreditation Steering Committee then worked to further refine them, and presented them to members of the Summit when they met again on January 18. After robust discussion, the group agreed to move forward with the two final topics. These topics were presented to the College's overarching shared governance group, the Planning and Resource Council, (PaRC), on February 2, 2017, and included in a presentation to the Board of Trustees on February 6, 2017.PaRC reviewed the QFE in May 2017.

Background

Per the Accrediting Commission for Community & Junior College QFE guidelines, institutions are to identify two or three "action projects" for further study and action that have strong potential for improving student outcomes. The projects should be related to the Accreditation Standards, emerge from the institution's examination of its own effectiveness in accomplishing its mission in the context of student learning and student achievement, be based on the institution's analysis of data collected, and identify areas of needed change, development, and improvement. QFE Action Project Components include: Identification of the Projects; Desired Goals/Outcomes; Timeline; Responsible Parties; Resources; and Assessment. The QFE is meant to:

> *"Provide the institution with multi-year, long-term directions for improvement and demonstrate the institution's commitment to excellence. The areas identified in the Essay will become critical focal points for the institution's Midterm Report."*

Standards Related to Institutional Plans for Future Action

<u>Participatory Governance</u>

- **I.B.1** The institution demonstrates a sustained, substantive and collegial dialog about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement of student learning and achievement.

- **I.B.7** The institution regularly evaluates its policies and practices across all areas of the institution, including instructional programs, student and learning support services, resource management, and governance processes to assure their effectiveness in supporting academic quality and accomplishment of mission.

- **IV.A.5** Through its system of board and institutional governance, the institution ensures the appropriate consideration of relevant perspectives; decision making aligned with expertise and responsibility; and timely action on institutional plans, policies, curricular change, and other key considerations.

- **IV.A.7** Leadership roles and the institution's governance and decision-making policies, procedures, and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

<u>Educational Pathways</u>

- **II.A.5** The institution's degrees and programs follow practices common to American higher education, including appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning. The institution ensures that minimum degree requirements are 60 semester credits or equivalent at the associate level, and 120 credits or equivalent at the baccalaureate level. (ER 12)

- **II.A.6** The institution schedules courses in a manner that allows students to complete certificate and degree programs within a period of time consistent with established expectations in higher education. (ER 9)

- **II.A.7** The institution effectively uses delivery modes, teaching methodologies and learning support services that reflect the diverse and changing needs of its students, in support of equity in success for all students.

- **II.C.6** The institution has adopted and adheres to admission policies consistent with its mission that specify the qualifications of students appropriate for its programs. The institution defines and advises students on clear pathways to complete degrees, certificate and transfer goals. (ER 16)

Mission

• Empower students to achieve their goals.

• Obtain equity in achievement of student outcomes.

Vision

• Students master content and skills which are critical for their future success.

Related Educational Master Plan Goals

• Create a culture of equity that promotes student success, particularly for underserved students.

• Strengthen a sense of community and commitment to the College's mission; expand participation from all constituencies in shared governance.

Related Educational Master Plan Strategies

• Implement activities to improve achievement of student outcomes among those population groups experiencing disproportionate impact.

• Enhance support for online quality and growth for (internet/web-based) instruction and student services.

• Reduce barriers and facilitate students' ease of access across the District and region.

• Encourage student participation in leadership and activities outside the classroom (including service/work-based learning) that engages students with the College and the community.

• Provide effective onboarding, support and professional development for all college employees.

• Encourage employee participation in leadership and activities that engages them with the College and the community.

• Promote consistent and clear communication in order to create a more informed, cohesive and engaged community.

• Increase lifelong learning opportunities for our community.

• Promote decision-making that respects the diverse needs of the entire college community.

Identification of the Project I

I. Develop more clearly defined educational pathways, resulting in reduced time for students to complete their goals.

Desired Goals/Outcomes

1. Develop and publish clear, structured academic program maps (suggested courses for each term) for all academic programs, starting with Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs) that will allow students to complete within two years.

2. Develop one and two year scheduling plans to support the structured academic program maps that allow students to complete within two years.

3. Offer additional faculty mentoring, student counseling, support and academic service opportunities, through multiple media and instructional methodologies, to help all students make an informed choice of major and/or career goal.

4. Develop information systems and staffing support to track students' progress in their education plans, identify students at risk of not progressing in a program, and intervene promptly with advising, academic, and other support to help those students resume progress or revise their education plan.

5. Develop reports using student educational planning data to project student course needs in order to facilitate degree attainment and transfer. Track progress on related Educational Master Plan metrics.

6. Review program requirements, starting with ADTs, to develop unique program pathway options for fully online students and for students taking all classes at the Sunnyvale Center.

7. Develop and implement professional development pathways that provides tools to facilitate discussions within and between instructional and student services divisions and departments on removing barriers to program completion for students.

8. Collaborate with K-12 and 4-year partners to define new educational pathways to and from Foothill College.
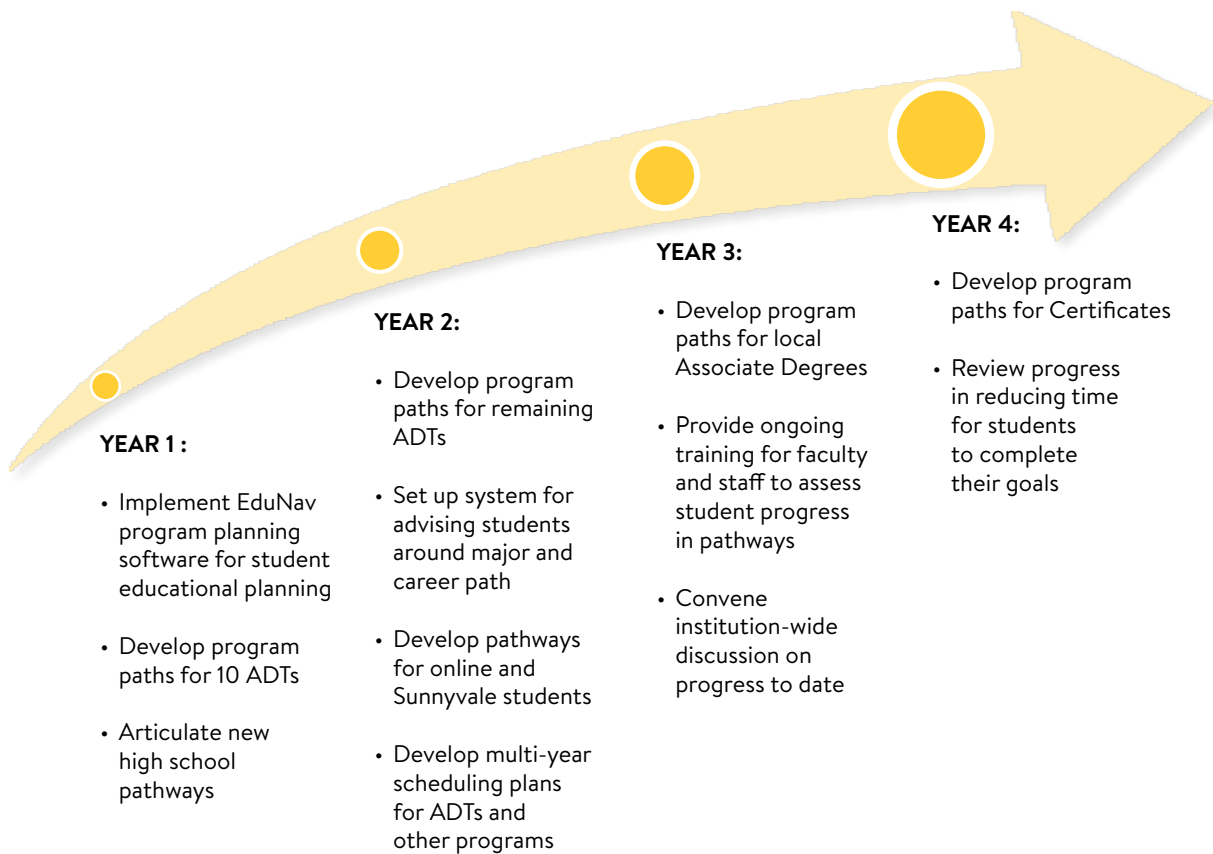
Responsible Parties

The Associate Vice Presidents (Instruction, Workforce, Student Services, and Finance), Presidents of the Academic and Classified Senates, and the Dean of Equity Programs will form a council to implement the actions outlined above in conjunction with the Office of Equity, the Student Success and Retention Team, and the Student Learning Outcomes Committee.

FIGURE 78:

Timeline for Implementing Educational Pathways | **2017-18 to 2020-21**

Planning Framework to Include:

- Educational Master Plan
- Combined 3SP, Equity and BSI Plan
- Stronger Workforce Initiatives/Plan
- Professional Development Plan

YEAR 1 :

- Implement EduNav program planning software for student educational planning
- Develop program paths for 10 ADTs
- Articulate new high school pathways

YEAR 2:

- Develop program paths for remaining ADTs
- Set up system for advising students around major and career path
- Develop pathways for online and Sunnyvale students
- Develop multi-year scheduling plans for ADTs and other programs

YEAR 3:

- Develop program paths for local Associate Degrees
- Provide ongoing training for faculty and staff to assess student progress in pathways
- Convene institution-wide discussion on progress to date

YEAR 4:

- Develop program paths for Certificates
- Review progress in reducing time for students to complete their goals

Identification of the Project II

II. Create a new College participatory governance system that actively involves a majority of College employees and is recognized by learning and dialogue about how to achieve College goals.

Desired Goals/Outcomes

1. Redesign participatory governance system to include integrated planning that is the common denominator for promoting equitable student outcomes. Use the participatory governance meetings held in spring 2016 as a starting point. See minutes: http://www.foothill.edu/president/parc/parc_archive2015-16.php

2. Develop a more efficient participatory governance system that allows deeper involvement, including:

   a) Student voice

   b) Discussion of student learning and achievement information

   c) Standard meeting times for committees and department discussions

   d) Scheduling meeting times when classes are not in progress

   e) An examination of incentives to promote involvement

   f) Development of service outcomes for the committees and a rubric for ongoing assessment

   g) Development of a process that integrates College planning and allocation efforts based on Educational Master Plan goals and metrics

3. Develop information to be added to employee orientation (faculty and staff) on the governance structure and how employee groups can participate.

4. Create Online/Hybrid competency-based training modules for governance committee onboarding.

5. Develop an online communication system by creating a "community of practice" around participatory governance committees.

6. Develop a mentoring system for participatory governance in order to share institutional knowledge and effective practices.

7. Review and revise Governance Handbook to articulate each committee's charge, membership and communication responsibilities.
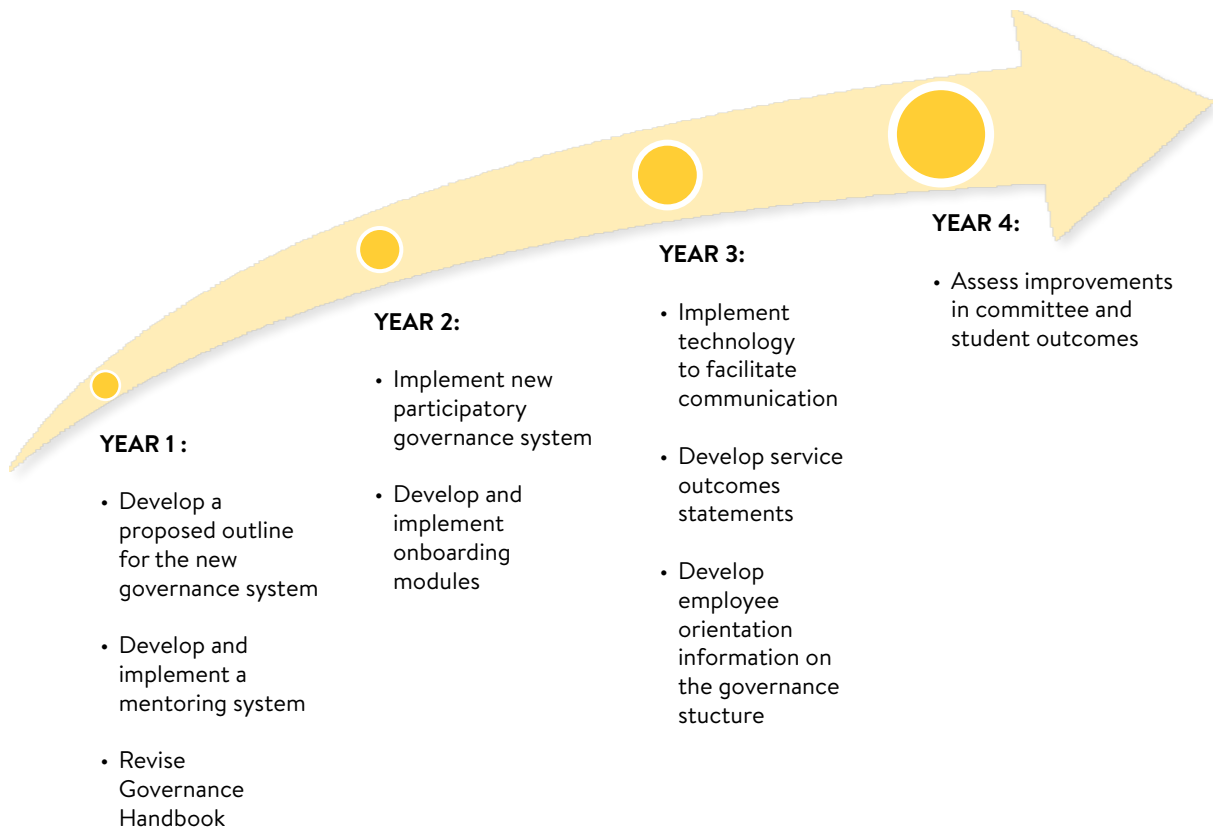
Responsible Parties

The Associate Vice Presidents, Presidents of the Academic and Classified Senates, and the Dean of Equity Programs will form a council to implement the actions outlined above in conjunction with the Integrated Planning and Budget Committee, the Program Review Committee, and the Professional Development Committee.

FIGURE 79:

Timeline for Implementing Participatory Governance Improvements | 2017-18 to 2020-21

Planning Framework to Include:
- Educational Master Plan
- Integrated Planning and Budget Team
- Equity Plan
- Professional Development Plan

YEAR 1 :
- Develop a proposed outline for the new governance system
- Develop and implement a mentoring system
- Revise Governance Handbook

YEAR 2:
- Implement new participatory governance system
- Develop and implement onboarding modules

YEAR 3:
- Implement technology to facilitate communication
- Develop service outcomes statements
- Develop employee orientation information on the governance stucture

YEAR 4:
- Assess improvements in committee and student outcomes

Resources

The College will use existing human, technological, physical and financial resources to meet the goals outlined in the QFE. Funding from the state's Student Equity program, the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) and Stronger Workforce will be allocated to this purpose when available and appropriate.

Assessment of Action Projects

Foothill College Institutional Research and Planning will annually evaluate progress in meeting the goals of the QFE, as well as its progress in meeting goals and timelines for the Action Projects. The College will assess the effectiveness of the plans, timeline, responsible parties and outcomes. Progress reports will be made to PaRC each quarter. PaRC will be responsible for annually reviewing the QFE goals in connection with Foothill's institutional metrics and the Educational Master Plan.