



*Office of the President*

Friday, March 8, 2024

Dr. Dianne Van Hook, Chancellor  
College of the Canyons  
26455 Rockwell Canyon Road  
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Dear Dr. Van Hook,

Ventura College was the first institution of higher education in Ventura County, established in 1925. The College moved to its present location in 1955 on 112-acres in the eastern part of Ventura – so close to the ocean that there is a clear view of the Channel Islands from several spots on campus. The current student enrollment of the College has declined since the pandemic from nearly 14,000 to just over 11,000. In addition to offering most programs at our Ventura campus, Ventura College also offers classes and degrees focused on the needs of the residents of the Santa Clara River Valley at our East Campus (VCEC) in Santa Paula.

VC is a Title V Hispanic Serving Institution that serves a diverse population of historically underserved students. Overall, sixty-three percent (63%) of our students are Hispanic/Latino/a/x; however, 85% of our students served by our VCEC identify as Hispanic/Latino/a/x. In addition, nearly 70% of our students receive financial aid, and during the pandemic, over 1/3 indicated experiencing food insecurity and approximately 25% experienced housing insecurity. Because we know educational attainment can be the key factor that transforms the lives of adults and their families, we work tirelessly and thoughtfully to ensure our students have access to classes and resources to successfully reach their intellectual and career goals.

Ventura College (VC) utilizes a systematic planning process that places data and research – quantitative and qualitative – at its core. The College has developed and implemented several programs that have become models for community college excellence across California and the U.S., including those in nursing, ESL, business, manufacturing, agriculture, automotive technology, and engineering to name just a few.

*Ventura College will be a beacon of learning – a source of inspiration and guidance – for our students and community.*

We believe that success begins with planning and have set ambitious and transformative goals for the future. By 2023, we planned to be one of the top five colleges in the state on several key student success metrics. While the pandemic affected our ability to achieve that goal, we are pleased to note that VC has emerged as a top five college in all metrics within our CCCCCO peer group as per the Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC) which considers community demographics. Further, we aim to close equity gaps related to access, transfer, and completion metrics with intention and racial equity in mind.

VC made two powerful realizations during the implementation of the 2019-2022 Student Equity Plan (SEP). First, the SEP utilized race-neutral language. Second, in implementing the SEP VC used an equality model instead of an intentional, focused, equity model. VC addressed these realizations in the [Student Equity Plan 2023-2026](#) through including race-conscious activities and strategies that focus on closing opportunity gaps for the two most disproportionately impacted populations at the college: 1) men of color and 2) part-time students. VC requests the assistance of a Peer Review Team (PRT) to implement and expand beyond the activities listed within the transfer metric section of the current SEP with a specific focus on the [University Transfer Center \(UTC\)](#).

The current SEP lists activities- from research to professional development- designed to shift the campus environment to one that will close transfer equity gaps for men of color and part-time students. While the UTC is mentioned within the transfer portion of the SEP, it is only once within the section and once throughout the entire 41-page document. This presents an opportunity to define and situate the UTC as a nexus in champion race conscious transfer-related activities. This is also an opportunity to re-envision transfer at VC and place the UTC as a critical entity for bringing about that vision.

A PRT visit in the fall of 2024 will best serve our needs in helping us assess the UTC's current organizational capacity to both serve students and champion transfer-related SEP activities. Specific to staffing, only one full-time faculty member serves as the counselor coordinating the UTC. The "counselor coordinating" designation is distinct from "Counselor/Coordinator" in that the faculty member has up to eight (8) hours to coordinate specialized centers and/or program activities where professional expertise is required. In analyzing organizational capacity, the PRT can support a deeper analysis of UTC's

- current partnerships (across campus and externally) and how they may be strengthened or expanded.
- current programmatic offerings.

A PRT visit will help VC center the UTC strategically in bringing the SEP activities and outcomes to bear. Further, a visit will help VC meet Vision 2030's transfer-related outcomes under Outcome 2: Baccalaureate Attainment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Hoffmans', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kim Hoffmans, President

*Cc: Dr. Matthew Lee, Special Projects Consultant for Higher Education  
Dr. Rick MacLennan, Chancellor of Ventura County Community College District*