INTERSECTIONS

The Academic Affairs Chronicles

A Message From Dr. Rai

As we approach the end of the semester, I am grateful and inspired by the student success work being done and in progress. I am encouraged by the results of all of our efforts to meet students where they are, to encourage student success initiatives, and to make ever more meaningful connections between faculty, staff and students. This work speaks to our efforts to understand what students need in the current and rapidly changing environment, and to ensure that we prepare them to be citizens of an unpredictable future. And so, I am very grateful to all of you who have been so deeply engaged in our many ongoing initiatives: Program Success Strategies, DFW Reduction Initiatives, OER development, Z-degree development, ATD and AMP implementation, and many others. Our students are successful because of your efforts to bring content and pedagogical currency to the classroom – real and virtual. Your commitment to their continued success is motivating, engaging, and contributing directly to their success. In that vein, I want to welcome Dr. Eric Benjamin as the Interim Dean for Education and Social Sciences, who will continue to lead our student success efforts in this discipline.

I am pleased to share that implementation continues for all seven First-Five Year Initiatives in the Academic Master Plan. A status report on all of these initiatives will be released during opening week activities this Spring.

I am also pleased to include an update from the Mathematics and Statistics Department. As most of you know, as a College and as a nation, we commit considerable resources to address the issues surrounding students who complete high school underprepared for the rigors of college level classes. Not satisfied with the results of the redesign of developmental math several years ago, the math faculty have continued to examine data and analyze what is working and what is not. The math faculty restructuring the pathway for those underprepared students have provided a status report with recommendations for streamlining developmental to college-level math which includes support for students along the new and shortened pathway. This proposal is expected to address the significant DFW rates in developmental math and create avenues that move students more quickly and successfully to college-level coursework, improving retention and allowing a population of students for whom graduation has been unlikely, to plan for that day with a new sense of optimism and likelihood.

Extended Winter Session and Winter Session are both doing quite well in terms of enrollment (see below), driven, I believe, by the quality and variety of courses being offered. I appreciate all of the work that has gone into making these sessions, and especially, the Extended Winter Session so successful. And I am grateful to the faculty members who teach these courses that are so clearly meeting the needs of hundreds of students – and the number is growing. When I talk about our innovative faculty who are focused on our students, this is just one example that I find very exciting.

One last thought before winter break…Please consider nominating your colleagues for Outstanding Faculty Awards this year. The article below includes website information, where you will find the guidelines for each award, submission requirements for the nomination packet, and a timeline which requires submissions to be uploaded by 11:59 p.m. on March 1, 2018.

I wish you a successful end to the semester and a safe and healthy winter break. I look forward to seeing you during Professional Week, when we will have an opportunity to welcome a new year – 2018 – and a new semester.

With gratitude and best wishes -

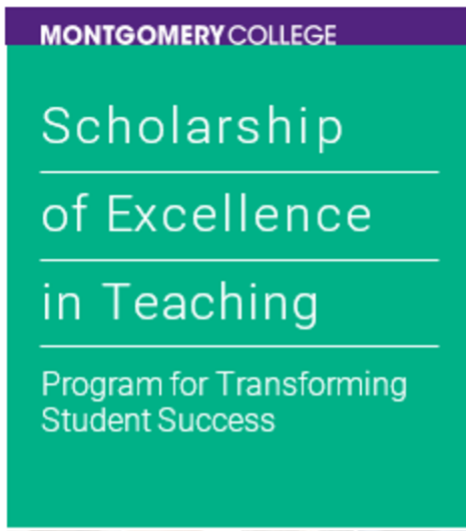*Sanjay*

Nominate an Outstanding Faculty Member

We are very pleased to announce the nomination process for the Outstanding Faculty Awards for the 2017–2018 academic year. We know that the next three weeks are very busy ones, but wanted to announce now for those who might find time during winter break to consider nominating a colleague.

The purpose of this program is to recognize individual full- and part-time faculty members who exemplify the excellence that characterizes the entire Montgomery College faculty. For the current year, each faculty member recognized with an Outstanding Faculty Award will receive a one-time payment of $2,000. Awardees receiving the Full-Time Faculty of the Year and Part-Time Faculty of the Year awards will receive $5,000 each. Two separate committees, one to evaluate the full-time faculty nominations, and one to evaluate the part-time faculty nominations, will review nominations and provide recommendations.

I encourage you to consider nominating one of our many outstanding College faculty members for this special recognition. All information pertaining to the awards, including guidelines, nomination process, and timeline can be found at http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/facultyawards/. The entire nomination process has moved to an online format, so please review the website for details.

All nominations are due by 11:59 p.m. on March 1, 2018.

Scholarship of Excellence inTeaching: Program for Transforming Student Success

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

Scholarship of Excellence in Teaching

Program for Transforming Student Success

To honor the exemplary work of Montgomery College's outstanding faculty and to enhance student success, the College has created the Scholarship of Excellence in Teaching: Program for Transforming Student Success. The Collegewide Deans and ELITE have collaborated to bring this opportunity to you to enhance the success of our students. Professor Joan Naake has graciously agreed to direct this initiative.

The program offers you time to reflect on your teaching. When was the last time you set time aside just to reflect on how you could have done something better? When was the last time you were able to have an in-depth conversation with colleagues from different disciplines and share your teaching methods and results?

It also provides an opportunity for you to transform your teaching strategies to enhance student success in an internet-guided world. The program will begin in February 2018 and end in December 2018. In the spring semester, you will consider different pedagogical methods and engage in the scholarship of teaching excellence. In the fall semester, you will implement an action plan and continue to engage in the scholarship of excellence in teaching.

Although other colleagues, your peers, will offer ideas, you will be the one who determines your action plan, an action plan related to transforming student success. We will ask you to bring these strategies back to your disciplines and departments. Please talk to your dean and chair about this opportunity since you will need a letter of recommendation from each of them.

This is an opportunity for you to be the agent of change in your classroom, in your discipline, and to engage in the scholarship of excellence in teaching. Accept a risk you have always wanted to take, with support of an engaged community of colleagues. The College will provide each of the ten or twelve faculty selected with 1.5 ESH in the Spring and 1.5 ESH in the Fall, a total of 3 ESH. In addition, each faculty in the cohort will have the occasion to work with a faculty member who has been awarded the CASE U.S. Professor of the Year Award or the MC Outstanding Faculty Award.

The website is http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/scholarship-of-excellence-in-teaching/

SWARMathon Students Introduce "Claws"

The Montgomery College SWARMathon team won the 2017 Virtual Competition in April, defeating 15 other 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities, and this year, they will be participating in the 2018 Physical Competition, using (and improving) their code but testing it on actual Swarmie robots. The three robots have been built and coding has begun. The Team introduced "Claws" to the Board at the BOT meeting on November 16th, and looks forward to another successful experience this year.

New Fellows for the MC-Smithsonian Faculty Fellows Program

The MC-Smithsonian Faculty Fellowship program is pleased to welcome 11 new fellows to its 2018 cohort. The group represents wide-ranging interests and disciplines and will consider the 2018 theme:

We The People: America's Grand and Radical Experiment with Democracy. The cohort includes: **Eddy Enriquez Arana** (World Languages/Spanish, Rockville), **Rachel Bonaparte** (Communications, Rockville), **Keith Elphick** (English, Rockville), **Osmond B. Farrell** (Communications, Rockville), **Alejandro Leopardi** (English, Germantown), **Raquel Licamele** (English and Reading, Rockville), **David Lott** (ELAP) Takoma Park/Silver Spring), **Monica Mallini** (Engineering, Germantown), **Brett Pelham** (Psychology, Germantown), **Deborah Solomon** (Media arts & Technology, Rockville), and **David Sowers** (English, Germantown).

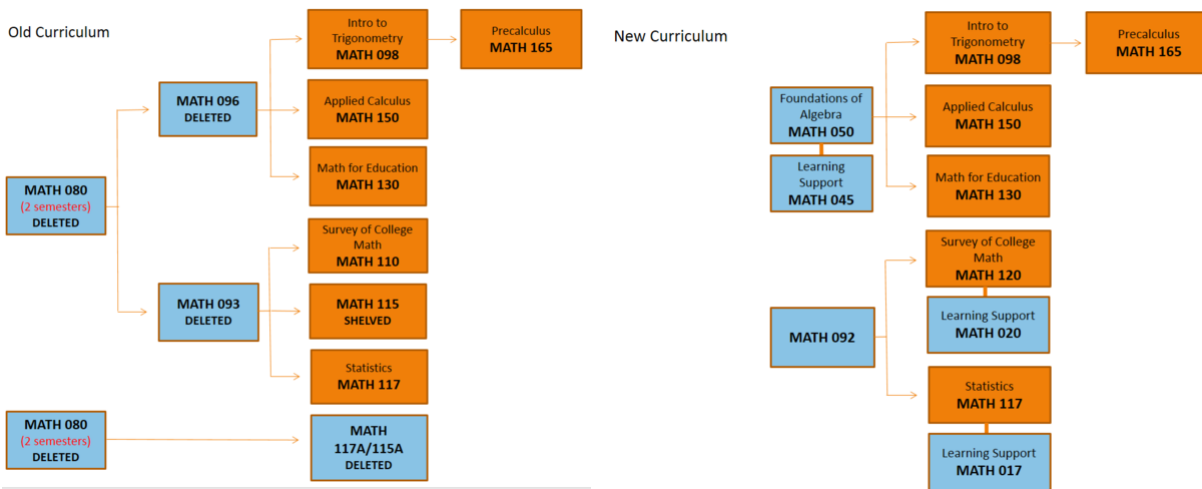## Improved Pathway from Developmental to College-level Math

Professor Milton Nash

Developmental math is a topic of conversation at many institutions across the nation. The picture we see at Montgomery College is a common one. Each semester more than half of our math classes are developmental and more than 60% of our students place into developmental math or English. Yet fewer than 12% of the students who start at the beginning of the course sequence complete a credit math class within 2 years. To address this situation, Mathematics and Statistics has pursued several initiatives, each utilizing one of two strategies and sometimes both working in concert. One strategy is to accelerate students through the sequence so that they spend less time in developmental coursework. The second is to make developmental coursework more appropriate to student goals by creating "pathways" in the curriculum.

The First in the World Grant, for example, is an initiative that combines these approaches. It has resulted in a new course MATH 092 which is a statistics pathway that actually *reduces* the course sequence by a whole semester. After one year of offering this course, early results are promising. Not only does it enable students to get through developmental math more quickly – in two semesters rather than three – but preliminary data shows that it better prepares students for statistics.

Expanding on these earlier efforts, Mathematics and Statistics has recently announced an innovative redesign of the developmental math program that combines strategies and absorbs the lessons of what has worked in the existing curriculum. In the new approach, the majority of students will spend at most one semester in a developmental math class. Two of our college level math courses – MATH 110 and 117 – will have sections requiring students to invest extra time where they are remediated in a "just in time" fashion. This is very similar to what we already do in MATH 115A and 117A. The primary difference is that the developmental content will be integrated throughout the semester and carefully aligned with the specific skills required to be successful in the course. Students master the developmental math content when it is needed to understand the college level work. More than that, as with MATH 092, students will learn the material within the context of applications thus making the math they are learning more relevant to their academic and career goals.

We know from our own past efforts that this model can work for our students. Furthermore, data from other schools that have implemented similar redesigns shows that this is a viable model for student success that has the potential to significantly improve student completion rates. Currently, starting with developmental coursework is a barrier to completion. The proposal has been submitted to the Collegewide Curriculum Committee and once it is approved, the College community will be kept informed about the progress of the coming changes. The flowcharts, below, show the current, and proposed, new, shortened pathways.

Old Curriculum / New Curriculum flowchart

Transfer and Prior Credit
New Guide Available

An American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO) workgroup, chaired by Seth Kamen, Director of Transfer and Prior Learning Design, has released "A Guide to Best Practices: Transfer and Prior Learning Credit." This Guide is designed to provide post-secondary institutions with a framework for building a comprehensive transfer and prior learning credit policy. Four guiding principles drive the framework, including (a) Students have the right to clearly know how credits transfer, (b) Institutions should develop policies that help prepare students for the transition, (c) Both institutions and students have responsibilities in the transfer process, and (d) Transfer Credit policies should reflect the mission and goals of the institution.

Divided into multiple parts, the Guide provides suggestions in the areas of determining course equivalencies (credit conversion, credit limits, expiration of credit), evaluating and transcripting credit (internal processes), partnerships and non-traditional credit (articulation agreements, home-schooled credit, nontraditional exams), and institutional and student rights and responsibilities (transcripts, appeal process, residency). Each area includes recommendations for including statements within a transfer credit policy, some are best practices while others are suggestions for wording. The Guide also includes a "Transfer Student Bill of Rights," a list of concepts that AACRAO feels all students should be afforded.

Montgomery College will be using the Guide to revise its transfer credit and prior learning policies.

Extended Winter/Winter Enrollments

The 2018 Extended Winter and traditional Winter terms are both exceeding enrollments when compared to 2017, despite initial concerns that Extended Winter would hurt Winter enrollments. Below are comparison figures for 2017 and 2018.

Extended Winter

	2017*	2018**
Registrations	267	730
Courses	12	28
Sections	18	41
Seat Utilization	73.7%	83.8%
Bill Hours	777	2073

Traditional Winter

	2017*	2018**
Registrations	1183	1320
Seat Utilization	68.5%	
Bill Hours	3332	

*End of term data
**Data as of December 4, 2017

Congratulations!

Sarah Adams, an Engineering graduate from MC and a senior undergraduate student in the UMD Department of Materials Science and Engineering, received a gold medal from the U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL) for her research presentation entitled, "Fabrication & Characterization of Silicon Nanoparticles for Energetic Applications." The symposium aims to develop future STEM leaders and showcased summer student research activity conducted at ARL. Gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded in addition to cash prizes.

Kristin Jenkins, PhD, part-time faculty of Biology in Germantown, has been recognized as an American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow in the Section on Education. This prestigious honor is bestowed on Dr. Jenkins for her work as Executive Director of the BioQUEST Curriculum Consortium. Please see the link here for more information: https://www.aaas.org/news/2017-aaas-fellows-recognized-advancing-science

New Certificate Offering: Data science combines math, statistics, programming and hacking skills, as well as data journalism to gain insight from a growing volume of information produced by an increasingly data-driven world, and to communicate them effectively enough to help solve real-world problems. Students who earn the certificate will be positioned to meet this new economy's growing demand for a more data-literate workforce in all professions, as well as to fill data analyst and data developer jobs in Montgomery County and the Washington metropolitan area.

Intersections, November/December 2017