

From: [DeRionne Pollard, Montgomery College President](#)
Bcc:
Subject: The Student Voice—Fall Opening Meeting Data Analysis
Date: Thursday, October 20, 2016 2:36:00 PM
Attachments: [The Student Voice - Fall Opening Meeting 2016.pdf](#)

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Office of the President

October 20, 2016

MEMORANDUM

To: Montgomery College Colleagues
From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President
Subject: The Student Voice—Fall Opening Meeting Data Analysis

You may recall that the Fall Opening Meeting in August included extensive conversations among students, faculty, and staff about the student experience at MC. The notes of those conversations have been transcribed, analyzed, and compiled into a report attached here, “The Student Voice.” I encourage you to read the report and reflect on what students shared about their experiences.

The 163 students who participated in these conversations provided in-depth commentary about several topics surrounding their experiences. They were enthusiastic about the impact of faculty care and encouragement on student success. They also commended the role of intentional communities in their persistence, and highlighted the critical role of financial aid in allowing them to stay in school. While the strengths were many, students also shared the challenges that have impeded their academic progress at MC: personal obstacles, work-life balance, financial insecurity, and cultural adjustment, among others. The students also commented on how they believed they could be better supported in some of these areas. This feedback, as well as other strengths and concerns, is documented in detail in the report.

While the College has made extraordinary gains in serving students, there is always room for improvement. As the many variables that impact higher education change—funding, regulation, market demand, among others—we must respond with agility. Convening these student discussions was a creative exercise that I believe produced valuable insights. I urge you to review this document and discuss your impressions with colleagues. The Achieving the Dream Core and Data teams will also study the feedback in hopes that it can contribute to improved strategies for student success. Finally, the four vice presidents and provosts have scheduled follow-up meetings for next week, which I urge you to attend. Details on their open forums can be found [here](#).

Thank you for your careful consideration of this report, your contributions to our ongoing dialogues about student success, and your dedication to our mission of changing lives.

