

# MONTHLY OUTLOOK

*A Meeting Preview with Data Insights and MC 2020 Progress*

December 5, 2014

## December Meeting Highlights—What to Expect and Why

Your next meeting occurs on December 15. The following are major items and topics planned at this time.

**Conference Session.** At your retreat last June, you requested two conference sessions on special topics during this fiscal year. Recall that a conference session is a meeting at which information is shared, but no decisions are made. The focus of this session is technology, how it is used in course delivery, career preparation, assessment, and more.

**Audit Committee Meeting.** Prior to your regular monthly public meeting, the Audit Committee—a committee of the whole—will meet to review the College's annual audit, which will be in your meeting packet. The Audit Committee is chaired by First Vice Chair Marsha Suggs Smith.

**My Monthly Written Report.** My December Focus report will look at best practices in schools and colleges that are making progress in closing the achievement gap.

**New Sexual Misconduct Policy.** A new policy addressing sexual misconduct will be presented for your approval. This policy is due to be submitted to the Maryland Higher Education Commission by December 31.

**New Involuntary Medical Withdrawal Policy.** This new policy provides a means of involuntary withdrawal for those students engaged in certain inappropriate behaviors resulting from medical or psychological reasons that present a direct threat to the health and safety of others or otherwise interfere with the educational process and orderly operation of the College.

**Contract for Architectural & Engineering Design Services.** Approval of this item would establish a list of 30 firms that the College could employ for architectural and engineering design on an as-needed and task-order basis. Based on their expertise, firms are placed in eight categories, where each category contains at least three vendors from which the College can choose for a particular project.

**Contract for TAACCCT Grant Evaluation.** As the lead College of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant for the Cyber-Technology Pathways Across Maryland (CPAM) consortium, MC is responsible for implementation-related actions, including the procurement of grant program evaluation services. This action awards the contract to the firm selected to conduct the evaluations.

**FY16 Operating Budget.** I will present the proposed Fiscal Year 2016 operating budget, which has been developed after extensive input and review across the College community, at the December meeting. The Board's Budget and Finance Committee has reviewed the budget as well. You will vote on the budget at your January 2015 meeting.

## Data Focus of the Month

### **ONLINE LEARNING: Growth and Digital Options for Teaching and Learning**



This month's Data Focus continues looking at students—specifically those students who are enrolled in distance education courses. This mode of content delivery continues to be an area of growth for the College, with more than 20,000 enrollments in calendar year 2014 alone.

**What is the growth?** Enrollments increase each year in online and “blended” courses, that is, those that have an on-campus component and an online component. During the five-year period 2010–2014, enrollments increased by more than one-third.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Online	11,756	12,520	13,858	14,923	15,908
Blended	3,629	4,456	4,460	5,022	4,970
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,385</b>	<b>16,976</b>	<b>18,318</b>	<b>19,945</b>	<b>20,878</b>

**How many courses/sections are we talking about?** The increase in enrollment—where an enrollment is one student in one class—is certainly a function of the number of courses and sections being offered. In 2014, we offered 200 different online courses with more than 800 sections of those courses. There were also 322 sections of blended classes spread over 142 different courses.

**Who is doing all the teaching?** The online sections in 2014 were taught by 219 individual faculty members; the blended sections were taught by 100. Other faculty are also using Blackboard, our course management system, even for courses that do not have an online component. In 2014, nearly 400 faculty used it as a supplement in over 1,500 on-campus sections.

**How do we know our online courses are quality courses?** Each online and blended course developed since 2010 has been required to meet Quality Matters' 21 essential standards before being offered. QM is an internationally-recognized organization focused on online course design. Peer reviewers from across the country have recognized 27 of our distance courses as meeting all 41 QM standards, thus earning the Quality Course designation.

**Are students doing as well in these classes as they are in on-campus classes?** Having outside recognition for our courses is but one measure of quality. Another gauge of academic rigor is the grade composition of online and blended classes when compared to on-campus offerings. The results from spring 2014, shown here, are typical.

Type	Students	A	B	C	A,B,C	D	F	U	W	GPA
Online	4,907	32%	20%	13%	64%	5%	15%	3%	12%	2.56
Blended	1,357	33%	21%	14%	68%	7%	13%	1%	11%	2.60
Traditional	35,178	28%	26%	16%	70%	6%	9%	6%	8%	2.65

**What does future hold?** We are in the process of seeking MHEC approval for two fully online degrees in Business and Computer Information. Plans have been discussed to position the General Studies degree online once that degree's redesign is complete.

## Montgomery College 2020 Update of the Month



The *Montgomery College 2020* strategic plan is a seven-year effort that began in Fiscal Year 2013. The preferred future envisioned under Theme IV, Community Engagement, stated that “Montgomery College will foster community building, civic responsibility, and intercultural understanding, and serve as the place for neutral public dialogue to advance social justice and enrich the life of the community.” What progress are we making?

***The first steps.*** Three major projects are underway in implementing this theme: (1) realization of the Hercules Pinkney Life Sciences Park, (2) establishment of community engagement centers, and (3) development of the “College Town” plan. Let’s look at each of these.

***The Hercules Pinkney Park.*** As you heard at your board meeting last month, the Montgomery College Life Sciences Park Foundation board completed and approved its strategic business plan for the Life Sciences Park. The plan’s main focus is to evolve the park and campus into an integrated community, where the College, businesses, government, and nonprofit organizations would be co-located. This co-location provides a connectivity of students and faculty to the tenants—or “resident partners”—for professional development and experiential learning opportunities. These resident partners will have the advantage of being on a college campus with access to interns, adjunct faculty, and guest lecturer opportunities, as well as be in proximity to the county’s business incubator in the Paul Peck Academic and Innovation Building.

***Community engagement centers.*** The community engagement office is turning the College “inside out” to bring the College to the community via its two community engagement centers and dozens of outreach activities. The community engagement centers have been established at the Gaithersburg Library and East County Regional Services Center. The centers are staffed by community engagement specialists who are multilingual and can answer questions about College offerings, admissions, and financial aid processes. Over 2,000 people have been touched by their efforts so far, nine classes have been taught, six workshops or special events have been held, and dozens of people have received one-on-one attention from College staff.

***“College Town” concept.*** We have contracted with the firm U3 Advisors, which is analyzing College and county data to set the context and scope for the College Town vision. They will map out short-term ways to create the College Town culture and recommended pathways for longer-term issues such as transportation. This fall, the firm has been interviewing internal College stakeholders to determine common threads in the creation of a College Town culture. They are also examining best practices nationally with the understanding that the MC approach is more innovative than the typical College Town.

***What’s next?*** Each of these efforts represents a long term commitment to engaging our community. The business plan for the Hercules Pinkney Life Sciences Park is a multi-decade project. Community engagement centers will grow deep roots where they are and have the potential to serve more areas. And I am very excited to see where the College Town concept takes us now and into the future in serving the educational and workforce needs of Montgomery County.

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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.**