MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

Dr. Pollard's Monthly Newsletter to the Board

MONTHLY OUTLOOK

A Meeting Preview with Data Insights and MC 2020 Progress

March 4, 2016

March Meeting Highlights—What to Expect and Why

Your next meeting occurs on Monday, March 21. Following are major items and topics planned at this time.

Conference Session on Accreditation. Prior to your public meeting, we will hold a public conference session—a meeting at which you gather information, but make no decisions—to hear a presentation on accreditation and the College's 2018 Self-Study. Recall that, as an institution accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education College, the College prepares a major Self-Study every 10 years for the commission's consideration. In April, I will bring the official Self-Study design proposal for your approval.

My Monthly Written Report. My March *President's Focus* report will continue to examine the pathways theme in the book *Redesigning America's Community Colleges* and explore our developmental education program.

Basketball Recognitions. Both the men's and women's basketball teams had outstanding seasons and competed all the way to regional tournaments. These student-athletes are invited to the March board meeting to be recognized and honored for their accomplishments.

New Online Degree in Criminal Justice. To offer a program completely online, MHEC requires an application process, including approval by the institution's board. I bring for your consideration an online associate of applied science degree in criminal justice. With a steady climb in enrollment over five years, this program is well positioned for online expansion. Our faculty and academic affairs leaders have worked very hard on this effort. Upon MHEC's approval, this would become our fourth completely online degree program.

New and Modified Policies. Four policies will be presented for your consideration—three are modifications to existing policies and one is new.

The three modifications all relate to financial aid policies. The first is a revised policy to reflect changes and consumer information required by federal and state regulations. The priority deadline to apply for financial aid is changed from May 15 to March 1 to reflect best practices in enrollment management. The second involves an enhancement of policy to delineate between need-based grants processes and merit-based scholarship processes. The third is an update to reflect changes in state law pertaining to tuition waivers for students with disabilities, foster care recipients, and unaccompanied homeless youth.

The new policy to be presented for consideration lays out the rules for "crowdfunding" for employees and the community. Crowdfunding is a process to raise money for some specific purpose through an online appeal.

FY17 Meeting Schedule. Dates for your Fiscal Year 2017 meetings are proposed and a vote on them is requested.

Data Focus of the Month

Our Students: Where They Live and the Campus They Attend

How are our students' residences distributed across the county? Accessibility is a fundamental feature of community colleges. While the concept of "accessibility" includes a wide range of dimensions, physical proximity is primary: community colleges try to place campuses and facilities within easy reach of students. Virtually 90 percent of the fall 2015 semester credit students are in-county residents, so, theoretically, at least one of the campuses should be very accessible. The adjacent map indicates the areas in which the most students live in the darkest red (more than 175 per block group), followed by a lighter shade of red for the second highest (120-174 students), and then progressively lower concentrations as the colors lighten (76-119, 41-75, and 40 or fewer).
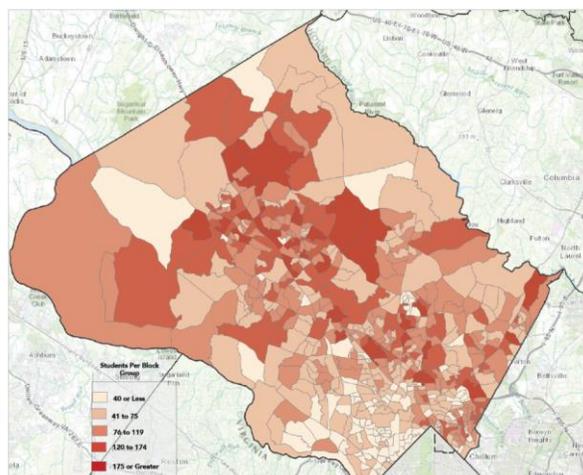
How many students attend classes on one (or more) Montgomery College campus? Of the 25,320 students enrolled in credit courses in the fall 2015 semester, 19,523 of them (77 percent) physically attended class at a campus, sometimes more than one campus. The remainder took their MC classes either "off-campus" (in MCPS high schools and other facilities) or online. Almost 3,000 students attended at least one course on more than one campus. The Silver Spring zip codes (Silver Spring and Takoma Park) send the most students to Montgomery College—a combined 6,302 unduplicated students to on-campus courses at one or more of the campuses—followed by the Gaithersburg zip codes with 3,268 on-campus students.

Do students live close to the campus? The Germantown Campus is in zip code 20876, and 599 of the students taking a class in a Germantown classroom reside in that zip code. From the nearest zip codes (Germantown Clarksburg, Gaithersburg, and Montgomery Village), there were an additional 2,238 students. Roughly 48 percent of the Germantown Campus students lived in the nearest five zip codes.

At the Rockville Campus, which is in zip code 20850, 835 residents from 20850 took classes at the campus, plus 2,711 students from the nearest zip codes (Rockville, Derwood, and Gaithersburg). So, a total of 3,500 (24 percent of the total Rockville Campus students lived in these zip codes) or "nearby" the campus. The Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus's zip code 20910 had 538 residents attending as on-campus students, as well as 2,359 students from nearby zip codes. This yields 2,900 of the 6,700 on-campus students (43 percent) living in nearby zip codes.

What areas of the County don't have many on-campus students? As would be expected, the zip codes furthest from one of the campuses yield small numbers of on-campus students, and the majority of these are in the easternmost section of the county (Brookeville, Brinklow, Dickerson, and Olney). These areas are home to just 227 on-campus students.

Which MCPS high schools sent MC the most 2015 graduates? This past fall, Gaithersburg and Northwest each sent 157 graduates to the College, followed by Clarksburg (155), Richard Montgomery (144), Kennedy (142), and Blair (141). The largest percentage of the MCPS class of 2015 graduates came from Kennedy (41 percent), Seneca Valley (39 percent), Watkins Mill (36 percent), Wheaton (35 percent), and Magruder (34 percent).

Montgomery College 2020 Update of the Month

The *Montgomery College 2020* strategic plan is a seven-year effort that began in Fiscal Year 2013. In it, we charged ourselves to "evolve Montgomery County into a 'College Town' with MC at its central core." To accomplish this we have taken some ambitious steps and made some careful plans. Bringing those plans to fruition, however, may take well over the initial seven-year estimate.

What is a College Town? Generally speaking, College Towns are places where the identity of the city or town is fundamentally shaped by the presence of a college or university, creating an environment that enriches all residents, regardless of whether they are enrolled at the institution.

What is needed to make MC into a College Town? In the fall of 2014, Montgomery College engaged a team of consultants to establish a comprehensive plan to develop the county into College Town by 2020. The goals are to more seamlessly integrate Montgomery College into the neighborhoods surrounding our three campuses; to deepen countywide support and 'ownership' of the College; and to increase the engagement level of county residents.

What progress has been made? The College already has many components that make it well-suited to the College Town model: engaged and respected leadership, curricula that are responsive to county's needs, strong community and business partnerships, a strong alumni base in the county, and a pioneering partnership with Holy Cross Health. The College has two community engagement centers, which have been visited by nearly 9,000 residents in just a year and a half. With almost 500 people attending information sessions at the centers, and more than 450 people taking an MC class in one of the centers, we have been highly successful in bringing the College to the community.

How are we bringing more people on to our campuses? Events such as the World of Montgomery Festival, hosted on the Rockville Campus for the first time this year, draw thousands to the College—4,000 people for this event alone. Our 70th anniversary next year will be another opportunity to draw large numbers of visitors. The College is working to increase its accessibility on foot and on bike, in order to reduce the boundaries between campuses and surrounding neighborhoods. Notably, both the Rockville and Takoma Park/Silver Spring campuses have bike rental programs already in place. We have also contracted to install new gateway signs for the Germantown and Rockville campuses as well as banners that will hang on various light poles throughout the Rockville Campus. We anticipate that these banners will foster feelings of greater ownership and pride in the College.

Where is the online College Town? Building the College Town online is another significant step. Recently, the College launched an improved version of My MC, our online web portal to help students and faculty access, secure, and optimize their use of personal, academic, and financial information in engaging the College and its services. An updated Montgomery College logo, along with a more robust and modernized website, are two components that are currently under construction. Such improvements to our online presence is being done in phases, with the first phase fully in place by the start of the fall semester 2016.

Be well,

DeRionne P. Pollard, PhD

We empower our students to change their lives, and we enrich the life of our community. We are accountable for our results.