



**MC**  
**MONTGOMERY**  
**COLLEGE**

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**FY23–FY25 ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN**





# BACKGROUND

A coordinated approach to enrollment management provides an operational framework that accelerates Montgomery College’s ability to fulfill its mission and empower students to excel in achieving their educational goals. Enrollment management employs comprehensive and systemic activities to align and coordinate institutional resources, departments, and actions to achieve and maintain enrollment goals.

The Enrollment Management Plan (EMP) defines the framework that aligns the College’s academic, administrative, co-curricular, fiscal, and enrollment resources with the mission and vision to ensure the College’s long-term enrollment success and fiscal resilience. The plan aligns with and is responsive to the refreshed strategic plan and institutional priorities. In this way, the EMP is developed to operationalize the College’s mission. As a result, the EMP is framed to ensure a highly desirable learner experience throughout the entire students’ life cycle by supporting and engaging prospective, current, and former students.

The development of this EMP occurred from fall 2022 to spring 2023 and was approved by President Jermaine F. Williams in August 2023

**EMP Planning Committee:**

- Dr. Monica Brown, Senior Vice President for Student Affairs
- Mr. Sherwin Collette, Senior Vice President for Administrative and Fiscal Services
- Dr. Sharon Fechter, Interim Senior Vice President for Student Affairs
- Ms. Joyce Matthews, Interim Senior Vice President for Advancement and Community Engagement
- Dr. Sanjay Rai, Senior Vice President for Student Affairs
- Dr. Kimberly McNair, Associate Senior Vice President for Student Affairs

## The EMP Guiding Principles

The opportunities to redefine a more dynamic student experience and to reverse the existing downward enrollment trends motivate our call to action to develop and implement the EMP. The principles that guide the EMP include:

- All EMP goals must align with the College’s mission, vision, strategic plan, and transformational aspirations.
- The EMP requires cross-campus and cross-functional participation and collaboration for success. Whether explicitly or implicitly, everyone has a role in student success and shares responsibility for the EMP.
- Relevant, actionable data will be used to inform decision-making and evaluation of the EMP.
- All actions in the EMP will be guided by an analysis of services and supports needed to attract, retain and graduate students with different experiences, backgrounds and learning needs, as well as an assessment of institutional policies, procedures and practices that may affect enrollment.
- The EMP reflects a commitment to implementing strategies designed to improve the quality of student life and learning, and foster success, satisfaction, and sense of belonging for all students.





# ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

In acknowledgment of the numerous opportunities the College has to engage and influence students' experiences throughout their collegiate journey, it is imperative that the EMP assesses and accounts for key internal and external perspectives. These perspectives can impact and inform how teaching and learning, processes, and support services at the College are designed and delivered. Following are major internal and external issues to which the EMP responds.







## External Perspectives

### COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

- The population in Montgomery County is projected to grow slowly, but steadily over the next 10 years.
- The population is becoming increasingly diverse and the percentage of people of color residing in the county is projected to rise from 59% to 67% by 2030.
- Hispanic or Latino, Black, Asian and Multi-Racial residents comprised 59% of the total population, making Montgomery County more diverse than the nation (42%), Maryland (53%), and the Washington, DC, region (58%).
- High levels of formal education characterize the county's population. More than 91% of adults 25 and older are high school graduates and approximately 60% have a bachelor's degrees or higher. However, almost 9% of adults 25 and over do not have a high school (HS) diploma. Hispanic, Asian and foreign-born adults 25 and over have the lowest rates of HS diploma attainment at 28%, 10%, and 16% respectively.
- Computer ownership and access is approaching 100%. Close to 98% of households in the county have a computer and approximately 95% have internet access.
- Almost 8.5% of county residents live in poverty.
- The county's annual unemployment rate increased from 2.9% in 2019 to 6.2% in 2020, likely as a result of the pandemic. In 2021, the annual unemployment rate was 5.5%, but as of June, 2023, the monthly unemployment rate was at 1.5%, the lowest of any June rate in more than 30 years.

## Internal Perspectives

### STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

- Overall student headcount has steadily declined over the last 11 years. Over the past 5 years, headcount declined 21.1%.
- Approximately 65.6% of the student population continues to be 18-24 years old, with some increase in the under-18-years-old population, most likely as a result of increases in dual enrollment students.
- Students 25 and older are declining, and those 30 and older declined at the greatest rate of more than 2% in fall 2022 as compared to fall 2021.
- Over the past 5 years, the percentage of part time students increased while the average credits enrolled declined 23.6%.
- The student population remains diverse, although each racial and ethnic group experienced declines in the number of students enrolled across all populations over the past 5 years.
- Foreign student enrollment increased 5% in fall 2022 as compared to fall 2021, which accounts for 10.2% of the College's total student enrollment.
- In fall 2022, the number of first-time-ever-in-college (FTEIC) students increased 10.2% over fall 2021.

### ENROLLMENT TRENDS

- Equity gaps (number transfer and awards conferred) show disparities among Black and Hispanic students.
- Fall-to-spring retention of FTEIC students has remained steady over the past 5 years.
- Financial aid, fall term grade point average, and the number of documented counseling and advising encounters are statistically significant positive factors predicting fall-to-spring retention of FTEIC students.
- The MCPS high school draw rate decreased from 22.5% in fall 2018 to 17.8% in fall 2022.



## Public School Pipeline

- The reported graduation rate for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is 90.3% for the class of 2022.
- MCPS students are 33.4% Hispanic/Latino, 25.3% White, 21.9% Black or African American, 14.1% Asian, 5% two or more races, and less than 5% American Indian or Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.
- MCPS enrolls students from 148 countries speaking 115 languages.
- More than 12% of MCPS students receive special education services, 18% receive services for English language learners, and almost 40% of students are eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMs).
- Montgomery County high schools with the highest draw rate in 2022 are Gaithersburg HS (29.3%), Rockville HS (27.4%), Watkins Mills HS (26.6%), Colonel Zadok Magruder HS (26.4%), and Northwest HS (25%).
- Schools with the lowest draw rates in 2022 are Walt Whitman HS (2.4%), Poolesville HS (5.8%), Winston Churchill HS (6.7%), Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS (8.5%), and Thomas S. Wootton HS (9.2%).
- MCPS is projected to have a 3.5% cumulative growth increase by 2031. MCPS enrollments also continue to reflect the county's diversity.

## Workforce Trends

- The primary short-term growth occupations in Maryland are in food service, hospitality and entertainment industries.
- Health care, life sciences, and information technology remain in-demand industries in the County.
- Occupations projected for growth in Maryland over the next decade, requiring at least an Associate degree, for which the College offers both credit and noncredit programs include:
  - Computer Programmers
  - Crafts Artists
  - Data Scientists and Mathematical Science Occupations
  - Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors
  - Interpreters and Translators
  - Managers and Supervisors
  - Massage Therapists
  - Nurse Practitioner
  - Occupational Therapy Assistant
  - Physical Therapy Assistant
  - Preschool Teachers
- Occupations projected for growth in Maryland, requiring at least an Associate degree, for which the College does not offer credit or noncredit programs include:
  - Wind Turbine Service Technicians
  - Gaming Dealers, Surveillance Officers, and Investigators
  - Solar Photovoltaic (Solar Panel) Installers
  - Forest Fire Inspectors and Fire Prevention Specialists
  - Motorboat Mechanics and Service Technicians







# COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

- Four-year institutions represent direct competition as many have become test optional, enhanced the use of tuition discounting, employed new technologies to optimize student engagement and enrollment, increased their branding and marketing spend, and focused on prospective/new student outreach.
- New learning organizations (technology companies, museums, libraries, etc.) are entering the higher education space, offering on-demand learning at low or no cost, and in direct competition to colleges and universities.
- Changes to affirmative action may threaten, diversity, equity and inclusion, thus limiting access to the baccalaureate and potential financial support for certain student populations. As a result, students may opt to attend community college before transitioning to the workforce or a 4-year institution.
- Ongoing social/political angst, increased public dissatisfaction with higher education, and concerns about potential political interference in teaching and learning activities contribute to students delaying or foregoing college entry.
- Increasing college affordability challenges, student debt, and lack of employment guarantees after graduation lead many students to leave college and deter them from returning, contributing to increases in the number of students with some college, but no credential.
- Strong labor market, low-skill jobs offering above minimum wage salaries, and employee shortages in various employment sectors entice students to enter the workforce instead of college.





# ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND TACTICS

Achieve a 12% increase in enrollment by the end of FY25 by implementing the following goals.



## Goal 1: Strengthen Montgomery College’s Market Position

### STRATEGY:

Expand MC’s reach through targeted marketing, partnerships, and additional academic, cultural, civic, and support options to strengthen the appeal of MC.

### TACTICS:

1. Recast and elevate Montgomery College’s brand and distinction as a destination community college with an unwavering commitment to empowering our students and transforming the lives of our students and our community.
  - a. By the end of fall 2023, identify measures regarding which groups/categories of students will create the 12% increase, and the composition, to ensure that: efforts are created that speak to market segmentation and pursuing the expected composition, groups can be monitored in real time with leading indicators, and the real time action can be taken to adjust efforts to optimally pursue intended outcomes.
  - b. By the end of FY24, update the College’s perception study and task a cross-functional stakeholder group to develop a strategy for refining and focusing the College’s branding and address perceptual gaps to strengthen visibility, positive impressions of the College’s offerings, value proposition and return on investment in support of the College’s position in the community and its enrollment efforts.
  - c. By the end of fall 2023, update the College’s website with renewed prominence on prospective student engagement, academic offerings, and enrollment.
2. Design and launch a long-range marketing and communication plan that aligns with and is responsive to the diversity of audiences we desire to engage.
  - a. By the end of the fall 2023 semester, convene a cross-functional team to conduct a communications audit, to include marketing and communication materials and practices.

As part of the audit process, identify opportunities for upgrades and refinements that would elevate a “plain language” approach and strengthen, personalize, customize, and coordinate outreach activities for the community.

- b. Implement a customer relations management (CRM) system to improve the delivery of student communications and response to messaging in time for the fall 2024 semester.
3. Establish educational, business, and industry partners’ advisory groups to strategically align course, program, degree, transfer and career planning options that plan for and respond to key employment needs and trends locally, regionally, and nationally.
  - a. Develop 10 new transfer partnership agreements with four-year institutions that are aligned with business and industry needs and that increase access pathways to the baccalaureate by the end of FY25.
  - b. Engage the Student Affairs Alliance Group leadership to research the career interests and workforce trends of prospective students with whom they interact by the end of FY24.
  - c. Convene the Student Success Network Post-Completion Success Workgroup to identify common loss points and recommend momentum strategies that improve students’ transfer and career outcomes by the beginning of FY24.
4. Design and implement a comprehensive, reimagined catalog of experiential, dynamic summer academic enrichment programs, camps, dual enrollment, and other engagement offerings at our locations and in neighborhood schools that introduces families and prospective students to the College beginning in elementary school.
  - a. Convene Workforce Development and Continuing Education (WDCE), Recruitment, Marketing, and other key stakeholders to assess student and parent needs, survey competitive landscape, and review historical

enrollment and programming data to ensure identified needs are addressed by the end of FY24.

- b. Develop a parent resource website to showcase summer academic enrichment programs, camps, and engagement offerings available for elementary, middle, and high school students by the end of the fall 2023 semester.
- c. By the end of FY25, expand dual enrollment outreach efforts in traditionally underrepresented and underserved populations by targeting FARMs schools and schools with significant populations of families whose first language is not English.

### INDICATOR TARGETS:

1. Increase the number of credit applications by 25%.
2. Increase enrollment in workforce development and continuing education programs by 25%.
3. Increase the number of noncredit students who transition to credit programs by 15%.
4. Increase the number of dual enrollment students from FARMs schools by 10%.
5. Increase the number of dual enrollment students from schools with significant population of families whose first language is not English by 10%.











### Goal 3: Address and Improve MC’s Rates of Student Success, Retention and Completion

**STRATEGY:**

Utilize strong collaboration and coordination of existing support programs as well as develop and implement more focused directions and services.

**TACTICS:**

1. Complete a student satisfaction survey to establish a baseline of both how satisfied students are and the value or priority they place on key factors such as retention, persistence, completion and belonging by the end of FY25.

a. Administer a student satisfaction survey and convene a cross-functional group to recommend strategies for addressing needs suggested by the survey by the end of FY24.

b. Using student survey results and enrollment data, create a framework that identifies at-promise students, as well as refine and implement an initial rollout of strategies and actions to increase enrollment for at-promise students by the beginning of FY25.
2. Design and implement a collegewide *Raptors Care* initiative by the end of FY24 to coordinate and strengthen intentional strategies, actions, and shared participation and responsibility of all faculty, staff, and administrators for nurturing a sense of belonging and a caring campus community, in which our students thrive and successfully achieve their academic goals at Montgomery College. Convene a cross-functional group to recommend resources, professional development, and other supports required to operationalize a sense of belonging, a culture of care, and high-quality customer service at the College.
3. Design and implement a comprehensive, integrated, high-touch program of student retention, tailored to the specific needs of each learner profile.

a. Re-engage and enhance the College’s honors and signature programs, by the end of FY24, ensuring excellence and equity, student-centered leadership, and appropriate supports for students to ensure strong enrollment and persistence.

b. Develop, resource, and assign designated case management teams to engage and communicate with students throughout the semester, using a caring campus approach, to support retention, persistence and completion by the end of FY25.

c. Design and implement a process to engage stop-out students promoting re-enrollment and return on investment by the October 2023.
4. By the beginning of FY24, implement year-round credit scheduling to improve student academic planning, decrease course cancellations, increase completion rates, and enhance the process to adjust course offerings as enrollment dictates.
5. Convene the Student Success Network Completion Workgroup to identify common loss points and recommend momentum strategies that improve students’ retention, persistence, and completion outcomes by the beginning of FY24.

**INDICATOR TARGETS:**

1. Increase fall-to-fall new student retention by 10%.



# NEXT STEPS: MEASUREMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

An ongoing commitment to reflection, assessment and continuous improvement is essential to success in achieving the goals of the EMP. To actualize Montgomery College's aspirations to transform students' lives and the community, efforts to define comprehensive goals, strategies, policies, processes, actions, accountability partners, resources, and key performance measures as part of this EMP remain ongoing. The EMP will be studied and evaluated annually and findings and recommendations to address identified opportunities for improvement will be published each year. Evaluating the plan's progress includes:

- Conducting focus groups, hosting ad hoc meetings, and administering surveys to gather student and employee experiences to evaluate the effectiveness and efficacy of the Enrollment Management Plan strategies, and to assess student and employee satisfaction and engagement.
- Providing professional development and education awareness programs to foster a shared accountability, responsibility and participation in ensuring College services, supports and resources are accessible to students.

- Assessing process improvement opportunities and measuring cycle times for responding to and completing critical customer service activities.
- Defining and designing evolving data and information needed to strengthen the future planning activities
- Ensuring continued alignment between the Enrollment Management Plan goals and strategies with the College's new strategic plan goals.
- Developing strategies for sharing agreed-upon data and reports with stakeholders.
- Measuring enrollment trends, success rates in moving prospects through to registrants, and the return on investment of contracted service providers that support our enrollment efforts.
- Tracking enrollment, retention, and completion rates by program, transfer volume or rate, degrees and certificates awarded by demographics and programs.

- Integrating EMP planning into the budget development cycle continuing to assess resource allocation needs and impacts to optimize enrollment management strategies and strengthen fiscal sustainability.
- Recommending financially sustainable, data-informed and operational excellence models to enable the ongoing success of the EMP.

Moving forward, we will commence work on confirming and designing an appropriate catalog of success measures for the Enrollment Management Plan. The Measures of Success may include but are not limited to:

- Enhanced marketing, digital and search engine optimization, and brand identity
- Increased parent, school, and community engagement
- Increased favorable perception of the College
- Increased number of prospects and inquiries
- Improved response rate to student communications
- Increased yield
- Increased enrollment
- Increased on-time registration
- Increased completion
- Decreased time to completion
- Increased student satisfaction
- Improved customer service
- Increased retention
- Increased student engagement and sense of belonging

An ongoing commitment to reflection, continuous improvement, and evaluation is essential to success in achieving the goals of the EMP. Ongoing reflection in identifying opportunities for improvement in student satisfaction and access, completion, and post-completion success outcomes. Indeed, all of these elements must work together collaboratively and simultaneously to achieve the outcomes we all want for students and our community.

So, transformation is a broad idea, but what will it look like? It will include changes in systems that will fundamentally nurture the college-going culture in the County. It will improve the ability of anyone who wants a credential of economic value, to get an MC experience — that is access. It will include deeper collaboration across internal divisions to create processes that best serve students. It will mean consistently student-centered strategies to keep people engaged, advancing and achieving their goals — that is completion. It will include investments in new technologies, enhancements of processes, and streamlining of support systems that truly change outcomes. Deep coalitions with business, industry, non-profits, and community organizations. Students who finish a degree or certificate will find jobs that can sustain a family. That is post-completion success. All of our students will be contributing members of their communities. Their credentials will benefit them, of course, but equally important: They will have community and social value. Our students will be empowered to share their talents and achievements. This is our collective work. This is what transformation looks like. I invite you all to participate. I ask that we hold each other accountable. And I challenge you — from whatever role you are in — to be the change you want to see.

*From President Dr. Jermaine F. Williams' Inaugural Speech, October 19, 2022*





