

Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Task Force Report



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Foreword

A Message from Dr. Jermaine F. Williams

Montgomery College is where students discover their passions and unlock their potential to transform lives, enrich the community, and change the world.

That is our mission at Montgomery College, and we take deep pride in serving the residents of Montgomery County and the region. So many individuals' lives have been changed and so many communities have been strengthened as a result of the work of the dedicated faculty and staff at MC.

After the College received the federal designation of Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in 2021 when we passed the 25% full-time equivalent threshold, I created and charged an HSI Task Force with examining ways that MC might strengthen its service to this growing population.

This report represents the fruits of the task force's efforts, and I am pleased to acknowledge and thank the HSI Task Force for its outstanding research, community outreach, and thoughtful consideration of data. It has produced a report that will help to shape student success efforts at Montgomery College and connect to our Transformational Aspirations of access, completion, and post-completion success. The report builds on other reports that have come before it at different times and provides a thorough snapshot of contemporary conditions relevant to the College in 2024 as well as the special opportunities inherent in the Hispanic Serving Institution designation.

We are driven to serve all students and to serve them well. When we see inequities, we are compelled to address them. There are promising academic results for Latine students in our IPEDS cohort, which is composed of first-time, full-time students. When we consider the total Latine population, beyond first-time, full-time students, it is evident that there are many opportunities for greater impact. While no group is a monolith, the overall success rates of our Latine students tell us that more student-centered, data-informed, and equity-focused supports should help us create transformation at scale.

I embrace the five overarching recommendations in this report. The Interim Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer will lead, in consultation with the Cabinet and an advisory group to be established, the development of an implementation plan for my consideration. While we are mustering institutional infrastructure to better equitably support Latine students and ensure inclusive excellence to work towards intended outcomes like ensuring a fifty percent completion rate for all student cohorts, regardless of demographic category, we will also submit applications for federal grants that are uniquely related to the work of HSIs.

Again, I offer my deepest appreciation to the task force members. I also share my gratitude for our Latine students and, indeed, all our students who have chosen Montgomery College as the education institution where they discover their passions and unlock their potential. We are here for you and the residents we seek to serve.

Preámbulo

un mensaje del Dr. Jermaine F. Williams

Montgomery College es donde los estudiantes descubren sus pasiones, y liberan su potencial para transformar vidas, enriquecer la comunidad y cambiar el mundo.

Esa es nuestra misión en Montgomery College y estamos profundamente orgullosos de servir a los residentes del condado de Montgomery y de la región. Las vidas de muchas personas se han transformado y muchas comunidades se han fortalecido gracias al trabajo y servicio del personal y profesorado de Montgomery College.

Después de que recibimos la designación federal de Institución al Servicio a los Hispanos (HSI por sus siglas en inglés) en 2021 cuando superamos el equivalente al 25% de estudiantes hispanos, creé un Grupo de Trabajo de HSI y les pedí que examinaran las formas en que Montgomery College podría fortalecer su servicio a esta población creciente en nuestra institución.

Este informe representa los frutos de los esfuerzos del grupo de trabajo de HSI, y me complace reconocer y agradecer al grupo por su destacada investigación, su alcance comunitario y su cuidadosa consideración de los datos. Han elaborado un informe que nos ayudará a dar forma a los esfuerzos para lograr el éxito de los estudiantes en Montgomery College, y que nos conecta con nuestras Aspiraciones de Transformación de acceso, culminación de estudios y éxito posterior a la culminación de estudios. El informe se basa en el trabajo de informes anteriores a éste, llevados a cabo en diferentes momentos, y proporciona un análisis amplio de las condiciones actuales y relevantes de Montgomery College en 2024, así como demuestra las oportunidades especiales inherentes a nuestra designación como Institución al Servicio a los Hispanos.

Nuestro objetivo es servir a todos los estudiantes y hacerlo bien. Cuando vemos faltas de equidad, nos ponemos a corregirlas. Hay resultados académicos prometedores para nuestros estudiantes latinos que estudian a tiempo completo y que están en la universidad por primera vez (el grupo de estudio IPEDS). Cuando consideramos la población latina entera, más allá de los estudiantes de tiempo completo que están en la universidad por primera vez, es evidente que hay muchas oportunidades para tener un impacto mayor. Aunque ningún grupo es monocultural o homogéneo, la tasa de éxito académico de nuestros estudiantes latinos nos muestra que un mayor apoyo, centrado en los estudiantes, basado en datos y enfocado en la equidad, debe ayudarnos a crear una transformación a escala.

Acepto las cinco recomendaciones generales de este informe. La Directora Interina de Equidad e Inclusión va a liderar, en consulta con el gabinete y un grupo asesor que se establecerá, el desarrollo de un plan de implementación para mi consideración. Estamos estableciendo la infraestructura institucional para apoyar de manera más equitativa a los estudiantes latinos para garantizar la excelencia. Trabajamos con dedicación para lograr los resultados previstos, como garantizar una tasa de culminación de estudios de cincuenta por ciento para todos los grupos de estudiantes, independientemente de la categoría demográfica. También presentaremos solicitudes para subvenciones y becas federales que estén específicamente relacionadas al trabajo de las HSI.

Nuevamente, ofrezco mi más profundo agradecimiento a los miembros del grupo de trabajo. También comparto mi gratitud por nuestros estudiantes latinos y, de hecho, por todos nuestros estudiantes que han elegido Montgomery College como la institución educativa donde descubren sus pasiones y liberan su potencial. Estamos aquí para ustedes y los residentes a quienes buscamos servir.

Montgomery College Hispanic Serving Institution Task Force Report

Executive Summary

In the summer of 2021, Montgomery College (MC) met the federal requirements to be designated a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). The College's largest student population are Latines, reaching 29% of credit-seeking students in 2023, and based on statistical trends from the county and state, it is only expected to grow. Although this is the largest demographic group at the College, the College's Student Success Score Card indicates that it is also the group with the lowest completion and graduation/transfer rates (Montgomery College, 2022). Further, it is the group least represented among College employees, especially in faculty, administration, and other leadership positions.

The College formed a task force in 2022 to investigate and research Latine access, completion, post-completion success; grant and funding opportunities; and community perspectives. The Task Force convened and researched for over a year, and based on the results and findings, the following recommendations were identified. While more specific and topic-aligned strategies are identified at the conclusion of the report, there were clear recurring themes that supported the development and call for the following five recommendations:

1. Increase access to and measurement of demographically-disaggregated data so the College leadership, faculty, staff, and students can implement evidence-based strategies for Latine student success.
2. Increase recruitment of Latine candidates for faculty, administration, staff, and leadership positions in the MC workforce to reflect the student and community population.
3. Increase and strengthen multilingual supports and resources throughout all areas of the College.
4. Develop and invest in a robust leadership structure to focus and strengthen the College's responsiveness and "servingness" as an HSI.
5. Regularly solicit input of Latine community members, students, and employees to ensure the College is responding to the educational and workforce needs of the growing Montgomery County Latine population.

These recommendations align with the College's Strategic Plan and Transformational Aspirations for access, completion, and post-completion success. With the large number of Latine students and the continued outcome disparities, there is an urgent need to support Latine student success. As outlined in the College's Transformational Aspirations, access is not simply opening the doors of the institution to those interested in attending. Instead, it "is deliberate work in the community to create a college-going culture across the county, and especially in those areas where going to college has historically been the exception instead of the expectation." Completion "is not just about earning degrees. The College must ensure that all credentials provide experiences of economic, social, and community impact."

In an effort to support these values and be deliberate with the importance of this work, the HSI Task Force urges the College to identify a leadership structure that can dedicate the time needed to implement the recommendations in this report.

By pursuing these evidence-based recommendations, Montgomery College, as the first HSI in the state, has the opportunity to become the leading institution dedicated to Latine student success. The HSI Task Force is confident that with a collegewide commitment to these initiatives, the College can truly fulfill its designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution. This proactive approach aligns with the College's strategic plan and will ensure that all students, particularly our growing Latine population, have the resources and support needed to discover their passions and unlock their potential to transform lives, enrich the community, and change the world.

Informe del grupo de trabajo de Montgomery College como Institución al Servicio de los Hispanos

Resumen ejecutivo

En el verano de 2021, Montgomery College (MC) cumplió con los requisitos federales para ser designada como una Institución al Servicio de los Hispanos (Hispanic Serving Institution, HSI por sus siglas en inglés). Los latinos constituyen la población estudiantil más grande de la institución y representan el 29% de los estudiantes inscritos en carreras en 2023. A base de las tendencias estadísticas del condado y del estado, solo se espera que aumente. Aunque éste es el grupo demográfico más grande, la tarjeta de puntaje de éxito estudiantil de Montgomery College indica que también es el grupo con las tasas más bajas de culminación de estudios y graduación/transferencia (Montgomery College, 2022). Además, es el grupo menos representado entre los empleados de Montgomery College, especialmente en el profesorado, la administración y otros puestos de liderazgo.

Montgomery College formó un grupo de trabajo en el 2022 para investigar el acceso, la culminación de estudios, el éxito posterior a la culminación de estudios, las oportunidades de subvención y financiación y las perspectivas de la comunidad latina. El grupo de trabajo se reunió e investigó durante más de un año y, con base en los resultados y hallazgos, se identificaron las siguientes recomendaciones. Aunque en la conclusión del informe se identifican estrategias más específicas y alineadas con el tema, hubo temas recurrentes indudables que apoyaron el desarrollo y la petición de las cinco recomendaciones siguientes:

1. Aumentar el acceso y la medición de datos desagregados demográficamente para que el liderazgo de Montgomery College, el profesorado, el personal y los estudiantes puedan aplicar estrategias con base en evidencia para el éxito de los estudiantes latinos.
2. Aumentar la contratación de candidatos latinos para el profesorado, la administración, el personal y los puestos de liderazgo en la fuerza de trabajo de Montgomery College para que sea reflejada en la población estudiantil y comunitaria.
3. Aumentar y fortalecer los apoyos y recursos multilingües en todas las áreas de Montgomery College.
4. Desarrollar e invertir en una sólida estructura de liderazgo para centrar y fortalecer la capacidad de respuesta y de “servicio” de la institución como una Institución al Servicio de los Hispanos.
5. Solicitar regularmente la opinión de los miembros de la comunidad latina, estudiantes y empleados para asegurar que Montgomery College esté respondiendo a las necesidades educativas y laborales de la creciente población latina del condado de Montgomery.

Estas recomendaciones se alinean con el Plan Estratégico de Montgomery College y las Aspiraciones de Transformación para el acceso, la culminación de estudios y el éxito posterior a la culminación de estudios. Con el gran número de estudiantes latinos y las continuas disparidades en los resultados, hay una necesidad urgente de apoyar el éxito de los estudiantes latinos. Como se indica en las aspiraciones de transformación de Montgomery College, el acceso no es simplemente abrir las puertas de la institución a los interesados en asistir. Por el contrario, “es un trabajo intencional en la comunidad para crear una cultura de asistencia a la universidad en todo el condado, y especialmente en aquellas áreas donde ir a la universidad ha sido históricamente la excepción en lugar de la expectativa”. Completar los estudios “no consiste solo en obtener títulos. Montgomery College debe asegurarse de que todas las credenciales proporcionen experiencias de impacto económico, social y comunitario”. En un esfuerzo por apoyar estos valores y ser dedicados a la importancia de este trabajo, el grupo de trabajo de la HSI insta a Montgomery College a identificar una estructura de liderazgo que pueda dedicar el tiempo necesario para implementar las recomendaciones de este informe.

Mediante la aplicación de estas recomendaciones con base en la evidencia, Montgomery College, como la primera Institución al Servicio de los Hispanos en el estado, tiene la oportunidad de convertirse en la institución líder dedicada al éxito de los estudiantes latinos. El grupo de trabajo de la HSI confía en que, con un compromiso de toda la institución a estas iniciativas, Montgomery College puede realmente cumplir con su designación como una Institución al Servicio de los Hispanos. Este enfoque proactivo se alinea con el plan estratégico de Montgomery College y asegurará que todos los estudiantes, en particular nuestra creciente población latina, tengan los recursos y el apoyo necesarios para descubrir sus pasiones y liberar su potencial para transformar vidas, enriquecer la comunidad y cambiar el mundo.

Note on the Use of Terminology

The terminology and language used to refer to Latinos as a group has varied and shifted throughout history. Hispanics are an ethnicity and not a race, and people who identify as Hispanic may be of any race. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023) Terms such as Hispanic, Latin American, Latino/Latina, Latino/a, Latinx and most recently, Latine, have been used to refer to this group. The terms Latinx and Latine have gained popularity among younger generations and in academia, especially with the increased effort to be gender inclusive. It is important to note that there are different perspectives on preferred terminology based on subgroups, regions, political identification, or just individual preferences. According to the Pew Research Center, the terms “Hispanic” or “Latino” are preferred by many individuals in this group. (Lopez, Krogstad, & Passel, 2023) However, for the purposes of brevity, consistency, inclusivity, and to promote gender neutrality, the term “Latine” (pronounced lah-tee-neh) will be primarily used in this document. However, the term “Hispanic” is the designation used by the federal government when collecting data about this population, so it may also be used within this document when referring to data collected or used by governmental entities.

Introduction

Montgomery County’s Latine Population

According to the [Profile of Hispanic Population in Montgomery County](#), Montgomery County’s Latine population has grown substantially in the last four decades, making up 20.1% of the population of just over one million county residents in 2021 (Montgomery Planning, 2023). This rapid and continuous population increase creates a sense of urgency for Montgomery College to become the leading institution to serve current and future students and community members; support credit and noncredit enrollment and student success; recruit diverse College faculty, staff, and administrators; and prepare our region’s future workforce with equitable outcomes for all graduates. These outcomes also align with the College’s Strategic Plan (Montgomery College, 2023) and [Transformational Aspirations](#) (Montgomery College, 2023).

The county’s Latine population is young; 31% of Latines are under age 18 versus 23% of the overall county population (Montgomery Planning, 2023). In the 2022–2023 school year, 34.6% of Montgomery County Public Schools’ 160,489 students were Latine (Montgomery County Public Schools Office of Shared Accountability, 2023). In the fall of 2023, [29% of Montgomery College’s 17,780](#) credit students were Hispanic, making this the largest racial/ethnic group at the College (Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Montgomery College, 2023).

To remain a leader in the state and in the country, and to achieve our Transformational Aspirations of access, completion, and post-completion success (Montgomery College, 2023), Montgomery College must take more deliberate, accountable, and intentional actions to recruit, welcome, and serve this growing Latine population. This includes acknowledging and celebrating the unique population we serve, and elevating the assets and opportunities Latines bring to the community and the College. This can result in not only an increased number and percentage of Latine student enrollment, but also their overall success and achievement of post-secondary outcomes. The important data and insights on Montgomery

County’s Hispanic population (Montgomery Planning, 2023) can help the College target appropriate actions to welcome and serve this community.

Citizenship and Language

The Planning Profile indicates that 73% of county Latines are U.S. citizens, and 53% of Latines were born in the United States. There is tremendous bilingual capability: 85% of county Hispanics can speak a language besides English. In response to the census question, “How well do you speak English?” about 59% of bilingual Hispanics report that they speak English “very well.” (*Montgomery Planning, 2023*) While a Census Bureau analysis indicates that those who self-report speaking English “very well” typically have literacy levels that permit them to read, understand, and summarize moderately dense texts (Vickstrom, 2015), the levels of proficiency that permit college students to analyze and write academic prose are not measured by this spoken-English question.

There are many gradations of bilingualism, with the terms “native speakers” sometimes used to describe those who learned a home language up to adult-level capability and “heritage speakers,” used to describe those whose families speak a language at home but who use the society’s majority language as their primary or “dominant” discourse. (Kupisch & Rothman, 2018) A 2022 report indicates that Spanish is the non-English language most widely spoken at home in the county. Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL) and Montgomery Planning, (2022) The bilingualism in the Montgomery County Hispanic community suggests that, while there is need for Spanish-language course offerings and outreach to the nearly 100,000 community members who are not U.S. born, there may also be an opportunity to provide classroom and extracurricular experiences that promote “students’ bilingualism, biliteracy, and multicultural competence” (Hernandez-Fujigaki, 2024) for the many fluent English speakers in the younger generation.

The prevalent bilingualism in the local population suggests that the many non-native English speakers enrolled in Montgomery College Workforce Development and Continuing Education (WDCE) English as a Second Language (ESL) classes may help to fill a noncredit-to-credit pipeline, both for themselves and for their more English-fluent friends and family members.

Certainly, the College can benefit from having multilingual staff and administrators who can welcome, guide, and assist the Spanish-speaking and heritage community.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment, while lower than other racial and ethnic groups in the county, has also grown considerably in the Latine community over the last 20+ years, mainly in terms of high school completion. Fourteen percent of county Latine residents over the age of 24 have completed a bachelor’s degree, and another 14% have completed a graduate or professional degree. (*Montgomery Planning, 2023*) This provides Montgomery College with a promising pool of potential local hires for faculty, staff, and administrator positions and suggests that outreach to share information about the College’s hiring process, benefits, and opportunities could improve the striking underrepresentation of Latines among our faculty and administrator workforce.

It is also the case, however, that 51% of the Hispanic population over the age of 24 has not attended any college and 41.6% of Montgomery College students would be the first generation in their family to earn a college degree. (*Montgomery Planning, 2023*) Of this group, 29.2% (2,159 students) are Latine (Ault, Emails regarding first generation students, 2024). For this reason, Montgomery College has an opportunity to intentionally provide a welcoming environment with more intensive college-navigation support and transfer advising to our many “first-generation” college students whose parents are unfamiliar with these processes.

Region of Origin of Montgomery County’s Latine Population

Another noteworthy and essential characteristic of Montgomery County’s Hispanic population is that 35%, the largest group, report that their heritage is from El Salvador, and an additional 20% derive from other Central American countries, including 8% from Guatemala and 7% from Honduras. (Montgomery Planning, 2023) This majority-Central-American background, with 55% of the county’s population having Central American roots, differs considerably from other large Hispanic enclaves in states such as Florida, Texas, California, and New York. This factor should be considered when revising curricular materials to include relevant voices, experiences, and perspectives, and when planning and coordinating events and other cultural offerings. While many Latines share the same language and many cultural similarities, it is important to recognize that the group is not a monolith, and country- and region-specific differences such as immigration status, journeys, and experiences should be recognized and acknowledged. The chart in Figure 1. Data on Hispanic Origin (Source: Montgomery Planning, Research and Strategic Projects Division, 2023) demonstrates the uniquely Central-American makeup of the Latine population in the Montgomery County area.

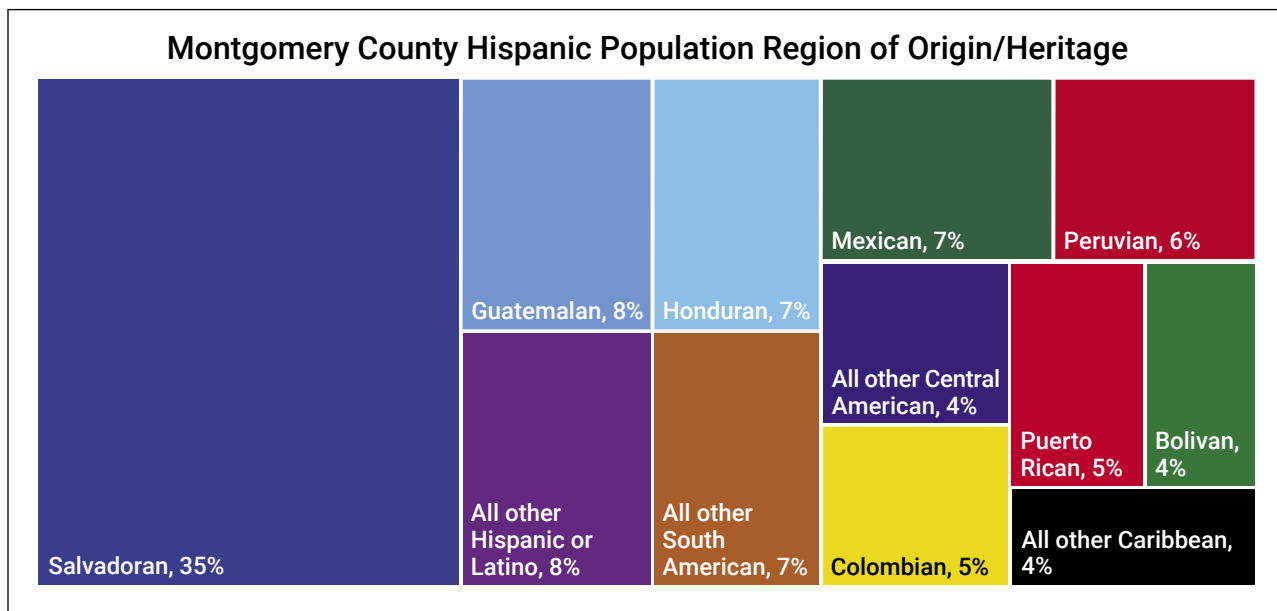


Figure 1. Data on Hispanic Origin (Source: Montgomery Planning, Research and Strategic Projects Division, 2023)

Federal Hispanic-Serving Institution Designation

The U.S. Department of Education has several designations for institutions of higher education that serve minority populations. Upon reaching an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25% Hispanic students, Montgomery College achieved the official U.S. Department of Education’s Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation in 2022. (U.S. Department of Education, 2022) The College is also federally recognized as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and a Minority Serving Institution (MSI). These designations make the institution eligible to apply for specific federal grant opportunities that are discussed in more detail later in this report.

Maryland College Student Data

According to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), 11.6% of higher-education students in the state of Maryland identified as Latine in 2022. While Montgomery College is currently the only U.S. Department of Education-designated HSI in the state (U.S. Department of Education, 2022), five other Maryland institutions of higher education are **classified by HACU as emerging HSIs**, further indicating the continued and steady growth of the Latine population in Maryland. Frederick Community College, Johns Hopkins University, Prince George’s Community College, University of Maryland Global Campus, and Washington Adventist University have Hispanic populations between 15% and 22% of their students (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), 2023). As the institution with the highest percentage (currently 29%) of Hispanic students in the state, Montgomery College has an opportunity to take a leadership role in developing best practices and serving as the premier workplace for qualified professionals who want to connect with and support Latine students.

Concept of “Servingness”

According to Dr. Gina Garcia, a nationally renowned leader in the study of HSIs, beyond the statistically-simplified federal designation, HSIs are not provided with a formula on what it means to serve Latine students and, therefore, HSIs should focus and define the explicit mission to “serve” their Hispanic students. (Garcia G. A., 2019) Garcia also explains that “servingness” cannot be reduced to just a few select factors. Instead, it “manifests in multiple ways and should be conceptualized along multiple dimensions” (p. 770). Examples of servingness include creating culturally enhancing spaces and opportunities where Latine students feel a sense of belonging. Table 1 shows Garcia’s depiction of four possible levels of “servingness” that may exist at HSIs. These are differentiated by how well institutions serve Latine students, both in their academic outcomes, such as graduation rates, but also how institutions “enact a culture that enhances the racial/ethnic experiences of Latine students” (p. 31). In the lower left corner of the table, Latinx- enrolling, are institutions that merely enroll a large number of Latine students but do not produce equitable success outcomes or enhance or support the development of Latine students. In the upper-right corner, Latinx-serving, the institution produces equitable success outcomes but is also deliberate and enacts a culture that enhances the educational experiences of Latine students. Garcia contends that this typology is not stage based, so HSIs are able to move in different directions based on intentionality and commitment to best serve Latines.

Organizational Outcomes for Latinxs	High	Latinx-Producing	Latinx-Serving
	Low	Latinx-Enrolling	Latinx-Enhancing
		Low	High
<i>Organizational Culture Reflects Latinxs (Garcia G. A., 2019)</i>			

HSI Task Force Charge and Timeline

Charge

Following the keynote address presented by Dr. Garcia during the College's 2022 Equity Week, President Jermaine F. Williams appointed an HSI Task Force, which convened in November 2022. The Task Force was charged to:

1. Identify, analyze, and discuss gaps in student access, completion, and post-completion success between Hispanic students and their peers.
2. Attend meetings with senior leaders and community groups to learn how the College can more deeply partner with the community to address gaps.
3. Collaborate with the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs and other key individuals to ensure an HSI grant is submitted.
4. Provide recommendations to senior leaders that are focused on eliminating gaps, while simultaneously increasing student success at the College through a lens of inclusive excellence.

A detailed timeline of the HSI Task Force process can be found in Appendix VIII (HSI Task Force Timeline). The HSI Task Force membership included representation from across the College. A majority of the members identify as Latine. Task force members are listed in the Appendix IX (HSI Task Force Membership).

Three subcommittees, Research, Community Engagement, and Grants, were formed and met over the course of a year. The Research subcommittee divided into three workgroups: Access, Completion, and Post-Completion. The subcommittees and working groups met separately and documented their insights, which serve as the basis of this report. The subcommittees identified strategies and opportunities corresponding to their research, which can be found in Appendix I (Comprehensive List of Supporting Strategies and Opportunities).

Efforts to Address Latine Success and HSI Task Force Timeline

A number of grassroots efforts at Montgomery College have focused on advocacy for success of Latine students and employees over the years.

Prior to the work of this task force, Latine employees and allies have highlighted the need to increase resources, focus strategies, and identify best practices to recruit, retain, and support Latine students to ensure their academic and post-completion success. The 2011 Performance Accountability narrative documented lower rates of persistence and graduation/transfer for Hispanic students than other groups (Maryland Higher Education Commission, 2012). Issues impeding Hispanic and African American success were investigated by the Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) Task Force in 2012 (Closing the Achievement Gap Task Force, Montgomery College, 2013). The CTAG report recommended the formation of a presidential advisory committee on equity and inclusion, which was initiated in 2017.

At the urging of CTAG members, Montgomery College's president in 2015 reported to the Board of Trustees that the College would "strengthen our cultural competency training" and engage in efforts to recruit "more African American and Latino/a faculty and staff" (Pollard, 2015). The grassroots group MC Advocacy for Latino/a Access and Success (MC-ALAS) met and shared data and information amongst Latine faculty and staff and reported insights to college administrators in 2016 and since. In 2019, the Office of Equity and Inclusion produced a paper,

Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI), stating that Montgomery College’s Latine population was 24.5%. (Rojas, 2019) This report outlined the need for additional resources and representation and called for starting the conversation on becoming an HSI, creating a task force, and seeking resources including HSI grants during the 2019–2020 academic year. Soon after this report, in the spring of 2020, the world was impacted with the Covid-19 pandemic. While the pandemic caused devastation for all, the Latine student population experienced the most severe drops in first-semester ABC grade rates (Penn & Berman, 2022).

In 2023, a grassroots Language Advisory Group (LAG) of College employees has met with College Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management representatives to discuss the “cultural taxation” of bilingual employees, primarily bilingual Latines, who are expected to use their language skills in uncompensated additional duties beyond their regular job activities.

Despite the best efforts to raise awareness and generate change, some measures of Latine student success and the recruitment of Latine faculty and administrators remain either unchanged or, in some cases, worse, as will be discussed below in this report.

While success and inclusion are important for all student groups, the charge and purpose of this HSI Task Force was to focus specifically on supporting Latine student success, and therefore, the data and analysis that follow reflect that focus. The sections below outline the methodology and insights of the Task Force subcommittees.

Research Subcommittee: Data Insights

The Research Subcommittee was divided into three workgroups: Access, Completion, and Post-completion. The Access subgroup studied the extent to which Latines are able to gain access to the College, enroll, and be placed into their desired programs. The Completion workgroup explored whether Latine students are completing their courses and majors at the same rates and with similar grades as other demographic groups. And the Post-completion workgroup looked at how Latines fare in the workforce and transfer institutions after completing coursework at MC. Each workgroup prepared a narrative with promising practices and recommendations; and the Access workgroup also included a national literature review of key scholarly work. See Appendix III (Literature Reviewed).

All three workgroups found that demographically disaggregated data is urgently needed to accurately assess the College’s progress with our Latine student population. The College commits significant resources to programs and strategies intended to assist minoritized students but does not always collect or use disaggregated data to evaluate success for various populations of students. In the following presentation of the findings, the lack of demographically disaggregated data is acknowledged and is an area for future work to ensure that MC is realizing its full potential as an HSI, including the critical “servingness” component (Garcia G. A., 2019).

Placement Practices for Access to College-Level English and Math Courses

In many cases, students’ first experience in enrolling in college and registering for classes is the placement practice or process for determining whether students can take college-level English and math courses. This point of access can be a barrier for students, particularly minoritized students, as the College’s own data has shown.

In 2013, the MC Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) Task Force reported that Hispanic and Black students were over-represented in developmental math courses, which had to be completed prior to accessing credit-level math, and the failure rates in the lowest-level developmental math course for Hispanic (as well as other minoritized) students were above 58%. The CTAG report indicated that the fall 2012 semester failure numbers represented “more than \$500,000 in tuition spent on failing grades for African American, Hispanic, and Multiracial MA094 students” at in-county rates. The CTAG Report also included pass rates for Hispanic and African American students in precredit English, ESOL, and Reading courses.

These courses’ pass rates were higher than for math, but students often did not persist on to complete credit-level English courses that were required for graduation. The report called for careful evaluation of the placement tests that MC used, which directed many minoritized students into these developmental courses that wound up being more of an obstacle than a pathway to college credits and graduation. (Closing the Achievement Gap Task Force, Montgomery College, 2013)

Over the next few years, the College pilot-tested and then implemented a series of alternative placement practices and redesigned the entry-level courses in English and Math. In 2018, MC implemented Alternative Program Placement-English (APPE), which allowed students who had earned A or B grades in certain high-school English or History courses to begin a credit-level English 101 course, accompanied by a support course, on arrival to college. The Alternative Program Placement-Math (APPM) indicator of college readiness allowed students with A or B grades in MCPS Algebra 2 courses to enter certain credit-level math classes at MC. In 2018–2019, through a statewide agreement, Maryland community colleges and public school systems agreed to a high school grade point average (HSGPA) of 3.0 or higher as an indicator of college readiness (Alternative Program Placement-Grade, or APPG). In addition, with the start of the pandemic in spring 2020, Montgomery College implemented a remote placement model that allowed students to complete untimed, unproctored placement assessments (the ALEKs tests for math and a “guided placement” set of questions and tasks for English). This placement approach, for students who do not meet the APPE, APPM, or APPG thresholds or who wish to take higher-level credit courses, continues today, with some modifications.

After the Math Department reformed its placement processes in the 2017–2018 academic year, most students went into credit-bearing courses, some of which were paired with support courses. Far fewer students were “stuck” in developmental courses, and overall pass rates in first math courses went from 57.4% in 2016 up to 66.3% or higher from 2019 through 2022. For the English placement revisions, pass rates remained similar from 2013 to 2022, despite a higher proportion of students beginning in credit-level English. (Penn & Berman, 2022). English faculty made additional modifications to the placement process in 2023 and have devised interventions including embedded tutors, embedded coaching, and a postsemester retention program that provides tutoring after the semester’s end for select circumstances, so these practices, as well as the placement systems, should be evaluated to determine their effectiveness for Latine and minoritized students.

One concerning finding of the Penn and Berman study was that, while there was some drop off in first-semester ABC English and math grades during the pandemic for all ethnicities, the drop was steepest for Latines. In 2013, new Latine students had 71% ABC rates, but in 2022, this dropped to 66%. Their peers—White, Asian, Black—also saw reduced ABC rates, but by fewer percentage points. See Appendix IV (First Semester Course ABC Rates). It is therefore important that the College demographically disaggregate the initial course placements and pass rates to ensure that Latine students are equitably served by these processes.

One other concern raised about the placement methods related to the success rates of students placed into credit-level English based on the APPE criteria alone. (Penn & Berman, 2022).

These students may be English Language Learners or students who received this placement level due only to a high school history course grade (rather than English course grades). Further investigation may be needed to determine whether APPE alone should permit students, particularly those who are new to the English language, to register for English 101/011.

Access to Noncredit Programs and Pipeline from Noncredit to Credit

Montgomery College offers extensive educational programs and courses that enhance skills but do not lead to college credits, certificates, or degrees. These “Workforce Development and Continuing Education” (WDCE) offerings include short-term courses that are classified as “community service and lifelong learning,” which enrolled 6,082 individual students in the 2022 fiscal year, as well as courses in “basic skills and literacy,” which enrolled 5,341 individuals that year. A total of 5,936 individuals were enrolled in “continuing education workforce development courses,” according to the 2023 Performance Accountability Report (PAR). The PAR did not provide demographically disaggregated data for these enrollments, only indicating that 53% of the continuing education enrollment was “nonwhite.” (Montgomery College Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, 2023) The HSI Task Force was unable to ascertain what percent of all WDCE students are classified as Hispanic since this designation is not a required field on the WDCE registration form.

A data set analyzing the WDCE Adult ESOL and Literacy Grant program from 2019 to 2023 indicated that 61.76% of the 20,684 individuals enrolled (who attended at least 12 hours of instruction in the fiscal year and underwent a valid assessment) were Hispanic or Latinos. (Vidal, 2023)

Since the WDCE classes include the free ESOL courses that are offered for the county community (which had 4,674 enrollments in 2022, according to the PAR), as well as many programs where the Hispanic population participates in large numbers, (including programs for GED® preparation, U.S. Citizenship Preparation, Child Development Associate [CDA], Early Childhood Education, Health Care, Food Safety and Hospitality, Transportation, Building and Construction, Technical, and Cosmetology) (Vidal, 2023), it is important to study to what extent the College is successfully serving immigrant Latine community members in their efforts to master the skills necessary for daily living and workforce participation. Moreover, since many students who aspire to college credit begin building their English-language or academic/GED skills in these WDCE classes, clarifying the “pipeline” from WDCE to credit-level classes that lead to degrees could benefit these students and their family members.

In order to better understand how well the local Latine population is being served by these WDCE programs, disaggregated WDCE enrollments should be shared and analyzed. The College should also assess whether more can be done to increase the number of WDCE students who transition to credit-bearing coursework.

Undocumented Student Access

Montgomery College's "Apply & Register" website identifies some [resources and information](#) for students with DACA, Maryland Dream Act, or undocumented status. (Montgomery College, 2024) The HSI Task Force encourages the College to widely and routinely inform faculty and staff of this content so that they can proactively share this information, as some students may not wish to self-identify their immigration status or that of their parents by asking for this assistance.

In fall 2023, 240 MC students were classified as having Dream Act status, 14 as DACA status, and 330 as undocumented. (Cartledge, 2024) Additionally, the data shared in this report's "Region of Origin of Montgomery County's Latine Population" section indicates that 55% of Montgomery County Hispanics trace their roots to Central America nations. Immigrants from these countries are less likely to gain U.S. citizenship than other immigrants. (Ward & Batalova, 2023) Thus, it is possible that many MC students, even those born with U.S. citizenship, have parents or family members with mixed or undocumented status. It would be helpful for the College to designate a point person who would be tasked with connecting with MCPS for outreach to graduating undocumented students and helping MC expand its services to undocumented students, nonimmigrant status students, and students whose family situation may impede registration or eligibility for financial aid. Some steps this point person could assist with are outlined in the Appendix I (Comprehensive List of Supporting Strategies and Opportunities). See also Appendix II (Resources for Undocumented Students).

Majors and Programs of Study

As Latine students comprise 29% of credit-seeking students in the fall 2023 semester (Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Montgomery College, 2023), it is important to consider whether they are represented at or near that level in various majors or areas of study at MC. The table in Figure 2, drawn from a [College Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE) data dashboard (Chan, Fall Enrollment by 3rd Week, 2023), shows the top 15 individual degree programs. Majors where Latine students are fewer than 26% of students are shown in red. Programs where Latine students comprise more than 32% of the population are shown in green.

Fall 2023 Top 15 Enrollments by Program/Major	Total #	Latine #	% Latine
Business	2,042	672	32.9%
General Studies–Science/Technology/Engineering/Math	1,519	490	32.3%
General Studies–Social Sciences/Administration/Health	1,163	429	36.9%
Computer Science	1,122	189	16.8%
Gen Ed/Pre Clinical Nursing	986	307	31.1%
General Studies–Humanities/Arts/Communication/Languages	797	224	28.1%
Cybersecurity AAS	680	151	22.2%
Science AS -Biological Science	664	146	22.0%
Information Systems	519	91	17.5%
General Studies–Integrated Studies	502	151	30.1%
Nursing (admitted)	384	90	23.4%
Gen Ed/Pre Clinical Diagnostic Sonography	330	175	53.0%
General Engineering	280	80	28.6%
Criminal Justice	243	107	44.0%
Communication Studies	202	52	25.7%

Figure 2

The table highlights that computer-related degrees, such as computer science, cybersecurity, and information systems, have a marked underrepresentation of Latine students. Also, while Latine students are well represented among the large number of students who aspire to health care-related associate's degrees and enroll in preparatory "premajors" such as pre-nursing, pre-clinical diagnostic sonography, or general studies-STEM, the pipeline narrows considerably as they attempt to progress through required courses such as Biology 150.

Students must apply for admission to enter the nursing or other health care majors after completing prerequisite courses, and among students who have been admitted to these selective health care majors, Latine students are underrepresented. See Appendix V (List of Largest Degree Program Enrollments, Total and Hispanic).

Also, of concern is the high representation of Latine students in general studies programs that may not transfer directly to a specific bachelor's degree. For example, a student who hopes to earn a bachelor's degree in biology or enter a medical, dental, or veterinary graduate school would be best prepared by pursuing a biological science A.S. major, but only 146 of the students (22% of the total enrollment) in that highly transferable major are Latine. There are more than three times as many Latine students (490 individuals, or 36.9% of the total) in the general studies-STEM program, which allows students to complete an A.A. degree with a broad range of classes that may not meet requirements of science majors at transfer universities. The [program guide for the general studies-STEM major](#) urges students to consult with an advisor to determine which math and science courses to take, (Montgomery College, 2023) but if students are not required to see an advisor in order to register, it is possible that many are not being adequately guided towards their goals.

The pipeline concept is a useful model for tracking students from admissions to completion. While the College has aggregate data for student cohorts, it is difficult to draw conclusions about any one race or ethnicity from start to finish for a single major or program since many students change major during their time at MC. As a result, the College does not publish demographically disaggregated figures for students who complete the various majors, so it is not known to what extent the pipeline narrows as Latine students progress through the major requirements towards graduation. Health science majors, as an exception, provide a window into a single program pipeline, since entry is structured and selective. In these programs, there is potential to strengthen support for Latine students. Students who have been admitted to the selective health-related majors receive intensive advising and supervision to help them complete major and licensure requirements and to obtain job placements, but premajor students do not receive the same level of guidance and assistance. Latine students are over-represented in the premajors but underrepresented in the post-selection degree programs. Therefore, it may be helpful to require regular advising meetings for prehealth majors and general studies-STEM majors (more than 1,000 of whom are Latine) and to offer programs that support them in successfully completing premajor requirements such as biology and math courses. In addition, fluency in a second language (a highly-sought trait among health care employers) could be considered as a preference to the selection criteria for admission to the degree programs.

Further investigation and intervention is needed to address disparities in limited-access majors and to help Latine students prepare for and enter highly paid careers with strong hiring needs such as computing and health care.

A more comprehensive table of majors and Hispanic enrollment is shared and discussed in the Appendix V (List of Largest Degree Program Enrollments, Total and Hispanic).

Completion Insights

The College's Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE) gathers data that provides valuable information on whether Latine students (and other racial/ethnic populations) are successfully completing their courses and degrees. However, this data often does not reach the faculty, staff, and administrators who can affect student success. Much disaggregated data is either unavailable or difficult to access. It is critically important for success data to be widely and regularly shared with faculty and staff in addition to administrators. All MC personnel should be responsible for taking action to improve the experience and outcomes of traditionally underserved students. All personnel should be able to easily and regularly see this data to assess progress in specific, more targeted areas or as an institution.

Persistence/Retention

The College publishes an annual [Student Success Score Card](#), which presents key information about arrival, progression, and completion. Some data shows five- or seven-year trend graphs; however, some trend figures are not disaggregated by race/ethnicity. (Montgomery College, 2022). Figures that are disaggregated show only a blue dot to indicate if the number is an improvement over the previous year. As a result, it is hard to discern multi-year trends. OIRE shares the last three years of Score Cards on its site, so it is possible to manually track some rates over time (Montgomery College Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, 2023).

The most recent Score Card shows that Hispanic students' pass rates in the fall 2021 semester were the lowest of all the racial/ethnic groups. Course pass rates for Hispanic students were only 70%, while pass rates for Asian students were 81.2%, for Whites 82%, and for Black/African American students 70.7% (Montgomery College, 2022). While all three of the non-White groups experienced declines in pass rates from the Fall 2019 pre-pandemic semester (Montgomery College Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, 2020), the decline was largest for Hispanic students.

Graduation/Transfer

The 2022 Score Card shows that of all the major racial/ethnic groups at the College¹, graduation or transfer rates for Hispanics were also the lowest (Montgomery College, 2022). The good news is that graduation rates for non-White students were higher than they were in the 2020 Score Card (Montgomery College Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, 2020). Thus, while the Score Cards show some bright spots for our resilient Hispanic students, more work is needed to assist these students to achieve at the same rates as their peers.

¹ For comparisons with other racial/ethnic groups, this report will generally include only groups who routinely comprise more than 8% of the College population. In 2022, these were Asian (12.3%), Black (25.2%), Hispanic (28%), White (19.7%) and Foreign/International (10.2%). (Montgomery College Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, 2022) Other groups, such as American Indian/Alaska Native, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Multi-Race, and Unknown are less than 4% of the student population and are sometimes so small that data about them may not be statistically useful.

Full-time, First-time Students: Dropout Rates and DFW Rates

IPEDS data shows concerning drop-out rates for Hispanic males, who were the largest cohort among first-time, full-time students. As Figure 3 Montgomery College Completion Rates, shows, they had the highest “no longer enrolled” rate three years later (IPEDS 2021–22 Data Collection System, 2022), with 47% of first-time, full-time Latine male entrants having left MC without completing their program or transferring.

The College also posts some course-specific data on D and F grades or Withdrawals from courses (DFW), but disaggregated DFW rates are only posted (in the back of a multi-sheet Excel file) for the

dozen or so courses with more than 999 students. Also, the rates are split by gender for each ethnicity, with no number of students shown, so it is not clear what the overall DFW rates are for any one ethnic group, nor how many students are being affected. (Montgomery College Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, 2023)

However, after color-coding the data for the largest demographic groups with highest DFW rates in dark red and lowest in green, we can clearly see the pattern in these high-enrollment courses in Figure 4. Black/African American and Hispanic students experience higher DFW rates than other cohorts. Indeed, in BIOL150 and MATH181, some Black and Hispanic cohorts had failure rates above 50%.

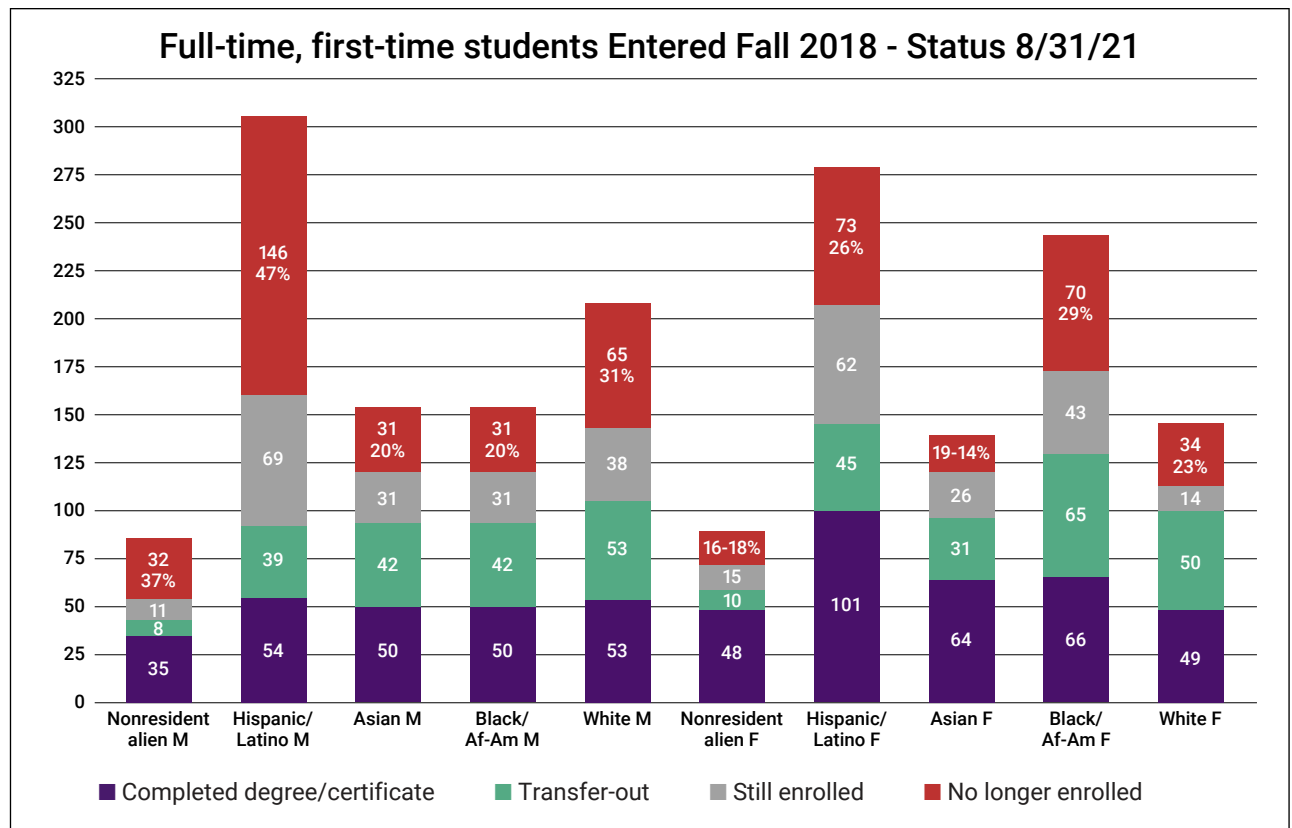


Figure 3 Montgomery College Completion Rates

Academic Year 2022										
DFW Rates in Courses with 1,000 or more Enrollment within Academic Year by Gender within Race/Ethnicity										
	Asian		Black		Hispanic		International		White	
Course	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
ARTT100	10.1%	21.6%	23.4%	27.8%	18.0%	25.2%	8.8%	21.2%	9.7%	22.2%
BIOL150	21.0%	25.0%	47.7%	54.8%	51.5%	47.9%	41.5%	40.5%	30.7%	28.4%
BSAD101	18.8%	22.6%	25.4%	32.2%	26.7%	26.3%	15.4%	25.0%	19.2%	18.4%
COMM108	17.3%	16.4%	29.0%	31.3%	24.6%	28.8%	16.4%	25.2%	16.5%	20.4%
ENGL011	18.3%	23.7%	30.5%	36.4%	34.4%	33.1%	19.6%	31.7%	20.6%	25.0%
ENGL101	17.3%	21.9%	29.4%	36.5%	32.8%	32.6%	17.3%	31.3%	20.5%	24.2%
ENGL102	26.0%	22.6%	35.0%	36.3%	41.7%	39.4%	23.8%	28.3%	25.7%	27.4%
MATH117	26.7%	28.5%	39.8%	47.3%	38.5%	43.8%	33.1%	38.1%	26.6%	31.4%
MATH181	18.3%	27.8%	50.5%	47.3%	38.8%	42.4%	27.7%	29.1%	25.3%	28.0%
NUTR101	15.3%	14.9%	25.4%	32.3%	22.9%	24.2%	21.8%	23.8%	12.1%	11.2%
PSYC102	18.5%	23.1%	31.8%	36.8%	31.3%	35.5%	14.8%	25.3%	18.4%	28.5%
SOCY100	17.1%	21.9%	32.5%	32.3%	31.8%	28.8%	19.7%	20.0%	17.2%	25.7%

Figure 4

While this visualization is startling, it does not fully convey the scope of the problem, since it does not show the number of students affected. In some courses taken by large numbers of Latine students, even DFW rates in the 30–40% range (which appear in lighter pink in Figure 4) may represent thousands of course credits lost. The trends continue similarly for the 2023 academic year. See Appendix VII (DFW Rates in 2023 Academic Year).

An analysis of the BIOL150 data for the 2022 year that reflects the actual numbers of students (rather than just the percentage of DFWs in disaggregated race/gender cohorts) shows 227 Hispanic D, F, or W grades in this course alone, with 201 DFWs for Black/African American students (Chan, email discussion with Karen Penn entitled "question about data details", 2023), as seen in Figure 5.

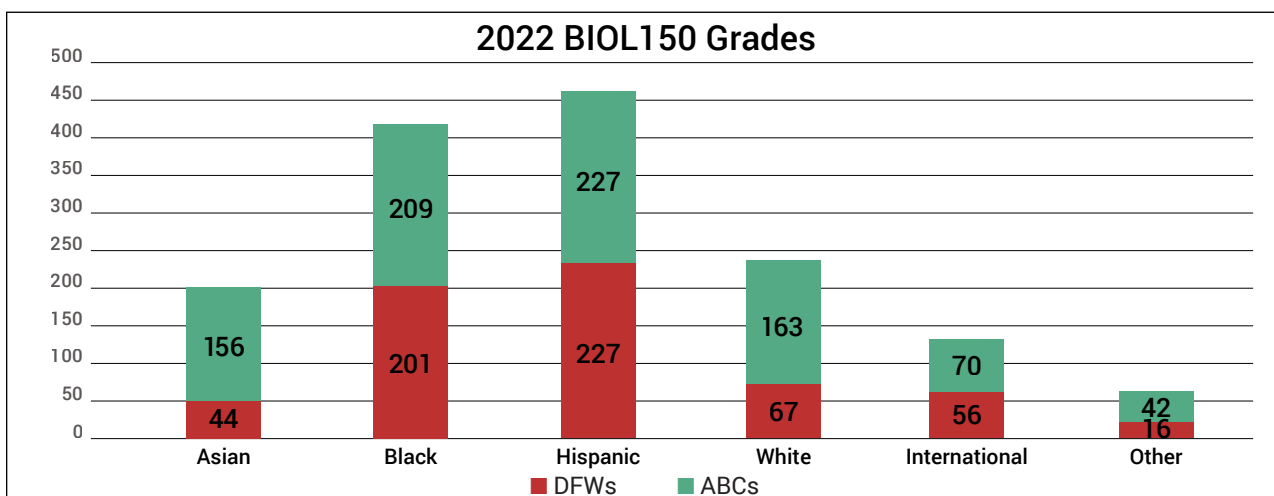


Figure 5

It is essential that this kind of disaggregated data be shared annually, at faculty or deans' meetings. Culturally sensitive facilitation of faculty discussions and exposure to successful models would allow idea generation about scaling or applying those models and practices at MC to assist students who are experiencing achievement gaps.

Representation of Latine Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

One other critical data point that the HSI Task Force notes is the continued lack of representation of Latine faculty and administrators in the College's workforce. To help Latine students envision themselves succeeding in academia, and for the College to implement practices that bring about increased success for Latine students, it is of paramount importance to improve the College's recruitment and promotion of Latine faculty and administrators. The chart in Figure 6 shows that Hispanic students are the largest demographic group in the fall 2023 credit student population, as reported by MC's Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Montgomery College, 2023).

While there has been some recent improvement in the hiring of Hispanic employees, the charts in Figure 7 and Figure 8 depict the faculty and administrator data in the [March 2023 Personnel Profile](#) (Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management, 2023):

White employees continue to constitute the majority of Montgomery College's workforce, making up 58% of faculty and department chairs and 49% of administrators. Black/African-American faculty and administrators make up the second largest employee group, such that the institution's 4,523 Black students can look to 151 full-time professors or administrators for role models and academic mentors, a ratio of about 30

Black students to each Black full-time professor or administrator. This compares to 3,377 White students to 349 White full-time professors or administrators, a ratio of 10 to 1. For the College's 2,274 Asian students and 64 Asian professors and administrators, the ratio is about 36 to 1. For the 5,157 Hispanic students (the largest student group at Montgomery College), their ratio to the 37 Hispanic full-time professors or administrators is more than 139 to 1. A 2022 working paper documents the positive effect of community college students "matching" the race/ethnicity of their professor, but points out that Hispanic and Black students are far less likely than White students to encounter such a match. (Odle, Gottfried, Miller, & Andrews, 2022)

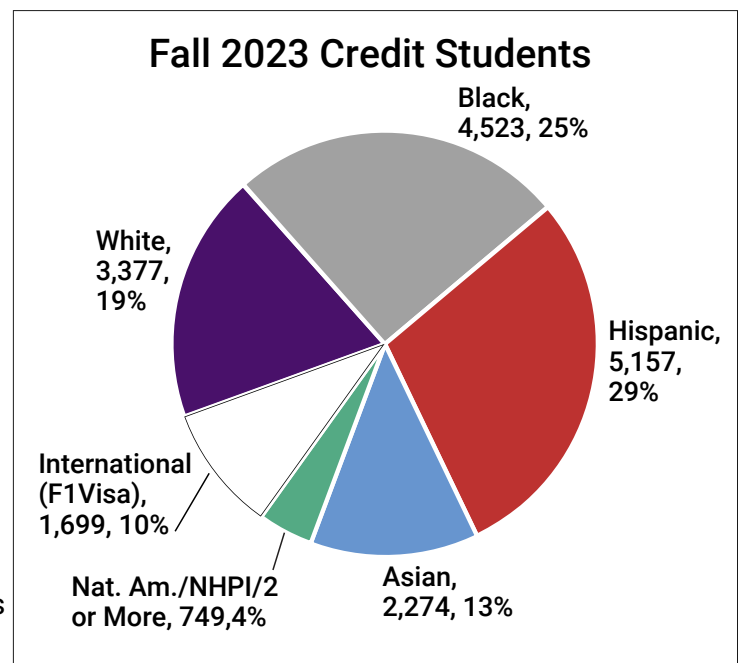


Figure 6

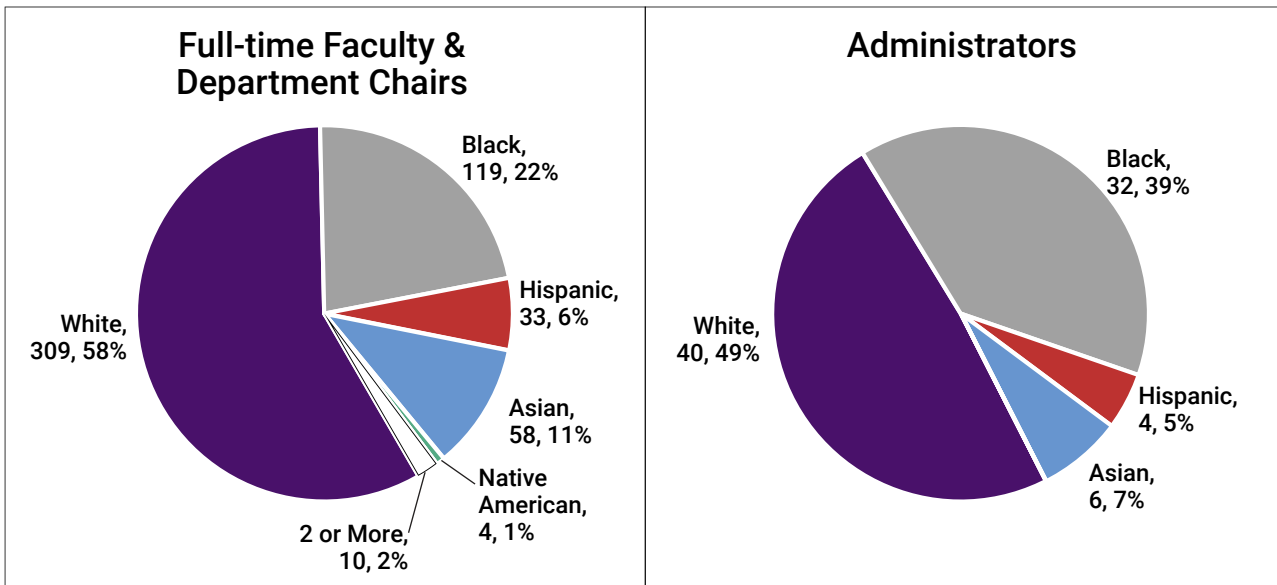


Figure 7

Figure 8

The Personnel Profile data reveals that each full-time Latine professor or administrator has only 36 Latine colleagues with whom to share the load of mentorship, linguistic and cultural support, and diversity related committee work to assist Latine students and initiatives. The College has recently hired more full-time Latine employees who are categorized as “staff” positions (which can include many position types from student-services personnel to facilities workers), but the overall numbers of Latine full-time faculty and administrators has remained largely static for the past six years, as shown in the chart in Figure 9, drawn from data in the College’s Personnel Profile reports from 2022 (Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management, 2022) and 2023 (Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management, 2023)

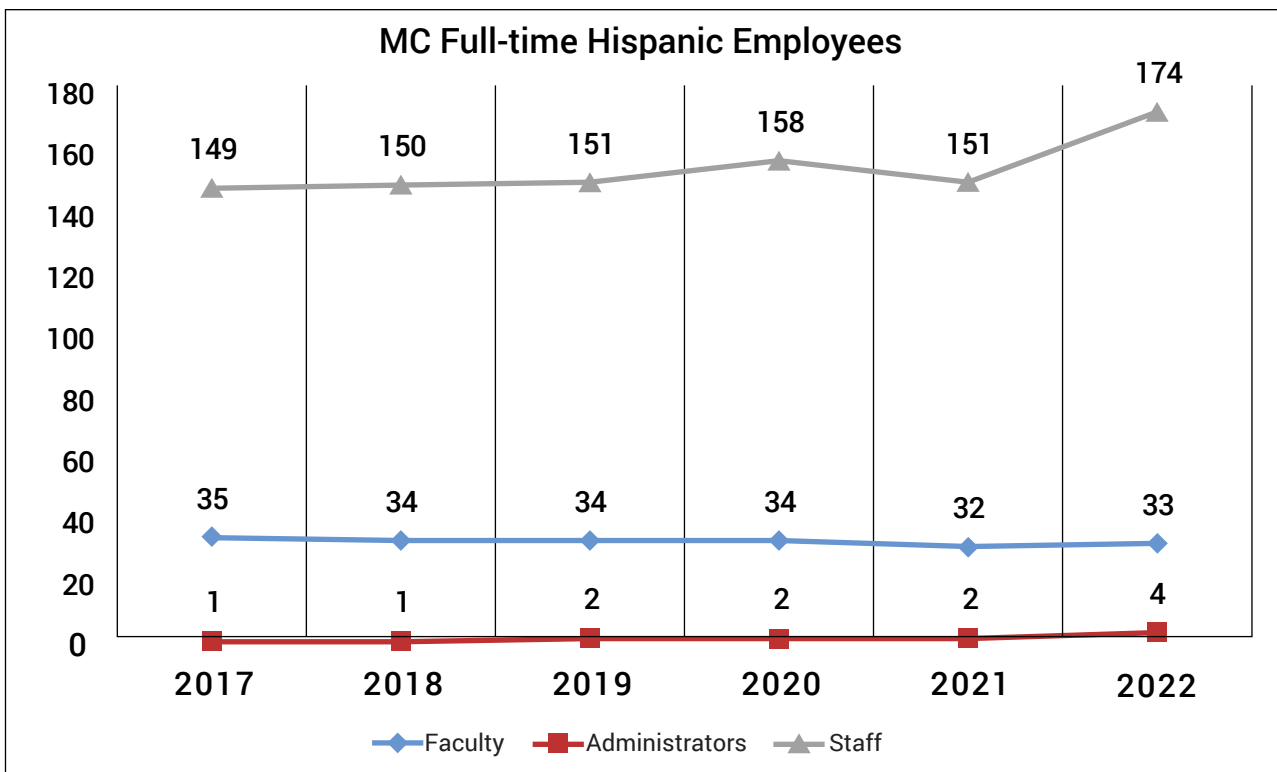


Figure 9

It is essential that position descriptions focus on candidates' qualifications for improving the College's success as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Prioritizing the importance of serving our growing Latine population, predominantly from Central America, in job descriptions and hiring qualifications can help bring in candidates whose professional abilities and lived experience more closely align with our students and their needs.

One mechanism that can be utilized, search advocates (SAs), current employees who have undergone a 16-hour training to help "enhance the equity, validity, and diversity in the institution's hiring process" (Penn de Martinez, *Implementing Search Advocates in Our Recruitment and Hiring Process*, 2020), has been incorporated into the College's Procedure 32100CP as a role that may be embedded in a search process. More than 80 MC employees have received the initial SA training, several of whom have served with search committees. The Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management has developed refresher training for those who have not yet served, as well as in-house training for new SAs. This training was in development throughout 2023. The mechanisms for how SAs will be made available to assist search committees and how many searches will utilize this assistance remain to be determined, but the Task Force hopes to see extensive use of SAs to promote equitable practices in recruiting and hiring.

Post-Completion Success

Post-completion success is MC's institutional ability to transform lives. When students leave MC, whether they are transferring to another school (Blaylock, 2023) or entering the workforce, they need to have gained skills that will ensure success on their journey and allow them to earn a family-sustaining wage (Montgomery College, 2023). The MC definition mirrors that published by *Excelencia* in Education, a leading research and advocacy organization: "post-completion success refers to Latino completers' long-term outcomes (ex. civic, educational, well-being, and workforce) within an institutionally defined context and measure" (Bermea, 2022).

The College's third Transformational Aspiration goal focuses on enhanced economic and social mobility, which is critical to Montgomery County's Latine population (Montgomery College, 2023). According to the *Profile of Hispanic Population in Montgomery County* (2023), the Latine median household income in 2021 was just 76% of the county's overall figure (\$86,302 compared to \$112,854). Further, only 22% of Latine households earn over \$150,000 versus 38% of households for the entire county, and more Latine households earn between \$35,000 and \$100,000 (38%) compared to the entire county (30%). Latines are far more likely to be living below the poverty line (14%) than the wider county population (5%). The unemployment rate for Latine adults ages 25 and older was 6%, while it was 5% for the entire county (Montgomery Planning, 2023). Connecting Montgomery County's Latine population with Montgomery College to earn a degree or a certification will provide residents with the skills and credentials to improve their economic and social well-being.

The term "post-completion" relates to or occurs in the time following completion of an educational credential. Post-completion success can include areas such as employability, skills improvement, ability to obtain a job in the field of study, career change, promotion and wage improvement, transfer to a four-year institution or another two-year school, completion of prerequisites for programs requiring special admission, and completion of long-term outcomes such as a degree or certificate.

Montgomery College has set ambitious metrics in terms of family-sustaining wages and decreasing under- and unemployment as part of the Transformational Aspirations and has

identified **data sources** that the institution will use to track progress (Montgomery College, n.d.) The College will need to collect demographically disaggregated data to ensure that economic and social mobility is being enhanced for the county's Latine residents and other minoritized populations.

Many first-generation students have challenges and barriers to completing college, including work obligations, childcare needs, taking care of other family members, and few Latine role models in their educational journeys. Possible interventions to address these concerns are included in the Appendix I (Comprehensive List of Supporting Strategies and Opportunities.)

Opportunities for Additional Research

While this report includes a stronger focus on quantitative research, it is important to recognize the value of qualitative data and including such data into the research, context and conditions that impact the sense of welcome and the success of Latine students and employees. Moving forward, it is important for the college community to explore the wealth of published research and case studies of successful models of Hispanic "servicingness," as well as the seminal work of Dr. Gina Garcia (Garcia G. A., 2023), who called upon MC employees to form this servicingness-focused HSI Task Force in her keynote address at our 2022 Equity Week. It is the hope and intention of the Task Force members to continue to dialogue, research, and lead efforts to promote the well-being and success of our Latine community.

Program Highlights/Promising Programs

As an institution committed to Latine student success, Montgomery College has enacted number of promising programs and practices, some of which show positive results for Latine students. These examples of the good work that is being done should be considered for additional study and expansion. Some highlights follow.

Program Highlight: Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success

In 2013, Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public Schools, and Universities at Shady Grove (USG) launched the Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) program. The mission of the ACES program is to increase success for underrepresented students through a regional, accessible, structured, and supportive pathway to college access and completion.

ACES provides intensive case management and builds career readiness skills and competencies from high school through the completion of an associate's and bachelor's degree, fostering a successful entry into the regional workforce. In the spring of 2023, there were 2,474 ACES students, of whom 806 were at Montgomery College (another 1,556 were still in MCPS high schools, and 112 were enrolled at USG. 60% of ACES students were categorized as Hispanic/Latino. (Tart, 2023)

At Montgomery College, ACES students are experience higher rates of success in comparison to non-ACES students, with Latino/Hispanic ACES participants' success rates even higher.

When comparing ACES rates to the *MC Scorecard* published in October 2022, there is a 6.9% fall-to-spring (ACES: 84.8% | MC: 77.9%) and a 16% fall-to-fall (ACES: 81.9% | 65.9%) difference for the fall 2021 cohort. As of November 2023, ACES has increased its fall-to-fall retention rate for the fall 2022 cohort, recording an 84% retention rate; 9% higher than the College's fall 2024 benchmark of 75% published in the 2023 MC Accountability Report. When looking specifically at

ACES Latino/Hispanic students, that rate increases slightly to an 85.3% fall-to-fall retention rate, a significant accomplishment when compared to the 62.9% national Latino fall-to-fall retention rate reported by the National Student Clearing House in July 2023.

Program Highlight: Achieving the Promise Academy

Montgomery College's Achieving the Promise Academy (ATPA) provides academic coaches, either embedded in classes or working individually with students. Coaches help students learn about and utilize/navigate academic resources like tutoring, counseling and advising, professors' office hours, and study habits reflection and skill building. Students may self-refer for personal coaching, or professors may refer a student who appears to need additional assistance. In Spring 2023 semester, 1,083 Hispanic students (approximately 22.5% of total MC Hispanic enrollees) were either in a course supported by an embedded academic coach or worked with a personal academic coach. From the Fall 2019 semester to the Spring 2023 semester, the number of Latine students who worked with a personal academic coach increased from 64 to 133 (a 107% increase). While coaches can be a very helpful resource, the vast majority of them are part-timers. About a third of them leave each semester, seeking full-time work elsewhere, so it is difficult to maintain longer-term relationships with students or even to provide the level of institutional knowledge that would be most effective. Nonetheless, in Spring 2023, 75.8% of the Latine students who worked with a personal academic coach passed their classes. (Sushka, 2024) This number compares favorably to the overall 70% Hispanic pass rates documented in the College Score Card. (Montgomery College, 2022)

Program Highlight: Collaboration with External Hispanic-Focused Organizations

Montgomery College collaborates with some of the leading advocacy and research organizations that focus on Hispanic student success, including the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and ¡*Excelencia* in Education! HACU holds an annual conference that gathers more than 2,000 registrants focused on Hispanic higher education.

Various members of the College's faculty, staff, and administration have attended the conference over the years, learning of valuable resources and model programs for Hispanic student success. The College could benefit from sending senior-level administrators as well as representatives from the Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management team to the annual conference to learn, recruit, and collaborate with Latine leaders from around the nation. Two College staff members participate in HACU's *Enlace* Mid-Level Leadership program, which supports and trains experienced mid-level professionals in topics such as academic and student affairs management, regional institutional accreditation, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and higher-education advocacy issues. (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2024)

The College's Montgomery Scholars Program, a selective honors scholarship program for 25 incoming high school graduates (Montgomery College, n.d.), has been listed in the Growing What Works database of ¡*Excelencia* in Education! (Excelencia in Education, n.d.), a Latina- founded and led nonprofit organization that conducts research on Latino educational success and provides technical assistance to institutions committed to transforming into learning environments where Latino, and all, students thrive. (Excelencia in Education, 2024) Such technical assistance might prove useful for a team from Montgomery College to utilize data and develop action plans for increasing Latine success rates.

Program Highlight: Counseling and Advising Visits to Increase Retention Rates

One possible intervention for which there is promising data is students meeting with Counseling and Advising (C/A) faculty members. A research brief from the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness showed that one or more encounters, either Zoom or in-person, with C/A faculty resulted in higher retention rates the following spring among First Time Ever In College (FTEIC) students. The increase in retention rates was even more marked for part-time students than for full-time students. (Ault, FTEIC Retention into Spring: Predictive Factors & A Spotlight on Encounters Documented with Counseling and Advising Faculty, 2022) Disaggregated retention rate data showed that C/A visits were most impactful for Latine students, whose retention rates rose steadily for each visit from zero to three. While all student groups showed increased retention for three visits vs. no visits, for full-time Latine students, the percentage point difference was 19.0 (vs. 4.1 to 14.2 points for other groups). For part-time Latine students, three visits resulted in a retention rate 30.3 percentage points higher than zero visits (vs. 16.6 to 25.0 higher for other demographic groups). For the 1,383 Latine part-time students reviewed, only 43.4% of those who had zero C/A visits returned the following spring, whereas 53.8% of part-time Latine students with one visit, 61.8% with two visits, and 73.7% with three visits were retained the next spring. (Ault, Research Brief_DrWilliamsFollowUp, 2023)

Appendix VI (Counseling and Advising Visits and their Association with Student Success) includes charts and analysis showing the positive relationship between C/A visits and student retention as well as higher GPAs for all non-White students but for Latine students most of all. Because second and third C/A visits are associated with even higher student success levels, Latine students should be encouraged to avail themselves of additional follow-up visits. Of course, this would require the availability of sufficient C/A faculty as well as logistical support for providing services to large numbers of students. The FTEIC Retention into Spring report indicates that in 2019, 95.7% of 3,931 FTEIC students had at least one C/A encounter. In 2020, the numbers decreased somewhat, with 91.9% of 3,588 FTEIC meeting a counselor/advisor. In 2021, 91.9% of 2,958 FTEIC students did so. As the document notes, during the pandemic, C/A faculty implemented new mechanisms for offering Zoom, email, and phone connections. (Ault, FTEIC Retention into Spring: Predictive Factors & A Spotlight on Encounters Documented with Counseling and Advising Faculty, 2022)

Given the strong association of one or more C/A visits with Latine student success, the College should explore the mechanisms for providing C/A visits for 100% of new students and ensuring that all students know where and how to access C/A assistance. Presently, new students receive an admissions email encouraging them to meet with a counselor/advisor, however, email is not the preferred communication method for the younger generation (Bajarin, 2020), so it would be beneficial for the College to communicate this important information by text message as well as other mechanisms.

Program Highlight: Dual Enrollment

In the last several years, Montgomery College has focused resources on increasing the number of MCPS high school students who concurrently take MC credit courses. These dual enrollment students may take one class or complete an entire associate's degree program while still in high school. In 2022, students under the age of 18 had risen to 10% of the population enrolled at the College (Montgomery College, 2023). MCPS data indicates that 1,647 unique students took a total of 7,353 college courses in FY22, however, only 15.7% of these students were Hispanic/Latino (Montgomery County Public Schools, 2022), despite Latine students constituting 34% of MCPS' high school population (Montgomery County Public Schools Office of Shared Accountability, 2023). The severe underrepresentation of Latine students in the dual-enrollment population should be explored and addressed.

Program Highlight: Financial Aid

An Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness research brief showed that, First-Time-Ever-In-College MC students in 2019, 2020, and 2021 who received financial aid were more likely to continue on in future semesters than MC students overall. Of Latine students in these three cohorts, 80.9% received federal financial aid grants, 54.4% received institutional grants, and 34.5% received state grants. (Some students may receive multiple sources of aid.) These percentages compare favorably with other demographic groups. However, Latine students who received financial aid were significantly less likely to return to MC the following semester than aid recipients from other demographic groups (Ault, FTEIC Retention into Spring: A Spotlight on Financial Aid, 2023). Further investigation into this data and outreach to the Latine community might help the institution address this disparity.

Program Highlight: Mi Gente Learning Community for Business Majors

Since the fall of 2020, a paired-course learning community has been offered to 25-50 Business majors each year, who take "two classes in a cohort with shared assignments and opportunities for hands-on experiences in the world of business. Highly recommended for new business majors who want to impact their community, advance in professional careers, and strengthen workplace software skills, the **Mi Gente** community is open to all," but is advertised as potentially being of special interest to Latine students (Penn de Martinez, Mi Gente Learning Community, 2023). It has enrolled at least 50% Latine students in each of its cohorts (higher than the 32.9% of Latine business students at the College overall), giving them opportunities to connect with peers and professors, utilize computer and business skills in real-world micro-internships, and receive advising within the classroom about completing the business major, transferring to a four-year university, and applying for scholarships. A number of program participants have been accepted to MC scholarship opportunities like the Macklin Business Scholars and the Southern Management Leadership Program, as well as to selective transfer programs and scholarships at the University of Maryland's Smith School of Business and Georgetown University. However, as with other programs discussed in this report, additional data would have to be generated to determine how success rates for Latine students in this program compare with data from the business major at large.

Program Highlight: Open Education Resources and Z-Courses

Montgomery College provides students low-cost options with open education resources (OERs) and Z-courses, in which all textbook materials are available at no cost. There are currently 647 courses available as Z-courses and six majors that can be completed with zero textbook costs.

The [MC Open website](#) indicates that there were 12,783 enrollments in textbook-free courses in the fall 2023 semester, with students saving an estimated \$13 million in textbook costs since 2017. (Montgomery College, 2023) While it is clear that OERs and Z-courses benefit MC students, the HSI Task Force would like to see this data disaggregated to ensure that Latine students are benefitting from these resources at the same rates as other groups.

Program Highlight: Welcoming Academic Support Services

MC learning centers, including the Writing and Reading Learning Centers (WRLC) strive to be welcoming and affirming spaces. Thanks to the support staff and tutors, the learning centers offer help in more than 30 languages, including Spanish, along with affinity-focused and social justice-oriented writing groups for students centered on Latin American literature (in Spanish), African diaspora literature, LGBTQ+ literature, and Asian-American literature.

An annual report, *Learning Centers Lead*, describes success rates of students who utilize centers for tutoring (Benton, 2022). While the data is promising, it is not disaggregated, and as a result, it is not possible to discern the extent to which Latine students are benefitting from these resources.

Community Subcommittee: Community Conversations and HSI Best Practices

The Community Subcommittee had a dual focus in its charge. First, the subcommittee conducted community conversations with internal and external stakeholder groups that were predominantly Latine or served a majority Latine population. The goal was to obtain stakeholder input on what Montgomery College is doing well and what could be improved. This valuable input assisted the Task Force in formulating strategies to address the College's "servingness" as an HSI. Second, the subcommittee researched the best practices used by other institutions that had received federal HSI grants.

Focus One: Community Conversations

The Community Subcommittee held nine community conversations with 167 participants over Zoom from April 20 to May 25, 2023. The community conversation forums were with external groups that serve 50% or more Latine residents and internal Latine students and employees. The number of participants for each conversation is listed below. In addition, the senior vice presidents for academic affairs, student affairs, advancement and community engagement, and administrative and fiscal services attended the virtual community conversations. Some of the conversations were conducted in Spanish, and those marked with an asterisk had English translations for attendees who did not speak Spanish. The Office of Community Engagement provided substantial support for the community conversation process. Staff from the Achieving the Promise Academy (ATPA) and Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) emailed Latine students inviting them to participate in the community conversations.

Stakeholder Group	Participants
Latino Childcare Association of Maryland (LCAM)*	64 LCAM members
LCAM is a nonprofit organization that builds the capacity of childcare providers. The organization frequently interacts with MC's Early Childhood Education, engaging on the credit and noncredit side.	
Identity	37 staff members
Identity is a nonprofit organization that serves Latino youth and families. Many of their employees are MC students or alumni.	
Identity*	14 clients
These clients are MC workforce development students referred by Identity and funded with scholarships from the MC Foundation.	
Achieving the Promise Academy (ATPA)	4 Latine students
ATPA is an MC academic coaching resource for students.	
Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES)	6 Latine students
ACES is a collaborative partnership between MCPS, MC, and Universities at Shady Grove to move students through a baccalaureate degree.	
MCPS Latino Student Achievement Action Group	8 MCPS Latine parents
This advisory group consists of Latine parents.	
Iglesia Gracia Soberana de Gaithersburg*	3 faith leaders
This is an evangelical church with many homeschooled students, including those who are dually enrolled at the College.	
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County	15 members
Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the chamber provides a forum for matters affecting Hispanics and minorities in business and advocates for a positive and inclusive public image of Hispanic-owned businesses.	
Montgomery College	16 employees
Employees were invited to participate through the College's weekly e-newsletter, <i>Inside MC</i> , and by email from the HSI Task Force Chair. All MC employees were invited to participate through the <i>Inside MC Online</i> e-newsletter and the HSI Task Force chair's targeted emails.	

The conversations consisted of a facilitator from the subcommittee, the lead person from the community group, the community organizations' participants, and the senior vice presidents. The student-focused groups included a facilitator, the students, and the senior vice presidents. No attributions were made to individual participants in the notes to facilitate candid conversations. Comments were collected orally, via chat, and through an online survey. After opening remarks from both MC and the community group, participants were all asked the following questions:

- What is Montgomery College doing well?
- What could Montgomery College improve upon?
- Are there any services that Montgomery College is missing?
- What else would you like to add that hasn't been mentioned?

Notes were taken at each community conversation and an online survey collected information after the event to capture additional thoughts. Separate from the nine community conversation forums, two surveys were emailed to WDCE students in classes that have traditionally high Latine enrollment. The notes and survey results were reviewed numerous times to identify major themes, congruencies, and inconsistencies which then informed the recommendation development process.

Many participants commented that MC's offerings and services rival four-year institutions. Many of the lead representatives for the community organizations also expressed deep gratitude for the work the College is doing to care for them, their children, and their community.

There were times when the feedback was conflicting. For example, some participants had positive experiences with a particular area while others had negative experiences or were unaware of services and resources. There is a barrier to information that could be addressed with improved or increased marketing and promotion, especially in Spanish.

For transparency and additional analyses, the subcommittee captured all comments and notes, and they are provided in Appendix X (Community Conversations Notes). Readers are encouraged to review the community conversation notes for greater detail and context. The following section summarizes each theme and provides relevant participant quotes that highlight areas of success and opportunities for improvement.

Identified Themes

Themes emerged from comments mentioned by more than two people in any one community forum or more than one community forum. After analyzing the feedback, the subcommittee selected three major themes as follows with additional information below:

Access

- More credit and noncredit classes in Spanish
- More bilingual information and bilingual staff
- Increased and improved outreach and marketing

Student Support

- Consistency in messaging and information from counselors, professors, and advisors
- Help for those with degrees from other countries
- Help for undocumented students

Financial Aid and Scholarship Information

- Make information clearer

Community Conversation Theme: Access

There was overall agreement that access is good, but that it could be improved for the Latine population.

Areas of Success

- Bilingual staff (Spanish-speaking staff) in some student-facing departments
- Virtual classes
- Wide variety of credit and noncredit courses
- Dual enrollment opportunities for homeschoolers, including virtual classes
- Noncredit courses offered in Spanish for specialized programs such as Early Childcare Education

Opportunities for Improvement

- Bilingual staff are not always available when needed or at the point of service
- More bilingual information, programs, and resources
- More credit options and more night classes, both in Spanish (for many student respondents, the most popular times were 7 a.m. and after 6 p.m.)
- Increase and improve outreach and marketing, for example:
 - Prospective students do not always know how to find information on the MC website
 - Some respondents were not aware of MC's many certification offerings in high- need employment areas such as IT

Grateful for having the opportunity to take classes in Spanish. (student)

I recently visited and I realized how new the buildings are. They are making the college feel very advanced, almost like a university...Kids were very excited by what they saw. (community member)

A lack of representation within the program, especially for international students who needed information in their native language since they were still in ESOL. (student)

Several students didn't know that there were Spanish social media channels, so marketing and outreach may need to be improved. (student)

Community Conversation Theme: Student Support

Areas of Success

- Students are academically prepared to transfer to a four-year institution
- Overall agreement that student support is strong when they are transferring to a University System of Maryland (USM) school
- Students who go from MC to the University of Maryland (UMD) are prepared to take classes at the institution

Opportunities for Improvement

- Students are not always prepared to transfer to the workforce
- The transfer process can be confusing and there is a lack of support if not transferring to a USM institution

- More guidance about what happens post-graduation is needed
- Help for those with degrees from other countries
- Help for undocumented students, particularly for high school students
- Discontent with certain professors, counselors, and advisors
- Support experience is not consistent and largely dependent on whom you receive the support from
- More clarity on what courses is necessary to take and what are not

I had the opportunity to visit the UMD Chemistry, and the professors were very pleased with the students that transferred from MC. It then seemed to me that MC is preparing students very well to transfer so they have that opportunity. (community member)

I attended a few years ago before transferring to UMD. The science department really prepared me. I didn't struggle at all, and I thought I was even more advanced than some of my peers. (community member/former student)

The counseling team is great, very welcoming and clear. They are very supportive to guide students, especially when they are lost in their decision to start a career. (community member/former student)

People want to know where to validate their certificate and translate their degrees from abroad. (community member)

The college needs to better support students who are not citizens and being more inclusive with the curriculum and language supports. (student)

Not all the people there were [giving] accurate [information]. Improve the diversity of the recruiters (more than Maryland schools), and when they come, we want to make sure we have accurate information. (student)

I changed my path more than a handful of times. Every time I needed to find an advisor, they changed me... My goal wasn't to stop working, but that was always their feedback. (community member/former student)

I also don't feel I had a good experience with the counseling department. I was bounced around to different counselors. Sometimes they guided me in the wrong direction. I didn't have financial aid or anything, and I had to pay for my classes. One of the counselors told me to take a class I didn't need to take. At University of Maryland, you get one counselor. It would be a better experience for students to have that MC. (community member/former student)

Community Conversation Theme: Financial Aid Information

Areas of Success

- Affordable classes/lower tuition rates
- Scholarships including ones for undocumented students

Opportunities for Improvement

- Financial aid website is confusing
- Not enough materials and webinars available for Spanish-speaking families
- Lack of clarity for students who do not possess a social security number

I'm in Financial Aid and we give presentations in Spanish. We have printed information in Spanish and English. We are trying to be more accessible in that way. (MC employee). I have visited the website and helped my son navigate the website. In reality, the website with finances is very confusing. I know there was a webinar and I missed it...I have to plan how to budget their classes but can't seem to locate it. (community member)

It's important as well to share more information about the enrollment process for students who do not have documents, in terms of cost and financial opportunities. (community member)

Dissonance

While some community conversation participants expressed gratitude for the ESL classes, others lacked knowledge of this important resource. For those participants who have taken MC ESL courses, they noted that accessibility and affordability after the beginner level are an issue. The beginner courses are free, but tuition and fees for the intermediate courses are \$450 or more. In addition, there is a need for conversational English courses or opportunities because participants felt that they struggled with everyday phrases and needed more time to practice their English. Finally, participants shared that they would like more industry-specific English such as business courses.

In addition, some respondents felt there was a good variety of credit and noncredit courses. Respondents familiar with the Early Childcare Education program requested more options, including credit classes in Spanish. Some respondents wanted more certification opportunities in higher wage career paths such as IT and were unaware of the College's programs. There are varied experiences with counseling and advising. A number of students and former students commented on inconsistent advising from counselors and professors. Others felt well supported and prepared to transfer, particularly to a USM institution.

Community Conversation Participants Recommended Strategies

- Provide specialized support for students who are undocumented and do not have a social security number regarding how to transition into the workforce post-college
- Provide support for international students with transferring their credits and degrees from abroad and recognizing their prior education
- Offer more support for MC Latine staff, especially for maintenance and facilities workers (from MC employee community conversation group)
- Offer vocational ESOL classes, as well as business training and mentorship, to support community members in setting up a childcare business
- Reach out to homeschoolers more systematically through recruitment efforts
- Hold more Latine events that illustrate the diversity within the community
- Create regular communication and interfacing with Latine entrepreneurs

Community Subcommittee Recommended Strategies

- Improve collaboration among departments for consistency in messaging from College faculty and staff that provide direct services to students
- Increase intentionality, quality, and consistency of customer service (customer service training, inter-office/division collaboration, information sharing between Academic Affairs/WDCE and Student Affairs)
- Review the current financial aid resources to improve clarity for students and their families (including support for undocumented students and scholarships)
- Offer more Spanish-language credit and noncredit courses during early morning, evening, and weekend time slots
- Provide more bilingual staff in direct service offices and make it easier to access interpretation and translation services when bilingual staff are unavailable to improve access for students and prospective students
- Develop a strategic bilingual outreach and marketing plan to reach Latinos where they gather (high schools, businesses, faith communities, events) and communicate with Latine students, prospective students, and their families using culturally relevant media and social media (Spanish language television, WhatsApp, etc.)
- Offer workshops to and create resources for the community on how to validate their degrees from other countries

Focus Two: Research on Best Practices of HSIs

The focus of this research was how other HSIs engaged with their campus communities to improve access and success for their Latine student population. The subcommittee examined 10 HSIs that have been awarded federal HSI grants. The most common programs funded by these grants help Latine students transition into college, create pathways to STEM fields, and establish peer tutoring centers.

In terms of marketing and communications, these institutions share their HSI status at student welcome orientations, at student clubs, through social media, and at special centers. Most of these 10 colleges and universities also have the Seal of Excelencia certification awarded by the organization *Excelencia* in Education and/or have programs in the organization's Growing What Works Database. A list of these grant-receiving institutions and their initiatives can be found in Appendix XI (Institutions that Received HSI Grants).

Grants Subcommittee

The Grants Subcommittee, in collaboration with the Grants and Sponsored Programs Office and the Montgomery College Foundation, was charged with investigating funding opportunities that will support the development of MC as a Hispanic-serving institution.

Available HSI Grants

As part of the subcommittee work, the Grants and Sponsored Programs Office researched HSI federal grants, conducted analyses of funded HSI grants, and provided information about MC's proposal development and grant application processes in preparation for future submissions. Currently, there are six federal HSI grant opportunities that MC would be eligible to apply for, and they are summarized below.

Grant Opportunity	Award Information	Deadline	Purpose
U.S. Department of Education (ED)			
Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions Program (DHSI Program, Title V, Part A): ED-GRANTS-040622- 001	FY23: 110 awards (46 from FY22 slate and 64 from FY23) 11% of FY23 applications funded Range: \$500,000-\$600,000 Period: up to 60 months	No competition in FY24. FY25 competition contingent on Congressional appropriation for program and the Administration's priorities.	Expand educational opportunities for, and improve the attainment of, Hispanic students; expand and enhance academic offerings, program quality, and institutional stability. See funded projects
Hispanic-Serving Institutions – Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics and Articulation Program (HSI STEM, Title III, Part F): ED-GRANTS-043021-00	Estimated number of awards: 96 Range: \$700,000-\$1 million Period: up to 60 months	Announced every five years Most recent cycle: June 14, 2021 Next application possibly 2025	Increase the number of Hispanic and other low-income students attaining degrees in STEM fields and develop model transfer and articulation agreements between two-year and four-year institutions for STEM See funded projects
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)			
Humanities Initiatives at Hispanic-Serving Institutions: 20220509-AA-AB- AC-AD-AE	Over the past 14 years: Average number of applications: 46 Average number of awards: 8 (18% funding ratio) Maximum: \$150.00 Period: 1 to 3 years	Next annual deadline May 7, 2024, for projects starting in 2025	Strengthen the teaching and study of the humanities at HSIs by developing new humanities programs, resources, or courses, or by enhancing existing ones. Humanities include history, philosophy, religion, literature, and composition/writing skills See funded projects; link to grant opportunity also includes sample application narratives
Awards for Faculty at Hispanic- Serving Institutions: 0210414-HB See funded projects; link to grant opportunity also includes sample application narratives	Average number of applications: 152 Average number of awards: 21 (13.7% funding ratio) Maximum: \$5,000/month Period: 2 to 12 months	Next deadline: April 10, 2024, for projects starting 2025-2026	Strengthen the humanities at HSIs by supporting faculty to produce humanities-related articles; research leading to existing undergraduate course or goals and interests of the institution or community; book, digital resource; translation; or other scholarly resources See funded projects; link to grant opportunity also includes sample application narratives

Grant Opportunity	Award Information	Deadline	Purpose
National Science Foundation (NSF)			
<p>Improving Undergraduate STEM Education: Hispanic Serving Institutions: NSF 22-611</p> <p>Three tracks: (1) Planning or Pilot Project (IPP) (2) Implementation and Evaluation Project (IEP) (3) Institutional Transformation (ITP)</p>	<p>Estimated number of awards: 30-60 as follows</p> <p>IPP: 20-40</p> <p>IEP: up to 15 ITP: 7-12</p> <p>Range: \$200,000 to \$3 million depending on the type of project and if a single institution or consortium; incentive to partner with a community college</p> <p>Period: PPP: up to 3 years IEP: 3-5 years ITP: 5 years</p>	<p>Annual solicitation; next deadline August 28, 2024</p>	<p>Enhance the quality of undergraduate STEM education and increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of students; support building capacity for HSIs and incentivize institutional and community transformation; promote fundamental research on (i) engaged student learning, (ii) about what it takes to diversify and increase participation in STEM, and (iii) improves understanding of how to build institutional capacity at HSIs; broaden participation of student that are historically underrepresented in STEM and expand pathways to continued STEM education and integration into the STEM workforce</p>
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)			
<p>Hispanic-Serving Institutions Education Grants Program: USDA-NIFA-HSI-008701</p> <p>Three options: Regular, Collaboration, or Conference</p>	<p>Estimated number of awards: Regular (10), Collaboration (2 to 4), Conference (2)</p> <p>21% funding ratio</p> <p>Maximum:</p> <p>Regular (\$250,000) Collaboration (\$1M) Conference (\$50,000)</p> <p>Period: Regular and Collaboration (48 months), Conference (36 months)</p>	<p>Annual solicitation (most recent: February 2024)</p>	<p>Promotes and strengthens the ability of HSIs to carry out higher education programs to attract, retain, and graduate outstanding students capable of enhancing the nation's food, agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences professional and scientific workforce.</p> <p>See funded projects</p>

As an HSI, Montgomery College is also considered a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) and therefore eligible to apply for MSI federal grants, if appropriate. Finally, many federal, state, corporate, and foundation grants support students underrepresented in higher education or within certain career pathways, and these grants have served our Latine credit and noncredit populations. It is important to consider these other opportunities as the College designs future initiatives to improve the outcomes of our Latine student population.

Status of Applying for an HSI grant

The Grants and Sponsored Programs Office has been sharing analyses of the U.S. Department of Education's Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions (DHSI) and other HSI funding opportunities with leadership since 2021 when MC received its HSI designation. In addition, two members from the Grants Office served on the HSI Task Force's Grant Subcommittee to provide additional support. The Grant Subcommittee had a goal of applying for at least one HSI federal grant, with special attention paid to the DHSI funding opportunity.

As noted above, the DHSI grant opportunity provides funds for assisting HSIs to implement, expand, and enhance programs supporting Hispanic student success outcomes. Funds may be used for a wide range of academic and student support activities. The Grants Subcommittee reviewed the DHSI opportunity and previously-funded applications and determined that more disaggregated data on MC's Latine student population is needed to develop a proposal for this competitive grant. This data should inform any proposed project and its impact on the MC Latine community. Additionally, there needs to be project leadership and bandwidth within Academic Affairs or Student Affairs to successfully carry out a DHSI grant project.

As per College procedure, the Grants and Sponsored Programs Office will work with the selected principal investigator, co-principal investigators, and the grant development team on a proposal for the next DHSI grant competition cycle and will keep the HSI Task Force or subsequent advisory structure involved in the process. The team will continue to research and contact other institutions with DHSI-funded programs for additional information.

The College's STEM unit is currently developing two HSI-related grant proposals for planned submissions in 2024, one for a NSF HSI opportunity, and another for a NSF Experiential Learning for Emerging and Novel Technologies opportunity, which is not an HSI grant but should benefit MC's Latine student population. The Grants Subcommittee and other HSI Task Force members have encouraged the addition of Latine faculty as co-principal investigators and proposal development committee members for these grants.

Recommendations and Supporting Strategies:

Based on the collective research and insights from the subcommittees, overarching themes emerged, and the following five recommendations, with supporting strategies, are being proposed to help the College improve Latine success and become a more effective Hispanic Serving Institution:

Recommendation 1: Increase access to and measurement of demographically disaggregated data so the College leadership, faculty, staff, and students can implement evidence-based strategies for Latine student success.

- a. Annually distribute disaggregated DFW data for courses with more than 200 students to discipline faculty. Clarify both failure rates and numbers of minoritized students who are experiencing difficulty. Discuss annually at deans' meetings and provide culturally responsive professional development, so faculty can address ways to assist students experiencing achievement gaps and can assess their progress. Begin sharing annually in 2025.
- b. Further investigate and assess the impact of promising programs such as ACES, ATPA, bilingual courses, counseling/advising visits, course placement reforms, dual enrollment, financial aid availability, open-education or Z courses, paired-course learning communities,

and tutoring on Latine and other demographically-disaggregated student populations to determine whether and how to scale up these operations.

- c. Review and analyze demographically disaggregated data regarding transfer to other institutions, employment, family-sustaining wages, and other economic and social- mobility measures to ensure that post-completion success is being enhanced for the county's Latine and other minoritized residents.
- d. Develop intentional measures to address disparities and track the success of Latine students seeking entry into highly-paid careers such as computing and health care where they are currently underrepresented.

Recommendation 2: Increase recruitment of Latine candidates for faculty, administration, staff, and leadership positions in the MC workforce to reflect the student and community population.

- a. Prioritize the importance of serving our growing Hispanic population in job descriptions and hiring qualifications to bring in candidates whose professional abilities and life experiences more closely align with our students and their needs, and who can serve as Latine role models.
- b. Utilize Search Advocates to help enhance the equity, validity, and diversity in hiring processes. Include demographic information and updates about the under- representation of Latine faculty in the SA training.
- c. Increase training and talent-acquisition opportunities for career advancement of current Latine employees, and provide more support for Latine staff, especially maintenance and facilities workers. This could include mentoring, leadership development training and opportunities that can lead to career advancement.
- d. Compensate bilingual employees who are expected to use that skill in additional duties beyond their regular job activities.

Recommendation 3: Increase and strengthen multilingual supports and resources throughout all areas of the College.

- a. Provide more Spanish-bilingual staff in direct service offices and the Counseling and Advising Department, and make it easier to access interpretation and translation services when bilingual staff are unavailable to improve access for students and prospective students.
- b. Develop a strategic Spanish-bilingual outreach and marketing plan to reach Latinos where they gather (high schools, businesses, faith communities, events) and communicate with Latine students, prospective students, and their families using culturally relevant media and social media (Spanish language television, WhatsApp, etc.)

Recommendation 4: Develop and invest in a robust leadership structure to focus and strengthen the College's responsiveness and "servingness" as an HSI.

- a. Appoint an HSI Advisory Committee to provide guidance to the HSI leadership above, which will permit coordination of follow-up activity for the recommendations here and additional strategies that are listed in the Appendix I (Comprehensive List of Supporting Strategies and Opportunities). The advisory committee should be composed of representatives from across units and divisions at the college, including student and community members.
- b. Provide paid support or release time for individual(s) to advance and implement the strategies, develop and pursue HSI grant proposals, and move the institution's "servingness" goals forward.

Recommendation 5: Regularly solicit input of Latine community members, students, and employees to ensure the College is responding to the educational and workforce needs of the growing Montgomery County Latine population.

- a. Increase intentionality, quality, and consistency of customer service (customer service training, interoffice/division collaboration, information sharing between Academic Affairs, Financial Aid, Student Affairs, and WDCE). Improve collaboration among departments for consistency in messaging from College faculty and staff that provide direct services to students. Survey the Latine community to assess whether they successfully access relevant information.
- b. Strengthen resources for the community on how to validate their degrees from other countries, obtain financial aid (and access Spanish-language financial aid support), and locate resources and guidance for DACA, Dreamer, and undocumented individuals.
- c. Designate a point person who would be tasked with helping MC expand its services to undocumented students, nonimmigrant status students, and students whose family situations may impede successful registration or eligibility for financial aid. Encourage faculty and staff to routinely share contact information for the point person and web resources so that undocumented students or mixed-status families receive this information without needing to ask.

HSI Task Force members dedicated hundreds of hours gathering and analyzing data, communicating with the community, and refining recommendations and strategies. Implementing the recommendations and supporting strategies will take sustained effort and advocacy. To do this work effectively, a leader or leaders will need to dedicate full attention and energy; these efforts are unlikely to succeed with responsibilities dispersed among “volunteer” leadership or assigned to individuals with other, full-time duties. For Montgomery College to become a fully “serving” HSI, a robust, dedicated, and adequately funded leadership structure is necessary.

Conclusion and Call to Action:

Fulfilling the Vision of “Servingness”

While Montgomery College has impressive programs and initiatives to address the needs of its diverse student population, there is a clear need for more intensive, focused, and intentional work related to Latine student success and improving our servingness to the largest student population at the College.

Montgomery College is the community’s college and a leader in the state and in the nation because it is responsive, innovative, and prioritizes the needs of its community. As it develops and grows as an HSI, it is essential to reflect and act on the many opportunities this designation provides. And while the designation was received in 2022, it is now time for Montgomery College to move forward as a proud HSI and fulfill the vision of “servingness” for its Latine students and community.

Appendices

I. Comprehensive List of Supporting Strategies and Opportunities

Some supporting strategies suggested by the HSI Task Force for immediate implementation are included in the Recommendations and Supporting Strategies: section of this document.

A comprehensive list, below, includes additional strategies that may be possible to implement when funding, time, and employee bandwidth permit. Some text has been condensed for brevity.

1. Annually distribute disaggregated DFW data for courses with more than 200 students to discipline faculty. Clarify both failure rates and numbers of minoritized students who are experiencing difficulty. Discuss annually at deans' meetings and provide culturally responsive professional development, so faculty can address ways to assist students experiencing achievement gaps and can assess their progress. Begin sharing annually in 2025.
2. Further investigate and assess the impact of promising programs such as ACES, ATPA, bilingual courses, Counseling/Advising visits, course placement reforms, dual enrollment, financial aid availability, open-education or Z courses, paired-course learning communities, and tutoring on Latine and other demographically-disaggregated student populations to determine whether and how to scale up these operations.
3. Review and analyze demographically disaggregated data regarding transfer to other institutions, employment, family-sustaining wages, and other economic and social-mobility measures to ensure that post-completion success is being enhanced for the county's Latine and other minoritized residents.
4. Develop intentional measures to address disparities and track the success of Latine students seeking entry into highly-paid careers with strong hiring needs such as computing and health care, as well as their outcomes for all majors through and after completion, including key performance indicators and success practices.
5. Require regular advising meetings for prehealth majors and general studies-STEM majors (more than 1,000 of whom are Latine) and offer programs that support them in successfully completing premajor requirements such as biology and math courses.
6. Add fluency in highly sought languages among health care employers as a preference to the selection criteria for admission to the selective health care degree programs.
7. Continue research on the implications of high school GPA and other placement practices to determine the placement criteria that best align with success.
8. Increase institutional commitment to improve Latine student success and then develop a plan to prioritize HSI and other grants that align with this institutional commitment, using disaggregated data to drive the grant development process.
9. Increase institutional capacity to track workforce outcomes and collect demographically disaggregated data to ensure that economic and social mobility is being enhanced for the county's Latine residents and other minoritized populations
10. Explore mechanisms for providing counseling and advising (C/A) visits for 100% of new students and for repeat visits for Latine and other groups for whom C/A visits show evidence of high impact. Ensure that all students know where and how to access C/A assistance, communicating this important information by text message as well as other mechanisms. Consider seeking grant funding for these high-impact practices.
11. Investigate and address disparities in participation of Latine high-school students in dual enrollment programs.
12. Prioritize the importance of serving our growing Hispanic population in job descriptions and hiring qualifications to bring in candidates whose professional abilities and life experiences more closely align with our students and their needs, and who can serve as Latine role models.

13. Utilize search advocates to help enhance the equity, validity, and diversity in hiring processes. Include demographic information in the SA training.
14. Increase training and talent-acquisition opportunities for career advancement of current Latine employees, and provide more support for Latine staff, especially maintenance and facilities workers.
15. Compensate bilingual employees who are expected to use that skill in additional duties beyond their regular job activities.
16. Include Latine voices during the HSI grant development and management processes and identify opportunities for Latine faculty, staff, and administrators to serve as principal investigators, co-principal investigators, and other key personnel to ensure representation as well as to develop grants-related skills.
17. Consider the 55% Central American background of county Latine when revising curricular materials to include relevant voices, experiences, and perspectives; and when planning and coordinating events and other cultural offerings.
18. Consider empirical review and expansion of credit and noncredit courses in Spanish and additional language supports, possibly marketing these offerings towards emerging multilanguage learner students.
19. Provide more Spanish-bilingual staff in direct service offices and the Counseling and Advising Department, and make it easier to access interpretation and translation services when bilingual staff are unavailable to improve access for students and prospective students
20. Offer more Spanish-language credit and noncredit courses during early morning, evening, and weekend time slots.
21. Review the WDCE registration form to consider whether answering race/ethnicity questions should be required. Share and analyze disaggregated WDCE enrollments to determine whether the College is successfully serving immigrant Latine community members in their efforts to master the skills necessary for daily living and workforce participation, and assess whether more can be done to increase the number of WDCE students who transition to credit-bearing coursework.
22. Develop a strategic Spanish-bilingual outreach and marketing plan to reach Latines where they gather (high schools, businesses, faith communities, events) and communicate with Latine students, prospective students, and their families using culturally relevant media and social media (Spanish language television, WhatsApp, etc.)
23. Appoint an HSI Advisory Committee to provide guidance to the HSI leaders above, which will permit coordination of follow-up activity for the recommendations here and additional strategies that are listed in this Appendix. The advisory committee should be composed of representatives from across units and divisions at the college, including student and community members.
24. Provide paid support or release time for individual(s) to advance and implement the strategies, develop and pursue HSI grant proposals, and move the institution's "servingness" goals forward.
25. Explore published research and case studies of successful models of Hispanic "servingness" as defined in the work of Dr. Gina Garcia. Incorporate the expertise of HSI Task Force members in continued dialogue, research, and leadership to promote the well-being and success of our Hispanic community.
26. Continue to research best practices, initiatives, and interventions of other HSIs that will improve access, completion, and post-completion success of Latine students.
27. Identify evidence-based practices for Latine students at each level of the decision-making process across the institution, including partnering with colleges and universities that have high numbers of Latine completers

28. Increase intentionality, quality, and consistency of customer service (customer service training, inter-office/division collaboration, information sharing between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs). Improve collaboration among departments for consistency in messaging from College faculty and staff that provide direct services to students. Survey the Latine community to assess whether they successfully access relevant information.
29. Strengthen resources for the community on how to validate their degrees from other countries, obtain financial aid (and access Spanish language financial aid support), and locate resources and guidance for DACA, Dreamer, and undocumented individuals.
30. Support the Student Career and Employment Services in providing enhanced career and professional development services for Latine students and graduates.
31. Audit the current financial aid resources to improve clarity for students and their families (including support for undocumented students and scholarships)
32. Provide more intensive college-navigation support and transfer advising to our many first-generation college students whose parents are unfamiliar with these processes.
33. Provide more web-based and in-person help for undocumented students, individuals with degrees from other countries, and students seeking financial aid.
34. Create/improve transfer partnerships to promote post-completion degree pathways
35. Assess effectiveness of advising and career planning post-completion.
36. Increase the number of internship opportunities and the number of students participating in these internships, particularly STEM internships; ensure that all students have equitable access to internships and assess participation rates.
37. Establish workforce pathway bachelor's degrees that support high-wage and in-demand careers. These are completion degrees for students who have an associate's degree with recruiting efforts that target Latine students.
38. Connect students with Recent Graduates Programs that provide professional development opportunities.
39. Create a culture of post-completion support and success by partnering with the Alumni Relations Office to collect transfer student stories and build a pool of alumni willing to come back to support other students.
40. Designate a point person who would be tasked with helping MC expand its services to undocumented students, nonimmigrant status students, and students whose family situation may impede successful registration or eligibility for financial aid. Encourage faculty and staff to routinely share the information for the point person and website so that undocumented students receive this information without needing to ask. The point person for undocumented information could assist with:
 - Strengthening collaboration and partnerships with MCPS College and Career Coordinators and counselors to help undocumented students from MCPS transition to MC seamlessly
 - Improving and expanding information available on a central webpage for that population
 - Developing faculty and staff training about undocumented student issues
 - Strengthening communication and resources related to Maryland Dream Act processes
 - Working with units on campus to provide programming to students around undocumented students' issues such as updates on immigration changes or other topics of interest we are identifying partnerships with organizations that may provide these students with relevant scholarships or other opportunities

II. Resources for Undocumented Students

The web page at https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/_documents/admissions-registration/undocumented-student-resources-updated.pdf updated in 2021, contains some scholarship resources, Maryland Dream Act information, and links regarding in-state tuition at transfer-destination Maryland public universities.

III. Literature Reviewed

In the past decade or more, studies of two- and four-year colleges and universities have been largely critical of the barrier between developmental and/or prerequisite courses and credit-level course work, particularly the disproportionate effect and negative impacts on minoritized students (Bickerstaff et al., 2022; Chen & Simone, 2016; Chen & Wells, 2022). These studies have focused on developmental education student completion rates, transfer rates, and persistence overall (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015) (Bailey et al. 2010; Barnett et al., 2020; Cullinan & Biedzio, 2021; Crisp & Delgado 2014; Jaggars et al., 2015). Specific research in this field looks closely at student demographics and placement errors based on high stakes testing (Belfield & Crosta, 2012; Edgecombe, 2011; Fields & Prasad, 2012; Grubb, 2013; Hodara et al., 2012; Saxon & Slate, 2013; Scott-Clayton, 2012).

Access to Academic Support. Scholarly literature on learning-center pedagogy underscores the invaluable support provided by learning centers (tutoring, review sessions, study groups, independent study, study materials). Pfrenger, Blasiman, and Winter (2017) claim that “frequent visits to the writing center in early semesters results in a statistically significant, positive relationship with increased pass rates and voluntary usage of the writing center [in later semesters].” To support the growing global community college, experts suggest innovations around web-based resources that writing centers can do to support L2 (English as a second language) populations (Paiz, 2018). Additionally, Paiz (2018) claims that web-mediated tutoring increases learner agency: it can serve as a function to encourage reluctant learners, skeptical of writing center support, to seek in person support and the myriad resources therein. Similarly, once students engage with centers, they improve their sense of community and belonging with the college via “independent study, ask(ing) for help, and interact(ing) with tutors” (DeFeo, Bonin, Ossiander-Gobeile, 2017, p. 14). Learning centers can be the face of the college, “carrying out essential identity and engagement work” of an institution (Paiz, 2018, p.4).

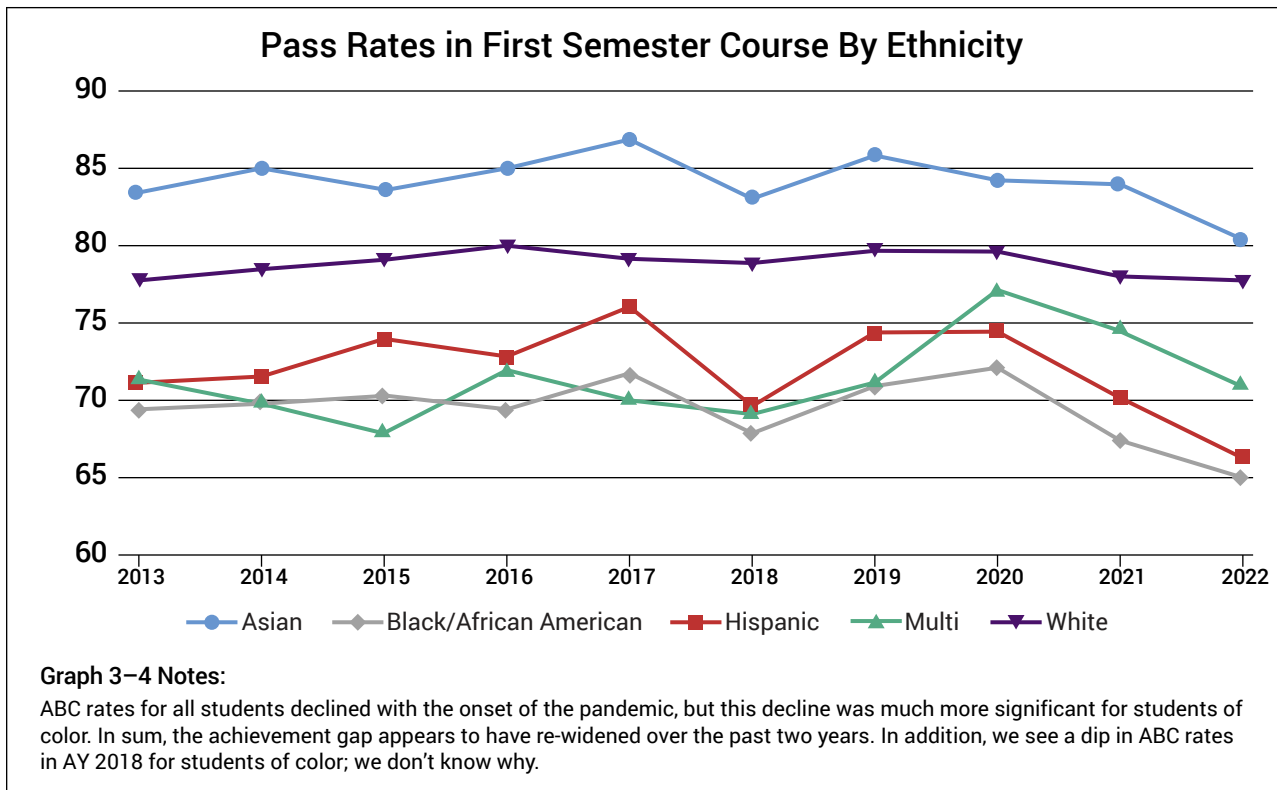
Montgomery College is no exception: Our centers lean into their mission embodying welcoming spaces for transforming lives.

One way the College can demonstrate access through “deliberate work in the community” (Strategic Plan, 2022, p. 8) is via the academic and financial efficacy of open education resources (Bowen et al. 2012; Bowen et all, 2014; Hilton & Laman, 2012; Feldstein et al. 2012; Genthe & Harrington, 2022; Iniesto et al. 2023; Pawlyshyn et al. 2013). This pedagogical and curricular model provides students and faculty the opportunity to design courses that deliver high quality, relevant materials at low and zero cost. This access initiative delivers on par and better retention completion than traditional models of instruction.

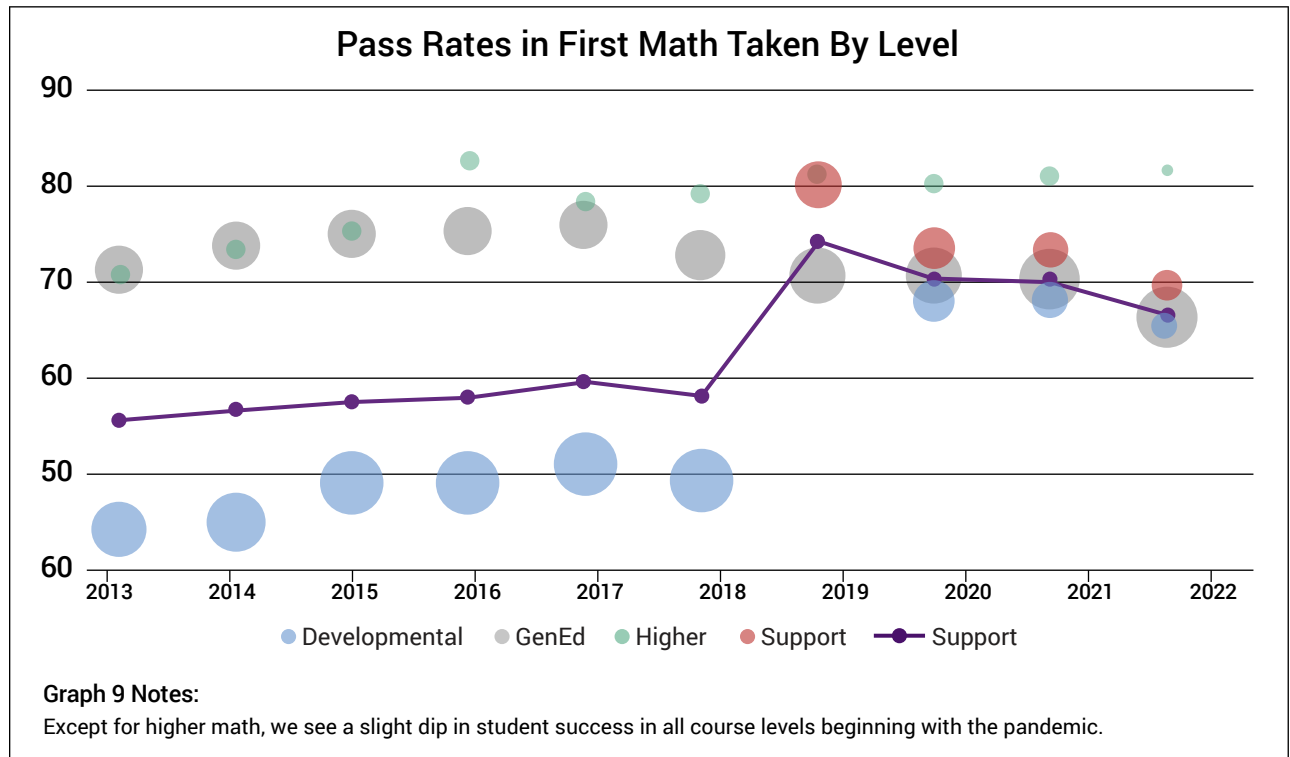
IV. First Semester Course ABC Rates

An analysis by Rick Penn and Mike Berman studied pass rates (grades of A, B, or C) in first-semester courses during the 2013-2022 time period. The full report, showing a variety of graphs, including analysis of which placement methods align most closely with higher success, can be found online at <https://rpubs.com/RickPenn/AssessmentStudy120822>. Of particular interest is their Graph #4 of ABC rates by ethnicity, shown below, which reveals a drop in pass rates for all groups during the pandemic but which shows the steepest drop-off for Hispanic students.

Graph 4: ABC Rates in First Semester by Ethnicity, 2013–2022



Also of interest is Penn and Berman’s Graph #9, below, which shows the impact of the Math Department’s redesign (fully implemented in 2018-2019), which directed far fewer students to developmental courses that had low pass rates. While Graph #9 is not broken out demographically, we do know, from the Closing the Achievement Gap Task Force Report, that the developmental courses in the years before the Math redesign had disproportionately high enrollment of Hispanic and Black students.

Graph 9: ABC Rates in First Math Course Taken, by Course Level, 2013–2022

These math results show that directing students into credit-bearing courses rather than sending large numbers into developmental courses (which provide no credit) resulted in overall pass rates increasing. However, in future, it will be important to disaggregate this data to ensure that Hispanic and other minoritized students succeed at the same rates as other groups.

The assessment of the English placement reforms showed that a higher percentage of students successfully gained access to college credit in their first semester. In 2013, just 8.6% of students took English 101 with a support class, which 74.2% of them completed with an A, B, or C grade. 48.6% of students took English 101 without support, and 71.9% of those students succeeded. 10.8% of students started in English 102 or higher, and 71.8% of them succeeded. However, in 2013, 31.9% of students (1,445 enrollees) started in a developmental (precredit) course. While 73.6% of these developmental students passed this English course, they earned no college credit for that work. In 2022, after the placement reforms, 48.5% of students took English 101 with a support class, where 70.9% of them earned an A, B, or C. 29.3% of students took English 101 without support, with 75.9% of them succeeding. 13% of students started in English 102 or higher, and 76% of them passed. Only 9.1% of students in 2022 started in a developmental course, where 63.7% passed but received no college credit. Thus, it appears that pass rates have improved for students deemed fully college-ready, and while pass rates have fallen somewhat for students who were not placed into stand-alone college-credit English courses, allowing the majority of these students to access college credit while receiving support resulted in far fewer students finishing their first semester with no English credit awarded.

Graphs #5 through #8 at <https://rpubs.com/RickPenn/AssessmentStudy120822> break out the English results with further detail by placement level, although success rates disaggregated by racial/ethnic group will also be essential in the future to ensure that Latine and other minoritized students are succeeding at the same rates as their peers and that they are placed into courses that maximize their chances of earning college credit.

V. List of Largest Degree Program Enrollments, Total and Hispanic

The table below shows the number and percentage of Hispanic students in each of the degree programs at MC that have more than 10 students enrolled in 2023, as drawn from <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/bo.chan/viz/2012-21FallEnrollmentbyProgram/Dashboard-Program>. As the legend on the final page of the table indicates, majors where Hispanic students are at least 33% of enrollees (at least 4 percentage points higher than their 29% enrollment at MC overall) are shown in green. Where Hispanics are fewer than 25% of enrollees in a major, the percentage is shown in pink. Prehealth majors that any student can enroll in are highlighted in blue.

Selective health majors where students must apply for acceptance into the degree program after completing the premajor requirements are highlighted in yellow.

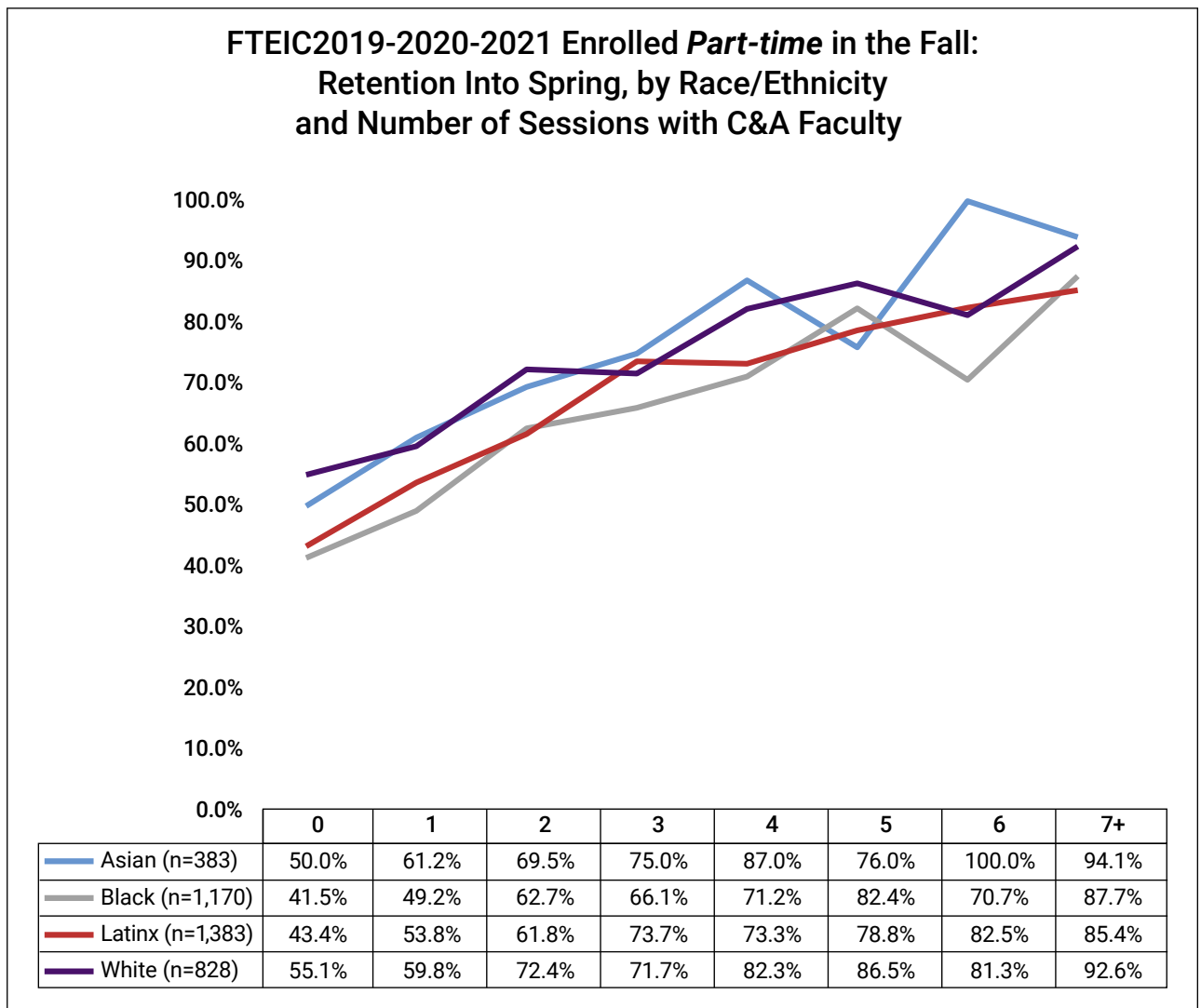
Fall 2023 Enrollments by Degree Program/Major	Total #	Hispanic #	% Hispanic
Business	2,042	672	32.9%
General Studies - Science/Technology/Engineering/Math	1,519	490	32.3%
General Studies - Social Sciences/Administration/Health	1,163	429	36.9%
Computer Science	1,122	189	16.8%
Gen Ed/Pre Clinical Nursing	986	307	31.1%
General Studies - Humanities/Arts/Communication/Languages	797	224	28.1%
Cybersecurity AAS	680	151	22.2%
Science AS - Biological Science	664	146	22.0%
Information Systems	519	91	17.5%
General Studies - Integrated Studies	502	151	30.1%
Nursing (admitted)	384	90	23.4%
Gen Ed/Pre Clinical Diagnostic Sonography	330	175	53.0%
General Engineering	280	80	28.6%
Arts & Sciences Criminal Justice	243	107	44.0%
Communication Studies	202	52	25.7%
Architectural Technology	192	90	46.9%
AAT Elementary Edu/Special Edu	189	85	45.0%
General Studies - GENU	188	54	28.7%
Criminal Justice	188	93	49.5%
AS in Science-Chemistry/Biochem	180	39	21.7%
AAT Edu-Early Child/Special Edu	173	61	35.3%
Behavioral Health	170	62	36.5%
Mechanical Engineering	169	52	30.8%
Arts & Sciences Criminal Justice	160	37	23.1%
Gen Ed/Pre Clinical Radiol. Tech	148	64	43.2%
Computer Gaming & Simulation	134	42	31.3%
Automotive Technology	128	62	48.4%
Cloud Computing & Network Tech	126	23	18.3%
Public Health Sciences	124	32	25.8%
Biotechnology	116	28	24.1%
Computer Engineering	111	20	18.0%
Exercise Science	110	28	25.5%

Fall 2023 Enrollments by Degree Program/Major	Total #	Hispanic #	% Hispanic
Management of Construction	105	54	51.4%
Arts & Sciences International	105	19	18.1%
Studio Art	101	33	32.7%
Digital Animation	101	34	33.7%
Gen Ed/Pre Clinical Physical Therapist Asst.	94	28	29.8%
Undeclared AA Degree	91	8	8.8%
Arts & Sciences Music	88	15	17.0%
Electrical Engineering	85	15	17.6%
Graphic Design AFA	83	37	44.6%
Early Childhood Education Tech	83	29	34.9%
Paralegal	80	20	25.0%
Graphic Design General	79	27	34.2%
Aerospace Engineering	76	18	23.7%
AS in Science-Mathematics	73	9	12.3%
Media Production	69	21	30.4%
Civil Engineering	69	23	33.3%
Transfer Studies - CT	69	10	14.5%
AS in Science-Environmental Science	68	8	11.8%
General Studies	68	15	22.1%
Interior Design General AAS	66	25	37.9%
Data Science	65	6	9.2%
Performing Arts	55	15	27.3%
Health Information Management	52	15	28.8%
Illustration	52	15	28.8%
AAT Secondary Education English	49	18	36.7%
AS in Science-Physics	49	8	16.3%
Digital Media & Web Tech AA	46	10	21.7%
American Sign Language	45	10	22.2%
Hospitality-Food & Beverage Mgmt	41	9	22.0%
Gen Ed/Pre Surgical Tech	40	12	30.0%
Photography	40	13	32.5%
Radiologic Technology	37	6	16.2%
Building Trades HVAC AAS	37	19	51.4%
Hospitality-Mgmt/Supervision	35	7	20.0%
Bioengineering	34	4	11.8%
Environmental Horticulture AAS	34	8	23.5%
Community Health	33	11	33.3%
Interior Design Preprofession	33	13	39.4%
Gen Ed/Pre Health Information Tech	32	3	9.4%
Diagnostic Medical Sonography General	30	7	23.3%
Chemical Engineering	28	4	14.3%

Fall 2023 Enrollments by Degree Program/Major	Total #	Hispanic #	% Hispanic
Building Trades Electric Wiring AAS	26	14	53.8%
Fire & Emergency Service Mgmt	23	2	8.7%
AAT Secondary Education Mathematics	22	8	36.4%
AAT Secondary Education Spanish	20	12	60.0%
Business Analytics	18	7	38.9%
Applied Geography	18	2	11.1%
Bioinformatics AS	17	2	11.8%
Arts & Sciences Art	16	0	0.0%
AS in Science-Life Sciences	15	7	46.7%
Building Trades Carpentry AAS	15	4	26.7%
Graphic Design	15	6	40.0%
Physical Therapist Asst.	15	2	13.3%
Physical Education	12	5	41.7%
Emergency Preparedness Mgmt AS	12	4	33.3%
Diagnostic Medical Sonography Echocardio	12	0	0.0%
Physical Education Teacher Education	12	3	25.0%
Medical Coding	11	3	27.3%
Surgical Technology	11	3	27.3%
... see full list of majors HERE			
Legend:			
Pre Clinical major			
Major to which students have been admitted			
Hispanic enrollment rate >4 percentage points higher than 29% collegewide average			
Hispanic enrollment rate >4 percentage points lower than 29% collegewide average			

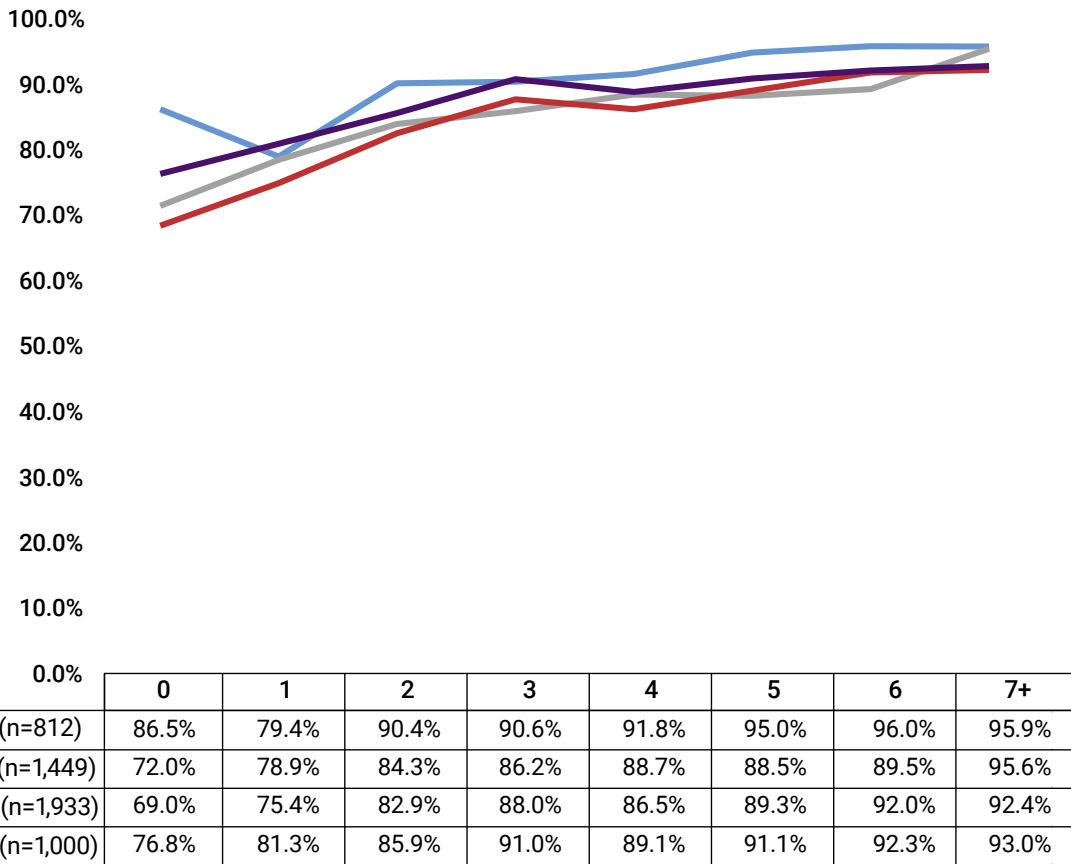
VI. Counseling and Advising Visits and their Association with Student Success

The document [FTEIC Retention Into Spring](#) contains an analysis of factors that predict first-time-ever-in-college students' likelihood of returning to Montgomery College the following spring semester. It showed that having one, two, or three Counseling/Advising visits was associated with a greater likelihood of continuing study the following spring. While this was the case for both full-time and part-time students, the impact was more marked for part-timers. Follow-up analysis, broken out by racial/ethnic groups, shows the associations between visits and student success. The follow-up data revealed that for Latine students, the increased success rates were even larger than for other racial/ethnic groups. The chart showing results for part-time students is included in the main body of this HSI Task Force Report, but it is repeated below in this appendix, along with the results for full-time students.



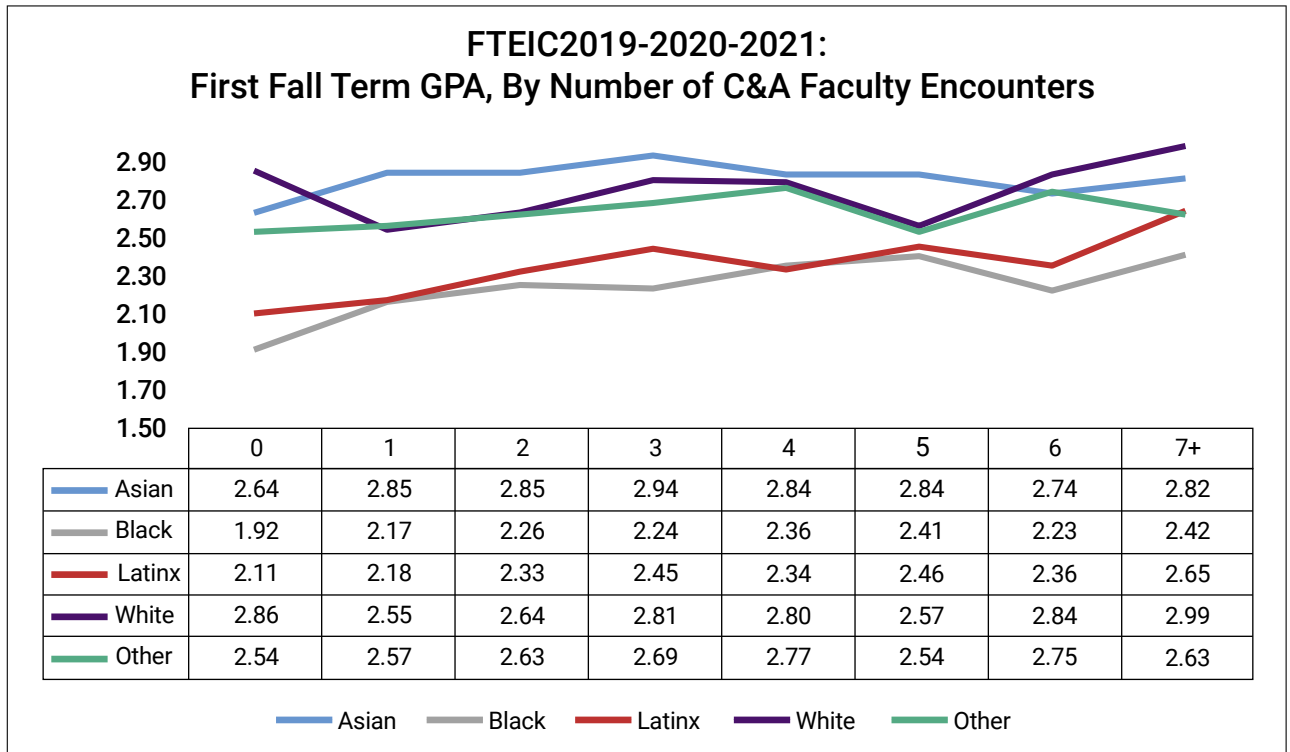
Source: OIRE (Ault); DMT; Starfish. January 2023.

**FTEIC2019-2020-2021 Enrolled *Full-time* in the Fall:
Retention Into Spring, by Race/Ethnicity
and Number of Sessions with C&A Faculty**



Source: OIRE (Ault); DMT; Starfish. January 2023.

In addition to their association with a higher likelihood of retaining Latine students the following spring, Counseling/Advising visits also were associated with higher GPA. Making one, two, or three Counseling/Advising visits had a positive impact on GPA for all non-White students, but it had the largest impact for Latine students. Average first term fall GPA for Latine students who had no visits was 2.11, for those with 1 visit, it was 2.18, for those with 2 visits it was 2.33, and those who had 3 visits had an average GPA of 2.45, an average increase in GPA of .34 points for Latine students with 3 visits versus 0. For other non-White groups, the GPA increase for 3 visits ranged from .20 to .32 GPA points. The chart below shows the disaggregated impact of Counseling/Advising visits on GPAs. (Ault, HSI_LevinsonAult_Part2, 2023)



VII. DFW Rates in 2023 Academic Year

The following rates of earning D or F grades or Withdrawing from courses, are drawn from the FY23 DFW Report published on the Reports and Resources page of the Office of Institutional Research, under “Resource Planning Toolkit.” Highest (worse) DFW rates are highlighted in red, lowest (best) in green. This data reveals several cohorts of Hispanic (and Black) student failure rates of more than 50% as well as numerous courses where DFW rates for these same groups are more than 30%. While the rates do not show the number of individual students affected in each group, it is essential that the College consider mechanisms to address this extremely concerning loss of credits and academic progress for Hispanic and Black students.

Academic Year 2023ACADEMIC YEAR 2023										
DFW Rates in Courses with 1,000 or more Enrollments within Academic Year by Gender within Race/Ethnicity										
	Asian		Black		Hispanic		International		White	
Course	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
ARTT100	23.1%	13.0%	16.7%	22.9%	18.0%	16.0%	4.8%	17.1%	15.6%	9.5%
BIOL150	31.9%	35.5%	42.9%	50.0%	51.2%	53.2%	34.5%	38.7%	27.7%	29.0%
BSAD101	11.1%	12.2%	24.4%	34.4%	26.8%	27.6%	22.1%	20.3%	21.1%	22.3%
COMM108	12.4%	16.0%	24.4%	27.7%	23.6%	24.7%	10.5%	20.0%	12.6%	17.2%
ECON201	21.5%	20.0%	25.5%	35.7%	28.3%	23.1%	16.4%	24.1%	7.1%	14.8%
ENGL011	26.7%	30.8%	27.7%	38.9%	29.6%	33.1%	14.4%	34.6%	26.0%	24.3%
ENGL101	23.0%	29.1%	30.1%	39.4%	31.1%	33.1%	15.4%	30.6%	25.9%	24.9%
ENGL102	19.2%	25.7%	27.9%	40.2%	35.8%	31.1%	22.6%	27.3%	19.9%	29.7%
MATH117	22.7%	22.1%	44.7%	47.1%	44.5%	36.4%	24.8%	41.9%	28.5%	28.3%
MATH181	27.9%	30.3%	47.6%	57.0%	51.9%	46.3%	28.3%	31.8%	30.6%	33.6%
NUTR101	12.5%	13.3%	16.9%	30.2%	25.4%	25.4%	16.4%	15.4%	11.2%	16.3%
PSYC102	15.7%	18.7%	28.8%	32.0%	28.8%	31.7%	14.3%	17.5%	13.4%	21.8%
SOCY100	14.0%	22.5%	31.0%	35.2%	28.7%	27.7%	24.4%	24.7%	19.4%	21.4%

VIII. HSI Task Force Timeline

Spring/Summer 2022:

- The Office of Equity and Inclusion invited Dr. Gina Garcia, noted HSI scholar, to give the opening keynote remarks for the April 2022 Equity Week
- An HSI Planning Committee was launched

Fall 2022

- President Dr. Jermaine F. Williams established the HSI Task Force and named the leadership and members (November)
- The Task Force held a kickoff meeting in December and established subcommittees
- The Task Force identified goals that aligned with the College’s strategic plan

Fall 2022 to Fall 2023

- The Task Force
 - conducted research on MC’s Latine student access, completion, and post- completion success and provided reports and recommendations
 - convened community conversation forums with internal and external stakeholders, including Latine community partners
 - researched other leading HSIs with promising practices
 - Identified and analyzed HSI grant opportunities, researched grant-funded institutions, provided information on grant development processes
 - Held an HSI Task Force panel, *What is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)?* during the April 2023 Equity Week,

November 2023 to April 2024

- The Task Force provided preliminary findings and recommendations to senior leadership and met with the Cabinet to review and discuss the report
- The Task Force submitted the final report to President Williams (April 2024)
- The Task Force developed a communications plan to distribute the HSI Task Force report for the College and wider community

Future Plans

- Publish final report for the College and wider community
- Attend stakeholder meetings and participate in other opportunities to share the report's findings and recommendations
- Support the implementation of next steps identified by the President
- Support the work to submit HSI-related grants

IX. HSI Task Force Membership

Cabinet Liaison

- Dr. Stephen Cain, Chief of Staff/Chief Strategy Officer (Oct. 2023-April 2024)

Executive Lead and Convener

- Sharon R. Wilder, Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer (Nov. 2022-Oct. 2023)

Task Force Chair

- Dr. Glenda Hernandez Tittle, Senior Program Director, Alternative Certification Programs (Oct. 2023-April 2024)
- Dr. Sonia Pruneda-Hernandez, Acting Dean of Education and Social Sciences (Nov. 2022-Sep. 2023)

Co-chairs

- Germantown: Dr. Ja'Bette Lozupone, Director of Student Affairs
- Rockville: Ivonne Bruneau-Botello, Department Chair, World Languages and Philosophy
- Takoma Park/Silver Spring: Gustavo Minaya, Financial Aid Counselor
- WDCE: Antonio Vidal, Data Coordinator, Adult ESL and Literacy Grant Program
- Other Co-Chairs: Henry Caballero, Professor; Dr. Sharon Fechter, interim senior vice president for academic affairs; Dr. Glenda Hernandez Tittle, Senior Program Director; Karen Penn de Martinez, Professor; Karla Silvestre, Director of Community Engagement

Subcommittee Membership:

- Research Subcommittee (three workgroups)
 - Co-chair: Henry Caballero, Professor
 - Access: Dr. Elizabeth Benton, Instructional Dean (lead); Dr. Jorge Hernandez- Fujigake, Professor; Dr. Shinta Hernandez, Dean of the Virtual Campus; Andres Maldonado, ACES Associate Director; Jose Medrano, Counselor/Professor; Maria Moreno-Martinez, Employer Services Specialist

- Completion: Karen Penn de Martinez, Professor (lead); Eddy Enriquez Arana, Professor; Dr. Glenda Hernandez Tittle, Senior Program Director, Alternative Certification Programs; Linda Robinson, Counselor/Professor
- Post-Completion: Henry Caballero, Professor; & Emma Wilson, Program Administrator (co-leaders); Rosalee Law, Manager of Data and Records Management; Hilda Smith, Counselor; Gloria Barron, Instructional Designer

Community

- Co-chairs: Ja'Bette Lozupone, Director of Student Affairs; Ivonne Bruneau- Botello, World Languages and Philosophy Department Chair; Karla Silvestre,
- Director of Community Engagement
- Members: Nelida Andres, Program Director Early Childhood Education Department; Alejandra Isaia, Program Director; Vanessa Zambrano, Strategic Content Producer; Ramon De La Cruz, Building Coordinator CT
- This group was supported by the Office of Community Engagement

Grants

- Co-Chairs: Dr. Sonia Pruneda-Hernandez, Collegewide Acting Dean of Education and Social Sciences, & Gustavo Minaya, Financial Aid Counselor
- Members: Dr. Brandy Naughton, Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs; Dr. Nancy Newton, Manager of Grants and Sponsored Programs; Dr. Sharon Fechter, Interim Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs, Surayya Johnson, Director of Student Life; Dr. Carlos Molina Rosales, Senior Part-time Faculty Associate

Report Writing Membership:

- Dr. Glenda Hernandez Tittle
- Rose Garvin Aquilino
- Prof. Karen Penn de Martinez
- Karla Silvestre

X. Community Conversations Notes

Notes from Latino Childcare Association of Maryland's Community Conversation

Thursday, April 20, 7–8 p.m.

64 participants (WDCE students)

1. What is MC doing well?

- Nelida Andrés offers early childcare classes in Spanish and in doing so helps Spanish-speakers lose fear of learning, especially the older students
- Access to computer classes in Spanish
- We are treated well
- Teaching certificate
- Access to space to meet on campus
- MC has not forgotten the early childhood profession
- Grateful for noncredit classes
- Montgomery College is focused on Latinos and they give us the opportunity to take classes in Spanish and be able to study early childhood education classes
- Grateful that Montgomery College offers classes for youth ages 13–14 and classes for adults
- Grateful for having had the opportunity to take classes in Spanish

2. What can MC improve?

- Assist professionals with education outside of the United States to validate their education
- Streamline certification
- Offer mental health and socio emotional classes/training
- Update curriculum and offer access to English classes in Spanish
- More virtual classes
- Access to scholarships
- More support to staff and faculty
- Business and computer training—prepare association members set up business, etc.
- Trade/vocational English
- Preparation for the requirements to the new Blueprint UPKA Universal PreK
- Credit classes be available to noncredit students
- Offer credit classes in Spanish
- Start classes with credit in Spanish and simultaneously study English classes
- I am an educator who became a 'family childcare provider' and I consider myself senior citizen. It would be advisable if the College could offer computer and English classes to be able to take the credit
- Alternative certification pathway early childhood classes
- I live in Prince George's County, and it would be nice if these credit, early childhood education classes were offered in Spanish. The Latino Child Care association opens the doors to the Latino community. For adults who work and study it is more difficult for us, I finished my associate's degree in four years.

- I recommend that Montgomery College help early childhood students with the following classes: English classes, Accounting/Quickbooks, Microsoft Suite Word and Excel, Owning Your Own Business classes, ESOL for Childhood educators, and continuing education classes required by the government (Maryland Department of Education and Licensure).
- That the wide array of credit classes be offered as noncredit. There is a greater variety of early childhood education classes in the credit area. We would also like to have new teachers that we can take credit, early childhood education classes in Spanish from.

Notes from Identity Staff's Community Conversation

Thursday, April 27, 10–11 a.m.

37 participants (many were former MC students)

1. What is Montgomery College doing well?

- I recently visited and I realized how new the buildings are. They are making the college feel very advanced, almost like a university. It reminds me of University of Arizona. I was really impressed at the design of some of the new buildings and designs. Kids were very excited at what they saw. I was impressed at how it looked.
- It is a joy working with people who believe in their mission. The level of support that we received for the middle school program. The degree of planning that has taken place with the deans in mathematics, biology, STEM, engineering. It really plants a seed for our kids that Montgomery College is an option and is welcoming. Outreach for college goes in the Latino community has to start in middle school. Knowing that they have a world class college in their backyard. I really appreciate that.
- I attended a few years ago before transferring to the University of Maryland. The science department really prepared me. I didn't struggle at all and I thought I was even more advanced than some of my peers.
- The counseling team is great, very welcoming and clear. They are very supportive to guide students, especially when they are lost in their decision to start a career.
- The programs provided by MC and the possibility to transfer easily to a university. The incredible connection that MC has with University of Maryland, where MC students are able to attend with special benefits.
- We work with a lot of English learners. I know there are some classes but I'd like to know if there are any nighttime classes.

2. What could Montgomery College do better?

- I changed my path more than a handful of times. Every time I needed to find an advisor, they changed me. I probably saw a lot of advisors and it was only when I was pursuing my education degree. My goal wasn't to stop working, but that was always their feedback. My education advisor finally understood that I needed more balance. I was always talking to different people. When I enrolled at MC, my high school hadn't prepared me for what I needed to have at MC. But when I knocked on every door, I would get told I needed to stop working and focus on my degree. I enjoyed the evening courses more than the morning. Professors were more understanding than my daytime courses.
Recap: Sometimes folks are getting bounced around, which is frustrating. There is a need and desire for flexibility that came from the professors during evening classes. We need higher awareness from faculty that people are juggling a lot.

- First of all, I want to express my gratitude. The communication we have with our partners in community engagement is great. I would like to share the experience from my children that attended MC. The professors, they said, were better than those from other universities. They also said the professors were more interested in their students. That's a personal comment.
- We would like to see more classes in Spanish.
- I also don't feel I had a good experience with the counseling department. I guided myself for transferring over. I was bounced around to different counselors. Sometimes they guided me in the wrong direction. I didn't have financial aid or anything, and I had to pay for my classes. One of the counselors told me to take a class I didn't need to take. At University of Maryland, you get one counselor. It would be a better experience for students to have that MC.
- For me, when I turned 18 in July, I had to go to the whole process. My parents are not English speakers. Having that information earlier would have been better.
- Re-cap: we need to do a better job to fully explain the financial aid aspect, etc. with accurate information and in their language.
- I went to MC for two years. I didn't know anything about it as a high school student. I had just heard that it was a good school and that it had a lot of resources. You should reach out more to high school students. A lot of people think it's a community college and that you don't have the resources that a university does, and it's not true.

3. Are there services missing that you would like to see?

- I would like to start a career with you and last year I was studying English and my teacher says to me someone would contact me about the career I would like to study. That was my first time studying here in the US. I never got the appointment. My course was done and I couldn't talk to anyone. My younger son is 30 years old and never went to college. He started now because you encouraged him and he thought: if my mom can, I can. They made an exception for him.
- My kids came when they were 10 years old and English is not their first language. My son received a letter from MC encouraging and congratulating him. That encouraged him to keep going. No matter how old you are, if you find someone to support you, it can happen.
- My question is: is there a chance for people like me to study? Any financial help?
- What would I like to see? People want to know where to validate their certificate and translate their degrees from abroad? For people who studied internationally, it would be great to have some services that would review international diplomas and then provide career guidance on which credits are transferable or how to follow a path to become certified in the U.S. Many of our skilled professionals come here but are lost about how to gain credits or take some classes to qualify for licenses, etc.
- It's important as well to share more information about the enrollment process for students who do not have documents, in terms of cost and financial opportunities. Most of them are afraid to apply because their income or immigration status. Maybe be more active at the schools to inform students. Work closely with the career counselors in high school even in middle school.
- More information about enrollment in the community.
- It would be good to offer more mentoring programs. Programs such as Future Link are good for students to participate in. But the key to that, is exposure, so that students are aware the programs are available to them.

- It would be great to hold Latino focused events. Events are usually held in English, not in Spanish.
- Providing information on growing career fields not just time of completion and cost, but hiring rates, retention rates, locations of where these careers are, etc. Providing this information in multiple languages or offering presentations from individuals in the fields/ sectors.
- I recall attending a presentation and receiving assignment credit for attendance, which allowed a real individual to share their experience and career path.

Comments via chat

- **Identity staff 1:** The counseling team is great, very welcoming, and clear. They are very supportive to guide students, especially when they are lost in their decision to start a career. The programs provided by MC and the possibility to transfer easily to a university. The incredible connection that MC has with the University of Maryland, where MC students are able to attend with special benefits.
- **Identity staff 2:** I would like the information in Spanish. I would like to know if you have any preparation course for the TOEFL?
- **Identity staff 3:** For those of you that do not have an A.A. or B.A., what conditions would have to exist in order for you to enroll at MC? UMD offers financial aid workshops for undocumented students in Spanish, Estudios universitarios a tu alcance. For people who studied internationally, it would be great to have some services that would review international diplomas and then provide career guidance on which credits are transferable or how to follow a path to become certified in the U.S. Many of our skilled professionals come here but are lost about how to gain credits or take some classes to qualify for licenses, etc.
- **Identity staff 1:** It's important as well to share more information about the enrollment process for students who do not have documents, in terms of cost and financial opportunities. Most of them are afraid to apply because of their income or immigration status. Maybe be more active at the schools to inform students. Work closely with the career counselors in high school and even in middle school.
- **Identity staff 4:** It would be good to offer more Mentoring programs. Programs such as Future Link are good for students to participate in. But the key to that, is exposure, so that students are aware the programs are available to them. Yanira and her team did a wonderful job at GHS [Gaithersburg High School] speaking to parents about Montgomery College. It was wonderful for parents to hear from them, and I am very thankful to them.

Notes from Identity Client's Community Conversation

Thursday, May 11, 6–7 p.m.

14 participants

Recent WDCE students (notes translated into English)

1. What is Montgomery College doing well?

- **Identity client 1:** I think that everything is very good, the teachers are very kind.
- **Identity client 2:** In my experience, face-to-face classes are better than online. I am studying basic mechanics, very practical exercises, it is very clearly understood, if you have questions, the instructor is patient. They have supported me a lot and I am committed to do my best.
- **Identity client 3:** So far, in my opinion' the program you are giving us is important to be able to develop new skills.
- **Identity client 4:** I have had my first experience with QuickBooks I. I am very grateful for the opportunity. The class in a classroom has been better because I have had the opportunity to ask the teacher directly and I have cleared up many doubts.
- **Identity client 1:** Yes. I studied computing and the classes are really good.

2. What could Montgomery College do better?

- **Identity client 5:** Maybe more variety in the courses, in the opportunity to offer careers as an associate. I am a preschool teacher, but I would like to take elementary [education] classes. Make classes more accessible. That the economic part is not a barrier. People who do not understand English may not be able to understand the information they receive. Maybe more variety in the courses.
- **Identity client 4:** The course I attended was very short for me.
- **Identity client 3:** The help you provide regarding classes or other activities is helping us a lot. The way that could be better is to follow the program you have now and above all continue giving opportunities to people. More courses in Spanish, the courses offered by workforce are not very varied, we need more variety. When they need to complete an associate's, they need a higher level to finish a degree and English slows them down a bit. Nursing classes are limiting, we have many Hispanic clients who want to study that career, but do not have the level of English to complete those studies.
- **Identity client 2:** More accessible hours. I am interested in the financial area, but I do not have the vocabulary or the level of English to develop myself in that area. I just took the English test, and now I'm studying the next level so that I can develop a financial vocabulary to move forward. The lack of English affects us.
- **SVP:** We could talk with teachers of English as a second language, English for specific purposes, vocabulary aimed at accounting, health professions, we could talk with programmers to offer what is most needed if it is business accounting, computer science, or health programs because it is something that can be done.
- **Identity client 6:** Idea of what clients are using the most, NEOTech, but they want to do it in Spanish because they don't have the level of English. Mechanics classes, plumbing classes that are like electricity but next to plumbing, pastry is something that has me and María, accessible pastry understandable in the language above all, but if made by hand.

- **Identity client 5:** In my case I would like more variety in IT certification, the options are very limited right now. Today IT is quite advanced, and it would be nice if they gave more specialized courses within computer science. For example, computer or network security.
- **MC staff 1:** Finding a way to absorb the language in what one does on a daily basis. Because I can't speak Spanish if my mom doesn't force me to speak it. All my childhood, adolescence, and adulthood we spoke Spanish at home, I have that trajectory, that discipline of having to speak it makes a big difference. In addition, listening to it, reading and writing it, one advances a lot in the language that one wants to master.

3 Are there any services that you feel are missing that you would like the College to provide?

- **Identity staff 1:** Something that we have seen several years ago, I think that this continues to be the case, is customer service, when students call for help or to ask a question, our clients who do not understand English have a lot of difficulty because they do not speak Spanish in customer service. That is what we are seeing, how we work hand in hand with our clients, we are translating and acting as interpreters to help them during the call. We have said it before, but this situation still continues. Opening the account to have the M number is quite difficult. The coordinator called and was told that there was no one who spoke Spanish. The authorization to clients to receive the M#. The process to get the information is very complicated. For student 2, it has been very difficult to clarify the situation.
- **MC Staff 2:** I explain that MC is doing something possible, I ask if they offered an interpretation service, but they are not.
- **Identity client 4:** What are the requirements for the "associate"?
- **Identity client 6:** The process of opening the student account and the M number is quite complex for clients.
- **Identity client 5:** Perhaps offer the test center service for certification exams. In my case, for example, I took out the network+ certificate from Comptia and the entire purchase process and making an appointment for the exam was something new in the org, and it was a bit difficult.
- **Identity client 2:** Thanks, I was able to do my account, I had to do it in English.
- **Identity client 5:** Yes, after finishing the course, the course is just a preparation for that exam.
- **Identity staff 1:** On the subject of "claiming your account," the whole process is quite complicated. If it is complicated and if English is not spoken, it is quite complicated, especially for newcomers, it can be very frustrating and discourage potential students. MC staff 3 shared the video with us and that is something that we use, but it is something that we would like them to do without so much difficulty. I have had to assist clients with the purchase of books or materials, we cannot make the purchase online because we cannot demonstrate that we are tax exempt. I don't know what would be the process that could help us to be able to order the books.
- **Identity staff 1:** We buy and pay for the materials and that is why we need them to make us tax exempt. The online procedure to prove that we are exempt from taxes, we cannot do that online on the bookstore website.
MC staff 2 offered her email address so that they can address your questions and she will offer the contact to get an answer on the subject of tax exemption.

4. What else would you like add that we haven't mentioned?

- **Identity staff 1:** Perhaps comment on the experience that our childcare group is having. Those who are taking 90 hours are having better results when the classes are in person. We had a success rate of almost 80%, with the other cohort less than 50% passed the courses. That is information to convey to you that there are courses that are going very well online, but this 90-hour course is much better in person.
- **SVP:** Requirements to study the associate's, to enter what would you have to do. What happens is that once they enter, they will have the assessments of English and mathematics or evaluation of the record of the primary credits. Most programs take 60 credits that take two years. Business, computer science, we also have for those who are totally convinced of a career we have general studies with various tracks. Academic programs that we have more than 40, but from credit associates, for example, American sign language, you can take an associate's or a certificate, but if you have previous credits from a school in the United States, you can send it. If you are from another country, you can go through those agencies that give an official record of the credits that can be used towards the associate's here. If it is from an accredited university in your country, you must send the information of one of those transfer office agencies.

MC staff 2 shared this information in the chat:

vanessa.zambrano@montgomerycollege.edu

<https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/academics/programs/index.html>

<https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/academics/credit-for-prior-learning/faq.html>

Notes from ATPA Students' forum

Tuesday, May 16, 6–7 p.m.

4 participants (current MC students)

1. What is MC doing well?

- I realized that the writing center was offering workshops and I really enjoyed it in Spanish specifically. I was able to go because of Professor Munoz, that's one of the activities that you should consider continue. I learn a lot about the college culture here. Keeping that kind of activities and workshops such as Latino culture. I did hear that they were not repeated.
- Exposure to activities and events to academic perspective on things that are culturally important, that speaks to inclusion, feeling seen, sort of adding that sense of belonging.
- **ATPA student 1:** Maybe to have more activities. I did see one Latino union club. The club was on and off. I want to be part of this club, but I did not hear about it. There was nothing related. Maybe have more Spanish initiative ambassadors, maybe having more faculty involved in that.
- **ATPA student 2:** What I can say about the ATPA program, this college is very diverse, no matter what nationality. MC always works to help students graduate. The ATPA program really helped me to graduate and complete my studies. Anyone should apply to join on this program.

2. What could MC be doing better?

- **ATPA student 2:** Especially moms it will be great to have childcare in MC to allow students more opportunities. There is a movement to make the campus more child friendly.
- **MC staff:** We will share on the chat the link to the program MC has in place.
- **ATPA student 1:** If the students are learning English, but speak Spanish with friends, that could help students who might be interested because the emails are in English, and maybe someone is learning English and they may miss the information.
- **MC staff:** I believe that MC has specific pages on various social media channels in Spanish. I'm wondering if what I'm hearing is if there should be information in Spanish and other languages. If anyone searches, the platforms that comes up may be the ones in English. We need to improve the awareness in social media channels. If we don't have it in all, maybe we need to add it to creating awareness or make the social media channels more inclusive.
- **ATPA student 3:** Not necessarily about Latino community at MC, but clubs in general. I feel I have a hard time to go through all dates when people are meeting. Some people post the time or group meet or Instagram, or other times on other areas. It was easy to miss out on information. He missed information, it's a bit disorganized so students can't keep informed. Students Club. Social club, it's not their fault they are trying to post in so many platforms that they may miss the opportunity to reach out to all students. I remember like two semesters ago, the psychology club sent an email and that was pretty helpful, there is some way to keep all the information of all clubs in one single place, that would be great!
- **MC Staff:** excellent that's wonderful feedback, thank you. That's not too much to ask. That's why we are having these forums. Whatever things we are doing well or some other we are not doing so well, but we are trying to improve.

3. What services are missing that you would like to see?

- **ATPA student 3:** I don't know if RV has any Latino student club, it would be great. Clubs mostly run by campus, not collegewide. We may need to rethink the club enrollment.
- **ATPA student 1:** Study and training workshops. Coming from HS [high school] to college is different. It's difficult if we do not know where things [are]. We can meet somebody specifically on a study group. How to manage the language and the course will be helpful.
- **ATPA student 2:** As far as what MC doesn't have from what I see in other colleges', MC has more of an open door than other community colleges. Provides many opportunities to help anyone who lives in MD, and I really appreciate this college. The gyms, the library, so many place that many students can go to study or get what they came for to have their diploma. And I really appreciate it.
- **MC Staff:** Hub for the community, there are also opportunities and resources for students in the county but for the state. MC is a place that welcomes.
- **ATPA student 2:** With two babies, online class professors are really supportive. In the end, MC faculty make sure students succeed, and I really appreciate that.

Anything else we should know that would help us improve the students experience to make it whether ais in your process with satisfying a degree? Is there anything else on your mind that you feel like you know what this might be helpful?

- **ATPA student 2:** After graduation I will be continuing certification. There will be events update? There is student parents' alliance, some activities in the summer as well. I encourage you to participate on these activities. Identify yourself as a parent, student to connect with the resources available from MC, including the student/parent task force. Participate on how they can make MC better for students/parents.

Notes from ACES Students' Community Conversation

Wednesday, April 26, 3–4 p.m.

6 students (current MC Students)

1. What is Montgomery College doing well?

- The activities that you provide for us. MC is very diverse so it gives us a chance to meet and interact. I spend 80% at Rockville and the rest in Germantown. In Rockville, there are twice the number of events that Germantown has.
- The activities and events, this makes it more welcoming.
- I liked the Mental Health Fair yesterday and it was great because it highlights that. If you are going through something or someone you know, it was very helpful to get the resources, who to call. So, having accessibility of resources provided at the College.
- I don't go in person but they are really good at notifying and communicating things available. They email you, there are flyers to let you know. I was able to do things without even going to campus. I prefer email and I get a lot of notifications from the school. I also see a lot of flyers and I like that.
- I go to the TP/SS Campus and I enjoy the activities. There's an activity on May 3rd that's Puppy Therapy.

2. What could Montgomery College do better?

- I had a bad teacher at first. Better hiring of faculty. We need to make sure we hire the right faculty members who will support students and align with our values.
- Lack of flexibility. Some thinking is old fashioned, especially with medical issues. I had a professor fail me because I was at the hospital even though I had left everything ready. She would keep us in class for three hours with no break.
- The transfer fairs, MC was leaning toward Maryland schools. Not all the people there were accurate. Improve the diversity of the recruiters (more than Maryland schools), and when they come, we want to make sure we they have accurate information to share.

3. Are there services missing that you would like to see?

- Two things come to mind: scholarship opportunities after transferring along with scholarships for my specific majors, and more support for people who aren't documented or don't have citizenship. I asked my ACES coach.
- I found talking to your teacher really helps. I needed help with supplies and my teacher notified me about a scholarship.

4. What else would you like to add that we haven't mentioned?

- One of the semesters, I was struggling mentally and my teacher said I could sign up to talk to a counselor. I did but it took a while for them to get back to me so by the time they did, I didn't feel like I needed it anymore. I didn't get the help I needed in a timely manner. We need to do a better job at having faculty members connect students to services.
- In the program there is a lack of representation of Hispanic people, especially people who are undocumented or immigrants. I love ACES but it's unfair that not everybody gets to benefit as much if they have a language barrier. ESOL students are used to having more support and people just kind of forget about them. I have seen it happen at the high schools but also at the College. Some make it to ACES in high school but then they don't come to MC because they feel they don't have the language skills or supports. The College needs to better support students who are not citizens and be more inclusive with the curriculum and with language supports.

Comments via chat

1. What is Montgomery College doing well?

- **Student 1:** Activities, break provided to the students, have a chance to interact and have fun. Germantown, most of the classes is in RV.
- **Student 2:** The activities and events, this makes it more welcoming.
- **Student 3:** art skills in RV, most of the teachers inform the students whenever are activities scheduled. Get notifications from school by email, and flyers.
- **Student 4:** I go to the TP campus, and I enjoy the activities. There's an activity on May 3rd that's Puppy Therapy.

2. What could Montgomery College do better?

- **Student 5:** My first semester was online, I had that specific teacher 3.5 rating on rate my professor, professor did not like when students asked questions and end the class. Faculty asked student to drop out if they were not doing well so far.
MC Staff apologized on behalf of MC! Impacts your completion goal, the retention goal. MC doesn't get the correct rates, and we should do something to clear this. If a faculty is not on track there should be a way for students to inform the institution that it is happening, finding the way to help the students to get the way to express about their concerns!
- **Student 1:** Some teachers, the way of thinking is old fashion. I was at the hospital, not able to go to class, and the professor said "I don't care" and failed me. I got a "D." never got a break in a 3-hour class despite the teacher promised they won't have a break but leave earlier. And ended up not being neither! When you guys doing transfer-fair was focus to Maryland school, but not all representatives were not providing accurate transferable information to MC students.
MC Staff clarifies that we ask the faculty to be more flexible, they have a lot of flexibility so that's an area where absolutely the faculty should be able to be more flexible. It would be better to improve the diversity of the transfer institutions on recruiting events. And they should share accurate information with the students.

3. Are there services missing that you would like to see?

- **Student 1:** Scholarships opportunities after transferring. FAFSA pretty much covers it, but finding a scholarship is a struggle. Hard to find information. Adequate and financial support for students. We could do a better job making easier for the students to find those resources and more scholarships to transfer and internships. Would like to continue getting help from ACES advisors. I don't know who to reach out to ask questions on my career path.
- **Student 2 and 5 agree with Ashley.**
- **Student 3:** I found talking to your teacher really helps. I needed help with supplies and my teacher notified me about a scholarship not to known.

4. What else would you like to add that we haven't mentioned?

- **Student 5:** Struggling mentally, I talked to my teacher and she was able to provide me the contact person to reach for help, I did but I did not hear from them or I heard later on that I decided that it didn't matter anymore since I was over the situation. MC staff: Maybe initial stop on a student journey, and maybe they are causing the students to drop out (faculty).
- **Student 1:** It was on the program a lack of representation within the program, especially for international students who needed information in their native language since they were still in ESOL. He wasn't comprehending well the information, the pace was too fast, and he did not understand. We should have someone to support the language barrier, it is unfair to those students who are provided with the opportunity but they have the language barrier and cannot engaged well or take advantage of the program. I helped him always that I could. The quizzes were not familiar with the formats since they were not familiar with the language. Especially in HS, but sometimes in MC. In the area is a large population of Hispanics.
- **MC staff:** The college should support better those students who are not US citizens. Inclusiveness with the curriculum that we are sharing and learning from within the program.
- **SVP:** Very valuable feedback! Thank you so very much.

Notes from MCPS Latino Parent Advisory Group's forum

Wednesday, May 17, 7–8 p.m.

8 participants

1. What is MC doing well?

- No barriers to accepting students of all backgrounds
- Affordable classes
- An easy process to transfer college credits to other colleges/universities
- Diverse, inclusive, and supportive faculty
- 4 children have graduated from MC, and both he and his wife have taken classes with MC
- The ACES Program
- Dual enrollment program for juniors and seniors
- A college that's open to everyone; everyone is welcome
- Affordable tuition rates
- Scholarship opportunities
- Opportunities for students to be involved with clubs in student life
- Variety of academic programs

- Friendly faculty and staff
- There's a need for a better process of orientation to the College and what to expect after courses are completed
- There's a need for clearer communication for students to understand expectations
- More follow-up with students to have a better sense of how students are doing with the class or class material
- Diversity of cultures among the students
- Scholarship opportunities for undocumented students
- ACES program- mentoring and scholarships
- Achieving the Promise Program
- Great English classes and early childhood classes
- Lower tuition rates

2. What could MC be doing better?

- A more robust system of counseling and advising for students.
- It would help greatly if tuition rates were the same regardless of the status of students.
- Offer math classes that are more relatable to the careers that students are pursuing.
- Some students are leaving the College out of frustration of being put into remedial classes.
- More variety of classes to take as opposed to taking the same classes every so often (child development).
- More evaluation/orientation for students to understand the process of evaluating foreign credentials.
- More office hours for teachers and more in-person assistance and services.
- Students are wasting tuition and classes by having to take classes that financial aid doesn't cover or that don't count towards the credits they need to graduate.

Notes from the Faith Community's Community Conversation

Thursday, May 25, 7–8 p.m.

3 participants

1. What is MC doing well?

- **Faith Community Member 1:** Access to campuses to GT and Rockville, students that are homeschoolers that are 11th or 12th grade can take online courses since they are hesitant to take classes with big gap of ages. Offering online classes provides many opportunities and benefits are homeschooling community.
- **MC Staff:** MC offers many opportunities and COVID opened MC's eyes in how to offer more accessible classes.
- **Faith Community Member 1:** It also presents as a great transition for our students to transition to the university. Something important about the Hispanic community is that family is very important—and we are not ready to send our children away at 18. The online and remote offers great opportunities to students.

- **Faith Community Member 2:** I had the opportunity to visit the UMD with chemistry and the professors were very pleased with the students that transferred from MC. It then seemed to me that MC is preparing MC students very well to transfer so they have that opportunity. And this is talking about UMD who is well known and departments of Chemistry and Engineering. For professors to speak so highly, gave me such peace and tranquility that MC is doing good work and that they have high quality education. It offers peace of mind that my children can attend classes.
- **Faith Community Member 1:** Many from my congregation are taking the 11th and 12th Early College [program] to complete a degree as a high school student. In our congregation we have many doctors, engineers, and at times they may be very hesitant to send to a community college, but they are considering MC because of word of mouth and seeing other students complete MC and that it is rigorous in preparing students. It gives members a peace of mind.
- Important that the cost of the classes is more accessible to students and then they can transfer with all credits (cost effective to families).
- **Faith Community Member 1:** In our congregation there are many engineers.
- **Faith Community Member 2:** My son did dual enrollment, and the communication was very fast. The person was consistent with supporting the students. It was very easy to enroll and was grateful for all the support from academic counselors to the advisors helping him with the classes. I was surprised by the quality of the service and the support that students received. I was very surprised that the person was always very respectful and recognized me as a parent. I was not ignored as a parent, so it made me feel good and supported.

2. What could MC be doing better?

- **Faith Community Member 1:** I have two things and I don't know if it's happenings so I'm assuming. At times I feel we get lumped in one and we are very diverse. We are all from all different countries, we may have different values and characteristics. On occasion, as Hispanics we are all placed together as one. A suggestion, is that we are identified individually. We are a congregation that is traditional and religious. Many parents prefer very black and white so that certain aspects are not taught, or personal opinions of people are passed down. We would never want someone's opinion or values judged that could impact their grades.
- **Faith Community Member 1:** We are a community that is very complex, we are not one homogenous group. It can be surprising when we speak of the worldview. As a parent of homeschooler, MC is extremely attractive to us and I wanted to take this opportunity to let MC know that we are grateful and thank you for what you have done. You are doing excellent work that supports families and our children. MC allows an opportunity for many educational opportunities that is expansive. I've heard from others in other areas that state their colleges are not great so would never send their children But, we are grateful for all that MC is doing and the opportunities.
- **Faith Community Member 1:** Showing what is the standard way to enter the College, it can be confusing. What is the pathway to start? The economical part is also confusing. What is the cost? Communication to community regarding the pathways and the costs so that it is clear. Part of the confusion is when discussing with friends, all people have different pathways so having some basics would be very good. What are some basic pathways such as high school, adult learners, tech program, or transfer program? How do you navigate the enrollment process and learning about the financial part?

- **MC Staff:** How did you find the information you received about MC?
- **Faith Community Member 1:** I received the information from other families that attended MC. I have been in MoCo [Montgomery County] for 18 years. I saw another family that their children were attending MC so seeing the quality of education that they were receiving. Many homeschoolers use MC to take courses for the quality and rigor. And we saw many families enrolling children because it was cost effective. Word of mouth was important, Rita Hoover, an advocate of MC and homeschooler parent, tells parents about the opportunities. We have seen the positive examples and the transfer opportunities that they have had. Seeing the older students from our congregation and friends follow this path has been very positive. I also saw a single mother be able to complete the nursing program because of the accessibility and now she can provide for her family as a single parent. We see it because of these examples.

3. What services are missing that you would like to see?

- I am a homeschooler mom, I am all for the children, teacher, advisor, etc. I have visited the website and helped my son navigate the website. In reality, the website with finances is very confusing. I know there was a webinar and I missed it. In reality, it's confusing. I have to plan how to budget their classes, but can't seem to locate it. Through MCPS, they can do it directly with counselors, but students that aren't in school, how can they receive the support or easy accessibility to the information.
- Does homeschooling receive the tuition free?
- Faith Community Member 1: At high school, it seems they may be to be in a cohort. If one goes and many go and receive support. It would be nice if there would be some marketing and targeting to homeschooling community. A recommendation would be to target and send information to the homeschoolers, so they have the information. What we do as parents, we follow other parents to support our children. Recommendation: Outreach to the homeschooling community could be very beneficial.

4. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

- **Faith Community Member 1:** I'd like to end giving my thanks, my gratitude for all MC is doing. We are advocates for our children. We support and provide information. We feel privileged for living in this area and one of them is having MC as an educational institution. This is not just by me, but the other Pastor who was not able to be here. MC is making a difference in the lives of many people. Thank you.

Notes from Montgomery County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's forum

Friday, May 12, 3–4 p.m.

15 participants (many attended MC decades ago)

1. What is MC doing well?

- What MC does well and is visible is they are offering an opportunity for young high school students to have a bridge into higher education. People in high school sometimes think that it will be too expensive but because the first two years are the fundamentals, they can have the opportunity to go to MC and in some instances, it's combined, they can go to high school and college.
- It's great that you are seeking feedback and this is great for us entrepreneurs. I started at MC and then moved to University of Maryland to get my degree. The outreach is great and having achieved being an HSI doesn't just come about without initiatives. The openness, the ease, the encouragement, the financial burden, which is a lot less than going to a four-year institution. It's a testing ground for many of the kids.
- Knowing that MC is ranked as one of the best nationwide, not just locally, speaks volumes of the good services that it provides to the community at large, not only to the Hispanic students. It would also be good if the College can share with us some statistics and facts to broadcast to our members and our community at large.
- As others mentioned, I have not followed what MC has done lately but I grateful because it was my opening door into higher ed in the US when I came from Colombia. I feel like this is the opportunity to give something back. We need to have more information to give us an idea of what's going on so we can become ambassadors of the College. We all have circles and the bottom line is I'd like to see more Latinos going to college and graduating. Many think that it's too expensive and that mindset has to change and the way is to tell them that this is the best way to get educated. The benefits will far surpass the debt.
- The fact that you are asking for our input is a HUGE PLUS! Thanks

2. What could MC be doing better?

- I typically work all across the state and the DMV. I live in Carroll County but I wonder if the marketing could reach the rest of the state. Our community travels and parents would probably feel comfortable with their Hispanic kids coming to a Hispanic Serving Institution. Attend bigger Hispanic events across the state. It's great to have great curriculum, staff, faculty, to accommodate all types of Latinos. So, pushing that out more (promotion). Secondly, more adult learning and I don't know them in depth right now. I get solicited all the time with people asking how to learn English, etc. If I know more, I can spread the word. I love what you're doing.
- I am wondering about the Dual Enrollment Program. My daughter has found it difficult. If she found the process to sign up difficult, I believe her. I need more information.
- I would suggest for the HSI Task Force, building some kind of routine communication with business owners is a good idea. Business owners are always looking for specific resources. Having communications with folks such as yourselves would give you a better idea of what is needed in every industry. And, not to undercut a four-year institution, there are a lot of jobs today that don't need a four-year degree. Using folks as yourselves to be disseminators of information, when a topic comes up in a conversation with a student or business partners,

we can share that information. We would know what's going on. Think about how to keep that outward communication with us.

- I don't think people should get a certification and that's it. But they didn't learn how to learn. And our Latino students and poorly served that way because the people who have the higher-ranking positions don't only have that. With AI, nobody in the government is taking the lead about the planning and the guardrails. It's a good idea to get people into jobs but we still need that awareness that writing, learning, and policy is extremely important. People also need how to communicate.
- I have noticed is that expanding the outreach approach... A lot of families need to know what are the opportunities that college can offer. What MC offers is tremendous. It was not clear to me until people came and said to me that at MC I'd have smaller classes, people who could help me, give me a hand. My point is participating and involving families can expand their mindset about what MC can do for their kids.
- I have come across many friends who come from universities, doctorates and master's degrees... I agree with both Carmen and Mauricio. There is always a need for higher education but many people in our community need more opportunities. There is a huge need for programmers. MC should push more on those certifications that bring job opportunities in the region.
- The intent of my comment was not to single out one vs. the other, degree vs. credential. It takes people who fix our AC but also people who will help the government write policy. That was not the purpose, just to make it an easy pathway for people from middle school, to high school to Montgomery College, and beyond, if they wish so.
- I have been serving on the board of Holy Cross for six years and at Suburban Hospital. There is a big need for lab technicians. I don't know if MC has the ability to provide those certifications but there is a high demand. It would be great if MC offered that. Also, the branding and recognition of Montgomery College. The reality is you do outreach, it's just not visible enough. There is a newsletter that it sends, but the subject line is incomplete when you see it very quickly. I finally opened it a week ago. I loved the newsletter and there were great things but the way it was being sent out... it was about the look. Another thing about marketing... I was behind a bus and there were great things on it but Montgomery College was small print in the bottom.
- MC needs more marketing directed to the Hispanic Community.

3. What services are missing that you would like to see?

- I don't know all the offerings, but we need certified interpretation, bilingual certification, commercial driver's license, we need social media bilingual marketing content (this one is a struggle). We have Latinos who are fabulous but they need more soft skills. We need to train them in that sense: how to show up to a meeting, how do you show up, how to communicate. We need to train the kids and young people on these.
- I would highlight that there is a great shortage of nurses, so boosting and creating outreach for the nursing program you already have. There is a need for bilingual nurses. It would benefit the community. Praises for opening a location in the East County.
- I'd like to do a plug in for the Hispanic Business Institute. So many people have a hard time getting through classes in English. We were instrumental in getting it started. We would like that strengthened. Important to have the occupational safety component in Spanish. We would also like more programs for our senior population and it's a population that is increasing.

4. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

- We need financial literacy. We need people to learn how to manage their finances but it would be nice to have a career pathway for Hispanics. I am one of two people in the region. We need more financial advisors and to create a pathway for young people to pursue that career.
- We need more information about scholarships, mentorships and internships for the kids. They have to have the component of outreach. Many in our community don't receive outreach. You have a wonderful newsletter, but our community is not used to receiving information this way. It's better to go to the schools.

Notes from MC employees' forum Friday, May 12, 1–2 p.m.

16 participants

1. What is Montgomery College doing well?

- **MC Staff 1:** I happen to run a workshop for heritage speakers in Spanish and what the college has done is facilitating some fundings to give free books and small stipend. This has been successful, like some of the students last semester were crying they did not want to leave. They never read a book in Spanish, so their literacy in Spanish was zero. Most of them choose Spanish, they don't get credit, it is completely optional, and it has been successful. For that they deserve credit. The college deserves credit.
- **MC Staff 2:** I'm in financial aid and we give presentations in Spanish, we have printed information in English and Spanish. We are trying to be more accessible in that way. Not targeting specially for Latinos, however we are trying to reach out to this population in the Spanish language.
- **MC Staff 3:** We do a fantastic job supporting Latino student union.
- **MC Staff 4:** I know there are a lot of clubs that not only have Hispanics, but students participate in other clubs and have good representation.
- **MC Staff 5:** I think that MC is open to have ideas, try, maybe some don't work, but they try. Open and trying new ideas regardless of where they are coming. These ideas, that faculty speaks in other languages, and are ready to help the students. This is something that it is not seen in other institutions. It is very unique!
- **MC Staff 5:** For employees: MC is great at offering opportunities for professional development for employees including getting a degree with reimbursement for the classes.
- **MC Staff 4:** I like that there are Spanish speaking personnel in Raptor Central, Financial Aid, scholarships, and grants and in other frontline points of contact.
- **MC Staff 6:** 8,000 people take our ESOL classes in the community and many are Latinos included in that number.
- **MC Staff 7:** Sharon Fechter has to be commended and whoever helped asking me to teach a history class in Spanish. Possibly it may not happen before, but I was able to do this noble endeavor, but also a risky endeavor. Sharon Fechter needs to take these chances to see what is good.
- **MC Staff 8:** This has been a great initiative, should be taking this sample to export this idea to other disciplines. Using the expertise, I believe it has been done in other disciplines, but in my area biology, we have not done so that. We must support the leadership with this idea.
- **MC Staff 5:** The outreach in the communities not just by being at community events but having the MC Centers in communities.

- **MC Staff 9:** 68% of Spanish speaking immigrants are currently attending Adult Basic Education classes to improve their like and work skills, including their English, reading and math skills, allowing those who did not complete their high school in their countries, or in the U.S., to get prepared for taking their GED test. WDCE founded by Maryland department of labor.
- **MC Staff 10:** By providing bilingual curriculum program, we are helping students to expand their fun in learning. We can be using multilingualism in the curriculum; from English being the only language of instruction. That really enhances their language capability, and the faculty can use their language with the instruction. Support faculty to develop course material with release time, etc. across disciplines, STEM, math, translingual process goes beyond. In the languages we have being doing the process of languages across the disciplines. Professional impact not only into the individual but the student takes those skills to the workforce and society. We have other bilingual faculty who would certainly participate. I'm very optimistic and that we are working on this and have people from other areas seeing this as a trend of best practice overall. It improves outcomes, graduations. We can look to beautiful models, there are multilingual models not just the curriculum, but staff.
- **MC Staff 4:** Validates the linguistic and cultural heritage social/emotional impact. Another positive aspect is that MC Latinx employees are unified in meeting the goals of MC.

2. What could Montgomery College do better?

- **MC Staff 3:** Representation 5% of our employees and 28% of students are Latino, that's a huge disparity!!! There are not administrators, only three. Representation really matters. MC Foundation does a philanthropic day for Black donors, but I do not see anything for Latino donors. We have a lot of Latinos in the county that I'm sure would love to donate. Why are we not reaching out to them?
- **MC Staff 4:** A lot of employees, facilities and building services staff, I don't know if they feel supported. The good thing is that MC has opportunities for development, I don't know if they are supportive in those departments of the college. Some people have come to me and asked what can I do? I don't know if they feel comfortable to talk to their supervisors, so I don't know if their supervisors are supporting.
- **MC Staff 11:** Latino students do not have enough classes or programs where they can improve their abilities in the language. When they take classes out of the equations 99% of the students speak Spanish when they go home! They do not have a place to speak English. Where are the English classes where can I practice my English conversation?
- **MC Staff 10:** July 3 reminded me about the pandemic, about bilingual memos. Essential employees among the staff were on campus doing their work while we were staying at home due to the pandemic—that should be a practice to be continued: bilingual memos. Take a need-based assessment among the facilities colleagues, so their needs are collected and responded by MC. Do we need bilingual memos? Rather than speaking for them, they could have the opportunity to express themselves. All employees matter, it will be great to see that data. The facility staff speak Spanish among them and to me. Creating a community that can choose. We could help them use both languages. I think the College has shown that it can be done, but it is important to see it could continue.
- **MC Staff 5:** I do a lot of social media. We have done it in various languages to promote courses or events. Somebody replied and said that's not where the College stands. Is there something that shows that the College supports all diversity because there is a rumor that a lot of employees are told not speak Spanish! I know some. Different areas, but it looks as if it is the College. Dispel this if it is not accurate. I know where our administration stands on, but it is important for the College to do something clearer.

- **MC Staff 6:** I missed some of the meeting, but have we talked about increased marketing MC to the Latino community? Much more outreach in Spanish in the high schools is needed to help families understand how to transition to MC.
- **MC Staff 12:** We definitely need more marketing!! We need to provide more targeted information. That could happen with all the services including financial aid. I know we can do a better job, like more outreach in Spanish. It is only three of us and two of us speak Spanish. More beneficial to our population if we provide support or information in Spanish.
- **MC Staff 6:** Many community members from Latin America want help on how to validate their diplomas from back home.

3. Are there services missing that you would like to see?

- **MC Staff 11:** The transition to the workforce is not easy. They need to validate their credential but with a lack of English it is more difficult. How I transition to a new culture and language environment?
- **MC Staff 6:** Intermediate ESOL at low cost is a service that is missing.
- **MC Staff 13:** When English is not their first language and they are transitioning to workforce development classes, it is really hard, anxious for speaking broken English. That happened with me. I'm just thinking if there is any kind of service or workshop we can create to just to practice the English language.
- **MC Staff 4:** We who have Spanish background, we are advocating for the services and identifying resources, but do not to add more burn out to the Hispanics staff or employees.
- **MC Staff 10:** Another important thing for those employees who are willing to engage in that extra work of using their language skills etc., I heard from Spanish speaking staff at MC that they would be interested in professional development for linguistics skills growth, so when they can advise, they can do better and be confident. Develop course materials they can do independently. Really support the faculty, in the sense of huge messaging that their work is invested and validated with compensation. Work with ELITE, sabbatical this opportunity. It is within our reach, and they should be bilingual faculty/staff who would take what the College offers.
- **MC Staff 6:** When I came to the College, I looked for classes where I could improve my Spanish, I wanted to feel comfortable. The only class I was able to take it was Spanish literature, it did not help me to improve my Spanish. I want to improve my Spanish writing. Back to the professional development that is needed. Latino employees should be fully literate in order to help the students!
- **MC Staff 4:** The College is bilingual and there are certifications for that. People need to get more confident to be able to do that.
- **MC Staff 3:** I think, for me I didn't grow up speaking Spanish. I have felt less than them as a Latino within the community for not speaking Spanish. It is what it is, but I think we can do a better in understanding that there are members within our community that don't speak Spanish. Again, that's supporting. We do have a lot of Latinos that English is their first language!
- **MC Staff 6:** A Latino family day at MC has been suggested to me by community members.
- **MC Staff 5:** This also came up by MC employees, and it was recommended to have a "Dia de la Familia" be added to Hispanic Heritage Month.
- **MC Staff 10:** There's SPAN 106, which addresses staff professional development in Spanish, but there is a need for the faculty/staff environment. There is only one section of this course, which really could be offered at a higher scale, commensurate with our student demographics.

4. What else would you like to add that we haven't mentioned?

- **MC Staff 11:** As a former student, we do not have to wait until Hispanic heritage month to celebrate Latinos. We could produce a theme or project that is every month like what makes you proud to be Latino? We can only imagine what the parents have gone through to have their kids where they are. Bring them to the College!
- **MC Staff 4:** I've been thinking, as we have been designated as an HSI maybe some groups feel threaten or feel competition. This should not be happening. Maybe they have not been featured, but more predominant and now when the data has come, we won't like to feel a competition.
- **MC Staff 5:** I was in an area with a lot of Chicanos. It is really important for us to be unified. Sense of identity, Henry says right, we are not trying to exclude some. We are coming together. There are many Latinos and Latinas in our lives. It is important for the College that we are not trying to exclude as a group. Everyone is invited to join us at the "Cafecitos with Colegas." We are saying where we belong. It is important that as Latinos we come together, to form a sense of belonging. That we see there is a piece of my culture here. That's something that some people won't understand, but I think for students it is a point of importance. We are having events but a lot of our colleagues that are working can't come. Having events or often talking with supervisors and ask them to let them join the events. People want to get involved, but they said their supervisors don't let them. We want to continue to help people feel they belong here.
- **MC Staff 14:** It's very inclusive thank you for doing this Sonia for putting all this together!
- **MC Staff 3:** I loved seeing Sonia get the leadership position. When they announced it, I shared it with my daughter- you can do that! We have grown up and didn't see us climbing the ladder in higher education. I can't talk to my family about advocacy, etc. More collaboration with other ethnic groups identify how we are alike. I identify as Afro-Latina. Anti-blackness within the Latino population. I don't think there funding designated for heritage. Creating designated budget for these important heritage months. I would like to see more financial support.
- **MC Staff 10:** alienating other groups, focusing on HSI initiative, a lot of research in the academy discusses significance of intercultural, how to perceive delineation. We are not in our country of origins, if we look at the data of the Hispanic that is 80% is US citizen, they are American. We are not foreign and have those connections across cultures. All these events are important helps create unity.
- **MC Staff 6:** MCPS has a 28% Latino graduating class. At MC is 26% but there are more out there that are not going anywhere to higher ed, majority are Latino. I would like to see a huge lift in promoting financial aid. Latinos don't know how to pay for college. Parents tell me my child did not apply anywhere. We need to saturate the media on how to pay for college. There is a way to pay for the college! Through any kind of media, to really change their mindset that their kids can go to college. Working in our school, we are not doing great work there. Get more Latinos in transition to MC. Finally, you all mentioned Spanish dominant employees at the College, let's get them access to reimbursements through EAP, to improve their English so they can move up in the workforce. Maybe we are but that's something I would like to see.
- **MC Staff 2:** I would like to see more involvement across the campuses. I'm not talking about employees, about students. TRIO bring them together. Student's involvements here in GT I don't see that much Latino involvement, I see other groups. Where at TP/SS we see more of that. We are a bigger group there than in this area in GT. I would like to see more involvement both students and staff members.

- **MC Staff 16:** Thanks Kimberly for your great ideas!
- **SVP1:** Thank you everyone for your thoughtful and sincere sharing. I must transition to another meeting I am leading at 2
- **SVP2:** Thank you for your time today. I appreciate you sharing your thoughts and ideas. I have to leave for my next meeting. Be well!
- **MC Staff 14:** Thank you all, we need to close.
- **MC Staff 15:** Shout out to community engagement for doing a lot of outreach in the community.

XI. Institutions that Received HSI Grants

Austin Community College, TX

- Received the Seal of Excelencia certification
- Ranked as a top-serving online university in Texas with an innovative distance education program offering 24 degree and 13 certificate programs fully online (Garza, 2021)
- Offers a Guided Pathways Program, which has increased the term-to-term retention rate for Hispanic students by 16 percent since its launch in 2016; initiative included in the Growing What Works Database (Office of the Provost Austin Community College District, 2024)

Big Bend Community College, WA

- Received a \$4.4 million U.S. Department of Education HSI-Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) and Articulation Programs (Title III, Part F) grant to increase the number of Latine students in STEM
- Additional achievements were implementing strategies to improve student success in developmental math and increasing the number of sections in precalculus and statistics (Big Bend Community College, 2021).

Central New Mexico Community College, NM

- Implemented Progresando Initiative, which supports Hispanic adults entering a health care professional track and involves intensive recruiting, peer support, and financial services assistance (Central New Mexico Community College, 2022)
- Offers many Spanish-language courses in business, personal finance, childcare, and math, as well as GED/High School Equivalency options (Central New Mexico Community College, n.d.)

CUNY Borough of Manhattan Community College, NY

- Secured a \$3 million U.S. Department of Education Developing Hispanic-Serving Institution (DHSI) grant to establish the Conexiones & Connections program, through which students are eligible to receive incentives for active participation including stipends, summer/winter tuition waivers, and opportunities to apply for paid summer leadership and career prep programs. (Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC/CUNY), 2022)
- Additional supports include a personalized academic plan and support team; Spanish-language financial literacy workshops, counseling, and peer mentoring supports; civic engagement and service-learning opportunities; and transfer preparation. (Borough of Manhattan Community College, n.d.)

Fullerton College, CA*

- Received the Seal of Excelencia certification
- Awarded a DHSI grant to support the Teacher Pathway program, STEM program, Career Technical Education programs, and Administration of Justice Pathway program (Fullerton College, n.d.).
- Provides the Puente program (peer tutoring) and the Student Diversity Success Initiative, which is designed to increase success among at-risk African American and Latino male students with orientation, academic counseling, life skills coaching, tutoring, and monitoring academic progress (Fullerton College, 2013).

*Of the schools researched, Fullerton College is the closest in size to MC in overall enrollment.

Lone Star College System, TX

- Included in the Growing What Works Database for the Mi Casa Es Su Casa Program, which connects Hispanic students to the local campus community helping them acclimatize to college life. In the fall 2019 semester, 68% of program participants continued to their second year compared to the college's average of 50%. (Lone Star College, n.d.)
- Offers excellent civic engagement programming including Alternative Spring Break, Human Library, Hunger Banquet, Citizen Alum, Citizen Engagement Conference + Texas Tribunal, and internships at elected officials' offices (Lone Star College, 2023)

Long Beach City College, CA

- Received the Seal of Excelencia certification and its Long Beach College Promise program is included in the Growing What Works Database (Long Beach City College, 2020)
- Provides very diverse programming for Latine students including Latinx Heritage Month events, Puente LBCC, Dream Services, DESTINO (Developing Engaging STEM Through Innovative New Opportunities), Colegas de LBCC, Male Success Initiative, La Promesa, and Raíces Student Graduation, which emphasizes education being a family process (Long Beach Community College, n.d.)

Palo Alto College, TX

- Won a \$599,007 DHSI grant award to fund Project Listo, which will create a one-stop Center for Career and Experiential Learning to increase student support, internship and service-learning opportunities, and integration of career readiness and industry competency. Project Listo will also increase the college's connections with employers in San Antonio and South-Central Texas. (Palo Alto College, 2020)
- Administers the Center for Mexican-American Studies that provides year-round programming, scholarships, and student leadership and civic engagement opportunities

San Diego Mesa College, CA

- Received the Seal of Excelencia certification
- Coordinates Latinx Heritage Month with a focus on Latinos in education, health care, chemistry, psychology, and research
- Secured DHSI grant funding to support a variety of programs including STEM Center Tutoring and Peer Mentoring dashboards, virtual STEM Center, Virtual Engineering workshop, Innovation Research Lab, and Summer CRUISE, a preorientation initiative to assist students transitioning to San Diego Mesa each fall (San Diego Mesa College, n.d.)

Union County College, NJ

- Implemented the Progresando Initiative to increase retention, course completion rates, and licensure pass rates for Hispanic adult students in targeted health care programs such as Nursing, Physical Therapist Assistant, and Social Services to address Latine representation in the health care sector. Strategies include intensive cohort-based tutoring and test preparation support; emergency financial assistance; bilingual student services specialist (Union College of Union County, NJ, n.d.)

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Montgomery College is an academic institution committed to promoting equal opportunity and fostering diversity among its students, faculty, and staff.