Data Asset Management Plan (2025-2029) Community Feedback Sessions

February/March 2025

> *The Data Asset Management Plan (DAMP) is shaped by the collective wisdom of our Montgomery College community. By embracing community feedback and prioritizing the use of data, we empower ourselves to make informed decisions, drive continuous improvement, and remain agile and responsive. This plan represents our commitment to utilizing data as a dynamic tool for progress and enables us to truly transform lives and enrich our community.*

- Analytics & Insights

> *One of the governance foci is ensuring that all members of the College community can provide input and offer feedback. Certainly, data-informed decisions are critical to everything we do at the College. Promoting data literacy, training, and data communication are paramount to institutional improvements.*

- Participatory Governance

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Montgomery College (MC) is committed to a data-informed culture that empowers student success and drives strategic goals. To ensure the Data Asset Management Plan (DAMP) 2025-2029 reflects the needs and priorities of the MC community, a series of feedback sessions were conducted in February/March 2025. These sessions aimed to gather input from students, faculty, staff, and administrators on key aspects of data asset management.

Key themes emerged from the feedback including, but not limited to:

- Desire for Transparency and Data Sharing - participants expressed a strong desire for greater transparency in how data is collected, used, and shared across the College (cross-departmentally and otherwise), including sharing information about data used in decision-making.

- Emphasis on Data Literacy - there was broad agreement on the need to enhance data literacy among all stakeholders to facilitate effective day-to-day operations and data-informed decision-making.

- Focus on Student Success - feedback underscored the importance of leveraging data to improve student outcomes, support services, and promote equitable access to opportunities.

- Call for Actionable Insights - participants emphasized the need for data to be translated into actionable insights that inform strategic planning, resource allocation, and continuous improvement efforts.

- Technology Needs and Infrastructure – feedback highlighted the need for investment in technology infrastructure and tools to support efficient and effective data asset management, analysis, sharing, and communication.

The feedback gathered from these sessions will be instrumental in shaping the final DAMP 2025-2029 and will ensure that it aligns with the College's mission and strategic imperatives.

II. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this report is to capture and summarize the collective input and feedback received during the DAMP Community Feedback Sessions and to identify the themes and suggestions raised. This report reflects the diverse voices and insights shared at the feedback sessions in a structured and accessible document. Moreover, this report demonstrates a genuine commitment to listening and valuing community participation which is intended to foster trust and transparency. Finally, this report allows those who attended to see their contributions acknowledged and understood while also

informing a wider audience at the College about the discussions had and the feedback received.

Every voice matters and informed input continues to fuel MC's evolution. The Community Feedback Sessions, co-sponsored by Analytics & Insights, Participatory Governance, and Student Affairs, provided invaluable information and provided clarity for updating the DAMP for 2025-2029. These sessions underscore the importance of collective input and wisdom in crafting a DAMP that truly reflects the needs of the MC community. By engaging a diverse array of community members, we ensure that the plan is technically sound and resonates with the practical realities of the College's daily operations.

Ultimately, data is powerful when understood and utilized by all. By embracing data-informed decisions, we ensure agility, responsiveness, continuous improvement, and institutional effectiveness. This enhances our ability to achieve MC's mission. The DAMP is our commitment to progress and serves as a tool that allows us to understand our students and community better, to innovate, and to ensure equitable outcomes. It is a testament to our belief that data can truly enrich our collective future. It helps to empower the MC community to actively participate in shaping the College's future.

III. THEMES AND INSIGHTS

<u>Goals Brainstorming Exercise:</u>

- **How can MC leaders promote a data-informed culture?**

Feedback emphasizes that leadership should actively model and champion a data-informed culture through consistent and transparent practices.

Data sharing within decision-making communications	Leaders should consistently refer to data in presentations and decision-making communications which will reinforce its importance and build trust.
Accessible and current data	The College must ensure real-time and easily accessible data which will enable and empower employees to use data more. A centralized data repository and standardized data dictionary are essential to breaking down the existing silos and will help to ensure data consistency and reliability.
Data literacy	Through training, mentorship, and "data champions", leaders can build employee confidence and competence in effective data usage. Investments in AI and advanced visualization would also contribute to a data-literate workforce and drive innovation.
Collaboration and accountability	Cross-departmental collaboration, data sharing, and a sense of ownership over data are essential for effective decision-making.

Data application	The focus should move from mere data collection to its meaningful application in problem-solving and strategic initiatives. We should utilize both quantitative and qualitative insights.
Communication and vision	Leaders should articulate a clear vision for data usage and consistently communicate its importance internal and external to the College.
Modeling data-informed practices	Leaders need to use data in their own decision-making processes which will set a clear example for the rest of the College community.

- **What specific training needs do you have in relation to data asset management?**

Feedback emphasizes a critical need for comprehensive, accessible, and role-specific data training.

Standardized foundation	Establish a centralized glossary and basic data literacy training for all employees, especially new hires, to ensure consistent understanding of data governance and data usage.
Tool proficiency	Provide training on available data tools (e.g., Banner, Starfish, dashboards), including access protocols and functionalities.
Data interpretation & reporting	Develop training on interpreting data, creating standardized reports, and integrating diverse data sources for accurate insights.
Ethical data handling	Prioritize training on data privacy, security, and ethical considerations - including bias awareness and responsible data collection.
Problem-driven analysis	Emphasize the importance of defining problems before data collection to yield accurate and actionable insights.
Accessible & flexible learning	Offer diverse learning options (e.g., webinars, modules, workshops) and ensure ongoing training to adapt to evolving data systems.
Proactive communication	Implement a clear communication strategy to raise awareness of available data tools and resources. Provide practical, hands-on training for effective application.

- **What tools and technologies are necessary to effectively access data?**

Feedback emphasizes the need for a shift towards integrated, user-friendly data tools to enhance accessibility, accuracy, and efficiency.

Integrated platforms	A centralized system is critical to eliminate data silos, ensure a "single source of truth", and improve data sharing between departments and with external stakeholders.

Automated tools	Acquire ad implement tools that automate data integration, analysis, and visualization. This will reduce reliance on manual processes and improve efficiency.
User-friendly dashboards	Enhanced, accessible, and easily navigable dashboards are essential for real-time data visualization and informed decision-making across all user levels.
Standardized tools	Unifying platforms and standardizing data definitions will ensure consistency and reduce confusion caused by disparate systems.
CRM system	A well-integrated CRM system is crucial for streamlining data collection, tracking interactions, and improving engagement.
AI utilization	Strategic use of AI can aid in complex data interpretation and predictive analytics.
Data governance	Clear policies on data access, security, and governance are vital to ensure data integrity, confidentiality, and user trust.
Training and support	Providing adequate training and support is necessary to improve data literacy and empower all employees to effectively use available tools.

- **How can MC better utilize data to inform decision making?**

Feedback emphasizes aligning data with strategic goals, ensuring transparency through widespread sharing and contextualized presentations, and providing robust training to prevent misinterpretation. In order to effectively utilize data for decision-making, MC needs to cultivate a data-literate culture built on accessibility, relevance, and transparency.

Contextualize and prioritize	Begin by clearly defining the decision and the problem it addresses. Align data collection with strategic goals and avoid information overload by focusing on relevant metrics.
Ensure data quality and access	Implement standardized, centralized data systems with clear governance to ensure data accuracy, consistency, and easy access for all stakeholders.
Communicate effectively	Disseminate data through existing channels using data visualizations and storytelling to make insights clear and compelling. Tailor data delivery to specific audiences and avoid irrelevant communication.
Promote data literacy	Provide training and support to empower employees at all levels to interpret and apply data effectively.
Foster transparency and trust	Clearly articulate how data informs decisions and share successes and challenges as appropriate and necessary. Make decision-making data publicly accessible to enhance trust and engagement.

Breakout Sessions:

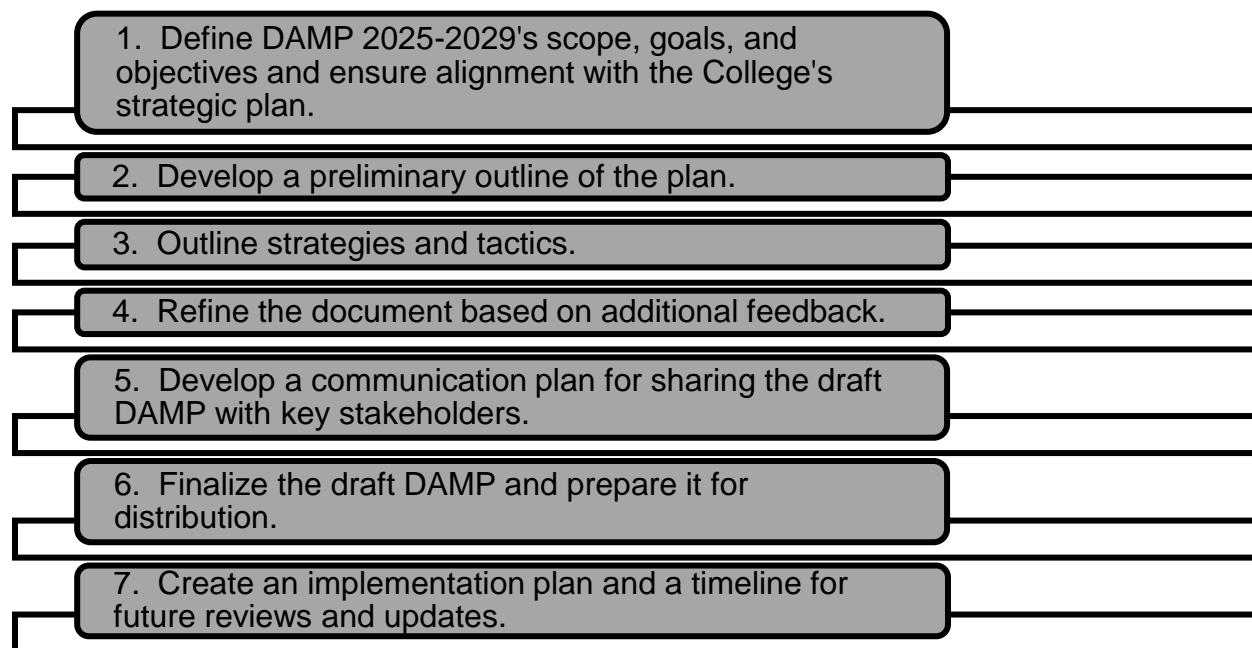| **Understanding Needs** |
| --- |
| Feedback highlights a critical need for data accessibility, relevance, and integration to foster buy-in and drive institutional progress. To overcome resistance, demonstrating data's impact on individual contributions and framing it within a sense of belonging is essential. Integrated systems and standardized data definitions are crucial for a cohesive understanding of institutional efforts. Targeted data literacy training that addresses specific gaps and concerns is vital for effective data utilization. Transparent communication, storytelling, and visible decision-making processes can further ease adoption. Faculty require streamlined access to relevant student performance and labor market data, while advisors need tools to track student progress effectively. Concerns surrounding AI integration and change management emphasize the importance of ethical considerations and clear communication to build trust and ensure successful implementation. |
| **Training and Support** |
| Feedback highlights a critical need for practical, relevant, and accessible data training and support. Employees desire hands-on, department-specific training that directly applies to their daily tasks, along with standardized, MC-tailored resources to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Training on institutional processes is also crucial. Overcoming time constraints requires dedicated training schedules and data-informed planning to minimize disruption. Training should encompass diverse formats, including in-person sessions, bite-sized videos, and recorded workshops, and focus on practical data application and decision-making. Incentives, like certificates and badging systems, can boost engagement. Crucially, a baseline of IT competency, including AI literacy, is necessary, with ethical AI usage and accurate career advising tools emphasized. Finally, cross-departmental collaboration on data use, including audits and standardized definitions, is vital for consistent data practices. |
| **Collaboration and Communication** |
| Feedback underscores a strong desire for enhanced collaboration and transparent communication to foster a data-informed culture. Participants advocate for regular, cross-departmental dialogue to standardize data utilization and share best practices, supported by a centralized data platform. Clear and engaging communication, including newsletters and Q&A sessions, is crucial for buy-in. To build trust, transparent reporting, inclusive of challenges, and visible, participatory decision-making processes are essential. |

Sampling of Comments:

- By consistently linking decisions to qualitative and quantitative data, leaders reinforce the importance of a data-informed approach. This practice helps establish a culture where employees understand that strategic decisions are not based on intuition alone but are backed by factual evidence.
- Managers should integrate data reports into meetings to reinforce the importance of data-informed decision-making.

- Keeping data current and accessible is essential for fostering engagement and maintaining morale among employees.
- When multiple people understand and use the same data, it fosters a shared commitment to data-informed decision-making.
- Moving away from manual data collection ensures efficiency and reduces the risk of errors, making decision-making more reliable.
- Clear definitions of key data terms, such as the distinction between "continuing" and "returning" students, help create consistency in data interpretation across departments.
- Strategic use of AI can help interpret complex data sets, identifying trends and patterns that may not be immediately obvious.
- Training should include a glossary of data terms to ensure a shared understanding among all employees.
- Training should be tailored based on roles, some employees need foundational data knowledge, while others require advanced analytical skills.
- A key focus should be on identifying the problem before collecting and analyzing data, ensuring that the data used aligns with the issue at hand.
- There's an opportunity for leaders at all levels to help employees become more data-literate so they can connect daily operations to broader institutional trends.
- Adding "Fast Facts" to messages that are already being disseminated, such as the President's Monday morning report, division newsletters, or institutional communications, ensures that data remains visible and top of mind for employees.
- Data should not exist in isolation—it should be connected to real outcomes.
- Every meeting and feedback session should include some information about data.
- Making data a regular part of institutional conversations ensures that it remains central to organizational improvements.
- Using data proactively to identify and address challenges can drive meaningful interventions.
- Many smaller departments collect data differently, making it inaccessible or disconnected from the broader institutional picture. If different offices track their engagement in separate, siloed ways, it becomes difficult to form a cohesive understanding of overall impact.
- Basic foundational training would help employees understand key institutional processes before diving into data.
- Leaders should infuse key metrics into messages, reports, and meetings to normalize data-informed discussions across departments.
- Monthly meetings to facilitate data sharing and best practice discussions among divisions.
- Conducting audits on data collection processes, clarifying definitions, and streamlining tools across departments could enhance confidence in data usage while improving collaboration.
- Demonstrating how data supports strategic choices reinforces its value and encourages others to follow suit.
- OIRE Dashboards provide real-time data visualization, making it easier to track organizational performance and trends.

- Similar to how students receive celebratory emails with animations upon acceptance, internal data communications could use eye-catching subject lines like "Wow, have you seen the enrollment numbers?" with quick-access links to dashboards. This keeps data front and center in a positive, accessible way.
- Data can help us allocate resources more effectively.
- All employees should have a baseline level of IT competency.

IV.   PATH FORWARD

Action Plan and Implementation Next Steps

1. Define DAMP 2025-2029's scope, goals, and objectives and ensure alignment with the College's strategic plan.

2. Develop a preliminary outline of the plan.

3. Outline strategies and tactics.

4. Refine the document based on additional feedback.

5. Develop a communication plan for sharing the draft DAMP with key stakeholders.

6. Finalize the draft DAMP and prepare it for distribution.

7. Create an implementation plan and a timeline for future reviews and updates.

V.   MESSAGE TO PARTICIPANTS

Your invaluable insights during the Data Asset Management Plan (DAMP) Community Feedback Sessions are deeply appreciated. Your thoughtful contributions will directly shape the direction of MC's data asset management plan and strategies and will ensure it reflects the needs of the MC community. We are committed to using your feedback to build an effective data ecosystem that empowers informed decision-making and drives continuous improvement at the College. Thank you for your collaboration and partnership in this important effort.

VI.   CONCLUSION

The outcomes of the DAMP Community Feedback Sessions, as detailed in this report, will directly inform the development and implementation of the DAMP 2025-2029. We are committed to using this feedback to enhance our data practices, empower our community, and advance student success.

VII.   APPENDICES

The master presentation used during the community feedback sessions can be accessed online [here](#).

Community data spotlight presentations occurred at the community feedback sessions and can be accessed online [here](#).