

Challenges - What are the challenges facing the College in the next 10 years?

Montgomery College is facing many academic and workforce challenges today. Some challenges will have a direct impact on our core mission while others will have an indirect impact.

- I. Student Success - the challenges impacting the College's mission to 'empower our students to change their lives', include:
 - 1) Student advising,
 - 2) Developmental education, and K-12 Alignment
 - 3) Program alignment and advocacy
 - 4) Teaching and Learning – in subject content and general competencies for faculty, students and students
 - 5) Partnership and Articulation
 - 6) Technology
 - 7) *Broad workforce skills set requirement for today's workforce*
 - 8) *Building and sustaining business partnerships and curriculum alignment*

- II. Accessibility and Community Enrichment - the challenges impacting accessibility of higher education and the College's mission to 'enrich the life of our community', include:
 - 9) Technology (DL challenge)
 - 10) Academic scheduling
 - 11) Infrastructure, Capacity and Facility
 - 12) Economic Challenges - Cost, funding, resource allocation, job market
 - 13) *Cost and funding*

- III. Accountability and Agility - Faculty, Staff, Students, and Leadership - the challenges impacting the College's mission to remain relevant and be 'accountable for our results', include:
 - 14) Responsive to change – flexibility, creativity, entrepreneurship, professional development
 - 15) Accreditation requirements
 - 16) Demographic Changes
 - 17) Succession Plan and Professional Development
 - 18) *Meeting the needs and leveraging the changing demographics in Montgomery County*
 - 19) *Global perspective and local demand*
 - 20) *Remain responsive and relevant*

Individual Responses

Conference Question #2: What other challenges are facing the College in the next 10 years?

I. Student Success - the challenges impacting the College's mission to 'empower our students to change their lives' include:

A. Student advising

1. Advising students; helping students who are in liberal arts/general studies program focus so that they can transfer more efficiently in areas of their interest/reassessing liberal arts/general studies curriculum
2. Academic advising model in Community College. How effective is it? How does the whole K-16 academic advising work for students? Should we advise students more often and initially to put a plan together? Online advising? There are existing models – Kirkwood CC and Northern Virginia CC. MC does have tools, but are they being used by students and how do we make them aware – mandatory first year experience course? Concern over degree audit system and how difficult it is to use (Banner issue).
3. **The current advising structure is a major challenge.**
4. **Counseling – current process is inadequate (need mental health, social, etc)**
5. Mandated advising and all faculty engaged
6. (3) mandatory orientation/advising;
7. ***Focus on prevention of drop outs by: tracking what is happening with students who are 'sitting out'; pay attention to 'early alerts' and planning ways to keep these students at MC.***
8. Defining college readiness and success to include transfer readiness and workforce readiness. We have an artificial dichotomy between academic and workforce training
9. Knowledge gap of the student—not understood since they received a high school diploma. Education as a “product” and students may feel a sense of entitlement.

B. Developmental education, and K-12 Alignment

1. Moving students through dev ed more efficiently;
2. We need to do something about the high numbers of developmental needs students but how?
3. Developmental Education, number of developmental students
4. Number of students who aren't college-ready, yet there is an expectation that since they were accepted, they can begin college-level courses. There isn't an understanding of that fact. Student/parent as consumer with different expectations. It's not a purchasing of education—we've lost the concept of college as philanthropy.
5. Students are underprepared – we will continue to need to address gaps between K-12 learning and college expectations.

6. Students still underprepared in grammar, punctuation, writing, logic, critical thinking (despite NCLB and Common Core standards)
7. Achievement gap---most immediate challenge---we have the data but what are we doing about it? Some small scale programs are successful but need to scale them up. Resources!
8. Students really are shocked when they get their dev/accuplacer scores in College—MCPS really doesn't let students know where they are. Tests are not aligned with learning. Need to get MCPS and MC faculty together, need to think about how to give students more realistic sense of where they are, where they need to be to graduate at college level. AGAIN: a focus on advising at all levels!!!!
9. In Dev Ed what are other options for students. RETENTION—a challenge that the College must respond to. Students need better understanding of what placement scores mean—more guidance from more sources. Their assessment profile for be related to their actual long-term goals. Maybe the same scores should mean the same to everyone. We must sell ourselves as high quality in general, not as where people can't go because they can't go elsewhere.
10. If K-12 doesn't shift to the new idea of learning with tech. (or vice-versa) how can students be expected to shift. Need to transition to new learning and teaching styles together (K-12, CC + 4 year)
11. Persistence: getting student through dev and CL courses/scheduling/help students identify career goals/easier transfer

C. Program alignment and advocacy

1. When looking at job data, how do we **sell interest in the jobs of the future?**
Marketing programs, once we adjust to job data.
2. Focus on **value and relevance of college degree** and how we deliver it. What does it prepare you for?
3. Transfer information and getting the students aware of what they need to successfully transfer.
4. Skill changing in jobs – more hybrid programs combining credit and non-credit
5. Broaden how we define job-ready programs
6. Encouraging AA degrees vs just transfer
7. Matching these jobs of the future with skillsets from general degrees. **Use data to help advisors to direct students to these jobs.** *Example: Music is an indicator of aptitude for computer science.* Matches that you don't expect. What a great idea for an all college meeting!
8. Need for workers w/B.A.---implications for our transfer programs
9. Achieving completion agenda—transfer as success vs. getting A.A.
10. Relevance of curriculum to students and in light of changes in society, economy, businesses
11. Look at our curriculum and evaluate---are we providing what is needed? “Don't do different things (have same general ed classes/requirements) but do things differently” (Rai).
12. Marketing/education to our students about the value of a degree

13. Should we develop capstone courses to ensure all gen ed competencies and proficiencies are developed.

D. Teaching and Learning – in subject content and general competencies for faculty, students and students

1. Education trends emphasize on teaching competencies - how to train our faculty to teach competencies besides content. Need more focus on professional development to prepare our faculty to teach competencies.
2. Link competences to what employers need
3. Development of core competencies that we will address in most every class
4. Adjusting the way we advise and attract returning students
5. Generational changes will mean we need to change the way we teach.
6. Adjusting the way we teach to retain the new generation of students coming out of high school
7. Need for excellence with development of Distance Education offerings and training/exposure for students
8. Course redesign—as challenge and opportunity
9. Changing the way we teach to address the increased need for online/ computer based learning
10. Connect EN classes with STEM and WD&CE so students make the connections. Taylor writing styles to job needs – make sure students understand writing-style issues.
11. How do we redesign courses to make them most efficient for the least amount of money on a limited budget.
12. Active, engaging instruction – course, materials, methodology, teaching strategies

E. Partnership and Articulation

1. Consider whether the future of MC is as a community college and a four-year college in light of trends in education, nursing and other disciplines
2. refocus on artificial distinctions between credit and noncredit;
3. what can be learned from for-profits (e.g. tech, OA);
4. need for more articulated programs up and down (e.g. unions, credit to noncredit, degree programs to outside institutions);
5. Conversations regarding articulation
6. Need to collaborate more closely with the school system, K-12, and 4-year schools
7. Are for-profit schools competition for MC?
8. Challenges of the K-12 partnerships on a number of levels,
9. We talk to students about transfer before they have an opportunity to engage here. Need to increase communication about the benefits of getting the A.A.
10. Reverse transfer strategies need to be emphasized. Some schools have added reverse transfer consent on admissions application.
11. State and national transferability issues
12. Getting students to Shady Grove

13. A pre-education program in content and pedagogy for science disciplines to train science teachers and engage student interest
14. (6) partnering with private industry;
15. (7) competition with for-profit;
16. Dual enrollment for all colleges at USG.
17. What is our role in workforce development?

F. Technology

1. Computer/ internet access for students
2. Faculty who are not comfortable using or increasing their use of different types of technology in instruction and as a tool
3. Getting people who need to be upskilled to come to MC
4. consider how technology is used in programs;
5. **Academic dishonesty** with new learning environments – online, group desks for testing, cellphones, tablets.
6. Cellphone use and tablets used in classroom needs to be re-thought. Leave it on vibrate??? Not all students will have one.
7. Computer Literacy skills for students and the difficult it presents to academically achieve. Workforce success concern, too.
8. Technology for productivity
9. Accessibility issues in technology
10. Need to provide access to technology for students (but we don't even have college-wide wi-fi now, for instance)
11. integration of technology, change idea of how students learn, what do students need to be successful, non academic support for students, different needs of incoming students
12. Blended learning sounds great on paper, but doesn't address student skills, resources students have at home, and college resources to provide equipment and staffing for labs.
13. The concern of the digital divide – more technology is needed but students can't access it.
14. **Technology/blended classes** are needed to be incorporated into the MC educational culture AND into the MC community culture by implementing hybrid courses and using the tool of telecommunication and skype to hold meetings rather than use gas on the road and valuable time on travel between campuses.
15. Student difficulties being successful with distance learning;
16. Digital divide – for online classes a student must have easy access to the internet. Students in online classes now fail or drop out because of reasons of access. They can't take in-class classes because of job/life schedules. They lose job and let their home access to technology go.
17. Students may not have the technology skills we think they do or the access to the internet
18. (5) more innovative uses of technology – also technology as a threat since competition is not limited by geography;

G. Broad Workforce Skills Set requirement

1. Foreign language skills
2. Educational requirements have increased from AA to BA in some areas to meet increased needs/skills; needs to be more of a focus on middle skills jobs and preparing students for them; economic forecasts remain grim
3. Language skills for specific business.
4. Keeping current with the content – knowledge and technology
5. Language skills courses for college workers. Plus the time to take them.
6. Fluency in English and working knowledge of other languages – Spanish, Mandarin, etc. Some of our students are resources for helping English speakers to learn other languages.
7. Gap in skills with workforce needs.
8. Ability to speak a language other than English
9. Skills gap
10. Currency in field, skill set, equipment, etc.
11. Panel emphasized CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING as valuable skill. This isn't associated with one course or field of study. We live in a time of change: whole job fields will grow up and go away. Students must be flexible to make it in fluid, modern world.
12. Life skills and work skills training in both the academic and WDCE courses/programs
13. Getting people who are well-rounded with job specific and soft skills
14. Employers need qualitative skills in our students.
15. Students need to better understand the culture of the workplace
16. Work-ready employees
17. We need to teach our students to be flexible/we need to be flexible as well---lifelong learning
18. Finding people with the right skill set
19. (5) Focus on basic skills development – essential communication skills (oral and written) – examples are poor spelling in “text talk” and lack of cursive writing
20. Need for out-of-class experience to make sure graduates are prepared for the world of work
21. Being multi-lingual; eg Spanish in hospitality. ASL; that students have expertise in a second language. Gen Ed requirements are only for 1 semester – (some majors have two semesters required) – that's not enough. Having more emphasis on languages.
22. People entering the workforce lacking communication, logic and organizational skills
23. Skill sets - very forthcoming about importance of communication/social skills; broader skill set important in every arena; problem solving/conflict resolution.
24. (7) Desire for students to increase their own self-awareness
25. Expectation that you'll have multiple careers over the course of your working life – and the training and retraining that is involved with that expectation
26. Balancing the needs of industry with the need to create a broadly educated democracy.
27. Lack of preparedness as students come through the pipeline
28. Need for maturity and experience in incoming employees.

H. Partnership and Curriculum Alignment

1. *Partnerships to help keep up on equipment used and standards for different industries with jobs.*
2. *Partnerships are current and constant. Need to maintain viable relationships.*
3. *Speed at which change is occurring will be a challenge. This will require stronger partnerships with the community and employers within it.*
4. *(4) Best way for us to provide effective workforce for industry is for them to partner with us in everything from curricular design to internships to employment – need to do this in each of our program areas for the industries we serve; also partner in this same vein with 4-year colleges*
5. *(3) Do we still have Career Advisory Boards and how are those used to improve our programs? How is the information shared with the College community?*
6. *(2) Value of today – of industry informing our discussion/decisions is very important to maintain on a regular basis;*
7. *Curriculum needs to be aligned – up-dated – to business. Difficult to keep up with rapid changes in business.*
8. *This also depends on the course. In English, changes will be slower; faster in IT.*
9. *Working with business/industry partners to develop courses and programs for training their future employees...maintaining the pedagogical strengths of the academic experts and somehow also incorporating the workforce leaders' needs.*
10. *Realignment of the workforce (standard jobs going away and new ones being created: re-tooling)*

II. Student Access and Community Enrichment- the challenges impacting accessibility of higher education and the College's mission to 'enrich the life of our community', include:

I. Academic scheduling

1. Our traditional length semesters and too few 12-month employees who provide instruction and advising
2. Summer schedule
3. Structure of the academic year
4. Need for services to be available because students are here year-round—limited time for planning; more reactive than proactive
5. 24/7/12 mos. Education being proposed—need for at least some break
6. Change summer session to have a third semester program

J. Infrastructure, Capacity and Facility

1. Space – physical space and classroom availability
2. **Capacity issues** – if more students, where to put them.

3. **Design of learning spaces** needs to be addressed. Traditional classroom models have not been rethought for years.
4. Space—brick and mortar vs. distance learning as a possible method for alleviating stress on facilities
5. Facilities must be partners in developing academic spaces.
6. Transportation issues between campuses
7. **Student Engagement Infrastructure** needs to be addressed. *Students need space on all campuses to engage socially with peers, communicate with faculty, and gain a sense of community and support from the environment not just the counseling faculty. Student training in life skills could be incorporated in the infrastructure.*
8. Service functions – emphasis on serving the classrooms
9. (4) campus security and behavioral intervention;
10. Increasing opportunities for access (eg. Winter session, weekends, etc.) with no downtime for maintenance/upkeep/improvements;

K. Economic Challenges - Cost, funding, resource allocation, job market

1. Future of bookstores in light of ebooks and online resources
2. Cost of degree plus outside costs. Community College student has to pay room & food, etc.
3. Cost of education and amount of financial aid available
4. More mission with less money—without compromising quality
5. Costs/budget cuts
6. Slow job growth
7. Flat government funding
8. Resources – focus alignment
9. Funding! How long can we rely on public support? Have to find ways to obtain other financial support, need a different financial model that relies less on public support (taxes) model---partner with industries to provide training to their employees---**partnerships!**
10. Have to become more affordable---how? Technology?
11. Affordability for students (tuition, texts, etc.; also ebooks driving up costs by eliminating used book market)
12. Resource Allocation (with limited resources we have to prioritize where to put our money and human resources and how we use our space)
13. May need to be more creative and entrepreneurial. Holy Cross partnership, eg., will generate revenue. What are other things we can do at the college to get better return on some of our money?
14. Funding a huge challenge; how to generate revenues in ways we've not thought of before. Tuition-model as source of money for college will not allow us to grow. IT looking for other ways to generate revenue for visionary plans; partnering with other colleges, eg. We have not fully leveraged rich technology. Budget should be aligned with well-thought out strategic plans.
15. Expenses related to increasing counseling, tutoring, providing technology and access – budgets are key and don't seem to be improving any time soon.

16. (8) transfer scholarship funds
17. Financial assistance for students in WD&CE

L. Cost, Funding, and Geographic Challenge

1. *Housing costs in area*
2. *Cost of living in this area*
3. *Increasing cost of higher education*
4. *Cost of living in the community; access to affordable housing for workforce*
5. *Economy – resources*
6. *Flat funding from County and Federal government*
7. *Quality of life and housing costs*
8. *Work/ life balance – number of hours spent working*
9. *Economic conditions will continue to be a challenge*
10. *(6) Possible impact of federal budget reductions will have a huge and ongoing ripple effect in Montgomery County*
11. *Budgets and funding needed for these programs are often beyond our control – controlled by county, state, or federal governments, and we must adapt to their changes.*
12. *Making sure we have the right equipment and tools they need in order to join the workforce---will need more partnerships or realign the “budget” in order to facilitate the acquisition of these tools and other specialized resources*
13. *Traffic and transportation*

III. Accountability and Agility - Faculty, Staff, Students, and Leadership - the challenges impacting the College’s mission to remain relevant and be ‘accountable for our results’, include:

M. Responsive to change – flexibility, creativity, entrepreneurship, professional development

1. developing a real spirit of innovation and competition
2. Resistance to change
3. Resistance to change
4. Need administrators, faculty and staff who embrace change! A paradigm shift needs to take place---we need to look at ourselves
5. Have to change our expectations, also, to reflect the “changing student” populations or their needs
6. MC’s resistance to change cultural,
7. Ability to quickly adapt to changes – particularly changing internally in response to external issues
8. Faculty must be flexible, learn to make change.

9. MC will need more data on a regular basis for the College leadership so that decisions are informed
10. Dr. Fuller's information on employment/demographic "churn" within our area that will occur in our community; skills needed today are changing.

N. Accreditation requirements

1. Accreditation standards/competencies/skill building
2. outcomes assessment;
3. Accountability in the high schools to prepare students for college. Partnership opportunity.
4. Accountability—demonstrating use of assessment/creating appropriate assessment

O. Demographic Changes

1. big change in student population – specifically with respect to empathy (e.g. in healthcare);
2. Declining abilities of high school graduates—problem of changed core/standards in K-12
3. Number of LEP students—25% of kindergarteners
4. Increase numbers first generation college students
5. Challenge of reaching students who are sincerely poor – who have significant outside factors that impact their ability to succeed once they're here – as well as how to convince them that education is relevant to their particular circumstances (cultural, social, economic)
6. Lack of familiarity with the language/concepts/culture surrounding post-secondary education, specifically for adult students
7. Adult learners need to be included in the picture. With a focus on millennial students, the adults are often the ones who need to be "upskilled" or learn different skills; how are we addressing their needs.
8. Changing dynamics of work force challenge community college to provide skills training (WDCE). How can we be responsive to employment needs, keep finger on pulse of community, provide job skills training?
9. Most of us came here after getting our educations from somewhere else. When you look at edu attainment of native Marylanders, it isn't so great—our PhD and MA demographics are imported. MD's unemployment numbers will go up if we don't scrutinize and think more deeply about MD education attainment data.

P. Succession Plan and Professional Development

1. A shift in culture? – an integrated learning environment encompassing all faculty, staff, administrators and students. How will this affect our overall workload and scheduling? And how can MC embrace this cultural shift among different types of faculty – pedagogy vs. content; traditional vs. new?
2. Increased workload—compliance/accountability—without resources

3. Transition in staff/faculty—retirements coming and the system will be trying to incentivize early retirement
4. Knowledge vacuum vs. denying opportunities for new talent
5. Professional development for part-time faculty (quality of instruction)
6. Special needs students – faculty and staff training, resource support incl. funding
7. Terminal degrees for faculty (value? Definitions? Standards? Proliferation and devaluation?)
8. Need training for faculty, also, in technology and other issues to address the changing needs of students and blended learning
9. Many faculty and students are not equipped or are resistant to teaching/learning technology. There still needs to be room for f2f interaction with students – it is still needed.
10. Excellent use of technology; should be pervasive. Faculty need to be trained.
11. Retirements/turnover
12. (2) mirroring diversity of student population in recruiting new faculty/staff;
13. Leadership and decision making

Q. Changing Demographics

1. *Changing demographics of area*
2. *Shifting age groups in classrooms – returning adults, high schoolers, etc...*
3. *Differences in working styles and habits among generations*
4. *Changes in the workforce*
5. *Cultural changes and increasing diversity of students who need to be prepared for the workforce*
6. *The College workforce and the County the workforce are changing and evolving*
7. *Educating the multi-generational student for the workforce (mature, gen x, gen y, millennials, net generation).*
8. *Deferred retirement means no slots for new workers to move into.*
9. *We need to invest in people who are here since bringing employees in from other areas is problematic because of high cost of living and industry immaturity (esp. in biotech and other areas)*

R. Global Perspective as well as Local Demand

1. *Global view*
2. *Global economy*
3. *We will be influenced by our community and impact of global community---outsourcing, too/low cost/high skill populations---competition from other states as well*
4. *Globally the increasing middle class in both China and India, more demand on our program and course development and more demand that we serve these students online*
5. *Competition from other countries – the need for globalization/global perspective*
6. *Fluctuating hiring practices – educators need to be aware of this – is this a permanent thing?*

7. *Rapid change of technology in areas like bioscience*
8. *Keeping up with the changing technology needs of industry.*

S. Remain Responsive and Relevant

1. *Flexibility in course scheduling*
2. *Important that MC teachers learn and keep current on job industry operations of different fields. This is to be sure they are teaching appropriate skills.*
3. *Upward mobility for MC employees.*
4. *Challenges existing for entrepreneurship*
5. *Growth is a challenge will infrastructure meet the needs of growing population*
6. *Change is difficult and sometimes resisted by college community; also it's not systematic*
7. *Slow to change and organizational inefficiencies*
8. *Being more reactive than proactive regarding workforce needs*
9. *Depending on the field, quick changes of ours will be superseded by quicker changes in the industries. We need to be very thoughtful about what should change and what should stay the same. Be evolutionary rather than revolutionary (agility). Involve all in the change process.*
10. *Other higher ed institutions are looking at these challenges too. We need to meet the challenges first.*
11. *There will be a need for different skills and knowledge. Won't be the same jobs and skills*
12. *Increased technology advances*
13. *Making sure that programs remain relevant to industry needs.*
14. *Need to get students to see relevance of what we are teaching them.*
15. *Conversation missed discussion of adult career changers; unemployment is higher than it has ever been BUT comparatively low in national scenario. It seems like panelists were focused on new graduates. For adults, coming back to school very daunting—we probably miss the opportunity to bring those people in. For profits may get those people because adults don't want to take a test to get a class; it is harder to enroll. MC registration/enrollment process is difficult—we surely lose people because it is a maze. Once students do enroll independently, they can easily sign up for classes without ever getting guidance to make sure classes are relevant. We can improve this process without disrupting our quality. Can we look at for-profit registration models to see if there is something there we can use? Re: adult students—they don't want to sit in classes with very young students, immature behavior—that chases them away (“we don't belong with these kids”). What can we do?*