

# Montgomery College



## Blue Ribbon Task Force on Governance Report to President Dr. Pollard

(Updated August 2011)

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## **Executive Summary**

During the spring semester of 2011, a Blue Ribbon Task Force on Governance was convened by President DeRionne Pollard and charged with developing a new system of governance for Montgomery College which is both participatory and inclusive. The Task Force met over the course of the spring 2011 semester and created a governance structure which meets these requirements. In addition, the Task Force created tools for assessing the effectiveness of the model and considered preliminary steps for implementation. The Task Force produced a report submitted to Dr. Pollard on April 29, 2011.

## **I. Introduction and Background**

In a memorandum to the College community on January 20, 2011, Montgomery College President, Dr. DeRionne Pollard, announced her intent to revisit the College's system of governance in order to bring it into compliance with Board policy (11004). To facilitate the creation of a governance system in which students, staff, faculty, and administrators engage in collaborative and respectful dialog, Dr. Pollard called for an internal Blue Ribbon Task Force on Governance, comprised of representation from all constituency groups.

Dr. Pollard selected three members of the College community to chair the Task Force: Ms. Amy Crowley, Professor Jennifer Polm, and Dr. Brad Stewart. She then selected representatives from all College constituencies: students, staff, faculty, and administrators to serve on the Task Force. The composition included:

- 4 students
- 4 staff, including bargaining and non-bargaining
- 4 full-time faculty
- 2 part-time faculty
- 4 administrators

The President's Chief of Staff, the Director of Employee Engagement and Labor Relations, and the Vice President of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness were appointed as resource members to the Task Force.

## **II. Work of the Task Force**

On January 28, 2011, Dr. Pollard met with the co-chairs to discuss the work of the Task Force and charged them:

1. To examine the existing system of governance at the College and develop a set of recommendations for restructuring it into a system that it is inclusive and participatory;
2. To develop a set of procedures that is in support of and consistent with Board policy, and can also be used as guidelines for implementing the restructured system;
3. To identify a set of criteria that could be used to assess the effectiveness of the system.

Over the course of several meetings, in an attempt to effectively frame future discussions, the co-chairs immersed themselves in a review of models of college governance, as well as an examination of the governance structures at a number of community colleges similar in size and scope to Montgomery College.

The Task Force held its first meeting on Monday, March 7, 2011. A rotating schedule of meetings was established so that the maximum number of Task Force members could attend the weekly meetings on a regular basis. The co-chairs presented a number of models of governance from other community colleges to demonstrate the wide array of possible governance models and spark discussion amongst the Task Force members. These models led to a conversation about shared versus participatory governance. The group examined the Board Policy (11004) on governance for Montgomery College (Principles 2, 3, and 4) to clarify the direction that the Task Force would take to identify the new governance structure.

Principle 2: All constituent groups within the College have a vested interest and a role in ensuring that the College fulfills the mission under the authority and direction of the Board of Trustees and under the leadership of the President.

Principle 3: Participatory governance is a method of organized and collegial interaction in which faculty, staff, students, and administrators participate in thoughtful deliberation and the decision-making process, leading to recommendations made to the College President, who represents the administration of the College as an agent of the Board of Trustees.

Principle 4: Mutual agreement is the goal to be achieved through active participation and collegial interaction by all constituent groups.

Task Force members were asked to identify existing models or create their own governance models based on the principles found in the Montgomery College Board Policy for consideration by the larger group at the following meeting on March 22. At the second meeting, to further clarify the distinction between shared and participatory governance, Dr. Rodney Redmond, one of the Task Force members, led the group in a detailed discussion using his background in the subject. Research revealed that shared governance is the most common type of collegial governance among colleges and universities. It is the process by which

relevant stakeholders engage in decision-making within higher education institutions, including exercising voice in the decision-making process and enacting power over those decisions, especially over academic matters. Participatory governance is a less common form of collegial governance. In participatory governance all stakeholders are invited to provide input into the decision-making process for that institution. The chart below highlights the distinctions between shared and participatory governance.

<b>SHARED GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE</b>
Assumes equal authority in decision-making process	Recognizes the divisions of labor and decision making in the decision-making process
Assumes the Board of Trustees can share its mandated authority and responsibility	Provides opportunity for all constituents to offer recommendations and provide input on decisions
May be limited to select constituent groups	Allows access for all constituents to participate in decision-making process
Expects to make decisions at various levels and rarely considers itself as advisory	Recognizes the governance group(s) as advisory to the President and the Board of Trustees (or their designee)
Defines consensus as unanimous agreement, which is rare in large organizations	Encourages majority consensus, but everyone supports the final decision
Allows for largest, most powerful or most vocal group to dominate decision-making process	Requires deliberation among and input from all constituent groups, with clear delineation of who will be responsible for the final decision

Drs. Redmond and Fechter also led a discussion of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education accreditation standards. In order to meet the accreditation standard on leadership and governance, Standard IV, a college is required to provide a governance system with clearly defined roles for the constituencies within the College: students, staff, faculty, and administrators. A college's board of trustees delegates to its president the authority to consult with internal constituencies on matters for "policy development and decision making" (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2011). Consultations with the various constituency groups should support the mission of the institution, allowing for appropriate input at varying levels within the organization and timely decision making. Middle States, while recognizing that higher education institutions are varied in structure, size and complexity, mandates a system of collegial governance.

Following these discussions on participatory governance, the Task Force members shared and discussed the models they had found or created. From this discussion, three basic types emerged: a purely constituent-based model, a purely functional-based model, and a hybrid of these two.

In order to gather additional input from the College community as a whole, the group identified one representative of each type of model to be shared at a series of open forums. Six forums were advertised to all members of the College community and were held the week of March 21 at varying times on all three campuses. Input was sought in two broad areas by posing the questions below to the students, staff, faculty, and administrators who attended the forums.

1. What is important to you in a governance structure?

Major themes of responses included:

- a. Inclusion
- b. Timeliness in communication and decision making
- c. A local way to contribute through a campus-based structure
- d. The need for an open and transparent process with built-in review procedures
- e. One unifying body or council

2. After discussing each of the three basic models, which model do you prefer and why?

Major themes in responses were:

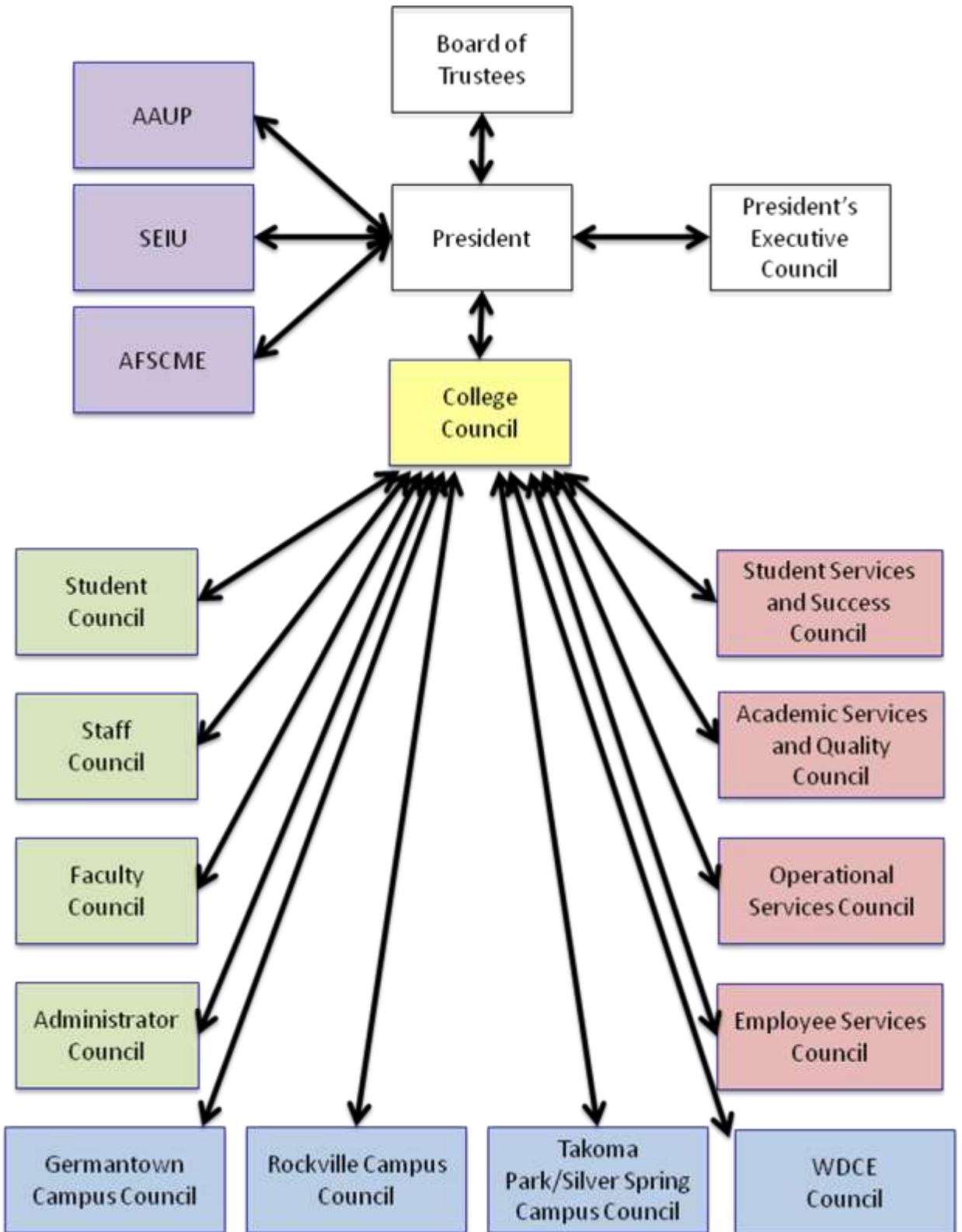
- a. Interest was equally divided between a functional model and a hybrid model, with little to no interest in a purely constituency-based model
- b. Consideration of which model would lead to the shortest decision-making process should guide the decision.
- c. Support for an overarching all-inclusive body.

Following the open forums, in its meeting on April 4, the Task Force analyzed and discussed the forum input and came to a consensus that the hybrid model, which blends the constituent and functional groups, would best fit Montgomery College's needs for an inclusive governance structure. Task Force members were then asked to propose which constituent and functional groups they wanted to be included in the model. At a later meeting, they were asked to propose how students, staff, faculty, and administrators would be represented in these groups. The membership of the Campus Councils was determined in a similar fashion. Discussion continued on each aspect of the proposed governance model, from the general outline to the composition of each Council, until consensus was reached on each item.

### **III. Proposed Participatory Governance Model**

Based on the charge from Dr. Pollard, the intent of the Board of Trustees for inclusive interaction, and feedback from the open forums, the Task Force came to a final consensus to identify a structure that meets the criteria of securing input from all stakeholders and assures the facility of two-way communication among them.

The model is composed of four broad council areas: a College Council, four councils representing constituent groups, four councils representing functional areas, and four councils representing campuses. All members of each council are elected. More specifics on the purpose, rationale, and membership of these groups are included on the tables found on page 11-16.



**Attributes of the model:**

- The guiding force for the governance structure will be the College's mission and vision statements and strategic and academic master plans.
- The model is inclusive. Students, staff (bargaining and non-bargaining), faculty (full- and part-time), and administrators from all locations in the College are represented in the structure, including groups that have been formerly under-represented or not represented at all.
- The College Council provides opportunities for cross-functional discussion and collaboration.
- Recommendations will flow from the constituent, functional, and Campus Councils to the College Council, and ultimately to the President and the Board of Trustees.
- Aligning the functional groups with the reporting structure of the Senior Vice Presidents' administrative units reflects the administrative structure of the College and provides another direct link of communication.
- The structure of the model allows its effectiveness to be assessed on a number of levels. Various assessment tools can be applied to each of the functional, constituent, and Campus Council groups. The overall effectiveness of the model can be determined by assessing the functioning of the College Council.
- The model provides an appropriate channel of communication between the President and the collective-bargaining units.

The Task Force recommends that each of the four constituent councils, each of the four functional councils, and each of the four Campus Councils elect an individual who will represent that group on the College Council. It should also be noted that the staff, faculty, and administrators serving on the College, constituent, functional, and/or Campus Councils require flexible schedules and support from their unit heads and administrators.

The Task Force has concluded that the President's Cabinet as currently constituted may no longer need to meet since the proposed College Council and the President's Executive Council will serve as the two primary conduits for information, consultation, and governance recommendations between the President and students, staff, faculty, and administrators.

The details of each of the constituent, functional, and Campus Councils are described in the tables that follow.

	Purpose	Rationale	Membership
<b>College Council</b>	<p>The College Council is the primary body of the participatory governance structure at Montgomery College. The Council provides input and forwards recommendations to the President on a variety of matters, including issues of concern to the various constituencies represented on the Council.</p>	<p>The College Council provides a voice for all constituencies, including the President, at Montgomery College and seeks to improve the college experience for our students and the quality of life for all in accordance with the mission of the College. The College Council provides the principal venue for recommendations to the President on matters of major interest to all members of the College community.</p>	<p>12 members, 1 from each Council:</p> <p><u>Convener</u>: Chief of Staff/ Chief Strategy Officer</p> <p>Constituent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Council</li> <li>• Staff Council</li> <li>• Faculty Council</li> <li>• Administrator Council</li> </ul> <p>Functional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Services and Success Council</li> <li>• Academic Services and Quality Council</li> <li>• Operational Services Council</li> <li>• Employee Services Council;</li> </ul> <p>Campus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Germantown Campus Council</li> <li>• Rockville Campus Council</li> <li>• Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus Council</li> <li>• Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education Council</li> </ul>

Constituent Councils	Purpose	Rationale	Membership
<b>Student Council</b>	<p>The Student Council will serve as a venue to afford students a full voice in the governance of Montgomery College. Recommendations from the Student Council will be forwarded to the College Council and from there to the President for further consideration.</p>	<p>As the primary customers of Montgomery College, students are full members of the College community. Their voice is critical to discussions of College matters and services that both directly and indirectly impact their success at the College.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 students from the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus</li> <li>• 3 students from the Rockville campus</li> <li>• 3 students from the Germantown campus</li> <li>• 3 students from Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education.</li> </ul>
<b>Staff Council</b>	<p>The Staff Council will address issues of concern on behalf of all Montgomery College staff, researching solutions to these issues and presenting recommendations to the College Council for further action.</p>	<p>Staff must have a voice in making practical and equitable recommendations to the College Council and further to the President and Board of Trustees. To ensure balanced staff representation, the membership targets specific groups that historically have been under-represented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 staff from the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus</li> <li>• 3 staff from the Rockville campus</li> <li>• 3 staff from the Germantown campus</li> <li>• 1 staff from West Gude</li> <li>• 1 staff from Central Services</li> <li>• 1 staff from OIT</li> <li>• 1 from Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education</li> <li>• 1 non-supervisory staff from Facilities</li> <li>• 1 administrative support (e.g. administrative aide)</li> </ul>

<b>Constituent Councils</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Membership</b>
<b>Faculty Council</b>	<p>The Faculty Council will promote teaching and scholarly excellence; serve as a consensus-reaching forum for faculty ideas and concerns; facilitate and promote communication and cooperation among College faculty; and serve as a liaison between the faculty and the College Council. The Faculty Council will ensure that the duties of its subgroups, including academic regulations, curriculum, and faculty evaluation are carried out appropriately. The Faculty Council will forward recommendations to the College Council and the Senior Vice Presidents as appropriate.</p>	<p>As the group primarily responsible for delivering a high-quality education to our students, the presence of the faculty voice in discussions of academic and overall college matters is imperative. The unique perspectives of full- and part-time faculty as well as Workforce Development and Continuing Education instructors will be represented on this group to ensure all aspects of the student academic experience are addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 at-large full-time faculty (two from each campus and two of whom are counseling faculty)</li> <li>• 4 at-large part-time faculty (one from each campus and Workforce Development and Continuing Education)</li> <li>• 3 representative Department Chairpersons (one from each campus)</li> <li>• 1 representative from the faculty evaluation subgroup</li> <li>• 1 representative from the academic regulations subgroup;</li> <li>• 1 representative from the curriculum subgroup</li> </ul>
<b>Administrator Council</b>	<p>The Administrator Council will collaborate on College administrative matters and make recommendations to the College Council or directly to the President as requested.</p>	<p>As leaders in the College community who are fully committed to student success, administrators play a critical role in decisions on policy, process, and implementation. Their top-down, bottom-up perspective offers a wide-ranging view of the needs and challenges for College services and programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All administrators</li> </ul>

Functional Councils	Purpose	Rationale	Membership
<b>Student Services &amp; Success Council</b>	The Student Services & Success Council will provide a forum to identify major governance issues related to student services and provide thoughtful feedback to appropriate decision-makers.	Student success is at the heart of Montgomery College's mission. A wide range of stakeholders supports this effort and can make valuable contributions to discussions on student services and success. Areas of discussion may include financial aid, enrollment management, counseling/advising, disability support services, student life, athletics, and student completion and success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Convener</u>: Senior Vice-President for Student Services</li> <li>• 3 staff from different locations</li> <li>• 3 administrators (1 Dean of Student Development, Director of Enrollment Management, Director of Financial Aid)</li> <li>• 3 faculty (1 counselor and 2 instructional such that all 3 campuses are represented)</li> <li>• 1 Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education representative</li> <li>• 2 students (from different locations)</li> </ul>
<b>Academic Services &amp; Quality Council</b>	The Academic Services & Quality Council considers discussions on academic programs and curriculum development, and the review of programs and curricula as forwarded by the Collegewide Curriculum Committee; learning outcomes and academic assessment, as forwarded by the Outcomes Assessment and College Area Review teams; and transfer and articulation agreements, as proposed by the Senior Vice Presidents, and forward suggestions to the College Council as appropriate.	The Academic Services & Quality Council ensures that all campus constituencies are represented in discussions related to the continued high quality of the College's academic programs and services. Areas of discussion may include academic support services, libraries, distance learning; accreditation; academic regulations, curriculum, honors and scholars programs, calendars and scheduling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Convener</u>: Senior Vice-President for Academic Services</li> <li>• 3 staff (from different locations)</li> <li>• 3 administrators (2 instructional deans, and any other administrator)</li> <li>• 3 faculty (1 from each campus, one of whom is a counselor)</li> <li>• 1 WDCE representative</li> <li>• 2 students (from different locations)</li> </ul>

Functional Councils	Purpose	Rationale	Membership
<b>Operational Services Council</b>	The Operational Services Council will collaborate on College operational matters and make recommendations to the College Council.	The Operational Services Council will provide a broad range of groups with interests in operations-related issues the opportunity to confer, provide input on decisions, and offer recommendations. Areas of discussion may include auxiliary services, facilities, security, information technology, budget, business services, and payroll.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Convener</u>: Senior Vice-President for Administrative &amp; Fiscal Services</li> <li>• 3 staff</li> <li>• 3 administrators (AVP Facilities, CIO, CBO)</li> <li>• 3 faculty (1 from each campus)</li> <li>• 1 Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education representative</li> <li>• 2 students (from different locations)</li> </ul>
<b>Employee Services Council</b>	The Employee Services Council will ensure the inclusion of all employee groups in decisions on employment services, employee programs, and related matters and make recommendations to the College Council.	Areas of discussion may include employee engagement; issues related to human resources (e.g. employment, benefits, and classification); wellness programs; matters of equity and diversity; and student employment. These are matters that pertain to all employees at the College, and therefore, the Employee Services Council should include representatives from all constituencies. Representation includes students to address the many students the College employs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Convener</u>: Senior Vice-President for Administrative &amp; Fiscal Services</li> <li>• 3 staff (from different locations)</li> <li>• 3 administrators (Director of Employee Engagement and Labor Relations, Chief Human Resources Officer, and 1 other)</li> <li>• 3 faculty (1 from each campus)</li> <li>• 1 Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education representative</li> <li>• 2 students (from different locations)</li> </ul>

Campus Councils	Purpose	Rationale	Membership
<p><b>Campus Councils for Germantown, Rockville and Takoma Park/Silver Spring</b></p>	<p>The purpose of each Campus Council will be to provide advice and recommendations regarding campus-related concerns, and campus and academic initiatives to the campus Vice-President/Provost and to the College Council as appropriate.</p>	<p>Each campus at Montgomery College has unique campus-related and academic concerns and issues. Respective members will have an opportunity to share their concerns and anticipate that their views will be represented to the College Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Convener</u>: Vice President / Provost</li> <li>• 1 counseling faculty</li> <li>• 1 full-time instructional faculty</li> <li>• 1 department chair</li> <li>• 1 part-time faculty</li> <li>• 1 librarian</li> <li>• 1 campus-based Information Technology representative</li> <li>• 3 staff</li> <li>• 2 students</li> <li>• 1 administrator</li> </ul>
<p><b>Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education Council</b></p>	<p>The purpose of the Workforce Development and Continuing Education Council is to ensure the representation and recognition of the College's large array of noncredit programs in all facets of College decision making. The Council also provides a Workforce Development and Continuing Education perspective on recommendations that are forwarded to the Vice-President/Provost and to the College Council as appropriate.</p>	<p>The Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education Unit serves a large segment of Montgomery College's students, offering a unique and direct College link to diverse community groups, employers, and government agencies. The unique concerns of this division of the College can be addressed by this Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Convener</u>: Vice President / Provost</li> <li>• 2 instructors</li> <li>• 1 IT representative from Workforce Development &amp; Continuing Education</li> <li>• 4 staff (1 Operations, 1 Business Services, 2 Program directors)</li> <li>• 2 students</li> <li>• 2 administrators</li> <li>• 1 at-large staff</li> </ul>

#### IV. Assessment of the Proposed Governance Model

In accordance with the third part of its charge, the Task Force discussed various options for assessing the effectiveness of the proposed governance structure. One suggestion was a table by which the members of each council would assess the effectiveness of the group.

### Annual Council Goals & Assessment Tool

<b>Council Annual Goals</b>	<b>Accomplishments/ Actions</b>	<b>Relationship to College Mission</b>	<b>Link to Strategic Plan</b>	<b>Effectiveness of Communication Upward &amp; Downward</b>	<b>Start Date/ Outcome Date</b>
<b>1.</b>					
<b>2.</b>					
<b>3.</b>					
<b>4</b>					

The information generated by the assessment tool will be used by the each council for future process improvement.

Another suggestion is a list of survey topics designed to solicit feedback from the entire College community on the efficacy of the overall structure shown below.

**Possible Evaluation of Governance Structure Administered through College-wide Survey**

- Is the process widely understood?
  - Do employees/students know what it is/isn't?
  - Do they know how to use it appropriately?
- Are the issues brought to the College Council appropriate (i.e. fit the definition of general governance)?
  - If not, are they referred to the appropriate person/committee?
- Once introduced into the governance process, are issues dealt with in a timely manner?
- Are the decisions of the College Council based on evidence?
- Does the College Council monitor the effectiveness of their decisions in some way? And, do they use the results to improve their process?
- Do the majority of employees indicate “trust” in the decision-making abilities of the College Council?

\*adapted from College of the Siskiyous (CA)

The Task Force recommends that a survey be distributed to the College community after one year of having implemented the new structure, that enhancements be made in response to the concerns expressed, and that the survey be re-administered at regular intervals.

The Task Force believes the evaluation of the governance structure deserves its own assessment instruments and should not be grouped with other surveys. Should the proposed governance model be accepted by the President and the Board of Trustees, further work on refining the

assessment tools, possibly with the help of the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis, would follow during AY 2011-2012.

## **V. Next Steps – Implementation Plan**

The Task Force has identified the structure of the proposed governance model. If approved by the President and the Board of Trustees, the next step would be to develop an implementation plan, including, but not limited to, the following topics:

- Constitution and by-laws
- Governance handbook
- Web-based governance training for all constituents who are serving in governance, including the Board of Trustees
- Informational governance website accessible to the entire College community
- Communications plan for the new model
- Appropriate instruments for assessment of each element of the governance structure

Several factors remain to be worked out in the implementation plan such as frequency and duration of meetings, length of term, election procedures and others. It is the recommendation of the Task Force that this implementation plan be developed during AY 2011-2012 with implementation by fall 2012.

The members of the Task Force would like to express our appreciation to Dr. Pollard and the Board of Trustees for the opportunity to design a broadly inclusive participatory governance structure that we believe provides a voice for all of the students, faculty, staff, and administrators who learn and work at Montgomery College and serve the citizens of Montgomery County.

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