From:	The President
To:	MC Communications!
Subject:	Ombuds Recommendation Accepted
Date:	Friday, May 17, 2013 11:35:51 AM
Attachments:	ICMS Charter Cover Memo April.pdf Proposed Integrated Conflict Management System Charter.pdf
Importance:	High

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Office of the President

May 17, 2013

MEMORANDUM

To: Montgomery College Colleagues

From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President

Subject: Ombuds Recommendation Accepted

As you may recall, I accepted a recommendation from the Employee Engagement Advisory Group (EEAG) earlier this year and committed to the creation of an employee ombuds. I followed up with another memorandum that announced Sarah Miller Espinosa will transition to this role prior to the beginning of the new academic year. Today, I am pleased to share a further update on the role and responsibilities of the ombuds, based on recommendations I recently received from a dedicated workgroup that consists of Dan Moskowitz, SEIU-designated representative for part-time faculty; Rick Penn, president of the AAUP; Jason Rivera, College Council chair; Carl Shorter, vice president of AFSCME; Jacia Smith, director of employee and labor relations and recruitment; and Laura White, human resources specialist, CPOD.

Together, these individuals represent employee constituent groups and stakeholders with knowledge of and responsibility for many of the existing dispute resolution processes currently in place at Montgomery College. After attending a multiday training on integrated conflict management last fall, the group spent six months engaged in discussion and research, and in benchmarking best practices in higher education settings and industry. To assist in the establishment of the Ombuds Office, this group recommended a proposed charter that incorporates the tenets of confidentially, neutrality, informality, and independence, which are identified by the International Ombudsman Association as essential.

The group also outlined the suggested functions of the Ombuds Office, including:

- providing a safe and confidential forum to surface individual, group, and systemic problems;
- listening to and helping clarify employee concerns;
- helping identify underlying issues and interests;
- providing information and exploring possible options available to the employee;
- facilitating—where voluntarily agreed to by all involved parties—discussions to resolve issues, if appropriate;
- collecting general data on emerging trends and patterns in the College; and

- evaluating and analyzing trending information and making systemic recommendations for change.

I am happy to accept the recommendations of this workgroup, which, I believe, provide a firm foundation for the Ombuds Office, a function intended to strengthen and supplement the use of MC's existing dispute resolution approaches.

As noted by the group, this charter will help the ombuds manage conflict constructively and cooperatively in support of positive change, and will benefit faculty, staff, and administrators in the resolution of conflict. I have attached the memorandum and charter I received from the workgroup for your information.

I am grateful to the workgroup and pleased to accept the collective recommendation in the collaborative spirit in which it was crafted.