



# Academic Master Plan 2016-2021

ACCESS, SUCCESS AND EXCELLENCE

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# Montgomery College Academic Master Plan

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

With this Academic Master Plan, Montgomery College embraces the opportunity to examine our academic enterprise and to agree upon the focus and direction of our programs and practices for the next five to ten years. We have, as of 2016, seventy years of history that we must honor and evaluate as we move forward to fulfill our mission to empower our students, enrich our community, and hold ourselves accountable for our results.

A clear, intentional, and innovative Academic Master Plan is more important than ever in today's higher education climate, as government, industry, accreditors, and students expect measureable results from colleges and universities. Internally, these institutions struggle to adapt and adopt disruptive technologies as they attempt to address changes in demography as well as the changing needs of a global economy. We acknowledge that the very meaning of "education" has evolved in this information age and that our methods of instruction must also evolve to meet the needs of students whose cognitive processes are very different from those of yesterday's students. Externally, even as funding streams are reduced, redirected, or cut off entirely, colleges are called upon to improve completion rates and align programs with workforce needs—all while adapting our strategies to serve an ever-changing student body.

### Academic Master Plan Goals and Outcomes

In light of current realities in the world of higher education, a thoughtful, focused, and forward-thinking Academic Master Plan is crucial to meeting the needs of students and our community. This Master Plan seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Setting academic priorities that impact other College units;
- Benchmarking data to gauge progress on the Academic Affairs student success matrix;
- Establishing criteria for effective academic program review, curriculum development, and assessment of the Academic Affairs Division's initiatives;
- Identifying major academic initiatives that will drive academic unit planning and budgeting;

- Coordinating the Academic Master Plan with Montgomery College 2020, the College's strategic plan, and the Middle States Self-Study process.

## **Institutional Learning Outcomes**

Montgomery College students demonstrate excellence in learning and achieve personal, career, and academic goals because they are able to:

**Think:** Solve problems by inquiring, interpreting, evaluating, and applying knowledge and skills.

**Communicate:** Pursue common understanding through effective exchange and expression of ideas.

**Create:** Apply curiosity, creativity, and flexible thinking to develop new ideas.

**Engage:** Collaborate effectively to discover and achieve common objectives.

**Connect:** Integrate learning across courses, over time, and between campus and community to recognize interdependence and interconnectedness.

**Grow:** Develop knowledge and skills to be resilient, self-confident, and independent life-long learners.

**Achieve:** Apply the experience, knowledge and skills attained at Montgomery College to complete personal, educational, and professional goals.

## **Academic Affairs Division Goals**

The faculty, staff, and administrators of the Academic Affairs unit hold ourselves to the same standards of excellence by committing to the following actions:

**Think:** Use qualitative and quantitative information to make informed decisions that promote student success while maintaining academic excellence. [Tracking Software and Student Success Software]

**Communicate:** Initiate, deepen, or expand conversations with internal and external partners to help students succeed. [Improved Advisory Groups, DS Roundtable]

**Create:** Foster and celebrate innovation at all levels of the institution. [Innovation Works]

**Engage:** Interact with students beyond the classroom, individually and in small groups, to support academic success. [Mentoring, Micro-Interventions]

**Connect:** Embrace interdisciplinary, and promote collaboration among disciplines, programs, and faculty. [Programs Across the Disciplines, Assignment Clearinghouse]

**Grow:** Offer meaningful professional development for all employees. [PD Pathways]

**Achieve:** Foster a culture of empowerment and accountability whereby all employees in the Academic Affairs unit have both agency and responsibility to make positive changes for students. [Revised Faculty Evaluation Process, Revised Curriculum Process]

## Academic Program Review

Building upon our current CAR (College Area Review) process, the new Academic Program Review model will examine a program or discipline within the context of the college's current goals, priorities, and resources. More importantly, the revised process will contain components used to guide the development of new programs and recommendations for continuance or discontinuance of existing programs.

Strategy 1: Establish a task group to collect feedback and propose an Academic Program Review Process by December 2016 for implementation the following academic year, 2017.

Strategy 2: Immediately implement an "early alert" system for programs that will likely face scrutiny as a result of Academic Program Review.

Strategy 3: Implement a training program for faculty and academic leaders – chairs, deans, and VP/Ps – to create a common understanding of the purpose and goals of Academic Program Review

## First Five Year Initiatives

Between 2016 and 2021, the Academic Affairs unit will pursue increased rates of graduation and transfer, reduced time and cost to completion, and better alignment with industry and transfer institutions by implementing the following initiatives:

**Embed Classroom Support:** In-classroom support from tutors, librarians, student learning assistants, community volunteers, and others.

**Offer Alternative Scheduling and Delivery:** Evening and Weekend College, accelerated scheduling, flex-terms.

**Implement Alternative and Customized Assessment and Placement:** Assessment of Prior Learning, multiple measures for developmental placement, expanded credit by exam.

**Design Alternative and Customized Credentialing and Pathways:** Competency Based Education, stackable credentials, badges, Technical Professional Skills (TPS) degrees, and multiple exit points from developmental studies.

**Enhance Student Pathways from MCPS and to USG:** Middle College, dual enrollment, Career and Technical Education, and college readiness.

**Expand Global Partnerships and International Opportunities:** Global partnerships, business partnerships enhanced in the areas of entrepreneurship, global education.

## **Second Five Year Initiatives**

- A. Integrate High School, Associates, and Bachelor's Degrees
- B. Offer Expanded Academic Orientation
- C. Enhance Scheduling (Block, Cohort, Accelerated)
- D. Offer MC Curriculum and Credentials Globally
- E. Institutionalize On-line Training for Academic and Career Success

## **Conclusion**

As Montgomery College pursues its mission to empower our students, enrich our community, and hold ourselves accountable, the Academic Affairs division is committed to the success of student learning. Building on the strong foundation of excellent programs, highly-qualified faculty and staff, and meaningful internal and external collaborations, the Academic Master Plan serves as a blueprint for the next five years of learning, growing, and improving as a division and an institution. As President Pollard said in a recent interview, "Our job—this is the next level of work for higher education and community colleges specifically—is to ensure that everyone has the ability to be successful in college by redesigning our institutions to meet these outcomes."

# Montgomery College Academic Master Plan, 2016-2021:

## Pathways to Access, Success, and Excellence

### Introduction

With this Academic Master Plan, Montgomery College embraces the opportunity to examine our academic initiatives through the lens of change. We define the focus and the direction of our programs and practices for the next five to ten years, attempting to anticipate the impact of globalization, demographic changes, economic uncertainty, and workforce alignment; the impact of technology on content delivery and assessment; and the agility needed to respond to the accelerated rate of change. Our mission, vision, and values and our seventy-year history provide a strong foundation.

#### **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

Since its inception in 1946, Montgomery College has focused on student success through the many extraordinary learning opportunities and support services that have been developed throughout a history of excellence. In academic preparation courses, honors seminars, general



education classes, transfer and career programs, workforce and technical instruction, and community education, students pursue an array of goals. The College attracts a wide spectrum of students with diverse backgrounds and with vastly different levels of preparation. Over 100 academic degree and certificate programs supported by superb faculty and staff provide an array of opportunities. For nine of the past twelve years, a Montgomery College faculty member has been named the State of Maryland Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). Faculty and students enjoy unique internship and fellowship opportunities at the Smithsonian Institution, The Library of Congress, the National Institute for Standards and Technology, and the National Institute for Health. The College has been awarded several prestigious grants from The National Science Foundation, The National Endowment for the Humanities, the US Department of State, the US Department of Education, and the US Department of Labor. Our Workforce Development and Continuing Education unit is regularly awarded grants such as the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training ((TAACCCT) grant to align programs with industry needs, and successful credit and non-credit programs serve our growing population of adult English learners, critical in our diverse ecosystem that welcomes students from over 160 countries. Articulation agreements with universities across the nation; partnerships with biotech, cyber security, and IT firms; and relationships with community organizations all serve the educational needs of our students and communities.

Montgomery College has an excellent record of embracing new technologies and delivery methods. We offer distance education in synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid formats. Not only do we have significant online learning opportunities (currently four online degrees), we also offer high-quality training for faculty who want to develop and teach well-designed online courses—including courses that have earned the Quality Matters designation. We have offered a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) for students to improve their writing. We use dozens of discipline-specific software applications to provide course content and training that meets industry standards. We provide technology resources to support student learning in developmental, credit, and non-credit courses as well as for self-directed learning. Faculty have created online content to replace textbooks, as well as Open Educational Resource (OER) banks that provide students with on-demand

access to instructional resources. We strive to maintain state-of-the art technology for every discipline in both classrooms and labs, quickly adopting new technologies and innovations that support student learning. A system of libraries and learning support centers embraces innovation and technology in both depth and breadth of their offerings. Finally, we have implemented a number of software applications that facilitate student success in general, including Blackboard, EvaluationKit, Starfish, Weebly, and Adobe Connect, with additional applications continually under review.

To be relevant, this Academic Master Plan must acknowledge significant changes in technology and pedagogy, and in this era of unprecedented access to information, the rapidly changing nature of education.<sup>1</sup> The advent of free and low-cost online educational options, offered by both public and private sectors, has led some to prophesy the end of higher education as we know it. In 2013, for example, Clayton Christensen, the Harvard Business professor who coined the terms “disruptive technology” and “disruptive innovation,” was not alone in predicting that “15 years from now, half of US universities may be in bankruptcy.”<sup>2</sup> Christensen and others cited not only the presence of MOOCs, badges, and other online learning opportunities, but also a general dissatisfaction among students and employers with the quality and content of the education offered by traditional institutions.<sup>3</sup> Christensen later softened his message to acknowledge that colleges and universities could embrace disruption as an opportunity rather than fear it as a threat.<sup>4</sup>

Montgomery College students and employees span four generations. Providing instruction and supporting the learning of digital natives and those of the “books, bricks and mortar” generation is a challenge. As we continue to incorporate pedagogies that include new technologies to enhance learning, we must do so in ways that acknowledge the learning habits of our millennial-age students and those who will follow them. In a 2012 Pew Research Center report, Anderson and Rainie noted a

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<sup>1</sup> De la Harpe and Mason, “A New Approach,” xx.

<sup>2</sup> Suster, Interview accessed on 14 March 2016, <http://www.bothsidesofthetable.com/2013/03/03/in-15-years-from-now-half-of-us-universities-may-be-in-bankruptcy-my-surprise-discussion-with-claychristensen/>.

<sup>3</sup> Frey, “By 2013,” accessed 14 March 2016, <http://www.futuristspeaker.com/2013/07/by-2030-over-50-of-colleges-will-collapse/>; Harden, “The End,” accessed 14 March 2016, <http://www.the-american-interest.com/2012/12/11/the-end-of-the-university-as-we-know-it/>.

<sup>4</sup> Roscorla, “3 Things,” accessed 14 March 2016, <http://www.centerdigitaled.com/news/3-Things-Higher-Education-Should-Know-about-Disruptive-Innovation.html>.

fairly even divide between experts who believe that the “rewiring” of the brains of subjects under the age of 35 will have a positive effect on their learning and functioning (55%) versus those who predict a negative impact (42%).<sup>5</sup> What many analysts seemed to agree upon, was that the younger generation’s hyper-connectivity and instant access to information may have affected their cognitive habits and functions. Knowing that most students have, at very minimum, different learning styles, educators must continue to adapt our methods that incorporate collaborative, active, and technologically enhanced learning. Core content and mastery are being questioned by students and faculty in this new era of instant access to information. Colleges and universities must continually update curricula in pursuit of education that prepares students for a future that is difficult to predict. Memorization is increasingly less important as learning outcomes expand to assess factual knowledge as well as the mastery of skills, such as critical and creative thinking, collaboration, problem solving, oral and written communication, and the ability to find, apply and expand on information. As traditional careers are transformed or replaced by technology and new career pathways emerge, colleges must provide students with a foundation on which to build, including being agile, lifelong learners--not only for personal enrichment, but to ensure adaptability, employability, and success.<sup>6</sup>

Yet another challenge for higher and continuing education is that Labor Department data consistently reveals that millions of jobs per year go unfilled as a result of skills gaps, i.e., employers’ inability to find workers with the skills needed for the positions available.<sup>7</sup> In Montgomery County, 78% of all new jobs anticipated between 2015 and 2025 will require some form of post-secondary education; in 2015, of the top fifteen occupations which employers had the most difficulty filling, 90% required some form of college education.<sup>8</sup> These pressures are particularly acute for community colleges such as Montgomery College as we try to align our programs with workforce and transfer pathways; increase enrollment, graduation, and transfer; and reduce time and cost to completion. To meet these goals with decreasing state support, we must identify new funding sources through

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<sup>5</sup> Anderson and Rainie, “Millennials Will,” 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> Carlos Devece, et. al., ; Knapper and Cropley

<sup>7</sup> Cohn, “The State Skills,” accessed 14 March 2016, <http://www.cnbc.com/2015/06/24/the-state-skills-gap-whos-got-talent.html>; Gillespie, “America’s Persistent problem,” accessed 14 March 2016, <http://money.cnn.com/2015/08/07/news/economy/us-economy-job-skills-gap/>.

<sup>8</sup> EMSI 2015.4, Q4

grants, foundations, business and industry partnerships, and entrepreneurial endeavors. In particular, we must identify financial aid sources for students completing workforce and career credentials. Perhaps most importantly, we must use our resources more efficiently and effectively than ever before.

In addition to the technological, pedagogical, and curricular forces shaping the future of higher education, external influences are stronger than ever. Montgomery College has been fortunate to have reliable funding streams and the support from our county and state officials who understand the connection between outstanding education and economic growth. While the county's commitment to the College remains steady, competition for resources increases each year. Although federal and state financial support of public education has declined fairly steadily since 1980,<sup>9</sup> pressure from governmental bodies is stronger than ever for colleges and universities to produce measurable results. In 2009, President Obama set the ambitious goal that "by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world."<sup>10</sup> In 2013, the State of Maryland passed the College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act (CCRCCA), legislation that sets credit limits on associate's degrees, requires clearer degree pathways, and mandates specific levels of individual student advising. Such legislation sends a clear message to secondary and post-secondary institutions in Maryland that timely completion is a priority in our state. Completion is an area in which Academic Affairs continues to work closely with our counseling faculty colleagues in the Student Affairs division. As we develop our strategies for increasing retention, transfer, and graduation, we look forward to collaborating with counseling faculty and drawing on their expertise and experience in assessing, placing, and guiding students on pathways to completion.

A visionary and innovative academic master plan, fostering agility and responsiveness, is more important than ever in today's higher education climate as government, industry, accreditors, and students demand measureable results from colleges and universities.<sup>11</sup> Internally, institutions of

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<sup>9</sup> *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "Twenty-Five Years," accessed 14 March 2016, <http://chronicle.com/interactives/statesupport>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/higher-education>

<sup>11</sup> Derek Bok, *Higher Education in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 2; Rebecca S. Natow, "From Capitol Hill to Dupont Circle and Beyond: The Influence of Policy Actors in the Federal Higher Education Rulemaking

higher education must continually evaluate which disruptive innovations to adopt and which standards to assess--even as we consider the possibility that the very meaning of “education” has evolved in this information age. Our methods of instruction must also evolve to meet the needs of students whose cognitive processes may be very different from those of yesterday’s students.<sup>12</sup> Externally, even as funding streams in many states are reduced, redirected, or cut off entirely, colleges are called upon to improve completion rates and align programs with workforce needs, all while adapting our strategies to serve an ever-changing student body.<sup>13</sup>

In response to the rapidly-changing and challenging higher education environment, in 2014 the Academic Affairs division adopted a new organizational structure that reflected the Montgomery College “One College” model, underscored our commitment to academic excellence, and made possible the development and implementation of this Academic Master Plan. Through a collaborative and transparent process involving more than 200 members of the College community, the Academic Affairs division created a structure that eliminates redundancy is agile and responsive, and that situates leadership within the disciplines through faculty chairs with supervisory authority. Deans now have Collegewide responsibilities to lead academic programs, and vice-presidents/provosts lead their Collegewide academic units as well as their respective campuses. This Academic Master Plan is one of several recent initiatives, ignited by the leadership transition, that reflect national best practices. A new and expanding Center for Part-Time Faculty supports student success by serving those who teach over half of our courses. An innovative Achieving the Promise Academy has been designed to address the achievement gap for Latino/a and African-American students. The newly established relationship with the national Achieving the Dream, Inc. will provide the models and coaching to expand data-informed strategies to promote student success and completion.

The Academic Affairs division has mobilized faculty and academic leaders to revise curricula in rapid response to changes in pedagogy, industry needs, technology, and accreditation requirements.

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Process,” *The Journal of Higher Education* 86, no. 3 (2015): 368; George Kuh et. al., *Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2015), XX.

<sup>12</sup> Christodoulou and Kalokairinou, “Net Generation’s,” 119; Chong, Loh, and Babu, “The Millennial Learner,” accessed 14 March 2016, [http://tlc.unisim.edu.sg/research/AdvSoTL-3/chong\\_loh\\_babu.html](http://tlc.unisim.edu.sg/research/AdvSoTL-3/chong_loh_babu.html).

<sup>13</sup> Kuh, *High Impact*, excerpt accessed 14 March 2016, <https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>; American Association of Colleges and Universities, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision*, accessed 14 March 2016, <http://www.greaterexpectations.org/pdf/gex.final.pdf>.

With a broader goal and an impact on all degree-seeking students, the General Education program was revised in 2015 and ratified by the full-time faculty, incorporating integrative learning across disciplines, promoting high-impact learning practices, enhancing assessment, and facilitating transferability. The General Studies program was redesigned (almost simultaneously) to provide coherence, rigor, and depth, giving students who are undecided about their major an opportunity to concentrate on an area of interest – a General Studies pathway – that may link to their future studies. The American English Language Program has been revised to accelerate student progress through the curriculum by condensing levels and reducing the number of courses required in the sequence. Developmental English and math faculty have redesigned their courses to shorten the pathway to college-level courses, and to provide alternative delivery and placement to support student completion. As these large programs are making significant changes, so too are other programs updating courses, incorporating new technology, and streamlining curricula to align their programs with industry and transfer institutions and to foster student completion.

Along with curricular transformation, the Academic Affairs leaders have linked the division's strategic goals to the MC2020 Plan to increase graduation, transfer, and student retention rates. Department chairs have identified strategies to reduce student DFW grades in high enrollment courses. Academic program coordinators have defined and implemented strategies to support student completion of their programs. ELITE has established a Master Teacher Institute to provide models for effective teaching. The division has responded to the College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act by implementing academic program advising and alternative placement pilots programs in English, reading and math. Finally, a new online catalog provides students with course sequencing that clearly defines the pathway to academic degree completion.

Montgomery College's Workforce Development and Continuing Education unit has always worked closely with business and industry and continues to make strides in this area. Recent successes include the MI-BEST (Maryland Integrated Basic Education and Skill Training) programs in Apartment Maintenance and Geriatric Nursing Assistant, which educate students in basic workplace and occupational skills simultaneously, and the TAACCCT grant, which provides resources for our expanded program in Cybersecurity Education. BioTrain is another partnership dedicated to

delivering relevant training to entry-level and incumbent professionals in biotechnology. The College has been awarded a TechHire partnership grant through the US Department of Labor to launch an innovating training and job placement program.

Long-standing programs with successful business and industry partnerships include those in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), automotive technology, and healthcare. Further, the College partners with industry through advisory councils for both workforce and transfer programs to better meet the workforce needs as well as prepare future workers, and to inform members about the role the College plays in meeting workforce needs. These councils allow the College to better align programs with real-world applications at the certificate, associates, or baccalaureate level and beyond.

For over 70 years, Montgomery College has created successful, targeted programs to bring out the best in particular cohorts; however, going forward, we must look for more opportunities to scale-up these best practices in ways that lead to success for all students. Our experience confirms that we can remain an open-enrollment institution, provide academic support for at-risk (or as we prefer to say, “at-promise”) students, and also attract and serve advanced students. By applying the strategies of targeted programs, such as honors programs, Achieving the Promise, and the Macklin Business Institute, we will promote excellence across the institution, and Montgomery College will be the first choice for any student seeking a degree or credential. As Montgomery College President, Dr. DeRionne Pollard explained in her most recent *Washington Post* opinion piece, “Opportunity is at the essence of community colleges . . . .”<sup>14</sup> The aim of this Academic Master Plan is to turn that opportunity into success. Our strong foundation allows us to face the challenges ahead boldly and innovatively and in collaboration with our colleagues in Student Affairs, Advancement and Community Engagement, and Administrative and Fiscal Services, we anticipate meeting those challenges and fostering an environment in which students thrive as we prepare them to navigate a future that is as promising as it is unpredictable.

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<sup>14</sup> “Why Starting,” *The Washington Post*, 8 April 2016.

## **Data Philosophy, Environmental Scan, and Success Indicators**

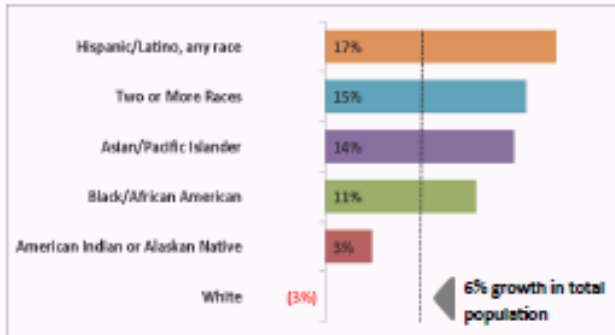
In this Academic Master Plan and throughout the Academic Affairs division, Montgomery College is committed to the responsible and holistic use of data in the broadest sense of the term. In using data responsibly, we seek to see the whole picture and to make decisions that are “data informed” rather than merely “data driven.” By data, we refer to statistics, benchmarks, and other numerical indicators, but also to qualitative surveys, narrative reports, and any other relevant input. Further, we are committed to providing real-time data to as many users as possible in the most efficient ways possible in hopes of influencing outcomes rather than merely dissecting results. All of our proposed Academic Master Plan initiatives are developed with data in mind, and benchmarks and success indicators are in place to measure outcomes and institutional effectiveness. Moreover, our recent designation as an Achieving the Dream institution underscores our intention to build a culture of evidence that informs our decisions for the benefit of our students.



# Montgomery County 2025

## County Diversity Growing Fast

Estimated Change in Population Size 2015-2025



By 2025, **7 out of 10**

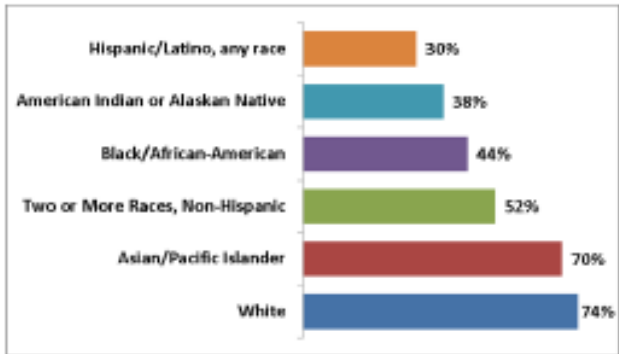
MC residents between the age of **15 and 24** will be Hispanic, Black, or Asian.



# 60%

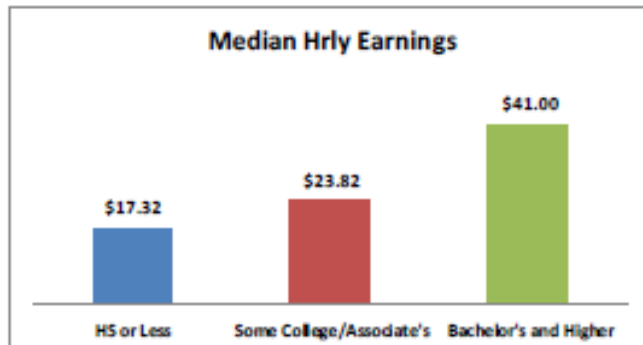
Percentage of County residents age 25+ with a college degree by 2025

Hispanics and African-Americans will still lag behind Whites and Asians in educational attainment, making access to college and student success for these groups an imperative.



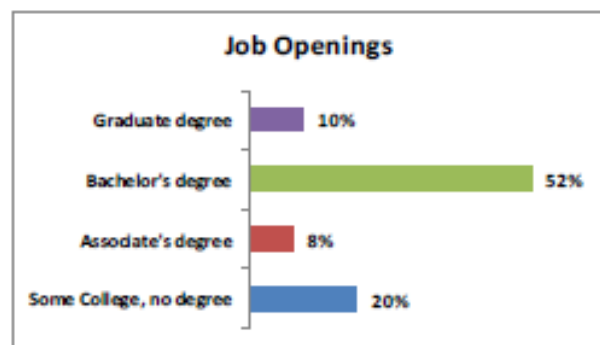
# 78%

The percentage of all new jobs between 2015 and 2025 that will require some form of postsecondary education

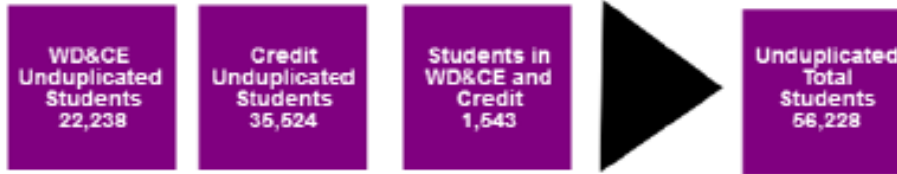


# 90%

The percentage of the top 50 occupations that employers had the most difficulty filling in 2015 that required some form of postsecondary education.



# Montgomery College FY2015 Quick Facts



## Fall 2015 Students at a Glance

Total Number of Credit Students Fall 2015



25,320



New 1st Time  
5,395



Number w/  
Preparatory  
Needs  
7,812

Spring 2015 MCPS Graduates



10,294

Enrolled at  
MC Fall 2015  
2,592

25.2%

Fall 2015 Student Demographics



52.7%  
Female



47.3%  
Male



Full-Time  
35.1%



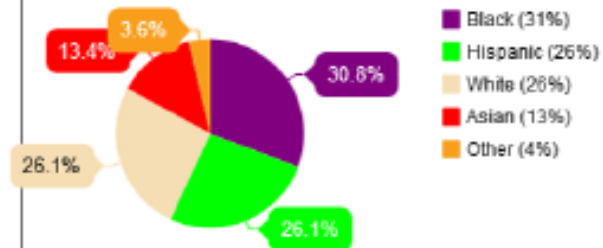
Part-Time  
64.9%



Average  
Age  
25.2 yrs



9.0 Average Student Load



# International Students  
1,919



# Foreign Countries  
159

Total Credit Hours



228,856



Courses  
887  
Sections  
4,536



Avg Class Size  
18.2



Student-Faculty  
Ratio  
17.8:1

22%

Enrolled in at  
least one online  
course



# Web-Based  
Students  
5,580

### Program Type Enrollment

Transfer		# 15,066	(59.5%)
Career		# 5,327	(21.0%)
Undecided		# 4,448	(19.5%)

Fall 2014 to Fall 2015 Retention Rate	73%
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	15.7%
Four-Year Cohort Transfer Rate	25.0%
Graduation and Transfer Rate	40.7%

## **Academic Master Plan Goals and Priorities**

In light of current realities in the world of higher education, a thoughtful, focused, and forward-thinking Academic Master Plan is crucial to meeting the needs of students and our community. This Master Plan will pursue the following broad goals:

- Set academic priorities that impact other College units, particularly facilities and information technology projects through the early 2020s;
- Benchmark data to gauge progress on the Academic Affairs student success matrix including enrollment, graduation rates, and transfer rates for students as well as the College's Student Success Score Card and our collective efforts in Achieving the Promise;
- Establish criteria for effective academic program review, curriculum development, and assessment of the Academic Affairs division's initiatives;
- Identify major academic initiatives that will drive academic unit planning and budgeting; and
- Coordinate the Academic Master Plan with Montgomery College 2020 (the College's strategic plan) and the Middle States Self-Study process.

In addition, the Academic Master plan will align with the six Academic Affairs Division Priorities:

- Increase the graduation rate of first-time, full-time students;
- Increase the transfer rate of first-time, full-time students;
- Reduce time to completion;
- Reduce cost of completion;
- Align programs with workforce needs; and
- Align programs with transfer requirements.

Focusing on these goals and priorities, the Academic Master Plan will articulate student learning outcomes, Academic Affairs division goals, first five-year strategies, and second five-year strategies to move learning forward at Montgomery College.

## Institutional Learning Outcomes for Students

Montgomery College students demonstrate excellence in learning and achieve personal, career, and academic goals because they are able to:

- a. Think: Solve problems by inquiring, interpreting, evaluating, and applying knowledge and skills
  - identify, evaluate, and use data and resources to make decisions
  - seek new knowledge, understanding, and skills
  - organize, structure, and synthesize knowledge
- b. Communicate: Pursue common understanding through effective exchange and expression of ideas
  - listen, write, and speak effectively
  - appreciate multiple perspectives, experiences, and cultures.
- c. Create: Apply curiosity, creativity, and flexible thinking to develop new ideas
  - take intellectual and artistic risks
  - consider alternate explanations, differing beliefs, and multiple perspectives
- d. Engage: Collaborate effectively to discover and achieve common objectives
  - develop an understanding of beliefs that challenge one's own
  - manage conflict productively
  - recognize responsible behaviors in local, global, and digital communities
- e. Connect: Integrate learning across courses, over time, and between campus and community to recognize interdependence and interconnectedness
  - formulate an understanding of global interdependence
  - identify patterns, connections, and linkages across disciplines
  - transfer and adapt skills, knowledge, or methodologies
- f. Grow: Develop knowledge and skills to be resilient, self-confident, and independent life-long learners
  - develop personal, academic, and career goals and plans
  - prioritize resources and strategies for continuous learning
  - practice self-reflection and self-assessment
- g. Achieve: Apply the experience, knowledge, and skills attained at Montgomery College to complete personal, educational, and professional goals
  - demonstrate knowledge of career and discipline-specific content and methods
  - pursue career, academic, and personal success

## Academic Affairs Division Goals

Just as we have identified seven Institutional Learning Outcomes to articulate our expectations for student learning at Montgomery College, we in Academic Affairs hold ourselves to a comparable standard by establishing seven parallel Academic Affairs Division Goals. These seven goals are both descriptive and prescriptive, serving as guiding principles for our work with students and identifying specific strategies and projects that must be undertaken in order to accomplish our goals.

A. Think: Use qualitative and quantitative information to make informed decisions that promote student success and ensure academic excellence.

- Strategy 1: Identify and implement agile software system(s) that provide real-time, easily accessible data for use by students, faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Strategy 2: Identify and implement comprehensive student success applications that facilitate and advance scheduling, planning, and recognition for progress and excellence.

When we think about student success, we must have adequate information and adequate time to reflect on that information in order to make good decisions.

B. Communicate: Initiate, deepen, or expand conversations with internal and external partners to help students succeed.

- Strategy 1: Institutionalize a support structure to provide assistance, training, and modeling for advisory groups to increase their effectiveness and to establish a system of accountability.
- Strategy 2: Establish a Developmental Studies Roundtable which includes faculty representatives from English, reading, and math, the leadership of which rotates on an annual basis among disciplines.

Our commitment to communication will be evident in the increased time that we spend discussing student success with each other and with the broader community, including industry leaders and surrounding academic institutions. For example, CCRCCA has spurred us to organize meetings between MC and MCPS faculty in English and math; now those conversations should be expanded to include other disciplines. Montgomery College has also committed to establishing advisory councils for all programs, with the goal that transfer disciplines will now engage in community collaborations similar to those established by the Career and Technical Education programs; for these new councils to be successful, conveners and council members must be provided with training, support, and a clear understanding of purpose. Internally, a proposal to create a Development Studies Roundtable recommends regular meetings of English, reading, and math faculty so that we are working together to help our students succeed.

C. Create: Foster and celebrate innovation at all levels of the institution.

- Strategy 1: Collaborate with MC Innovation Works to teach principles and strategies for innovation, to facilitate implementation, and to identify and address systemic barriers to innovation.
- Strategy 2: Enhance pathways, processes, opportunities, and incentives to innovate and to scale innovations.
- Strategy 3: Identify and work synergistically with partner institutions on academic innovation.

College employees are frequently exhorted to “innovate” and to “think creatively,” but evidence suggests that we sometimes lack a common understanding of those terms and that we often lack the time, tools, and space to be innovative and creative. Montgomery College has made a commitment to innovation in the establishment of MC Innovation Works, Innovation Grants, and other initiatives. For the Academic Affairs division to take full advantage of these opportunities, we must partner with internal and external drivers of creativity and innovation and provide faculty and staff with training, guidance, and opportunities to actualize innovation.

D. Engage: Interact with students beyond the classroom, individually and in small groups, to support academic success.

- Strategy 1: Collaborate with Student Affairs to support and expand existing mentoring programs, create new ones, and provide a mechanism for the distribution of resources, coordination of efforts, and a clearinghouse to share and discuss effective methods and strategies.
- Strategy 2: Create an electronic discussion forum to collect, discuss, test, and disseminate “micro-intervention” techniques. Provide incentives for faculty and staff participation.

Study after study demonstrates that one-on-one or small-group advising, mentoring, coaching, or other personalized interventions have significant impact on students’ persistence and success. Montgomery College already has many fine programs that meet this description, including but not limited to, Boys to Men, Trio, Raptor Navigator, International Buddy Program, Women’s Mentoring Project, and the newly launched Achieving the Promise Academy; as an institution, we must find ways to fund and expand these efforts Collegewide and to offer new options for students who don’t currently fit a targeted profile but who could benefit from individualized attention. We can also use these strategies to help students who are average performers to reach the next level of excellence, and we can supplement these more structured programs with micro-interventions: brief, focused, and potentially high-impact exchanges between students and College personnel. As a large institution with thousands of students, we must develop a culture in which ALL employees routinely engage in intentional ways with students to foster their success. Our goal is to highlight “community” in community college.

E. Connect: Embrace integrative learning through interdisciplinary and collaboration among disciplines, programs, and faculty.

- Strategy 1: Validate and support current “across the disciplines” programs, such as Writing in the Disciplines, Quantitative Reasoning in the Disciplines, and others, and add additional interdisciplinary projects as appropriate—

including credit and non-credit curricula. (Additional projects might include a statistics network, global/international education, or innovations in health care education.)

- Strategy 2: Create a clearinghouse for modular high-impact, low-stress collaborations among faculty from different disciplines to share assignments, lectures, pedagogical practices, and expertise.
- Strategy 3: Implement a portfolio system that recognizes, tracks, and validates student participation in academic programs and co-curricular activities.

Stark delineation among disciplines has never been a feature of business, industry, government, or the community, and academia is quickly realizing the need to cross boundaries and make connections in order to provide students with the most relevant education possible. While we have offered a successful Writing in the Disciplines program for many years and made significant progress in offering learning communities of various types and complexity, we must now find ways to extend these benefits to more students by helping them make connections that deepen their understanding of their own discipline and others. Knowing that faculty participation is the key to expanded integrative learning, we must make ease of implementation a priority for any new programs. For example, we may decide to infuse statistics into a wide variety of STEM and non-STEM disciplines by designing assignments that are modular and adaptable to any subject matter. Likewise, a centralized and easily accessible clearinghouse would allow faculty to connect for just one or two class periods to share expertise, assignments, or lectures. In order to help our students transfer skills and see big-picture connections, we must model that behavior and teach by example.

F. Grow: Offer meaningful professional development for all employees by embracing broadened perspectives in scholarship.

- Strategy 1: Develop a focused professional development pathway for faculty and instructional staff to enhance their pedagogical practices in light of new outcomes for courses that teach essential skills alongside discipline content.



- Strategy 2: Create professional development opportunities for faculty and instructional staff to develop and enhance currency in discipline content, scholarship, pedagogy, and workforce alignment.
- Strategy 3: Provide relevant professional development opportunities for all academic support staff in the Academic Affairs division.

While content expertise is still the most important qualification for the professoriate, to be effective in today's higher education environment, content expertise among faculty must be coupled with expertise on pedagogical strategies proven to improve student success. Today's faculty are routinely asked to incorporate new technologies and pedagogies, to restructure their courses to focus on broader learning outcomes (such as oral communication or information literacy), and to incorporate interdisciplinary content and high-impact learning practices. Through clear communication, meaningful self-assessments, and readily accessible training, we can help faculty meet continually changing expectations. Moreover, even faculty who are teaching primarily "content-based" courses might welcome opportunities, such as industry externships, scholarship support, and courses in topics such as, "teaching professional practice" to remain current in their disciplines. Likewise, staff and administrators in the Academic Affairs division, regardless of function, will benefit from professional development that focuses on student learning and engagement. If we truly care about student success, we must invest in faculty, staff, and administrator success as well.

G. Achieve: Foster a culture of empowerment and accountability whereby all employees in the Academic Affairs unit have both agency and responsibility to make positive changes for students.

- Strategy 1: Review curriculum approval processes to improve efficiency and responsiveness.
- Strategy 2: Revise faculty evaluation process to reflect institutional goals, our new organizational structure, and the dynamic role of 21<sup>st</sup> century faculty.

The most enthusiastic and innovative faculty, staff, and administrators can become discouraged if internal processes impede their efforts to make improvements. Two systems at Montgomery College

that have not undergone thorough scrutiny in ten years or more are the curriculum approval and faculty evaluation processes. The implementation of the Academic Master Plan is an opportune time to examine both and potentially revise them to align with current and evolving expectations for faculty, programs, and curricula.

## **Academic Program Review**

Academic Program Review is an important tool at most institutions of higher education, used for internal self-evaluation and assessment, to address academic quality, and to document continuous improvements to our external accreditors and stakeholders. Further, this process informs decision-making by setting academic priorities and aligning resources to institutional mission and goals. Academic Program Review at Montgomery College builds upon our current College Area Review (CAR) process for academic areas.

Montgomery College's CAR process has been used since 2003 to review academic areas and, since 2007, to assess administrative and student affairs units. Academic areas, including all disciplines, credit programs, special programs (credit and non-credit), and learning centers have participated in past reviews. Provosts, deans, chairs, and faculty workgroups have actively engaged in this systematic, comprehensive, and cyclical process to ensure that our programs are meeting students' educational goals. In addition, CAR recommendations are used to inform Perkins grant funding for our CTE programs.

Building upon the current review process, the new Academic Program Review model will examine a program or discipline within the context of the college's current goals, priorities, and resources. More importantly, the revised process will contain components used to guide the development of new programs and recommendations for continuance or discontinuance of existing programs.

Successful Academic Program Review often begins with collaborative, institutional decisions about criteria for evaluation and ranking of those criteria. Based on the Dickeson (2010) model, the following criteria are often considered for inclusion:

- History, development, and expectations of the program
- Alignment with college mission, goals, or institutional values

- Impact, justification and overall relevance of the program
- Quality of program inputs and processes
- Quality of program outcomes
- Size, scope and productivity of the program
- External and internal demand for the program
- Revenue and other resources generated by the program
- Costs and other expenses associated with the program

Once criteria are established and described or quantified, a revised process will be developed that builds upon the existing Academic Program Review process, including the following:

- An Academic Program Review committee with representational membership to prepare reports, review results, and make recommendations to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs;
- Management of the program review through the Office of Assessment using materials based on existing Academic Program Review forms;
- A timeline for periodic review that is based on the current 5-year review cycle for academic programs and that includes a mechanism for early review in response to changes in the academic environment;
- A rubric that identifies whether a program is viable, needs revision or improvement, or should be considered for elimination; and
- Training in the process for all involved.

While objective assessment of programs can be difficult, the Academic Affairs division's goals and objectives demand that we prioritize resources and focus on results.

Strategy 1: Establish a task group to collect feedback and propose an Academic Program Review Process by December 2016 for implementation the following academic year, 2017.

Strategy 2: Immediately implement an "early alert" system for programs that will likely face scrutiny as a result of Academic Program Review.

Strategy 3: Implement a training program for faculty and academic leaders – chairs, deans, and VP/Ps – to create a common understanding of the purpose and goals of Academic Program Review

## **First Five Year Initiatives**

The Academic Affairs unit has identified six initiatives for implementation over the next five years, roughly 2016 through 2021. During that time, we will focus on supporting and scaling up successful programs, implementing best practices from other institutions, and piloting some entirely new ideas of our own. In all cases, we are committed to increasing enrollment, graduation, and transfer; aligning with transfer institutions and workforce needs; and reducing time and cost to completion.

### **Initiative 1: Embed Classroom Support**

One academic support strategy that has yielded consistently positive results in programs at Montgomery College and elsewhere is embedded classroom support. Grant-supported Student Learning Assistants in STEM disciplines, embedded tutors in 101A PACE (Program for Advancement to College English) for developmental writing students, and interdisciplinary English-language and trade-skills instruction in the MI-BEST (Maryland Integrated Education and Skills Training) program are all examples of successful embedded classroom support programs that might be scaled up to include non-STEM disciplines, other developmental and college-level English courses, and other non-credit career programs. Additional ideas for classroom support include embedded librarians and push-in tutoring, as well as virtual support embedded via Blackboard. Embedded support is designed not only to benefit students during class hours, but also to empower students to seek assistance beyond the classroom (e.g., in libraries, learning centers, or counseling offices) as a result of relationships built with academic support professionals. In all cases, units must collaborate to identify alternative funding or creative scheduling to make it possible for academic support professionals to spend enough time in classrooms to build these relationships with students. Another potential strategy is to expand the definition of “academic support professional” to include qualified staff members at all levels of the institution, specially-trained peer tutors, selected

community volunteers, counselors, and any other relationships that can be leveraged in support of student success.

Strategy 1: Pilot embedded academic support strategies in selected gateway courses. [Benchmark: Decrease by 10% the number of students receiving DFW grades in selected gateway courses by 2021.]

Strategy 2: Pilot embedded academic support in at least one course per program or discipline. [Benchmark: Decrease by 10% the number of students receiving DFW grades in selected program or discipline courses by 2021.]

Based on success of pilots and reduction in DFW rates, academic programs would institutionalize and scale up embedded support as possible in the second five year period.

## **Initiative 2: Offer Alternative Scheduling and Delivery**

For many years, proprietary schools have attracted considerable enrollment by offering alternative scheduling and delivery. Students, especially non-traditional students, have been drawn to the convenience of online and hybrid courses, evening and weekend degree programs, lockstep cohort programs, and accelerated degrees. In order to meet the needs of all of our potential students, we must look to these models and make intentional decisions to vary our terms, class times, pathway options, and delivery methods. Traditional students will also benefit, particularly those who can participate in full-time cohorts, block-scheduled learning communities, apprenticeships, or study travel.

Strategy 1: Offer one entire degree program on each campus or in each VPP area by developing an evening/weekend cohort or other scheduling strategy designed to decrease average time to completion. [Benchmarks: Twelve month reduction from average time to degree for students enrolled in evening/weekend or specially scheduled programs by 2021.]

Strategy 2: Create and market flex-term courses (*or degrees*) so students can begin at different standardized times of the semester (7 weeks OR 5 weeks, as determined by consensus). [Benchmarks: Increased enrollment in parts of term 2-6 by 20% by 2021.]

Implementation of this initiative will require collaboration with Student Affairs to adapt room scheduling practices for alternative classroom use. Successful programs can be replicated in the second five year period.

### **Initiative 3: Implement Alternative and Customized Assessment and Placement**

Whether or not a student completes a degree or other credential is sometimes dependent on a student's starting point. Time and cost to complete often determine which credential a student can attain. Frustration, due to the inability to get credit for prior knowledge and experience, can impact a student's engagement and persistence.

Options such as Assessment of Prior Learning and alternative placement for developmental courses can remove courses or entire semesters from a student's pathway, decreasing, sometimes significantly, the time and cost to earn a degree and increasing the likelihood of completion. High-achieving high school students are often able to place directly into or even exempt college-level courses with appropriate scores on CLEP, IB, AP, SAT, or ACT<sup>15</sup> exams, but opportunities for students with military or job related training have been more limited. In addition, a new cadre of students may come to us having completed free online courses in hopes of earning proficiency credits. Any credits that we choose to award through alternative assessment must uphold rigorous standards and align with workforce, associate, and baccalaureate curricula if the credits are to transfer. National organizations, such as National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS) and The American Council on Education's (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT®), are helping colleges navigate these challenges. The more options we can offer students to start at the right place and with credit for prior learning, the less likely students are to give up due to cost, frustration, or boredom with courses that are too easy or too difficult.

Strategy 1: Appoint a joint credit/non-credit workgroup to recommend appropriate steps for expanding student access to Assessment of Prior Learning and proficiency credit, incorporating multiple placement and assessment opportunities for students with training,

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<sup>15</sup> College Level Examination Program (CLEP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and American College Test (ACT).

education, and experience outside of traditional credit programs. [Benchmarks: Proficiency credit options exist for top 20 enrolled credit-bearing courses and all courses included in Career and Technical Education (CTE) articulation agreements by 2021; increased number of students earning credit by exam by 300% by 2021.]

Strategy 2: Standardize multiple measures for developmental course placement including assessments currently in place, measures currently in pilot stage, and new placement strategies based on degree pathways, alternative assessments, high school test scores, and/or targeted student need. [Benchmark: Reduction of number of students placed into developmental courses by 40% by 2021.]

#### **Initiative 4: Design Alternative and Customized Credentials and Guided Pathways**

Just as there are multiple starting points based on various methods of assessment and placement, there are multiple academic and career pathways leading to credentials. By offering customized pathways through the use of competency-based education, stackable credentials, badges, Technical Profession Skills (TPS) degrees, and online education resources, more students will be able to complete multiple certificates, degrees, and credentials that advance their education and their career prospects in parallel or in sequence. As we customize pathways, we must incorporate credentials from secondary education, military and work experience, credit by exam, developmental courses, and credit courses to create multiple opportunities for students to succeed, and the flow of these credentials must move smoothly between credit and non-credit courses and programs.

In addition, as state laws change in regard to college math requirements, developmental courses can be customized for students to complete material up to the level required to be successful in the college-level math course appropriate for their discipline. For those students who have difficulty completing developmental math, instructional and counseling faculty can help students find workforce pathways that do not require college-level math.

Strategy 1: Identify and articulate pathways for stackable credentials and stackable competencies that allow for incremental completion of both non-credit programs and credit-bearing certificates and degrees; these pathways should offer (and recognize) a

wide variety of credentialing options and lead students to multiple points of completion and success. [Benchmark: Increase in number of students receiving multiple credentials within a rolling ten-year period by 200% by 2021; availability of stackable credentialing in 50% of programs and disciplines collegewide by 2021.]

Strategy 2: Customize developmental studies pathways by exploring accelerated programs and interdisciplinary delivery and by creating multiple exit points determined by student strengths, needs, or program goals. [Benchmarks: Reduction of number of students attempting the same developmental studies course more than three semesters without exiting (by passing or changing pathways) by 50% by 2021; increase by 20% the number of students completing college level math or English courses after beginning in developmental studies.]

After Montgomery College has established models, processes, and benchmarks for awarding proficiency credit and implementing alternative developmental placement, we can continue to expand and add options for both.

As we continue to develop and add new pathways, it will be important to market these options and to have software that tracks student progress.

### **Initiative 5: Enhance Student Pathways from MCPS and to USG**

To effectively advance the completion agenda and address the skills gap, the Academic Affairs division is committed to providing opportunities for our students that lead to accelerated credentials, rigorous educational experiences, and academic success. Collaborations with secondary schools and baccalaureate institutions can be leveraged to help students complete valuable certificates and programs in the most efficient and least costly way. Dozens of examples of successful and productive partnership programs exist between and among Montgomery College, Montgomery College Public Schools (MCPS), and the institutions offering degree programs at The Universities at Shady Grove (USG); we want to continue most, expand some, and explore new opportunities.



Strategy 1: Deepen and/or expand MCPS partnership programs especially Middle College, Dual Enrollment, Career and Technical Education, and college readiness efforts. [Benchmarks: Increase in the number of students enrolled in Middle College programs by 20% by 2021; increase in the number of students enrolled in Dual Enrollment by 20% by 2021; Increase in the number of students accessing CTE articulated course credit by 200% by 2021.]

Strategy 2: Increase MC faculty collaborations with faculty in undergraduate programs offered at USG in order to facilitate student success in targeted programs. [Benchmark: Increase number of discipline-specific, faculty-level collaborations to 75% of all undergraduate programs offered at USG by 2021.]

These strategies taken together will also strengthen the 2+2+2 pathways articulated among MCPS, MC, and USG institutions.

## **Initiative 6: Expand Global Partnerships and International Opportunities**

As we prepare students to live and work in an increasingly globalized environment, the Academic Affairs division must foster new opportunities for students, staff, faculty, and Academic Affairs units to work with international governments, businesses, and institutions of higher education in order to provide a twenty-first century education for our students and much-needed services and expertise to our colleagues abroad. In light of shrinking state funding, we must be willing and able to export our knowledge and leverage entrepreneurial efforts to fund programs for our own students.

Strategy 1: Expand opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to study abroad through exchanges, short and long-term programs, and service learning. [Benchmark: Increase number of students and faculty participating in MC-sponsored international opportunity by 200% by 2021; Increase number of courses globalized through GHI to 60 by 2021.]

Strategy 2: Establish new global partnerships for entrepreneurial, educational, and/or community outreach purposes. [Benchmark: Increase in the number of global partnerships/ contracts/ memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to 20 by 2021.]

## Academic Master Plan Integration with MC 2020

AMP Initiatives	AMP Strategies	Outcomes/ Benchmarks	Academic Affairs Priorities	MC 2020 Theme	Related MC 2020 Canvas Measure
1. Embed Classroom Support	1. Pilot embedded academic support strategies in selected gateway courses.	*Decrease by 10% the number of students receiving DFW grades in selected gateway courses by 2021.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the graduation rate <i>of first-time, full-time students</i>.</li> <li>Increase the student transfer rate.</li> <li>Reduce the average time to degree or certificate.</li> <li>Reduce the average cost of degree or certificate.</li> </ol>	Theme II: Access, Affordability, Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fall-to-Fall Retention</li> <li>Graduation Rate</li> <li>Transfer Rate</li> <li>Fall-to-Spring Retention</li> <li>Student Success</li> <li>Time to Completion</li> <li>Transfer Student Success</li> <li>Student Satisfaction</li> </ul>
	2. Pilot embedded academic support in at least one course per program or discipline.	* Decrease by 10% the number of students receiving DFW grades in selected program or discipline courses by 2021.			
2. Offer Alternative Scheduling and Delivery	1. Offer one entire degree program on each campus or in each VPP area by developing an evening/week-end cohort or other scheduling strategy designed to decrease average time to completion	*Twelve-month reduction from average time to degree for students enrolled in evening/weekend or specially scheduled programs by 2021.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the graduation rate <i>of first-time, full-time students</i>.</li> <li>Increase the student transfer rate.</li> <li>Reduce the average time to degree or certificate.</li> <li>Reduce the average cost of degree or certificate.</li> </ol>	Theme I: Academic Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course Schedule Efficiency</li> <li>Time to Completion</li> <li>Fall-to-Fall Retention</li> <li>Fall-to-Spring Retention</li> <li>Student Satisfaction</li> <li>Credit Annual Headcount Enrollment</li> </ul>
	2. Create and market flex-term courses ( <i>or degrees</i> ) so students can begin at different standardized times of the semester (7 weeks or 5 weeks).	*Increased enrollment in parts of term 2-6 by 20% by 2021.			

AMP Initiatives	AMP Strategies	Outcomes/ Benchmarks	Academic Affairs Priorities	MC 2020 Theme	Related MC 2020 Canvas Measure
3. Implement Alternative and Customized Assessment and Placement	1. Appoint a joint credit/non-credit workgroup to recommend appropriate steps for expanding student access to Assessment of Prior Learning and proficiency credit, incorporating multiple placement and assessment opportunities for students with training, education, and experience outside of traditional credit programs.	*Proficiency credit options exist for top 20 enrolled credit-bearing courses and all courses included in CTE articulation agreements by 2021. *Increased number of students earning proficiency credit by 300% by 2021.	3. Reduce the average time to degree or certificate. 4. Reduce the average cost of degree or certificate. 6. Align programs with workforce needs and industry demands.	Theme I: Academic Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time to Completion</li> <li>• Student Satisfaction</li> <li>• Graduation Rate</li> <li>• Student Success</li> <li>• Transfer Rate</li> </ul>
	2. Standardize multiple measures for developmental course placement including assessments currently in place, measures currently in pilot stage, and new placement	*Reduction of number of students placed into developmental courses by 40% by 2021.	1. Increase the graduation rate of first-time, full-time students. 2. Increase the student transfer rate. 3. Reduce the average time to degree or certificate.	Theme II: Access, Affordability, Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time to Completion</li> <li>• Student Satisfaction</li> <li>• Graduation Rate</li> <li>• Student Success</li> <li>• Transfer Rate</li> </ul>

AMP Initiatives	AMP Strategies	Outcomes/ Benchmarks	Academic Affairs Priorities	MC 2020 Theme	Related MC 2020 Canvas Measure
	strategies based on degree pathways, alternative assessments, high school test results, and/or targeted student need.		4. Reduce the average cost of degree or certificate.		
4. Design Alternative and Customized Credentialing and Guided Pathways	1. Identify and articulate pathways for stackable credentials and stackable competencies that allow for incremental completion of both non-credit programs and credit-bearing certificates and degrees; these pathways should offer (and recognize) a wide variety of credentialing options and lead students to multiple points of completion and success	*Increase in number of students receiving multiple credentials within a rolling ten-year period by 200% by 2021; availability of stackable credentialing in 50% of programs and disciplines collegewide by 2021	6. Align programs with workforce needs and industry demands.	Theme III: Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noncredit Annual Headcount Enrollment</li> <li>• Career Program Student Success Economic Impact</li> </ul>
	2. Customize developmental studies pathways by exploring accelerated programs and interdisciplinary delivery and by creating multiple exit	*Reduction of the number of students attempting the same developmental studies course more than three semesters without exiting (by passing or changing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the graduation rate of first-time, full-time students.</li> <li>2. Increase the student transfer rate.</li> <li>3. Reduce the average time to</li> </ol>	Theme I: Educational Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fall-to-Fall Retention</li> <li>• Graduation Rate</li> <li>• Transfer Rate</li> <li>• Fall-to-Spring Retention</li> <li>• Student Success</li> <li>• Time to Completion</li> </ul>

AMP Initiatives	AMP Strategies	Outcomes/ Benchmarks	Academic Affairs Priorities	MC 2020 Theme	Related MC 2020 Canvas Measure
	points determined by student strengths, needs, or program goals	pathways) by 50% by 2021. *Increase by 20% the number of students completing college level math or English courses after beginning in developmental studies.	degree or certificate. 4. Reduce the average cost of degree or certificate.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer Student Success</li> </ul>
5. Enhance Student Pathways from MCPS and to USG	1: Deepen and/or expand MCPS partnership programs especially Middle College, Dual Enrollment, Career and Technical Education, and college readiness efforts.	*Increase in the number of students enrolled in Middle College programs by 20% by 2021. *Increase in the number of students enrolled in Dual Enrollment by 20% by 2021. *Increase in the number of students accessing CTE articulated course credit by 200% by 2021.	1. Increase the graduation rate of first-time, full-time students. 2. Increase the student transfer rate. 3. Reduce the average time to degree or certificate.. 4. Reduce the average cost of degree or certificate.	Theme II: Access, Affordability, Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of MCPS Graduates</li> </ul>
	2: Increase collaborations with faculty in undergraduate programs offered at USG in order to facilitate student success in targeted programs.	*Increase number of discipline-specific, faculty-level collaborations to 75% of all undergraduate programs offered at USG by 2021.	5. Align Programs with those at four-year institutions. 6. Align programs with workforce needs and industry demands.	Theme I: Educational Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduation Rate</li> <li>Transfer Rate</li> <li>Transfer Student Success</li> </ul>
6. Expand Global Partnerships and International Opportunities	1. Expand opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to study abroad through exchanges, short and long-term	*Benchmark: Increase number of students and faculty participating in MC-sponsored international opportunity by 200% by 2021. *Increase number of	1. Increase the graduation rate of first-time, full-time students. 2. Increase the student transfer rate.	Theme I: Educational Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional Development Opportunities for faculty and staff</li> <li>Globalization of the Curriculum</li> <li>Graduation Rate</li> <li>Transfer Rate</li> </ul>

AMP Initiatives	AMP Strategies	Outcomes/ Benchmarks	Academic Affairs Priorities	MC 2020 Theme	Related MC 2020 Canvas Measure
	programs, and service learning.	courses globalized through GHI to 60 by 2021.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer Student Success</li> </ul>
	2.Establish new global partnerships for entrepreneurial, educational, and/or community outreach purposes.	*Increase in the number of global partnerships/ contracts/ MOUs to 20 by 2021.	6. Align programs with workforce needs and industry demands.	Theme III: Economic Development  Theme IV: Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of Global Partnerships</li> </ul>

## **Second Five Year Initiatives**

### **A. Integrate High School, Associates, and Bachelor's Degrees**

By working with MCPS and USG, MC has the opportunity to reduce time and cost to degree by creating 1) a high school senior year experience that results in the first year of an associates degree and 2) integrated programs with USG that merge the second year of the associate's with the beginnings of the baccalaureate degree. This initiative builds upon the First Five-Year Initiative 5: Deepen Existing Partnerships with MCPS and USG. Extensive negotiation and potential policy changes may be required to begin implementation in 2021.

### **B. Offer Expanded Academic Orientation**

Summer orientation programs offered by the Student Affairs division have shown a positive impact on student success. In order to build upon this success, the Academic Affairs division will explore discipline-specific, extended, summer orientation programs designed for college-ready and not-yet-college-ready students. This initiative builds upon Academic Affairs Division Goals D: Engage and E: Connect and upon the First Five-Year Initiative 1: Embed Classroom Support. These programs should be offered in close collaboration with Student Affairs faculty.

### **C. Enhance Scheduling (Block, Cohort, Accelerated)**

As new technology provides us the tools to be more intelligent and analytical about course scheduling, Montgomery College will explore options, such as block scheduling, cohort scheduling, pathway scheduling, accelerated scheduling, and long-term scheduling. This initiative builds upon the First Five-Year Initiative 2: Offer Alternative Scheduling and Delivery. Designating this initiative for the second five years will allow us to gain some experience with less complex alternative scheduling strategies, to explore ways in which we might truly "accelerate" a program, and to thoroughly research and implement the right software application.

### **D. Offer MC Curriculum and Credentials Globally**

As a member of a global community, Montgomery College has an opportunity and an obligation to share curriculum and expertise with our international colleagues who are struggling to find the capacity and resources to educate millions of students. The next step, offering credentials and degrees jointly or singly to students studying in other countries, may require significant time and effort to overcome regulatory obstacles (hence the need to slate this initiative for the second five years). This initiative builds upon the First Five-Year Initiative 6: Expand Global Partnerships and International Opportunities.

#### E. Institutionalize On-line Training for Academic and Career Success

Colleges are called upon increasingly to teach career and professional skills to students, but fitting these lessons into a curriculum already filled with program content and general education competencies is difficult. Fortunately, many vendors are now providing low-cost, online modules on topics ranging from financial literacy to time management to listening skills. In order to make sure that students access this training, we must either find a way to document it in their portfolios or recruit faculty to require it in some classes. The next five years will give us time to structure this learning and choose an appropriate vendor. This initiative builds upon Academic Affairs Division Goals D: Engage and E: Connect.

## **Conclusion**

As Montgomery College pursues its mission to empower our students, enrich our community, and hold ourselves accountable, the Academic Affairs division is committed to the success of student learning. Building on the strong foundation of excellent programs, highly-qualified faculty and staff, and meaningful internal and external collaborations, the Academic Master Plan serves as a blueprint for the next five years of learning, growing, and improving as a division and an institution. As President Pollard said in a recent interview, “Our job—this is the next level of work for higher education and community colleges specifically—is to ensure



that everyone has the ability to be successful in college by redesigning our institutions to meet these outcomes.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Milestone Moments: Building for Student Success*, Montgomery College Publication, 2015, 6.

## Academic Master Plan Glossary

**2 + 2 + 2:** Shorthand for an articulated program or curriculum that begins in the last two years of high school and leads seamlessly into a two-year associate's degree at a community college followed by two years of study at a four-year college or university, resulting in a bachelor's degree.

**Badges:** Visual, digital representations of achievements or competencies that signify educational mastery and are earned by completing learning modules, accomplishing particular tasks and goals, or demonstrating knowledge of content or skills. In an institution of higher education, badges would be part of a larger system of assessment.

**Career and Technology Education (CTE):** Programs of study based on articulation agreements that allow students to earn Montgomery College credit by successfully completing program courses at MCPS (Montgomery County Public Schools). These programs include Automotive Technology, Business, Construction and Development, Criminal Justice, Education, Engineering, Hospitality Management, Information Technology, Media and Interactive Technologies, and more.

**College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013 (CCRCCA; a.k.a. Senate Bill 740):** A Maryland State Act designed to ensure student college and career readiness, expand access to early college enrollment, enhance transferability, and foster timely degree completion. Elements of CCRCCA that are particularly relevant to community colleges include focusing high school students on dual enrollment opportunities, making 60 credits of community college courses transferrable to public four-year state institutions, making 30 credits of public four-year state institution courses transferrable to community colleges, developing incentives for students to obtain an associate's degree before enrolling in a public four-year state institution, filing a degree plan upon community college entry, and setting credit limits for associate's and bachelor's degrees.

**Completion:** Graduation from a community college with a certificate or degree and/or transfer from a community college to a public four-year institution of higher education.

**Credential:** Something that formally confers credit or confidence, such as a degree, certificate, or badge. The Department of Labor defines a "stackable credential" as "part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual's qualifications and help them to move along a career pathway or up a career ladder to different and potentially higher-paying jobs."

**Disruptive innovations/technologies:** Innovations or practices that displace established technologies and methodologies and drastically change the way individuals or institutions

operate. Examples include e-mails displacing letter-writing; PC's displacing typewriters; cell phones displacing home lines; smart phones displacing cell phones, cameras, and calculators; and cloud computing displacing institutional in-house service hosting.

**Dual enrollment:** Student enrollment in two academic institutions (such as a high school and community college) that have developed a coordinated program of study.

**Environmental scan:** A survey of relevant data to identify an organization's external opportunities and threats as well as internal strengths and weaknesses. In the process, the organization considers where it is now and where it plans to be in the next five or ten years.

**Guided pathways:** Structured, coherent education programs that include courses and support services leading students directly to their goals. Contrasted with the *cafeteria-style self-service model* that expects students to choose among disconnected courses and support services. Guided pathways are explained fully in *Redesigning America's Community Colleges* by Thomas R. Bailey, Shanna Smith Jaggers, and Davis Jenkins.

**Massive Open Online Course (MOOC):** An open-access web-based course allowing free and unlimited participation. MOOC course materials might include lectures, readings, and user forums to promote interactions among students, professors, and assistants. Coursera, Udacity, and edX are among the top MOOC providers.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** A formal agreement used to establish partnerships between at least two parties who share common interests. Examples include Montgomery College's MOUs with Xian University in China to conduct seminars and colloquia between humanities faculty at both institutions; with KeyGene, a biotechnology firm, to develop internships and employment opportunities for College students; and with the Georgia Institute of Technology to establish College course requirements for students transferring to the Institute's engineering programs.

**Micro-intervention:** Brief, focused, and potentially high-impact exchanges between students and College personnel. Grounded in social work theory and practice, micro-interventions originally referred to strategies that produce positive changes for individuals.

**Middle college:** A collaboration between a high school and community college that allows high school students to take both high school and college courses, applying college credits toward a community college degree while they earn their high school diplomas. Through Montgomery College's Middle College Program, students at selected Montgomery County Public Schools may earn their associate degrees and high school diplomas at the same time.

**Millennials:** The Pew Research Center defines "millennials" as the generation born between 1981 and 1997. Pew reports that as of May 2015 this generation surpasses Generation X as the largest generation in the U.S. labor force, with 53.5 million workers.

**Open-enrollment institution:** An educational institution that grants admission to applicants who have a high school diploma or a GED certificate. Some open-enrollment institutions, such as Montgomery College, may also allow students without a high school credential to enroll in certain programs or under specific conditions.

**Portfolio:** A collection of academic documents and co-curricular activity records that tracks learning progress and academic achievement, enables students to reflect on their goals and accomplishments, and creates an archive of academic and career-related products. Portfolios are often digital and updated using web-based applications.

**Proficiency credit:** Credit for knowledge or skills acquired through participation in non-academic experiences, such as employment or community service. Ordinarily credit is granted only when the outcomes of these experiences are documented, course-related, and assessed as "college-level."

**Program/program:** A Program (with a capital "P") is a structured set of courses, workshops, or activities that results in a credential from Montgomery College. A program (with a small "p") is an organized sequence of learning activities along a pathway and may include credit and non-credit classes, service learning, extracurricular activities, and other opportunities for engagement and growth.

**Push-in tutoring:** Academic support activities that involve a tutor working with individuals or small groups in a classroom. Contrast with "pull-out" tutoring that takes place outside of the classroom.

**Skills gap:** A gap between employer needs for workers with particular skills and the availability of workers who have those skills.

**Student Success Score Card:** At Montgomery College, a set of indicators that tracks student achievement and, according to the MC website, "provides actionable information to help the College assess and improve its programs focused on achievement and success for every student." Indicators are grouped into "arrival" (focused on new students), "progression" (focused on returning students), and "completion" (focused on graduating and transferring students). See the Score Card at <http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/scorecard>.

**USG: Universities at Shady Grove:** A partnership of nine University System of Maryland institutions offering upper-level undergraduate and graduate programs at one location in Rockville, Maryland. Learn more at <http://shadygrove.umd.edu/>.

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