

# MONTHLY OUTLOOK

*A Meeting Preview with Data Insights and Strategic Topics*

February 11, 2022

## February Meeting Highlights—What to Expect and Why

Your next meeting takes place on Monday, February 21. Following are major topics and items planned at this time.

***Conversations with Constituents.*** Two student guest speakers, who are recipients of Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds, are invited to engage with the Board on their learning experiences and any challenges they are facing.

***Awards of Contract.*** Two competitive awards of contract will be presented to the Board for consideration: one for continued use of cloud-based hosting services for information technology asset management software, and one for HVAC systems located on the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus. The latter of these is one of four guaranteed maximum price (GMP) proposals scheduled for this year. GMPs make contractors responsible for cost overruns beyond the maximum price unless there are changes to the project design or scope.

***New and Modified Policies.*** Two proposed new policies related to data asset management and security are included on the public agenda. In addition, two policy modifications on Board of Trustees scholar awards will be presented. According to Board bylaws, these proposed new and modified policies are presented as information and the Board can vote at a future meeting or take action this month to approve the items.

### **The following items are on your consent calendar.**

***Personnel Actions Confirmation Report.*** This report reviews the personnel actions taken during the month of December 2021.

***Recognition of Retirees.*** Each February, the Board receives resolutions to honor and appreciate the service of employees who retired in the fall semester. In addition, five awards of Bronze Medallions and two awards of Silver Medallions to retirees are on the consent agenda for your consideration.

## Data Focus

### **Class Modalities, Trends, and Pivots**



One of the greatest uncertainties for MC during the pandemic has been planning class offerings months ahead of evolving public health conditions. Before COVID, such plans were routinely made months in advance of course sessions. This pattern was seriously hampered by variables introduced by the pandemic, even two years in, such as the omicron surge. Nonetheless, the College worked tirelessly to provide students with as many class options as possible, namely, face-to-face (F2F), distance learning (DL), and structured remote teaching (SRT). Trying to help students work around barriers created by COVID conditions—increased family care, remote learning challenges, and technology issues—while also adhering to health and safety protocols for employees and students—required a delicate balance.

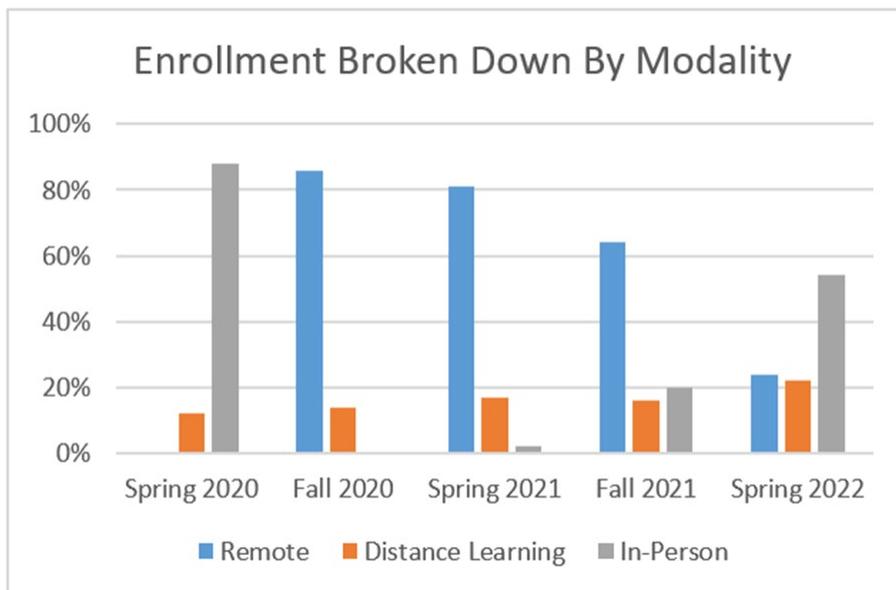
***How have class offerings changed since the pandemic?*** At the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, students and faculty transitioned to virtual teaching and learning, along with the rest of the nation. Summer 2020 classes were offered only in the distance learning (DL) format, but by fall 2020, certain hands-on courses like science labs, and certain workforce programs such as automotive technology, were offered held in person with small class sizes and health and safety procedures in place. Spring 2021 saw increased sections offered in person, with the College adding more seven-week classes so students could have more flexibility with the introduction and uncertainty of COVID variants. Summer 2021 offered students both distance learning and structured remote teaching. By fall 2021, all options were available to students: in-person, structured remote, distance learning, and in 15-, 13-, and 7-week options.

***What did MC do to support teaching and learning during the pandemic?*** Faculty professional development offered by ELITE was instrumental in the success of the College's remote teaching and learning. Students in the virtual environment remained similar engaged in comparison to previous semesters. Measures of such engagement during remote instruction were reflected in the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), which showed dramatic increases in engagement when compared to our peers—a full 12 percentage point increase from pre-pandemic levels. In addition, student evaluations for 2020 included targeted questions on faculty use of technology, the learning management system, and remote pedagogy. Ninety percent of students who were surveyed in the post-SRT-training period agreed or strongly agreed that faculty were engaged with them outside the classroom.

***What modalities are students selecting, and what is the trend?*** In spring 2020 at the dawn of the pandemic, 88 percent of 60,718 enrollments were for in-person classes and 12 percent were taken through distance learning. In spring 2022, we offered 70 percent in-person and 30 percent in virtual formats structured remote teaching and distance learning. At the start of the spring 2022 semester, 63 percent of classes were in person, and 37 percent were virtual. Several DL and SRT classes were added this month and filled quickly within days. About 53 percent of enrollments for spring 2022 are in face-to-face classes. Seat capacities also registered high marks: in face-to-face classes, 72 percent of the seats were filled, while in both SRT and DL classes, 85 percent of the seats were filled. Figure 1 shows the mix of in-person, distance, and remote enrollments from the start of the pandemic (spring 2020) through the current semester.

***What do we expect to see going forward in regard to enrollment in various modalities?*** The pandemic has changed how students access our courses and support services. We are becoming more accessible with additional modalities and formats of course offerings. The scheduling initiative committee continues to focus on providing the right courses for the right students at the right time—in the right modality based on student need. It is hard to predict an accurate distribution among in-person, remote, and distance learning enrollments, but the College will continue to

provide students a variety of options and let them drive these offerings until a more definitive and sustained pattern emerges.



**Figure 1.** Mix of enrollment modalities from the start of the pandemic through the current semester

## Strategic Topic of the Month

### Your Voice, Your MC

Since 2010, the College has conducted organizational assessments to measure employee experiences by administering an employee engagement survey. In 2017 and 2018, the College conducted two additional surveys to learn more about employee experiences related to ethics, and equity and inclusion. One recommendation from those surveys was to use a single instrument to capture employee perspectives in all three areas. The College partnered with Modern Think, LLC, a firm well-known and regarded for its work in administering the “Great Colleges to Work For” survey, to develop and administer a comprehensive, 90-question survey of all our employees, which was called [Your Voice, Your MC](#). The College worked closely with Modern Think to capture the essence of the previous surveys while allowing us to benchmark against national norms in key areas.

**How was feedback solicited?** All employees received personalized links to the online survey after some thoughtful and enthusiastic encouragement from senior leaders at the College. The survey ran from February 15 to March 8 in 2021 while most employees were working remotely. Over half of the 2,700 active employees completed the survey, with some divisions producing up to a 70 percent response rate. This is a significant increase over most earlier surveys, ensuring that we had a representative sample of the College as a whole.

**What were the top results?** The 90 survey questions were broken down into 12 main themes. Mission and Pride, Manager Effectiveness, Faculty & Staff Well-being were the top scoring areas. This is particularly impressive given the College’s remote teaching, learning, and working

environment and the struggles that some employees have faced during the pandemic. Performance Management, Communication, and Collaboration were the three areas indicating a need for organizational improvement and growth. The survey results were shared with the College community in multiple forms and formats. Results organized by division provided senior leaders the opportunity to engage directly with their teams to delve into their relevant data and understand strengths and identify areas where improvements are needed.

***What are the next steps?*** Four priority areas were identified for collegewide action based on the recommendations of the Employee Engagement and Advisory Group, the Chief Analytics and Insights Officer, and leaders representing the offices of Compliance, Risk, and Ethics; Equity and Inclusion; and Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management.

The two strengths-based areas were identified as: building on our impact and pride in the College mission and enhancing the successes of our equity, inclusion, and ethics efforts. The two areas identified for improvement: enhancing the quality and effectiveness of performance management and greater clarity and inclusivity by leaders and managers in decision-making.

A series of collegewide open forums will be held during February to provide employees with opportunities to share feedback that will inform the development of a proposed action plan supporting these four areas. The recommendations and proposed action plan will be presented to Incoming President Dr. Jermaine F. Williams for his review and consideration.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlene". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charlene M. Dukes, Ed.D.  
Interim President

*We empower our students to change their lives, and we enrich the life of our community. We are accountable for our results.*