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Montgomery College
Academic Services Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 11, 2021
10:00– 12:00 PM
(*via Zoom*)
</div>

Attendees
Present: Veronica Banh, Shelly Bennett, Erika Bucciantini, Colleen Dolak, Robin Flanary, Alex Galen, Fiona Glade, Tonya Harris, Muhammad Kehnemouyi, Kiersten Newtoff, Theodore Shusterman

Absent: Milton Nash

Guests: Presenters: Stacy Ford, Universal Design; Sue Haddad, Disability Support Services (DSS)

Call to Order
Chair Colleen Dolak called the meeting to order at 10:10

Approval of Minutes and Agenda
- February Minutes
  - Chair requested a motion to approve the February minutes
    - Motion to approve was made and seconded
  - Approved as it stands; Vote – majority/unanimous approval via Zoom (all present (10) approve)

- March Agenda approved
  - Chair requested a motion to approve the agenda.
    - Motion to approve was made and seconded
  - Vote – majority/unanimous approval via Zoom (all present (10) approve)

Constituent Concerns
- **Our role:** The Academic Services Council is to consider discussions on academic support programs including assessment centers, labs, registration, scheduling, website information, and transfer and articulation agreements, and forward suggestions to the College Council, the Senior Vice Presidents or other councils, as appropriate, for further consideration and/or action.

- Student success discussion in 7-week modality:
  - Students have had differing measures of success in 7-week courses
  - Departments had different ways of allocating 7-week over 15-week
  - Advising is key
  - Accommodating students is priority
  - Impact of embedded coaches
  - Leadership team adjusts class schedule to offer a higher volume of 7-week classes

- Data of success rate for 7-week classes is comparable to DFW rates for 15-week schedules
  - Students have been lauding the accelerated options
- <u>A variety of scheduling options for flexibility is the future</u>

Guest: Stacy Ford, Universal Design

- Developing Universal Design Center
  - Digital center
    - a platform for collaboration
  - Web design changes
  - Technology accessible
    - Software & hardware requests
      - Reviewed for IT security & accessibility
      - Work with groups to provide options
        - Recommendations for product changes as needed
  - Working with ELITE & training
    - Technology & documents
      - to increase accessibility
      - heading structures
  - Question: Templates at a departmental level for faculty to use?
    - Barriers to access
      - Instructional design to create a template to meet accessibility standards
      - <u>There is one in HDML on the webpage—faculty handbook website</u>
  - Steering committee
    - Involves a number of areas in the College; no student
  - <u>End goal wish: to incorporate aspects in a meaningful and measurable way</u>
    - to create a positive impact to students and faculty
    - Normalize accessibility
    - **<u>Bottom of the website: link to report a barrier form</u>**
      - users are invited to report barriers to access concerning the website, physical barriers, any & all

Guest: Sue Haddad, College-wide Chair Disability Support Services (DSS)

- DSS counselors, learning
  - Access for student with disabilities
- Updates: things new in DSS
  - Website updated to make it easier for students to navigate & engage with DSS
    - three areas:
      - now operating under COVID conditions
      - new students
      - resource area for faculty & staff
        - Will be updating resources
        - reflect social justice: look at barriers

- o engaged with equity & inclusion at the College
  - ▪ engaged with Universal Design
- ▪ ADA outside consultant
  - • Looking at the College for access
    - o physical access for students, faculty, community members
    - o Policies and procedures
      - ▪ looking to reflect a positive culture in general
    - o Website is also being looked at
    - o College-wide survey
      - ▪ and focus groups
        - • What are our strengths
        - • Where are there opportunities for improvement
- o Have been busy supporting students!
  - ▪ Student survey every two years
    - • Different this time: question about student experience in post-pandemic learning environment
  - ▪ How many students at the College identify to DSS?
    - • 1,800 students
      - o consistent over the last three semesters
      - o Even while College enrollment has decreased
    - • 19% of people with disabilities (nation-wide rate) are attending college
      - o MC is about at 9% (for credit)
    - • Survey:
      - o Students who felt welcomed as a student with a disability: 91% of students strongly agreed
      - o How welcomed to you feel with respect to DSS: 93% strongly agree
      - o Serve both credit and non-credit students
      - o Biggest challenges:
        - ▪ communication
          - • more difficult to reach professors
        - ▪ connection
          - • missed social connections
        - ▪ adjusting to self-directed learning
          - • more difficult to maintain focus
      - o Most helpful:
        - ▪ support
          - • students felt like they were heard
        - ▪ DSS counselor relationship
          - • counselors available to assist
        - ▪ receiving accommodations
          - • books in alternative formats
      - o GPA impact of using accommodations
        - ▪ 2.87 GPA using their accommodations

- 2.44 GPA for students who chose not to use accommodations
    - o Top disabilities (this is a change):
        - ADD/ADHD
        - Mental health
        - Learning disability
        - Autism Spectrum
        - Chronic medical
        - Deaf/HOH
    - o Students feel there is a stigma to disclose their accommodations to their professors
    - o Top 5 Accommodations:
        - extended time for assessments
        - lecture notes (Universal Design could be helpful here!)
        - assistive technology
        - calculator
        - flexibility with deadlines/attendance
    - o Suggested improvements for remote environment:
        - Instructional
            - record lectures
        - Technical
            - Blackboard training for faculty
        - Connection
            - increased interaction with faculty & peers
        - Access to laptops
    - o Lessons learned: Students actually preferred to meet virtually
        - we should keep a virtual option open as we move forward
        - strategies to address needs
- Q&A:
    - majority of students have chronic and permanent disabilities compared to temporary disabilities
    - How to reach out to students to are unaware of DSS
        - o MCPS relationships to build awareness as early as possible
            - How were students referred?
                - a college personnel member was the primary source of information
        - o There is a partnership with the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services: Pathways Program
            - works with students on the autism spectrum
            - specialist who works one-on-one with students
            - about 20 students accepted
                - sometimes there is a waiting list
        - o Faculty syllabus template for DSS is outdated

- There is a compliance piece
- also aligns with our mission & equity&inclusion

Chair's Report

The chair provided the following information:
- In response to our constituent concerns, we brought guests to our meeting today
- Announcements:
  - Today is the last day to nominate for governance
  - review governance website
- College Council announcements
  - forthcoming
- Academic Enquiries Event
  - next one: March 30th 3-4:30
- College expansion
  - Feasibility study with County partners
    - to address gaps in services and needs for support
    - More information and data collection on going
- Compensation summary
- FY22 budget that the County will release
  - MC has requested a flat budget
- Calendar for next academic year has been finalized
  - on the website
- Jefferson Cafe
- Check WorkDay to ensure information is up to date
- Attend Board of Trustees meeting as a constituent

Old Business
- Goal of making recommendations to College Council to retain online modalities
  - Anecdotes
  - Issues of accessibility
  - Some students excel
  - Some students drop
  - Zoom is mixed bag
  - Online tools can be difficult
  - training for faculty needed
  - Can we push counseling? Encourage students to see counselor regarding modalities
    - messaging needed
    - outreach vs. mandatory program advising
    - students receiving financial aid need advising
    - mandatory works at other institutions
    - students tend to be reactive instead of proactive
    - we don't have enough manpower to provide advising to all of our students
      - 18,000 students this semester enrolled
      - College goals: reduced time to graduation & reduced costs for students
        - mandatory counseling could help with that
    - Nursing has mandatory advising

- it's a lot of work
- there will need to be mandatory ESH
    - Some units have ESH available
    - Maybe advising for certain groups of students
    - Maybe group sessions for students
    - Academic Advising Guide
        - most students are self-advised
        - there is a resource online
        - Many faculty are not aware
        - But not one stop shop for every student
        - Counselors help with individual student concerns
            - making an individual plan
    - Conclusion: we're not ready to make a formal recommendation

New Business
- Some students have made some different choices based on what classes transfer and which ones don't
    - Transfer agreements?
        - Have things changed in our remote environment
        - Invite Angela Rhoe to come speak at a future meeting
        - Invite Justin Edgar
        - Transfer Affinity Group
            - Transfer Fair was last month
        - Students will be invited

Announcements & Adjournment
- Draft minutes will be sent out soon
- Meetings will take place via Zoom
- General announcements
    - If you can't attend, please send a proxy
        - Please note if your proxy will have voting rights or not
- Please invite a student to join us next meeting
- Motion was made to adjourn, seconded
- Without objection, meeting adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 pm.