

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE GOVERNANCE

Operational Services Council
Thursday, December 12, 2024
2:00 – 3:30 pm

MINUTES

Attendees

Current year members present: Ramon De La Cruz, Gloria Barron, Margarita Silva, Lisa Evans, Charlotte King, Patrick Johnson, Tamekia Williams, Yvette Taylor, Angie Moy, Carla Pullen, Chris Cusic, Douglas Schwanke, Clevette Ridguard. Special Guest: Dr. Jermaine Williams.

List of Constituent Concerns

Zoom Application Downtime:

Concern about the impact of Zoom application downtime during the semester, particularly its disruption to students and faculty teaching mid-semester. Request for clarity on the IT department's process for scheduling upgrades and ensuring minimal impact during critical teaching periods. Suggestion to consider scheduling such upgrades at the end of the semester to avoid disruptions.

Elevators:

Concern regarding the frequent problems with elevators, particularly in the Rockville campus's Mannakee building, were highlighted. Concerns included delays in responses after emergency buttons were pressed and the overall reliability of the elevator systems.

Chair's Report Summary:

Operational Context and Focus:

The Operational Services Council meeting addressed concerns about maintaining quorum, constituent engagement, and ongoing operational support for students and staff.

Quorum and Voting:

A quorum was established for the first time this season.

- Votes were conducted for:
 - Approving September and October meeting minutes.
 - Electing a secretary: Lisa Evans was unanimously voted for the position.

Key Updates from the Chair:

- Encouragement to support **mobile markets** and participate in **Giving Tuesday** to aid the Montgomery College Scholarship and Emergency Fund.
- The college's strategic initiatives were emphasized, focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Updates on the college's **brand renewal process** (7 to 10-year cycle) and goals related to **student pathways** and affordable education.

Governance Updates:

- A **refresh meeting** for governance members is scheduled for January 22nd (via Zoom).
- A **review of governance documents** (Constitution and bylaws) is underway, with the aim of updating language and policies.

Spiffy Closet and Donations:

- Spiffy Closet drives for clothing and pantry items are in progress, with collection points established at various locations.

Institutional Communications:

- Encouragement to engage with updates via "Employee Matters" and the "Monday Minute" emails.
- Dr. Williams' **bow tie chats** and social media presence were highlighted as engaging communication tools for students.

Actionable Concerns and Resolutions:

- IT disruptions with Zoom in Blackboard were acknowledged, with plans to resolve issues post-semester.
- Elevator malfunctions, including delayed responses when users are stuck, were discussed. Further investigation into response protocols was requested.
- Discussion on ensuring equitable access to WDCE tuition waivers for students with disabilities. The council plans to deliberate further on making recommendations.

Future Goals:

- Continued support for the spiffy closet, with emphasis on ensuring resource sustainability and exploring opportunities for expansion.

Closing Notes:

- The Chair emphasized the importance of collective efforts in governance to support students, faculty, and staff in achieving strategic goals.

- The council welcomed new Vice President of Facilities, Carla Pullen, and thanked outgoing members for their contributions.

Report on Goal Follow-Up

Goal: Support Students Through Clothing and Food Drives Across Campuses

1. Success Highlights:

- **Engagement:** The clothing and food drives are receiving robust participation. Items are being consistently donated by faculty, staff, and community members.
- **Impact:** Students, particularly from underserved communities, are utilizing the *SPIFFY Closet* and other support programs. Many items benefit not only students but their families as well.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** The initiative is meeting critical needs, with a significant percentage of users being from Hispanic communities, reflecting the institution's status as an HSI (Hispanic-Serving Institution).

2. Challenges Identified:

- **Sustainability:** Ensuring consistent donations and long-term operational support for programs like *SPIFFY Closet* remains a focus.
- **Expansion Needs:** Addressing increasing demand and evaluating the feasibility of scaling up services to include more diverse offerings or locations.

3. Institutional Support:

- Leadership, including Dr. Williams, commended the council for its commitment to addressing students' basic needs.
- There is institutional acknowledgment of the critical role such programs play in removing barriers to education and fostering a sense of belonging.

4. Future Directions:

- **Broader Community Collaboration:** Encourage partnerships with local organizations to enhance resource availability and expand outreach.
- **Awareness and Accessibility:** Increase visibility of the services among students and establish clear pathways for accessing resources.
- **Assessment and Growth:** Regularly evaluate the initiative's impact and explore additional funding or support mechanisms to maintain and potentially expand offerings.

5. Action Steps:

- Strengthen existing programs through targeted donation campaigns during peak periods (e.g., holiday seasons).
- Improve communication about the impact of these resources to encourage sustained participation and support from the college community.
- Leverage governance discussions to propose strategies for long-term sustainability, potentially involving external grants or corporate partnerships.

The *SPIFFY Closet* and associated food drives have demonstrated tangible benefits to the student community, aligning with Montgomery College's values of equity and inclusion. However, ongoing evaluation, innovative funding solutions, and enhanced outreach will be critical to meeting growing demands and ensuring the program's future success.

Summary of Dr. Jermaine Williams' Report

Season of Gratitude and Governance Appreciation:

- Dr. Williams expressed gratitude for the council's dedication and their role in college governance, emphasizing the importance of listening to and addressing constituents' concerns.
- He highlighted the council's contribution to fostering a sense of belonging and community at Montgomery College.

Strategic Plan and Transformational Aspirations:

- The second year of the college's strategic plan and 10-year transformational aspirations was discussed.
- He noted that these frameworks were shaped by input from faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders.
- The emphasis remains on leveraging Montgomery College as a platform for social transformation and creating an inclusive, equitable environment.

Reaffirmation of Core Values:

- Dr. Williams stressed the importance of recommitting to the college's core values: equity, inclusion, excellence, integrity, innovation, adaptability, sustainability, and respect.
- These values guide efforts to foster diverse perspectives, critical thinking, and a sense of belonging across the college community.

Support for Basic Needs Initiatives:

- He commended the council's goal of supporting students through clothing and food drives, recognizing the importance of addressing basic needs for student success.
- Dr. Williams emphasized the connection between meeting basic needs and enabling students to focus on higher educational objectives.

Navigating Uncertainty:

- Dr. Williams acknowledged the uncertainties in the local, state, and federal landscape, particularly following recent elections, and emphasized the need for the college to remain adaptable and innovative.
- He reiterated the college’s commitment to social justice, supporting student well-being, and fostering community transformation.

SPiFFY Closet and Resources:

- In response to a question about the SPiFFY Closet, he noted no known obstacles but encouraged continued contributions and external partnerships to sustain and expand the initiative.
- He highlighted the importance of equipping students with skills to navigate community resources beyond their time at Montgomery College.

LPN Program Update:

- Regarding inquiries about the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program, Dr. Williams shared tentative plans for the program to launch at the East County Education Center in Fall 2025, pending confirmation.

Closing Remarks:

- Dr. Williams thanked the council for their leadership and commitment to supporting students and the broader college mission.
- He encouraged proactive and collaborative efforts to keep Montgomery College thriving while adhering to its core principles.