

MONTHLY OUTLOOK

A Meeting Preview with Data Insights and Strategic Topics

April 9, 2021

April Meeting Highlights—What to Expect and Why

Your next meeting takes place on Monday, April 19. Following are major items and topics planned at this time.

Conversation with Constituents. Guest speakers this month are the members of the College Council, the collegewide governance body that considers key College issues and makes recommendations to the president. Comprised of the chairs of each of the College's governance councils, it includes faculty, staff, students and administrators. This conversation will focus on constituent experiences of learning, teaching, and working remotely, and Board insights about remote governance operations during the pandemic.

My Monthly Written Report. My April *President's Focus on Marketing and Branding* explores the changes made in response to COVID-19 and their potential for permanence. Many traditional modes of advertising and engagement were limited due to health restrictions. However, strategy and creativity allowed outreach to some new potential students, through some innovative methods.

Fiscal Year 2022 Tuition. The Board will be asked to vote on a recommendation that tuition and fees remain at their current rates for FY22.

Collective Bargaining. This is a recommendation for Board approval on the terms of a memorandum of agreement with the College's staff union, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Local 2380.

College Expansion to East County Region. In conjunction with a presentation on this topic and resource materials, this proposal comes to the Board to consider the establishment of a Montgomery College Center in the East County. It seeks authorization of the president to move forward with a site location, program planning, and request to the county for support for sustained operations.

Request for Supplemental Appropriation for the FY21 Capital Budget—Capital Renewal Project. This will be presented for the Board's consideration and is a request for approval of a supplemental appropriation for the FY21 capital budget to fund the innovation hub located in the Mannakee Building.

Competitive Awards of Contract. Three competitive awards of contract will be presented for the Board's consideration. The first is for the purchase of athletic supplies and uniforms; the second, for swipe lock replacement parts on the Germantown and Rockville Campuses; and the third, for the purchase of a new cloud-based library services platform and discovery system, which will allow the consolidation of several library functions into one browser-based system and integrate with enterprise systems such as Workday and Banner.

Sole Source Award of Contract, Continuation of Interim Information Technology Leadership Services.

This will come before the Board for consideration and is a request for the continuation of interim information technology leadership services, which will allow for progress and completion of mission-critical projects and addresses organizational issues that will enable the office to perform at its best going forward.

Contract Change Orders. Two change orders to existing contracts will come before the Board for consideration. The first is a change to the Rockville physical education pool filtration and heat exchange replacement project, which will increase funding for installation of several items.

Policy Matter. A proposed modification to College Policy 66004–Electronic Information Technology will be presented as an information item. According to the Board’s bylaws, the Board may choose to enact the modification at this meeting, or have it brought back for action in May.

The following items are on your consent calendar:

Personnel Actions Confirmation Report. This is a review of personnel actions taken in February.

Graduates Receiving Associate’s Degrees and Program Certificates in Spring 2021. The Board is asked to ratify the conferral of degrees by faculty for expected graduates of spring 2021.

Data Focus

Impact of COVID on Workforce Development and Continuing Education Offerings

Overall program activity in WDCE has trended down during the remote learning environment brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The comparison of year to date for the close of the third quarter, March 31st, reflects a decrease of 25 percent in total full time equivalent (FTE) students. This FTE metric is a more telling comparison than sections or enrollments since noncredit courses can be from three hours up to 100 hours in length. The chart below reflects our year-to-year third quarter comparisons.

	FY2021	FY2020	FY2019	Difference FY19-FY21	% Change
Enrollment	26,623	36,599	38,278	11,655	-30%
Total FTE	2,723	3,552	3,638	915	-25%
Sections	2,888	3,414	3,579	691	-19%

Another way to state this change is to say that 75 percent of WDCE activity has been sustained during this primarily remote delivery period. Our faculty and staff have been nimble in moving to a wide variety of remote instructional platforms, from Zoom to Blackboard to student work packets. Many creative alternatives to face-to-face classroom meetings have been developed, and many of these techniques will continue to be used post-pandemic in blended, remote, and face-to-face formats.

The pandemic has impacted noncredit students in financial terms and opportunities lost. Noncredit students do not receive federal financial aid and pay out of pocket at the time of registration, and many experienced disruptions to employment. In the absence of a grant or scholarship support, many of them are even more vulnerable in times of financial hardship than other students. In addition, many WDCE

programs are uniquely reliant upon learning skills in a face-to-face format or using tools or equipment to which students don't otherwise have access, in areas such as truck driving, phlebotomy training, and auto maintenance, among others.

The College is currently in the process of serving more than 360 students using \$1.4 million from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) in workforce development grants. These grants go directly to student tuition, fees, and technology support for in-demand workforce development courses. Additionally, the College is using \$1.4 million from the state's Recovery Now Funds (RNF) to build capacity and expand the College's in-demand workforce development programs such as biotechnology, information technology, health sciences, automotive technology, and building automation systems.

Up to this year, WDCE has continuously expanded services to several county locations and business training services, cultivating extensive grants in order to deliver them. Industry partnerships with Amazon, Apple, and BioTrac, among others, have helped expand offerings. Over the last ten years, the average WDCE enrollment has been 44,205 and the total FTE in excess of 4,000 per year. The number of individuals enrolling in WDCE programs has steadily increased by six percent in the last three years until FY21. Potentially several grants for expanded learning opportunities and the incremental opening of lab-based classes in the remaining fourth quarter, should contribute to a stronger closing of the year.

The College anticipates an increase in student and employer interest in short-term industry credentialing programs and quick-start boot camps. These should serve individuals looking to make career changes and employers seeking new workforce talent. The College is continuing to partner with community groups, County agencies, school systems, and employer trade groups to design and deliver these meaningful educational enrichment opportunities to support the county's economic recovery.

Topic of the Month

Considering College Expansion to the East County



When County Executive Marc Elrich approached the College about establishing a presence in the eastern part of Montgomery County (the orange region on the county map, left), the College was eager to respond. The College had, in fact, considered an East County location several times previously. It is an area with a growing population that could benefit from College services. After delivering an exploratory report on the potential of an MC presence in the East County to the county executive in February 2020, the College recommended doing a complete feasibility study to determine the community needs, real estate options, and budget requirements.

What has the feasibility study determined? The feasibility study began on October 1, 2020, when the College contracted with Ayers Saint Gross as the lead firm accompanied by Kennedy & Company and McEneaney Commercial as partners. The study is planned in phases that started with community connections through focus groups to engage with students, parents, principals and school leaders, employers, government leaders, nonprofits, and the faith community. The final report on the study will

be presented later this year, but preliminary feedback about a College presence in the East County is very positive.

What kind of College presence is envisioned? There are two answers to that question: one for the near-term and one for the long-term. If the feasibility study points in the direction of opening a fourth campus and the Board of Trustees approves, then the process for finding a site, seeking approvals, and ramping up operations would begin. Such a process would likely take seven to 10 years to complete. So, for the near-term, the College is considering a potential center that would house classrooms, offices, and meeting rooms to meet East County students where they are.

What programs and services would be provided in the East County? If the decision is to go in the direction of a new campus—opening, most likely in seven to 10 years—then it would be a full-service campus with credit general education offerings, perhaps a signature program, Workforce Development and Continuing Education courses, and the full array student services, such as admissions, registration, financial aid, and counseling and advising. A near-term center would be more focused on short-term training opportunities—especially important in the wake of the pandemic—student services, and perhaps a Community Engagement Center office.

What steps remain in the feasibility study? As community feedback is reviewed by the College Expansion Advisory Committee, a committee of 30 College employees with a broad range of expertise about College programs and services, is considering specific program offerings, student services, and space concepts. The work from the first phase is driving the review of potential near-term and long-term locations, and that will then drive work on pro forma operating and capital budgets. If a decision is made to open a fourth campus, then the final step of the study will be to prepare an amendment to the College’s Facilities Master Plan, a necessary step to begin the regulatory review and the process of advocating for state and county capital funding.

Be well,



DeRionne P. Pollard, Ph.D.

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