



Toolkit for Constituents

The **Montgomery College participatory governance system** provides all members of the college community with the opportunity to express their opinions and make recommendations about how the institution should function to fulfill its mission. It also provides structures through which these opinions and recommendations will be given due consideration when important decisions are made.

How can constituents utilize governance to ensure their voices are heard?

Type of perspective you want to share:	Purpose of working with governance:	Get the Council's Attention by doing one of the following:
Something needs attention...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise awareness of an issue and ask council to address	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend the open comments period at the beginning of any council meeting to speak before the council• Contact one of your representative council members about the issue• Contact the chair of the council about the issue
I/we have a great idea...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate for a particular recommendation or solution to help the College better fulfill its mission based on your expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same
My needs and interests with regard to this issue are...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convey your views regarding an issue so the council can better understand and appreciate representative perspectives on an issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same

Consideration # 1: Is it a governance issue?

- Governance councils **make recommendations.**
- Governance issues have **group impact.**
- Governance councils **do not implement or manage college work.**
- Governance works best when **identifying and clarifying needs and interests and recommending the direction of a desired solution.** This allows subject matter experts and managers to most feasibly respond.
- College procedures that involve **contractual, governmental or legal requirements do not fall under governance review.** Some examples include: Collective Bargaining, Legal Rights, Federal and State Mandates.
- *Council chairs and the director of governance can provide clarification if you are unsure.*

Options when governance isn't the right fit...

Topic	Suggested Referral
Academic Status	Counseling and Academic Advising
ADA/Accessibility	Disability Support Services
Bargaining Issue	Union Leadership
Confidential Conflict Assistance (for students)	Student Development Deans, Student Ombuds (in future)
Confidential Conflict Assistance (for employee)	Office of Ombuds
Discrimination/Exclusion	HR-STM
Personal/Family Concern (for students)	Counseling and Academic Advising
Personal/Family Concern (for employee)	Faculty Staff Assistance Program
Workplace Concern	Office of Ombuds or HR-STM

Consideration # 2: Does the issue support the mission, vision, and values of the College?

- **OUR MISSION**

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

- **OUR VISION**

- With a sense of urgency for the future, Montgomery College will be a national model of educational excellence, opportunity, and student success. Our organization will be characterized by agility and relevance as it meets the dynamic challenges facing our students and community.

- **OUR VALUES**

- EXCELLENCE * INTEGRITY * INNOVATION * DIVERSITY * STEWARDSHIP * SUSTAINABILITY

Consideration # 3: Which council should you contact?

- Impacts single College role: **Constituent council**
- Impacts a campus or location: **Campus council**
- Impacts one area of service: **Functional council**
- Impacts more than one of these: Multiple councils
- Impacts (almost) everyone: **College Council**

What happens after you notify a council?

1. Chair places **item on agenda** or communicates with council.
2. Council determines course of action through a response, usually in the form of a **motion and a vote**. The chair should communicate to you the outcome of the item.
3. If the vote passes, the motion is then sent to the **College Council** to act upon or communicated to the *relevant senior leader*.
4. The College Council determines the course of action through a **motion and a vote**.
5. If the vote passes, the recommendation is made to the **College President**, who approves and assigns the recommendation to management or communicates an alternate response.

Note: You can check on the status of your issue by following up with the Council Chair. It can take a couple of weeks to several months for an issue to move through the system and get due consideration.

Effective Governance

Hallmarks	Constituent Role
There is inclusive opportunity to share perspectives	Talk to your representative council members about issues that are important to the College.
Leadership communicates how input informed decisions	N/A
Councils demonstrate responsiveness to constituents, but not seen as primarily a “help desk”	Know your options for when governance is not the right fit. Do some “homework” about the issue that is important to you before bringing it to the attention of a council.
Council efforts are directed at clarifying and sharing representative perspectives to to inform decisions and inspire problem solving	N/A
Participation in governance leads to expanded understanding of and appreciation for diverse perspective	Seek opportunities to listen to different views in addition to sharing your own expertise.
Pathways for participation are clear for community, councils, and leadership	Understand your role and pathways to participate. Know the basic purpose of each council and whom to contact.