

MONTHLY OUTLOOK

A Meeting Preview with Data Insights and Strategic Topics

October 9, 2020

October Meeting Highlights—What to Expect and Why

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

Conversations with Constituents. We will continue with the reimagined Conversations with Constituents this month at the public meeting, when you will engage with a faculty member, a staff member, and a student, and hear about their resilient MC experiences and challenges while remotely teaching, learning, or working during the COVID-19 pandemic.

My Monthly Written Report. My *President's Focus* this month addresses the changes made in student affairs processes in response to the pandemic: new student orientation, recruitment, enrollment, advising, student life, and financial aid have all transformed their operations, many of them in ways that may be permanent.

FY21 First Quarter Financial Summary Report. A summary report of the first quarter of this fiscal year will be provided by Senior Vice President for Administrative and Fiscal Services Donna Schena.

Fiscal Outlook Report. In response to your request, a report will be provided by Senior Vice President Donna Schena about the impact of current events on the College financial outlook.

Award of Contract for Shuttle Bus Transportation Services. This competitively bid contract is for the continuation of shuttle bus services to support the intercampus transportation needs of students and employees on all three campuses.

Performance Accountability Report. The annual Performance Accountability Report comes to you for your consideration. Upon your acceptance of the report, it will be submitted to MHEC.

The Proposed FY22 Biennial Capital Budget. The biennial capital budget request is presented annually to the Board of Trustees in October, as an information item. The budget will be recommended as an action item at the November meeting and subsequently transmitted to the county executive. The FY22 request is the second year of the biennial capital budget and part of the six-year FY21–26 capital improvements program (CIP).

The following items are on your consent calendar:

Personnel Actions Confirmation Report. This report documents personnel actions taken during August.

Recognition of Retirees. Each October, the Board receives resolutions and awards of medallion to honor and appreciate the service of employees who retired during summer months. This month, a newly formatted resolution will be presented to you—a single resolution that recognizes the retirees during this period. There will also be an award of Bronze Medallion for your consideration.

Contract Change Order. This contract change order is for a contract approved in June 2019 for the Rockville Physical Education Building’s pool filtration and heat exchange system and allows for additional items that were discovered as necessary during the course of work.

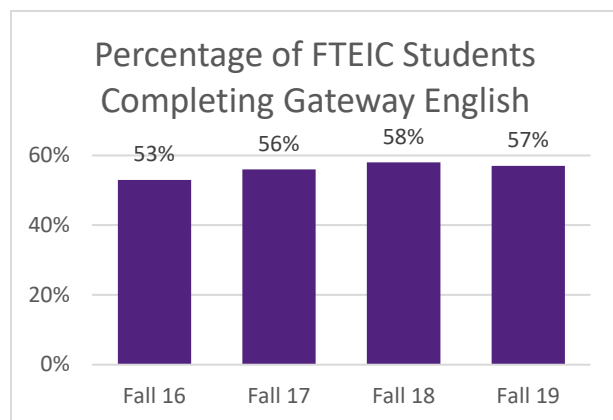
Supplemental Appropriation Request. This is a supplemental appropriation for the FY21 Operating Fund Budget request to the Montgomery County Council for an increase in the College’s FY21 Federal, State, Private Grants, and Contract Fund. The funding for this request will be the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Modification of Policy 32500–Flexible Work Arrangements. Modification of the Flexible Work Arrangements policy to add language distinguishing those arrangements that are a privilege and must be approved within an employee’s supervisory chain and those implemented to protect health and safety.

Data Focus

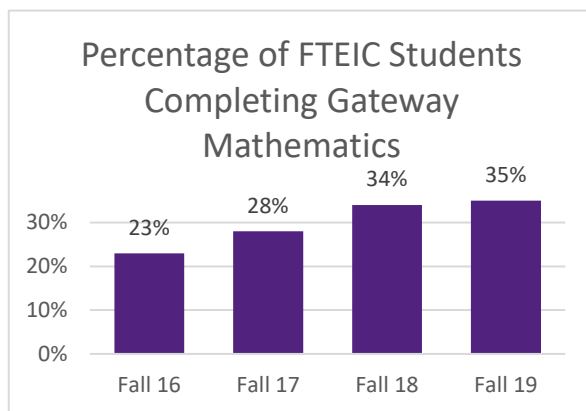
Why Gateway Math and English Matter

The order in which students take their first college-level mathematics and English classes can have a profound impact on the rest of the academic career. These courses are called “gateway” courses as students must pass them in order to earn an associate’s degree. To measure how Montgomery College students perform in these courses, the College examines the “first-time-ever-in-college” (FTEIC) cohort. These are all the students who began in a fall semester with no previous credits from other colleges. There are between 3,500 and 4,300 students each fall in this cohort.



Completion of gateway English has been consistently improving. The College has worked to improve the placement process for college-level English by moving away from one-time, high-stakes testing to using high school GPAs as a placement tool. Developmental English courses have also been redesigned to allow students to move through them more quickly and with less expense. These changes have substantially improved the percentage of FTEIC students completing gateway English in their first year.

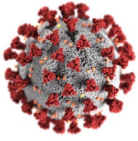
Completion of gateway mathematics has increased considerably. The College has also worked to improve the placement process for college-level mathematics by moving to a similar high school GPA tool. It has also revised the testing process to allow both practice problems and multiple attempts. Mathematics faculty have developed corequisite courses in which students can take both developmental coursework and college-level classes simultaneously with the same instructor. These changes have resulted in a marked improvement in the percentage of FTEIC students completing gateway mathematics in their first year.



Students completing gateway courses in their first year have far better outcomes. For the fall 2018 FTEIC cohort, more than 80 percent of students who completed gateway English and math in their first year returned for classes the following fall. Only a third of those who did not complete either course returned the following fall. For this same cohort, among those who graduated in two years, more than three-quarters completed these gateway courses in their first year. The completion of gateway mathematics and English is the best early indicator we have of student success and we are continuing to encourage more students to complete them early in their academic careers.

Strategic Topic of the Month

Special Pandemic Student Survey Helps Refine MC Support



At the invitation of the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice at Temple University, Montgomery College participated in the #RealCollege *During the Pandemic* student survey, following the emergence of the coronavirus. More than 3,500 MC students responded to a wide range of questions regarding the impact of the pandemic in areas of basic needs security and related challenges. The results of this survey confirmed the Colleges' instincts about student need.

How has employment changed for our students? As of the end of July, the Montgomery County unemployment rate was eight percent lower than it was in January. However, this trend did not impact all residents equally. While employment rates have rebounded to nearly pre-COVID-19 levels for high-wage workers, they remain significantly lower for low-wage workers likely impacting many MC students. Of the MC respondents to the Hope Center survey, more than 40 percent of those employed prior to the pandemic lost jobs and a third experienced reduced hours or pay.

What other issues did the students disclose? At the time of the survey, almost a quarter of respondents did not have a functional laptop or reliable internet. Almost half of the students reported being food insecure at some point in the previous 30 days. Additionally, four out of 10 respondents were housing insecure at the time of the survey, with one out of 10 being either homeless or at risk of homelessness due to the pandemic. The [full national report](#) is available for review.

How is the College responding to this information? The College has received more than 2,000 student assistance requests and we were able to grant approximately 1,700 awards. There have been four major sources of support for our student aid: Montgomery College Foundation funds; reallocated College funds; Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act student assistance funding; and other state and federal grants.

Foundation Funds. Awards totaling \$48,000 from the general scholarship fund have gone to students during this pandemic, largely to DACA, DREAMer, and F1-students, who are not eligible for other forms of publicly-funded assistance.

CARES Act Funding. Approximately \$2.7 million has been awarded to almost 6,000 students from CARES Act funds with more than 85 percent of the recipients being Pell-grant recipients. This funding is designed to help students pay for expenses related to disruptions caused by the coronavirus.

Student Emergency Assistance. More than \$300,000 dollars—some in computer vouchers and in-kind laptop donations—has been awarded to 680 students with 60 percent of them students of color. The majority of awards went to students with GPAs of 3.0 or higher and the recipients had an average course load of four courses.

Radical inclusion during the pandemic means helping our students stay enrolled and addressing basic needs security. Advancing the College's mission in this critical time has required innovation and

collaboration. The Hope Survey has helped the College better understand student needs and address them directly. The College is administering the full #RealCollege survey to all students in October.

Be well,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DeRionne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'D' being particularly large and stylized.

DeRionne P. Pollard, Ph.D.

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