

Montgomery College Plan for Program of Cultural Diversity FY26–29

In Fulfillment of Maryland Education Code §11–406

Submitted to:
Maryland Higher Education Commission

Submitted by:
Montgomery College

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Montgomery College Plan for Program of Cultural Diversity

This Cultural Diversity Plan is submitted in fulfillment of the requirements set forth in Maryland Education Code §11–406 and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) guidance. The plan demonstrates Montgomery College’s ongoing commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion across the institution.

Montgomery College’s mission affirms its dedication to empowering students to change their lives, and enriching the life of the community. Montgomery College is focused on creating an environment where all students and employees are valued and supported by embracing cultural diversity in every part of its operations. The College’s values—integrity, excellence, equity, and inclusion—are reflected throughout this plan, which outlines the institution’s efforts to foster a welcoming environment where individuals of all racial and ethnic backgrounds are supported, respected, and represented.

1. Definition of Cultural Diversity (§11–406(a))

Montgomery College defines cultural diversity as the intentional inclusion and support of racial and ethnic groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher education. This includes, but is not limited to, African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and multiracial populations. The College also recognizes intersectional identities and the compounding effects of marginalization, affirming its commitment to building a campus culture where every individual is respected, valued, and empowered.

2. Institutional Commitment and Plan Development (§11–406(b)(1))

Montgomery College has cultivated an institutional identity rooted in radical inclusion, grounded in deeply held values that welcome all individuals who seek higher education, with particular attention to advancing opportunities for racial and ethnic groups historically underrepresented in higher education. By intentionally developing its locations as places where cultural diversity and equitable educational opportunity flourish, the College advances its educational mission, contributes to Montgomery County’s aspirations, and supports the commitment to inclusive excellence.

Montgomery College is committed to ensuring that every student, regardless of race, ethnicity, ability, background, economic status, or age, has meaningful access to higher education. The institution’s primary focus extends beyond access to emphasize equity in successful outcomes, recognizing that students from culturally diverse and historically underrepresented backgrounds often face systemic barriers to college success. The College provides comprehensive assistance, opportunities, and tools that enable all students not merely to attend college, but to effectively achieve their academic and career goals. The institution’s responsibility is to eliminate predictable disparities in student outcomes by redesigning institutional practices and support systems.

The faculty and staff of Montgomery College have intentionally created robust, culturally responsive learning environments where all persons feel safe expressing their perspectives and where intellectual rigor serves as the foundation for meaningful engagement across racial, ethnic, and cultural differences. The College actively addresses cultural diversity among its student, faculty, and staff populations through targeted recruitment, retention initiatives, professional development, and campus climate assessment.

The Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging at Montgomery College upholds a culture that values civil discourse, a safe environment for sharing, and one that observes, measures, and rewards success so that we can create an extraordinary educational institution. Montgomery College’s Board of Trustees adopted an Antiracism Goal, which will “Promote social justice, radical inclusion, and racial equity

within the College and the broader community and continue the Board's focus on the journey to being an antiracist institution."

Montgomery College promotes and creates a working and learning environment grounded in the basic tenets of fairness, diversity, and inclusiveness, and has developed this Cultural Diversity Plan to improve and expand upon its existing efforts in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. The plan is structured around four strategic goals focused on belonging, access, engagement, and institutional policy. Each goal includes specific strategies and measurable indicators of success. Implementation is guided by the College's senior leadership, with annual benchmarks to assess progress. The plan reflects a long-term commitment to systemic change and accountability.

3. Description of How the Institution Addresses Cultural Diversity (§11–406(b)(2)(i))

The College addresses cultural diversity across its student, faculty, and staff populations through a variety of programs and practices. For students, the College provides culturally relevant programming, support for multilingual and ESOL learners, and academic mentoring. Faculty and staff benefit from professional development in equity and inclusion, and recruitment strategies aimed at broadening representation. Institutionally, communication strategies promote accessibility and respect, while employee resource groups create supportive networks across identities. Identified gaps in representation, access, and outcomes have been informed by institutional research and disaggregated data analyses, including equity audits and climate survey findings, which help guide ongoing strategies to foster inclusion and belonging.

4. Institutional Plans for Improvement (§11–406(b)(2)(ii))

Montgomery College has identified several areas for enhancement through its ongoing, college-wide strategic planning processes. These include increasing faculty diversity, expanding data collection and analysis, and embedding equity into policy review processes. Planned initiatives include an institutional equity audit, inclusive hiring practices, and the development of DEI dashboards. These actions aim to close gaps in representation and outcomes while reinforcing accountability across the institution.

Montgomery College will continuously monitor and refine its institutional plans for improvement using disaggregated data and regular stakeholder input. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, in partnership with the Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging, will analyze trends across key demographic groups to identify disparities in access, retention, completion, and post-completion success. These findings will inform decision-making at both the programmatic and policy levels. Stakeholder feedback, including input from students, employees, and community partners, will be gathered through climate surveys, listening sessions, and advisory groups. This cycle of analysis, reflection, and responsive action ensures that institutional efforts remain relevant, equity-centered, and accountable to the diverse communities the College serves.

Reflective of its broad-based and institution-level commitment to create an environment where all students and employees experience a sense of belonging and feel respected throughout the College, the following goals from the Strategic Plan align with the College's framework for promoting and assuring inclusivity and cultural diversity. In support of each goal, specific strategies and assessment metrics show how Montgomery College will operationalize this work as part of its institutional plans for improvement.

Goal 1: Cultivate a College Culture of Belonging and Care

Supporting Strategies

Montgomery College will launch a comprehensive belonging campaign that elevates stories of identity and inclusion across our locations; we will strengthen the multilingual communication process for key public-facing materials and move our universal design initiatives to ensure that physical and digital

environments are accessible to all. Also included is a commitment to developing affinity-based resource networks and trauma-informed response protocols to support psychologically healthy and empowering learning and work communities. We will institutionalize identity-conscious mentoring programs across student and employee lifecycles to ensure students, faculty, and staff feel seen, valued, and supported.

Illustrative strategies include:

- Launch a dynamic collegewide belonging program campaign that infuses inclusive values into learning and workplaces, physical spaces, events, and communications.
- Implement a comprehensive accessibility initiative (cognitive, physical, digital, and linguistic).
- Develop a trauma-informed care framework in student services and human resources programs.
- Establish structured intergroup dialogue programs and identity-based resource groups.
- Create culturally responsive mentoring networks for students and early-career employees.

Intended Outcomes

We expect to see a demonstrated college-wide climate of belonging and cultural humility, increased psychological safety, and greater inclusive participation. Sustained improvements in accessibility will benefit multilingual, disabled, and neurodivergent communities, while historically underserved students and employees will experience greater retention and satisfaction.

- Students and employees experience belonging and psychologically safe learning and work communities.
- Improved accessibility and inclusion for the diverse range of needs of members of the College community.
- Greater cross-cultural empathy and institutional responsiveness.
- Enhanced opportunities to thrive and express leadership, academic proficiency, and engagement of diverse students, faculty, and staff.

Indicators

The key metrics that will be used to evaluate progress and attainment of Goal 1 will include: climate survey gains disaggregated by identity; participation in belonging campaigns, dialogues, and mentoring networks; multilingual asset creation; and improvements in accessibility and inclusive design across the College.

- Climate survey metrics on inclusion and psychological safety.
- Feedback from participants in dialogue and mentoring programs.
- Disability access ratings and linguistic resource usage.
- Retention data disaggregated by identity group.

Goal 2: Advance Equitable Academic and Holistic Success for Students and Employees

Supporting Strategies

We will embed inclusive excellence-minded practices in curriculum redesign and inclusive pedagogies, ensuring all students have access to high-quality learning experiences. Integrated care centers will combine academic, mental health, career, and wellness support to positively impact students' social determinants of success. Transparent internal mobility pathways for employees, bolstered by coaching and sponsorship, will promote equitable advancement.

- Integrate inclusive excellence-minded practices into teaching, advising, onboarding, and career planning and advancement.
- Continue to strengthen empowering and responsive pedagogies and inclusive learning initiatives.
- Expand wellness and social determinant supports (e.g., food, housing, mental health).
- Establish transparent compensation and promotion systems informed by audits.
- Build holistic student support hubs that include academic, personal, and career guidance.

Intended Outcomes

The intended focus is to facilitate closing opportunity and outcome gaps in student completion, transfer, promotion, and retention. Additionally, we will also address the development of advancement progression practices, and improvement in employee confidence and trust in career progression opportunities and processes. As a result, students, faculty, and staff will feel deeper levels of engagement, responsiveness, and belonging, and will help shape inclusive norms in our learning and work communities and environments.

- Closed performance gaps, and across the board increases, in course success, retention, and graduation.
- Improved employee progression for underrepresented staff and faculty.
- Higher levels of student and employee well-being.
- Strengthened sense of purpose and support among all community members.

Indicators

Planned indicators include the use of disaggregated completion and retention rates, increased availability and use of wellness and academic support, student and employee participation in high-impact growth practices, promotion rates, and exit interview data in appropriate categories.

- Disaggregated student achievement, engagement, and services metrics.
- Outcomes from inclusive excellence audits and HR reports.
- Uptake and impact of integrated student and employee support services.
- Feedback from enhanced faculty and staff on professional development opportunities.

Goal 3: Foster Inclusive Community Through Meaningful Cross-cultural Connections

Supporting Strategies

The College will create shared inclusive excellence and belonging initiatives with nonprofit, civic, and business partners. We will co-create community forums, cultural dialogues, and civic learning experiences that establish protocols for engaging challenging topics, build mutual awareness, and foster authentic engagement. Community-engaged learning will be integrated into general education and workforce programs. We will also launch initiatives or fellowships to support student-led, cross-cultural programming that builds inclusive leadership skills.

- Co-create events and initiatives with local community partners and advocacy groups.
- Expand experiential learning opportunities using community-based research, internships, and service-learning.
- Develop and implement an intercultural and inclusive excellence competency framework for co-curricular activities.
- Launch a *Community Voices* speaker series that informs institutional programming planning.
- Develop a community impact framework that ensures shared investment and understanding in programming outcomes.

Intended Outcomes

The result will be expanded campus-community partnerships producing measurable impact, enhanced intercultural fluency and civic engagement among diverse perspectives and lived experiences of our college community, and strengthened institutional credibility in nurturing belonging and place. Additionally, new pathways will be developed for students, faculty, and staff to meaningfully engage in impactful learning, civic, and workforce opportunities.

- Enhanced community trust and collective impact with the communities we seek to serve.
- Established frameworks for civic engagement, addressing conflict, and effective listening.
- Expanded cultural understanding among students and employees.

- Stronger, more reciprocal partnerships with organizations that reflect our diverse College community.
- Increased student engagement through real-world learning opportunities.

Indicators

Defined metrics will assess the breadth and diversity of community partnerships, assessment of civic and intercultural learning outcomes, student-led cross-cultural events funded or recognized, and participation and satisfaction among external community stakeholders.

- Participation and satisfaction from community partners.
- Intercultural competency assessment data.
- Student, faculty, and staff reflections and artifacts from experiential learning.
- Evidence of co-created projects and community-informed decisions.

Goal 4: Embed Inclusive Excellence and Belonging in Institutional Practices

Supporting Strategies

We continue to analyze all policies through lens of inclusive excellence and conduct biennial, inclusive excellence-centered audits of practices across all areas. Reporting on the progress of inclusive excellence and belonging programming will include accessible, real-time, disaggregated performance metrics published to ensure understanding and reflection. Resource allocation processes will demonstrate progress. Supplier diversity goals and procurement practices will be monitored and reported to advance inclusive economic impact. The bias incident response process will be continually evaluated and enhanced to include restorative practices, peer accountability, and educational opportunities for all involved.

- Conduct regular policy and procedural reviews through an inclusive excellence lens.
- Expand disaggregated data collection and public dashboards for transparency.
- Align employee evaluations and resource allocations to promote progress towards inclusive excellence goals.
- Establish inclusive procurement protocols that elevate community-based and diverse vendors.
- Strengthen the bias response system by incorporating restorative practices, peer accountability, and educational outcomes.

Intended Outcomes

These actions will ensure that inclusive excellence and belonging is explicitly integrated into decision-making structures, visible in participatory governance transparency, and reflected in opportunities to strengthen economic and upward mobility. Our bias response systems will lead to healing, education, and reintegration.

- Institutional decisions consistently reflect equitable analysis.
- Transparent inclusive excellence accountability embedded across governance levels.
- Increased engagement and educational awareness of opportunities for business engagement with diverse suppliers.
- Inclusive excellence practices normalized in budgeting, hiring, and policy-making.

Indicators

The indicators of success and progress will include the development and reporting of quantitative and qualitative inclusive excellence data using visual dashboards in Cabinet and informing decisions by the Board via procurement data showing diverse vendor engagement, resolution outcomes and feedback in bias incident processes, and policies, procedures, and reviewed and revised through an inclusive excellence framing.

- Public progress reports and dashboards.
- Policy changes resulting from inclusive excellence reviews.
- Continuous feedback from students, employees, and community stakeholders.
- Use of DEI dashboards in decision-making.
- Diverse supplier engagement, utilization, and spend metrics.
- Case data and resolution quality from bias reporting systems.

5. Hate Crime Reporting Process (§11–406(b)(2)(iii))

The College’s process for reporting “campus–based hate crimes”, as defined under Title 10, Subtitle 3 of the Criminal Law Article and consistent with federal requirements under 20 U.S.C. 1092(f), known as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act is contained below. Our listed policies focus on hate-based crime reporting, which may have a direct impact on retention and recruiting.

Reporting Hate-Based Crimes

This section contains information concerning the process for reporting hate-based crimes, consistent with federal requirements as under Title 10, Subtitle 3 of the Criminal Law Article and consistent with 20 USC §1092(f) known as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (the “Clery Act”). All students and employees are encouraged to report if they are the victim of a crime, observe a crime in progress, or believe a crime may be in progress. If a life-threatening emergency is taking place, call 9-1-1 first, then call the Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management at the appropriate campus. Officers are required to record any crime information reported to them and do not have the authority to maintain complete confidentiality. However, complainants and victims who prefer to remain anonymous are given special consideration. Personal identifying information will not be published and only shared with college officials on a need-to-know basis.”

All hate-based crimes reported to Public Safety staff, typically via telephone, in-person, walk-up, or written correspondence, will be assessed to determine if a timely warning or advisory needs to be issued. The report is then forwarded to appropriate personnel such as the dean(s) of student affairs, the Title IX Coordinator, and/or the director of employee and labor relations, and the Vice President for Inclusive Excellence and Belonging. External law enforcement will be notified of the report and coordinate an investigation when appropriate. Public Safety will record and retain the report, and the resulting statistics will be printed in the College’s Annual Security Report.

The College’s commitment to compliance with these federal requirements is reinforced by several college policies, including College Policy 31002–Hate/Violence Activity and its corresponding College Procedure, 31002CP–Hate/Violence Activity. Adoption of policies and implementation of corresponding procedures is a collaborative effort involving input from the College Offices of General Counsel, Planning and Policy; Public Safety; Office of Compliance, Risk, and Ethics; Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management; under the leadership of the Office of the President. Policies are reviewed and adopted by the Board of Trustees and implemented through corresponding procedures, which are established by the President.

Montgomery College has taken several actions to ensure compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, as amended by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), and all implementing regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education (34 CFR Part 668.46). The College’s Annual Security Report is prepared and distributed by the Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management based on crimes reported to its staff, as well as crimes reported to campus officials designated as Campus Security Authorities under the Clery Act and crimes

reported to local law enforcement authorities. By October 1 of each year, the college's report is posted online with a link on the college's homepage and made available to each college community member via email. The Office of Compliance, Risk, and Ethics routinely monitors the College's efforts to fulfill the law's requirements.

In addition, articles, trends, and safety tips are regularly publicized through college media, public service announcements, student newspapers, and targeted messages on radio and television. Crime prevention programs, including reporting procedures and related materials, are made available to students, staff, and faculty by the College's Office of Public Safety, Health, and Emergency Management. For example, such information is delivered at both new-student and new-hire orientations, as well as being made available through student resource and compliance fairs. In summary, the College's strategy for information dissemination concerning processes and procedures for hate-based crime reporting is multifaceted and designed to provide critical information to various audiences using several methods and employing available technology.

6. Resources Needed (§11–406(b)(2)(iv))

To fully implement the strategies outlined in this plan, the College requires sustained and expanded resources. Montgomery College plans to leverage a comprehensive portfolio of federal, state, and local grant funding in addition to operating budget resources to support cultural diversity initiatives that recruit and retain underrepresented student populations. These strategic investments will directly address systemic barriers faced by historically underserved communities, including refugees, asylees, first-generation college students, low-income individuals, and underrepresented groups in STEM and allied health fields.

The College's diversified funding approach encompasses workforce development, academic support services, English language learning, and specialized STEM programs. Key initiatives target Montgomery County's most vulnerable populations through culturally responsive programming, wraparound support services, and pathway programs that eliminate traditional barriers to higher education access, completion, and post-completion success.

The table below represents a sample of the funding and grant opportunities that the College intends to leverage to expand its support for diversity initiatives. These resources will enable Montgomery College to serve the student community through targeted diversity and inclusion programming, with particular emphasis on refugees, immigrants, first-generation college students, and underrepresented minorities in high-demand career fields. This funding portfolio demonstrates the College's institutional commitment to equity-driven resource allocation and sustainable programming that advances cultural diversity goals.

Grant and Funding Opportunities

Funding Source	Grant Program	Target Population
Department of Labor	Technical Metro Area Pathways (TechMAP)	Underrepresented groups in IT fields
Department of Labor via PCC	Building an Inclusive Workforce	At-risk communities in Montgomery County
Maryland Department of Human Services - MORA	English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) FY25	Refugees and asylees
Maryland Department of Human Services - MORA	Vocational Training and Employment Services FY25	Refugees and asylees
Maryland Department of Labor	Adult ESOL & Literacy Grant Program	County residents needing English support

Funding Source	Grant Program	Target Population
Maryland State Department of Education	Perkins V Career and Technical Education	Students in CTE programs
National Science Foundation via MSMU	Community College Collaboration in STEM	STEM transfer students
National Science Foundation via UMD	Democratizing Experiential Education for Microelectronics	Underrepresented students in semiconductors

7. Diversity Programming and Sensitivity Training (§11–406(b)(3))

Montgomery College enhances awareness and understanding of cultural diversity through institutional programming and training. This includes heritage month celebrations, cultural fairs, and forums for dialogue. Training is offered in cultural competency, disability inclusion, and inclusive pedagogy. These programs are designed to equip students, faculty, and staff with the skills to navigate a diverse learning and working environment, fostering a culture of respect and inclusion.

8. Review and Reporting Procedures (§11–406(c–d))

The Cultural Diversity Plan is submitted annually to the Montgomery College Board of Trustees by July 1. The annual progress report is then submitted to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) by September 1. These reports detail the institution’s progress toward stated diversity goals and are aligned with the broader State Plan for Higher Education. The College continually evaluates its implementation of strategies to ensure effectiveness and accountability.

9. Implementation Timeline by Goal

The following table outlines the projected start and end dates, as well as the responsible leads, for key initiatives aligned to each of the four strategic goals outlined in this Cultural Diversity Plan.

Goal 1: Cultivate a College Culture of Belonging and Care

Initiative	Projected Start	Projected End	Responsible Lead
Collegewide belonging campaign	Fall 2025	Spring 2026	Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging (OIEB)
Accessibility initiative (cognitive, physical, digital, linguistic)	Summer 2025	Ongoing	Office of Facilities/IT/ Disability Support Services
Trauma-informed care framework	Fall 2025	Summer 2026	Student Affairs/Human Resources and Strategic Talent (HRSTM)
Intergroup dialogue programs and identity-based resource groups	Spring 2026	Ongoing	OIEB/ HRSTM
Culturally responsive mentoring networks	Spring 2026	Fall 2026	Academic Affairs /Student Affairs/HRSTM

Goal 2: Advance Equitable Academic and Holistic Success for Students and Employees

Initiative	Projected Start	Projected End	Responsible Lead
Inclusive excellence-minded practices in curriculum and pedagogy	Fall 2025	Ongoing	Academic Affairs/Student Affairs
Expansion of student wellness and basic needs supports	Fall 2025	Ongoing	Student Affairs
Transparent compensation and promotion systems	Spring 2026	Fall 2026	HRSTM
Integrated student support hubs	Fall 2026	Spring 2027	Student Affairs

Goal 3: Foster Inclusive Community Through Meaningful Cross-Cultural Connections

Initiative	Projected Start	Projected End	Responsible Lead
Community co-created programming and speaker series	Fall 2025	Ongoing	OIEB /OACE
Experiential learning opportunities	Spring 2026	Ongoing	Academic Affairs/Student Affairs
Inclusive excellence competency framework	Spring 2026	Spring 2027	OIEB/Student Affairs
Launch a Community Voices speaker series	Fall 2025	Ongoing	OACE
Develop a community impact framework for understanding program outcomes	Spring 2026	Ongoing	OIEB/OACE

Goal 4: Embed Inclusive Excellence and Belonging in Institutional Practices

Initiative	Projected Start	Projected End	Responsible Lead
Inclusive excellence policy and procedure analyses	Fall 2025	Annual	Office of Policy and Planning / OIEB
Public DEI dashboards and transparency reports	Spring 2026	Ongoing	Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE)
Align employee evaluations and resources	Spring 2026	Ongoing	AFS/OACE
Inclusive procurement protocols	Fall 2025	Ongoing	Procurement / Business Services
Bias response system enhancements	Spring 2026	Fall 2026	Office of Compliance / OIEB