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# INTERSECTIONS

*The Academic Affairs Chronicles*

## **A Message From Dr. Rai**

So much has happened in the first four weeks of this semester. I am excited and proud that we are rolling out the Academic Master Plan (AMP) and we have had a very successful first Extended Winter Term. The development of the AMP was an open, transparent, inclusive process that reflects a diversity of ideas and approaches that is the hallmark of all of our efforts. Fundamental elements in our chemistry are our respect for diverse points of view and to our inclusivity. These create the bonds which form innovation, creativity and success. It makes me incredibly proud and grateful to be at an institution that thrives on diversity and inclusivity, especially diversity of ideas and inclusive approaches to solving problems.

Our Academic Master Plan took your ideas and approaches, and those of external partners, to address the higher education needs of our students and our region for the next five to ten years. (<http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=96668>) I thank Dr. Deborah Preston for her leadership in this effort and the hundreds of people who contributed to it. Implementation of the AMP's First Five-Years Initiatives is our priority, and I anticipate thoughtful and engaging discussion.

I am pleased to share that we have also just had a very successful Extended Winter Session – the first - (see article below) that resulted in an additional 258 students taking classes over winter break! These students and a cadre of dedicated faculty together achieved a 96% retention rate and a 78% success rate. This new effort supports student success and completion through decreasing the time to degree and it will be assessed as we plan for future efforts.

Remember that the performance measures for the new academic structure are increased graduation and transfer rates, reduction in time and cost to complete, and alignment with four-year colleges/universities and with industry. Our collective energy and creativity are focused on these measures which, individually and collectively, increase student success.

Student success was front and center at the Opening Meeting in the excellent keynote address given by Dr. Steven Murray, Chancellor Emeritus of Phillips Community College and Achieving the Dream Coach. When Dr. Murray spoke of Plus1, as in keeping one more student enrolled and successful in each section, I was very pleased, but also quietly proud to note that we are working on Plus2 through

our Program Success Strategies and DFW Reduction Initiatives.

This introduction to the new semester and the focus on student success was a perfect prelude for the Academic Affairs Division Spring meeting on February 6th. We had the opportunity to shine a light on several Program Success Strategies and DFW Reduction Initiatives that have been successful. After the restructuring of the Academic Affairs Division in 2014, we identified our 16 highest enrolled programs (which enroll 90% of our students) and collected baseline data for these programs and benchmarked where we expect to be in 2020 (see below) addressing our success priorities of graduation and transfer, and decreasing time and cost to degree. In determining our benchmarking figures, we needed to ascertain how we would reach these figures. Many conversations and discussions later, the Program Success Strategies and DFW Reduction Initiatives were developed by faculty and they are beginning to make a difference. Even with enrollment remaining flat, we are seeing more retention and decreased DFW rates in some of these highly enrolled courses. This is a necessary step to increase the number of graduates and transfers.

We also must be good stewards of the resources that we are given. You have heard quite a lot about seat utilization rates as we are working to develop a sustainable model that maximizes resource utilization and student success. A great team has been looking at data to understand how we can be better curators of our resources. As we approached the new spring semester, we looked at Spring 2016, where we offered 94,000 seats and filled 74,000. With a prediction of declining enrollment and budget constraints, there was opportunity to offer fewer seats while ensuring that seats are available at optimal times to meet student needs. A goal was set of 85% seat utilization – on average. That is, not every section needs to have 85% seats filled; some sections have a higher rate (full classes have 100% seat utilization) while others will fall below, and we still achieve the goal. I am very grateful to the chairs, deans and faculty, who, through their proactive work achieved an 88% seat utilization rate for opening day! This was remarkable. I greatly appreciate the work of many, including the Data Team (John Hamman, Margaret Latimer, Kim Kelley, Rick Penn, Veronica Banh, and Josh Messite) who provided information every day to support timely decision making so that students would have access to courses at times and in formats that support program completion and student success. Going forward, we want to make sure that schedule changes that occur after the registration begins are minimized. This allows faculty and students to plan well. We will continue using better data and having more discussion early in the process. In addition, Scheduling and Delivery of classes is one of the First-Five Years Initiatives in the Academic Master Plan. Margaret Latimer, Vice President and Provost of the Germantown Campus has the lead on this initiative and is forming a work group to begin the process.

This has been a very busy time for all of us, and I appreciate the wonderful work you are doing for student success at MC. Spring semester always goes so quickly, and I look forward to a semester that continues to energize and engage both our students and ourselves. Thank you for all you do.

**Final note:**

Please take the opportunity to **nominate one of your colleagues for outstanding faculty and staff awards** (staff award info can be found at [http://insidemc.montgomerycollege.edu/details.php?id=79298&title=MEMO:\\_2017\\_Staff\\_of\\_the\\_Year\\_Award](http://insidemc.montgomerycollege.edu/details.php?id=79298&title=MEMO:_2017_Staff_of_the_Year_Award)). Let's celebrate our many outstanding colleagues.

## Nominations for Outstanding Faculty Awards Now Due March 1st

We have extended the deadline for nominations for the Outstanding Faculty Awards for the 2016–2017 academic year to March 1st!

The purpose of this program is to recognize individual full- and part-time faculty members who exemplify the excellence that characterizes the entire Montgomery College faculty. For the current year, each faculty member recognized with an Outstanding Faculty Award will receive a one-time payment of \$2,000. For full-time faculty, there are 9 awards for excellence in teaching or counseling and academic advising, 2 awards for excellence in scholarly or professional accomplishments, and 2 awards for excellence for service to the institution and/or the community. For part-time faculty, there are 4 awards for excellence in teaching/counseling, and 2 awards for excellence in scholarly or professional accomplishments. Awardees receiving the Full-Time Faculty of the Year and Part-Time Faculty of the Year awards will receive \$5,000 each. Two separate committees, one to evaluate the full-time faculty nominations, and one to evaluate the part-time faculty nominations, will review nominations and provide recommendations.

I encourage you to consider nominating one of our many outstanding College faculty members for this special recognition. All information pertaining to the awards, including guidelines, nomination process, and timeline can be found at <http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/facultyawards/>. The entire nomination process has moved to an online format, so please review the website for details.

**All nominations are due by the close of business on Wednesday, March 1, 2017.**

## Top Enrolled Programs

### Baseline (2014) and Benchmarks (2020)

The Academic Affairs Division restructured in 2014 with the goal of implementing a collegewide decision making process as we addressed the College's priorities of increasing graduation and transfer, decreasing time and cost to degree, and improving alignment with four-year institutions as well as business and industry. Toward that end, OIRA provided data on the top 16 enrolled programs, which comprised over 90% of our student population. Each of the department chairs was tasked with working within their team to build on current data (the FY2014 baseline data) towards the development of their 2020 benchmark data. This process provided a great opportunity for discussion, and the development of strategies to achieve the benchmark. Those strategies are the Program Success Strategies and the DFW Reduction Initiatives that you have been hearing about for over a year now. Several are noted in the next articles.

	Enrollment		Graduation		Transfer		Time to Degree	
	2014	2020	2014	2020	2014	2020	2014	2020

Biotechnology	162	190	22	30	13	20	4.3y	3.5y
Business	3232	3700	345	395	442	504	3.7y	3.7y
Chemistry/Biochemistry	383	475	18	40	9	29	4.1y	3.8y
Communication Studies	300	600	20	90	60	180	3.4y	2.5y
Computer Science	561	1000	38	85	123	274	4.6y	4.0y
Construction Mgmt & Architecture	328	394	33	40	29	35	5.1y	4.5y
Criminal Justice	992	1153	22	28	35	44	4.7y	3.5y
Cybersecurity	328	650	33	86	n/a	n/a	4.6y CT	3.5yCT
Early Childhood Ed	445	500	16	26	24	44	9.0y	7.0y
Elementary Education	1069	1336	69	88	117	146	4.0y	3.0y
Engineering	1465	2000	74	126	279	476	3.8y	3.0y
General Studies	12748	10836	1018	1273	1398	1748	4.1y	3.0y
Graphic Design	276	350	27	40	13	18	4.0y	3.0y
Hospitality Mgmt	219	220	16	22	21	29	4.6y	4.0y
Life Sciences	1255	1350	112	250	96	115	3.2y	2.8y
Nursing	526	526	405	457	52	263	5.1y	4.0y

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## Student Success: AELW 940

**Dr. Monica Trent**

A quick review: About five years ago, at the recommendation of CAPDI, 12 years of student success data were gathered which showed that AELW 940 students did extremely well - *often significantly better than their non-AELP peers, in fact* - in a range of Gen Ed courses. Based on this data, CAPDI as well as the SVP of Academic Affairs, Dr. Rai, gave their approval for the AELP to pursue co-enrollment pilots involving AELW 940 and a number of specific degree-credit courses, pending discipline approval, of course. These were courses for which the data had shown that AELW 940 students were highly successful as co-enrolled students. These courses included all 100-level MATH courses, CMAP 120, CHEM 109, ENES 100, PSYC 102, BSAD 101, and others.

A pilot was launched with the Math discipline first. The results of the two-year co-enrollment pilot, wherein AELW 940 students could co-enroll in any 100-level MATH course for which they had appropriate Accuplacer Math scores, mirrored the results of the initial data set. Subsequently, co-

appropriate replacement math scores, mirrored the results of the initial data set. Subsequently, co-enrollment pilots were launched in CMAP 120, CHEM 109, and ENES 100 about three semesters ago. In all three courses, the data for the first complete year of the pilot supported continuation: AELW 940 students received a higher average GPA in the 100-level course, earned a higher success rate, and had a lower attrition ("W") rate. As a result, Computer Science faculty have begun preparing Curriculum forms for making this assessment level permanent. Meanwhile, pilots are ongoing in the other two courses, with all involved pleased with the results so far.

With all of the above data in mind - particularly the ample data related to AELW 940 student success in STEM courses - the Chemistry and Biology disciplines are planning to run similar 2-year pilots for BIOL 101 and CHEM 109 beginning in the fall of 2017, and Dr. Rai has endorsed these efforts. We think this will be a tremendous opportunity for upper-level AELP students, and one that is well warranted. In fact, beginning in the fall of 2017, we will be able to support these co-enrolled students in a way that was previously not available. As we are launching the redesigned AELP (ELAP) in the fall, our new capstone course (ELAI 990), which is replacing AELW 940, will feature content based support "modules" which will provide scaffolding for the concepts, terms and assignment formats in specific academic areas. In the case of BIOL 101 and CHEM 109, AELP faculty will work with designated Biology and Chemistry faculty in developing these modules to create content that is precisely targeted to the language and materials from these courses. We are excited about opportunities for student access and success that this will create.

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## **Student Success: Extended Winter Session and Blackboard Analytics**

For 10 years, winter session has been an opportunity for students to catch-up on credits, or take a class to alleviate pressure on a busy semester. We offer a traditional three-week winter session, but wanted to make sure that we were meeting student needs and providing as many opportunities as possible. As a pilot, the College initiated an Extended Winter Session beginning on December 19<sup>th</sup> and ending on January 19<sup>th</sup> (the traditional winter session ran from January 3<sup>rd</sup> thru January 19<sup>th</sup>). The content sessions were offered in an online format.

Knowing the College would be closed, we worked with faculty in advance to assure that they had appropriate information to share with students on administrative issues, which would be handled when the College reopened, and worked with IT and Blackboard to assure there would be no planned outages over that time period. For the Extended Winter Session, enrollment on the first day was 258 for 12 courses with 18 sections. By the third week we had retained 96% of the students and they had a 78% success rate.

Data show that the Blackboard help desk received a total of 48 calls from 30 students throughout the extended session, and only six calls while the College was closed. In terms of logins to Blackboard during the time the College was closed, there were 47,289 logins, almost 2,000 forum posts, and more than 108,000 course interactions. Both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs did an excellent job of identifying any possible issues in advance before the session started.

Institutional Research will make the appropriate student success comparisons, with the expectation that more courses will be offered in the next extended winter term.

## DFW Reduction Initiatives

### Criminal Justice

CCJS110, Administration of Justice has addressed a Fall 14/Spring 15 DFW rate of 42% by using the General Education Assessment Process, whereby faculty identified a common writing assignment as a barrier to success. The faculty revised the writing assignment and broke it into progressive parts: topic selection, locating good sources, providing an annotated biography and finally, writing the paper itself. Faculty also created a "Student Success Form" that listed numerous possible interventions, and all faculty track their interventions using that form. As a result, some faculty changed the number of exams, added quizzes, or altered their practices. **The DFW rate for CCJS110 decreased 8.1%.**

### Biology

BIOL150, Principles of Biology I, faculty dove into DFW data to look at "DF" rates versus "W" rates, and discovered that "DF" rates are decreasing slightly (1%), but the **"W" rate has decreased significantly from 17% to 10.3%** in the last semester. Faculty have "early and often" intervention strategies.

### Spanish

SPAN101 was among the most highly enrolled programs with a DFW rate of 30.2%. Faculty wanted to reach students where they were by becoming truly student centered. For faculty this meant early intervention strategies after the first assessment; train the trainer workshops; supplemental and embedded instruction using language coaches; and massive advertising of all initiatives. The faculty also developed a "non-Attendance" campaign" to make outreach to students before they fall too far behind. Since F14, the **DFW rate has decreased to 21.3% a reduction of 8.9%. Additionally, the DFW rate for ITAL101 has decreased 16.4%; FREN101 has decreased 5.8%; POLI203 has decreased 12.9%; HIST200 has decreased by 11.1% POLI206 has decreased by 7.9% and HIST117 has decreased by 6.4%.**

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## Program Success Strategies

### Criminal Justice

- Final courses for the CCJS online degree were prepared in Fall 2016
- Developing 4 z-courses
- Strengthening and adding articulation agreements

## SET (Science, Engineering and Technology) Area

The SET area established program benchmarks (see above); integrated advising into the curriculum so that it happens in the classroom over time within the program; encouraged the development and use of OER; addressed gap-analysis and progress for the Computer Science Program; and included interdisciplinary efforts within the SET area.

Addressing the gap-analysis and progress for the Computer Science Program - For many years our students could not test out of taking Computer Science I and II at UMCP through an exemption exam. Faculty reviewed UMCP provided final exams for CMSC131 (MC CMSC203) and CMSC132 (MC CMSC204), and modified MC exams to assure that our exams captured the skills and knowledge required at UMCP. We started offering UMCP CMSC131 and 132 Exemption Exam Preparation Sessions. Our next step is to work with UMCP to assess the possibility of giving the exemption exam



at MC at the end of the spring semester, as well as the possibility of using the previous exemption exam in our CMSC131/132 courses.

Interdisciplinary Efforts - Computer Science and Cybersecurity faculty joined forces in the creation of the Introduction to Scripting course, and addresses CMSC253 delivery issues to accommodate our Cybersecurity program and student needs. Several new interdisciplinary efforts are in the works including, a programming course in "Python," cloud computing certificate, and a forensic certificate.

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***To check out all of the Program Success Strategies and DFW Reduction Initiatives presented at the Academic Affairs Division Meeting on February 6th, please visit the Academic Affairs Resources community in Blackboard. Enrollment is open to all, so please enroll yourself and look at the transformative work being done by MC faculty.***

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## **General Education Conference Comes to MC in March**

**The 2017 General Education Conference is coming to MC on Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 9-3:30, BE building (room 151-152) of the Germantown campus.**

Register through ELITE! The conference is free, and professional development credit will be available through ELITE for all participants. Alternate assignments are allowed if faculty miss classes to attend the conference. In addition, each attendee will receive a voucher and be able to choose a book related to the conference's topics.

As all General Education courses at Montgomery College are currently undergoing Gen Ed Recertification, faculty attendees will receive detailed information and practical examples and skills of how to design class activities and assignments incorporating integrative learning, life skills, reflection, leadership and civic engagement as well as signature assignments to measure required competencies for outcomes assessment.

The Conference will start with the keynote speaker, Paul Hanstedt, Professor of English at Roanoke College, author of *General Education Essentials: A Guide for College Faculty*, and General Education consultant with the AAC&U, who will present theoretical and practical information about how to design Gen Ed assignments, including signature assignments as well as shorter-term activities.

The mid-morning break-out sessions will focus on faculty sharing of Gen-Ed-related assignments and provide all faculty participants with specific feedback on their own assignments.

During a catered lunch, speaker David Hubert, Assistant Provost of Learning Advancement at Salt Lake Community College, will provide more specific information about signature assignments and other ways to measure student mastery of course and Gen Ed skills, including a discussion of e-portfolios. He will describe SLCC's use of signature assignments to measure Gen Ed course outcomes and its incorporation of e-portfolios – detailing the successes and challenges the faculty have faced along the way.

The early-afternoon break-out sessions will address how to incorporate Gen Ed elements into tight course plans as well as the practical information about e-portfolios, outcomes assessment, and Gen Ed course transferability challenges.

Both full- and part-time faculty are encouraged to attend. To help facilitate attendance at this all-day

conference, Dr. Rai has approved faculty use of alternate assignments for their classes that day.

If you would like any further information regarding the Gen Ed Conference or the Gen Ed Program, feel free to contact Sharon Anthony or Anestine Theophile-LaFond, co-chairs of the General Education Standing Committee.

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## Transfer Agreements Supporting Student Success

Montgomery College continues to develop partnerships with four-year institutions that result in value-added benefits for our students. An enhanced process – called **TRANSFERmation** – focuses on developing agreements that encourage degree completion, academic success, and improved access. Over the last few months, the following new Enrollment Agreement and Articulated Pathways have been or are in the process of being signed:

- MC's A.A.S. in Biotechnology to the UMBC Transitional Life Science Technology program
- A.S. Nursing degree to the B.S.N. in Nursing at Trinity Washington University; this program allows students to take 90 credits at MC and the remaining 30 at Trinity.
- UMBC Raptor to Retriever (R2R) program is a pre-enrollment program for students transferring to UMBC at Shady Grove, and offers priority registration, pre-transfer advising, and social and academic preparation. This program is unique to MC.
- An Enrollment Agreement with Notre Dame of Maryland University; students are able to take advantage of dual enrollment, study abroad, and tuition discounting if transferring to NDMU.
- Multiple disciplinary advising pathways have been established between MC degrees and programs at UMUC; students who transfer to UMUC with an Associate degree are guaranteed a scholarship.
- The MC Health and Allied Sciences Associate degrees to the University of Baltimore's B.S. in Health Systems Management (Main Campus and Shady Grove); this agreement guarantees admission and the block transfer of 63 credits between certain MC degrees and the HSMG program.
- The Honors Programs to the Honors program at Goucher College; this program affords students in any of the honors programs the chance to meet the requirements for graduating with honors from MC and from Goucher.
- MC's A.A. Business degree to the UMD Smith School of Business programs at the Universities at Shady Grove; these agreements articulate coursework to one of the largest and most in demand transfer programs for our students.
- MC's A.A.S. in Computer Gaming to University of Baltimore's B.S. in Simulation and Digital Entertainment (Main Campus and Shady Grove); this program articulates 63 credits for students between the two programs.
- The Business Associate's degree to Rochester Institute of Technology's B.S. in Business Administration; this is the first agreement in an anticipated series of scholarship-supported STEM-related articulations between the two institutions.
- UMBC's Transfer Student Alliance agreement has been updated to include more students; this guaranteed admission program is now eligible to students with a 3.0 GPA (lowered from a 3.2GPA).

The institutions listed above account for 58% of the 4,824 students who transferred in 2015\*.

The Office of Articulation and Transfer continues to work with American Public University System (APUS), Hood College, UMBC, Washington Adventist University, Coppin State College, York College, Howard University, Wilmington University and St. Mary's College of Maryland on various agreements.

Four-year institutions are able to submit new agreement requests between January 18<sup>th</sup> and February 28<sup>th</sup>.

\*Students with 12 or more credits who transferred to four-year institutions that participate in the National Student Clearinghouse.



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# Spring Transfer Fairs

Visit with more than 50 four-year institutions. Ask about admission requirements, financial aid and scholarships, transfer credit and more! UMCP, UB, UMBC, Stevenson, Morgan State, Howard, Salisbury, Towson, Shady Grove, and many others will be in attendance.

Germantown  
Tuesday, February 28, 2017  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Bioscience Education Center  
Rm 151/152

Rockville  
Wednesday, March 1, 2017  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
PE Building, Large Gym

Takoma Park / Silver Spring  
Thursday, March 2, 2017  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Student Services  
Center Atrium

Check your MC email for additional transfer news and transfer fair information. Institutional attendance may vary by campus.

**MC** MAKE YOUR MOVE  
TRANSFER PLANNING  
[montgomerycollege.edu/transfer](http://montgomerycollege.edu/transfer)

***Intersections, February 2017***