From: The President
To: MC Communications!
Subject: Reaccreditation
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2015 5:24:59 PM

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Office of the President

April 29, 2015

MEMORANDUM

To: Montgomery College Colleagues

From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President

Subject: Reaccreditation

Every 10 years, colleges in our region of the country undergo a comprehensive reaccreditation process by our accreditor, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Montgomery College was accredited shortly after opening in 1946 and has been reaccredited in every cycle since then. Being accredited is critical for a number of reasons. First, accreditation signifies a level of quality important to a college's operations and reputation. Second, students can use federal financial aid only at accredited institutions. And, third, transferring students' credits must come from an accredited school in order to be recognized by the receiving school.

We are entering our next cycle of reaccreditation, which will culminate in a review by MSCHE in 2018. That may seem a long way away right now, but there is much to be done before then. Prior to the commission's review, we will complete an extensive review of the College through the lens of the accreditation standards and document our findings in a self-study. Composition of the self-study will take place from approximately spring 2016 through spring 2017. A team of peer reviewers from other Middle States colleges will visit Montgomery College in spring 2018 to validate our self-study findings and then it will make its own report and recommendations to the commission.

It is important to note several important factors that are different compared to our last cycle when we were reaccredited in 2008:

- **Middle States now considers Montgomery College as a single college.** This change in designation occurred in 2010. As a result, we will be accredited as a single entity. Prior to 2010, each campus was accredited separately.
- **Middle States has revised its standards.** You may have followed the national dialogue about higher education standards in recent years. The US Department of Education has urged accreditors such as Middle States to strengthen standards to stress educational outcomes and evidence for those outcomes. The newest standards were released last year; they take effect in the year we are reaccredited.
- **The reaccreditation process now includes a compliance report.** In addition to the self-study, institutions now need provide documentation to show compliance with key

federal laws pertaining to higher education.

An institution's comprehensive review and self-study are guided by a steering committee made up of faculty, staff, administrators, and students from across the College. I plan to name the steering committee in the fall through a process that will be announced at a later date, but I am pleased to announce today that the three co-chairs of the steering committee will be:

- **Dr. Eric Benjamin**, chair of the education and psychology department;
- **Melissa Gregory**, chief enrollment services and financial aid officer; and
- **Professor Tammy Peery**, English and reading.

The three of them will begin working over the summer to plan for establishing the steering committee and beginning the self-study. I have asked Dr. Stephen Cain, chief of staff/chief strategy officer, to serve as convener and liaison for their work.

Please watch for further information about the reaccreditation process and consider serving either on the steering committee or as part of a team that works on the self-study.

I thank you in advance for your service in this critical effort and for all you do every day to help Montgomery College fulfill its mission to help students change their lives.