

**From:** [DeRionne Pollard, Montgomery College President](#)  
**Subject:** Advising and the Advising Review Committee  
**Date:** Monday, October 02, 2017 2:09:05 PM  
**Attachments:** [Recommendations for the Advising Review Committee \(ARC\).pdf](#)

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**MONTGOMERY COLLEGE**  
Office of the President

October 2, 2017

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Montgomery College Colleagues  
**From:** Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President  
**Subject:** Advising and the Advising Review Committee

The work of counseling and advising is essential to student success at Montgomery College. As the College continues its efforts to raise student completion and transfer rates, the role of those who guide students is vital to supporting their academic and psychosocial needs, and ultimately narrowing the achievement gap. As the College becomes more sophisticated in pedagogy and in helping students to plan their academic careers successfully, even more emphasis will be placed on specific counseling and advising functions.

The Advising Review Committee (ARC) at the College has been working for two years to develop recommendations related to advising at Montgomery College, including issues around compliance, communication, and implementation of best practices that promote student success and completion. After careful review of the extensive work of the ARC, I am accepting its recommendations (see attached), two of which will impact the way in which counseling and advising are practiced at the College.

The important role of counselors continues to evolve to meet student needs. Counseling faculty are specially trained in cognitive science to aid students with study skills, time management, planning, and self-discipline, among other factors that impact learning. Their expertise is especially valuable to our most vulnerable students. Counseling faculty will continue to serve as the first point of contact for advising new students at the College through academic orientation. These faculty will develop the initial degree plan in collaboration with students and record it using Starfish—or any potential future student success software—to guide students through the critical first 12 credits hours. During this initial period, best practices in advising will be vital to encouraging students to develop their plans, stay on track academically, and register for the next semester.

In their next phase of studies, students will transition to academic program advisors, with a few targeted exceptions discussed in the attached memo. Having academic program advisors at this stage of advising is a strategy that has been carefully examined. Instructional faculty members who are disciplinary specialists are uniquely positioned to guide a student on his/her path to a degree in a specific subject area. They have insights on the content of courses and their synchronization that might be less apparent to those outside the discipline. Connecting students who have passed the 12-credit mark with faculty members in specific fields is an

important dynamic as students begin to specialize. Program faculty will be asked to fill this role by actively monitoring degree plans, posting program advisor hours, and documenting student interactions through an advising system. The Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will collaborate closely on this in order to create a seamless transition for students.

I want to thank the current membership of the ARC, which has served faithfully for two years. I appreciate the work of the ARC and its careful attention to student success. In order that this important area of College activity benefit from the additional insights of new members, the senior vice president for academic affairs and the senior vice president for student affairs will recommend members to serve on the committee starting this year.

In a world where the needs of students can change rapidly in response to shifting economic and social factors, advising is on the front lines of dynamic adaptation. I am confident that these carefully developed approaches to counseling and advising will serve our students more effectively, while also using the unique skills of our faculty most strategically. With an invigorated and clear counseling and advising system, we will further enhance our tools to help students change their lives.

Attachment