



**Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) 2022**

**Cultural Diversity Report**

Frederick Community College (FCC) is a public community college located in the second largest city and the largest agricultural-producing county in the state of Maryland. Since 1957, FCC has prepared an increasingly diverse student body to complete their goals of workforce preparation, transfer, career development, and personal enrichment. FCC values learning, innovation, diversity, excellence, community, integrity, and as described in the College vision statement, “Focused on teaching and learning, Frederick Community College provides affordable, flexible access to lifelong education that responds to the needs of diverse learners and the community.” FCC is a mid-sized institution with over 7600 credit students and over 5000 continuing education and workforce development students per year. FCC students come from 32 countries, consisting of 42% Students of Color and 26% first-generation credit-seeking students. The College values being the community college in Maryland with the highest graduation and/or transfer rates for students.

FCC has a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) infrastructure that includes: the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with a senior diversity officer, the President’s Diversity Advisory Council, Adult Services, Veteran and Military Services, English as a Second Language Programs, as well as other student-centered and employee-centered programs. The FCC cultural diversity work is grounded in our College-wide 2019-2024 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2019-2024.

As an institution, Frederick Community College is fully committed to the goal of inclusive excellence, that in order to be excellent—as an institution and as individuals—we must be inclusive. An inclusive institution promotes and sustains a sense of belonging across multiple dimensions of difference, including racial and ethnic diversity. FCC aspires to be a leader in the state and the nation that fosters an environment that welcomes, supports, rewards, and challenges our community members to center equity and inclusion in everything they do, including being innovative and leading with authenticity. We are pleased to report a summary of the institution’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)-explicit initiatives or efforts for the following four populations: students, faculty, non-faculty, and administration. The report also describes the data metrics, administration, and inclusion of diverse perspectives/student voices used to guide the work.

## **Students**

### **Student Affairs**

In alignment with Strategic Domain #1 of the Frederick Community College DEI Strategic Plan, *Addressing access and success gaps for traditionally under-represented students*, the Office of Student Leadership & Engagement offered over 50 DEI-related events for students during the 2021-2022 academic year. Examples of such offerings included World Sexual Health Day which brought awareness about sexual health and sexual rights and ways to enforce them. World Suicide Prevention Day was a virtual event packed with eight hours of inspiring conversations about mental health and suicide prevention. Global Coffee Breaks allowed students to connect virtually with students from Italy and Jamaica. Wellness Week provided students with a plethora of activities devoted to their physical and mental health. Hip Hop Appreciation Week educated students about cultural aspects of the Hip Hop community. These are just a few examples of the numerous programs offered to students to bring to light diverse perspectives as well as foster belonging and inclusion.

### **Office of Student Success Programs**

In an effort to strengthen and expand support for students at FCC, the programs and services offered through the Office of Adult Services and the Office of Multicultural Student Services were reimaged to create the Office of Student Success Programs.

The Office of Student Success Programs supports the enrollment, success, and retention of first-generation college students, student parents, LGBTQIA+ students, adults age 24 and over, limited-income students, immigrant students, and students from other underrepresented or diverse backgrounds. The Office of Student Success Programs engages students through one-on-one drop-in appointments, high-impact cohort-based programs, mentoring opportunities, and workshops to provide support for students. The current cohort-based programs are:

- PASS (Partnership to Achieving Student Success)

- Program for new and incoming students from 1st generation, limited-income, and those from historically- underrepresented or underserved backgrounds with year-round success coaching, personal enrichment, and academic opportunities, including a Summer and Winter Academy
- Parents Lead
  - Program for any incoming or current student who is the primary caregiver to children 17 or younger that assists with tuition, books, and childcare for students with a demonstrated need
- Project Forward Step
  - Program that provides counseling, information, referrals, and financial assistance for returning adult students, including special services for single parents (as well as single pregnant women) and non-traditional age adults (age 24 and over) who are low income, out-of-workforce, or homeless
- Allied Health Academy
  - Program that provides training, educational support, and consideration for financial assistance to eligible certified nursing assistants (CNA), geriatric nursing assistants (GNA), or other select allied health occupations with tuition, books & materials, and transportation

Leaders at FCC regularly take steps to understand the student experience. The Division of Student Affairs and respective offices within the division initiate periodic assessments that measure culture, climate, and student satisfaction outside of the school. In addition to data collection, focus groups, secret shoppers, and external reviews have been conducted to help inform the work of departments and continuously improve the student experience.

## **Faculty**

### **Equity Scholars**

As a part of the College’s Institutional Racial Equity Plan, in June 2021, FCC held its first Culturally Responsive Teaching Institute, a 7-week intensive training program in culturally responsive teaching in which 14 faculty and administrators (Equity Scholars) engaged in thoughtful dialogue about scholarly texts, built community, and ultimately transformed syllabi and assignments in an effort to close racial equity gaps as well as to increase student success for all students in their courses. Equity Scholars met throughout the Fall and Spring semesters to participate in professional development sessions specifically tailored to the group as well as to share culturally responsive teaching ideas with their cohorts. In Spring 2022, Scholars presented CRT-informed syllabi and assignments to faculty and staff both inside and outside the institution. In January 2022, a group of Equity Scholars presented on the personal and instructional transformations necessary for fostering a culturally responsive classroom environment at the Association of Faculties for the Advancement of Community College Teaching (AFACCT). Equity Scholars also presented on equity-minded practices at the College’s 7th Annual Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development Leadership Conference (January 2022). In February and March 2022, Scholars further supported the college’s Institutional Racial Equity Plan by providing feedback and suggestions to departments on how to approach departmental racial equity plans from a culturally responsive and equitable lens. In June 2022, a second cohort of 11 Equity Scholars participated in the Culturally Responsive Teaching Institute for the 2022-2023 school year.

### **Racial Equity Strategic Action Team**

The Racial Equity Strategic Action Team, composed primarily of faculty and academic leaders in Academic Affairs, Continuing Education & Workforce Development (ACEWD), was formed in the Spring of 2022 to oversee the work of implementing the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan.

Credit programs in ACEWD began to work on closing racial equity gaps for African American and Latinx students –the populations where we consistently have seen opportunity gaps–through a year-long initiative. Working with the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research (OPAIR), all department chairs and program managers were given institutional and departmental data focusing on student success and equity. After receiving training in the use of dashboards, a tool which allows data access to employees to address equity gaps, stakeholders were instructed to utilize FCC’s dashboards to track several years of equity data within their program. Using this information, departments were instructed to use the fall semester to identify probable causes for equity gaps and then submitted their responses in a standardized template at the end of the fall.

In January, departments received feedback regarding their responses about equity gaps. For the spring, all departments were tasked with identifying at least two initiatives that could be implemented at scale within their departments or programs for the 2022-2023 academic year to address reasons for equity gaps provided in their responses. All are on track for implementation next year. Non-credit CEWD program areas began equity work in Spring 2021, focusing on access. CEWD administrators are currently reviewing demographic data points of enrolled students from 2016 – 2020 and are writing narratives to reflect on the reasons for equity gaps across gender, ethnicity, and race.

Areas of focus that emerged from this work include appealing to a broader audience of students, diversifying the adjunct pool, and making changes at a curricular level. Goals developed include:

- Marketing assistance in developing outreach materials to attract more diverse student body
- Incorporating Culturally Responsive Teaching into curricula across areas to expand adjunct capacity
- Becoming intentional in course development to incorporate topics that appeal to a wider and/or more targeted audience
- Building new networks of community engagement
- Identifying student pipelines that exist and building connections to CEWD courses and programs

These recommendations will increase access to students based on gender, race, and ethnicity. Program areas began to implement plans in FY 21 and CEWD will benchmark progress annually in the AACEWD Master Plan beginning in FY 22.

## **Non-faculty Staff**

### **ODEI Calendar of Events**

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) offered six workshops for faculty and staff for the 2021-2022 academic year:

1. Campus Police and Frontline Responders: Trauma and DEI-Informed Training to Improve Response and Intervention - Nov 1, 2021
2. Supervision With a DEI and Antiracist Lens: Dr. Jamie Washington on Going Beyond Optics- January 18, 2022
3. Mental Health First Responders: Train Faculty & Staff to Identify At-Risk Students - January 20, 2022
4. Black Student Initiatives: Short- and Long-Term Programs for Retention and Persistence on January 24, 2022.
5. Support Your LGBTQIA+ Campus Community: Create & Celebrate Cultures of Inclusion, Access & Thriving in Higher Education- February 8, 2022
6. Bias Incident Reporting & Response – February 23, 2022

Eight people attended the events on average, with the greatest attendance (12) being “Supervision with a DEI and Antiracist Lens.” The ODEI will continuously look for ways to increase employee participation and awareness by expanding marketing and modality options.

### **Faculty and Staff of Color Group**

In alignment with Strategic Domain #2 of the DEI Strategic Plan to increase the diversity of FCC faculty and staff to reflect our students and Frederick County, action item #5 seeks to “*Develop Faculty and Staff opportunities (such as groups or associations) to support retention of minority faculty and staff populations for People of Color and members of the LGBTQIA+ communities.*” To that end, the Faculty and Staff of Color group meet monthly to build community by getting to know each other and sharing their experiences. Discussions for institutionalizing the group comprise a number of goals, including extending connections both within and outside the college and collecting data to document the extent to which the group meets desired outcomes.

## **Administration**

### **Leadership Conference**

Convened by the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development, the 7th Annual Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development Leadership Conference was held on January 11th and 12th, 2022. The focus was to further support the College Institutional Racial

Equity Plan designed to close all racial gaps in access or success by 2027. The conference featured two nationally-known scholar-practitioners, Dr. Adrianna Kezar (Director, University of Southern California Pullias Center for Higher Education) and Esmeralda Hernandez-Hamed (University of Southern California Race and Equity Center). Their presentations on equity-mindedness and leadership in higher education were the launching point for our discussion about race and changing faculty practice, policies, and structures. Associate Vice Presidents and faculty reflected on the access and success data by race within their departments to determine institutional barriers they have the power to address to close existing equity gaps. On behalf of their academic areas, all department chairs made presentations to share what they learned.

### **Xhercis Mendez—Transformative Justice in the Workplace**

On March 4, administrators, faculty, and staff heard from Dr. Xhercis Mendez, a consultant who uses transformative justice (TJ), a strategy for addressing the root causes of harm, such as microaggressions, relationship violence, and campus sexual assault, to create actionable pathways towards accountability and healing. A total of 23 administrators (83%), staff (9%), and faculty (9%) attended.

Dr. Mendez's presentation was well received. On a scale from 1-5, 95% scored transformative justice a 4 or 5. Those who provided a high rating reported doing so because transformative justice is a way to resolve harm in the workplace while holding those responsible accountable. Others expressed appreciation that transformative justice addresses policies to enact change. Others liked that TJ could be used to help transform the institution's climate. Ninety-five percent of attendees felt transformative justice would be a useful framework for the College to adapt. One hundred percent of attendees approved of Mendez as a presenter and felt that she could lead the college in developing a transformative justice framework. Attendees expressed appreciation for her knowledge of the topic, engagement of the audience, enthusiasm, and authenticity.

## **Description of the Governing, Administrative, Coordinating, and Institutional Offices**

### **The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) at Frederick Community College has primary responsibility for providing College-wide leadership on best practices as well as effective and ethical strategies to build and sustain an inclusive and excellent College community for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and the larger community. FCC fulfills its mission of educational excellence through culturally conscious and responsive classrooms, policies, practices, workplaces, and activities. Through strategic planning, professional development, technical assistance, curricular and co-curricular interventions and development, ODEI centers the principles of equity and inclusion in all facets of the College.

### **The President's Diversity Advisory Council**

The President's Diversity Advisory Council (PDAC) is a body of students, faculty, and staff, charged with "[advising] the President and Senior Leadership on matters involving diversity, equity, and inclusion. This description of PDAC located on the institution's website [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - Frederick Community College](#) lists out several responsibilities of this group, including: 1) responding to the college community, 2) advising the President and Senior Leadership, 3) educating the college community, and 4) providing direction on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The goals of PDAC are influenced in large part by the President.

Under the leadership of former President Elizabeth Burmaster and former Senior Diversity Officer, Dr. Beth Douthirt Cohen, PDAC was instrumental in developing the collegewide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan, approved by the Board of Trustees on June 19, 2019. A copy of the DEI Strategic plan can be found in the appendix at the end of this report. Consisting of a total 28 action items, most of the plan is in progress. Other items were paused or delayed due to COVID-19. One action item has been completed: "Develop[ing] an accessibility map of the College, including single-user restrooms that are ADA compliant, lactation rooms, prayer rooms, accessible parking, accessible doors, and spaces for specific populations."

On February 1, 2022, English faculty member, Dr. Andrea D. Dardello, assumed the role of Acting Senior Diversity Officer. With the vacancy of the DEI Officer position as well as an Interim President and Presidential search, PDAC members continued to meet to increase awareness about and report on progress regarding college initiatives and to make plans to welcome our new president, Dr. Annesa Cheek.

### **The Center for Teaching and Learning**

In support of the College mission, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) supports and enhances high-quality instruction and responds to the individual learning, teaching, and support needs of students, faculty, and staff. In addition, the CTL encourages exploration and innovation in various learning environments by sharing knowledge, tools, and resources. Hence, the CTL provides academic support via library services, the Learning Centers (tutoring), proctored testing and student assessment, online learning, and instructional innovation. The Center for Teaching and Learning models excellence by designing and delivering student learning experiences, pathways, and programs that increase student access, success, and completion. CTL offers teaching and learning hours in four distinct tracks, including Culturally Responsive Teaching [CRT] and Cultural/Global Competence Development; Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; Instructional Innovation and Faculty Leadership and Academic Management.

### **The Global Learning Committee**

The Global Learning Committee (GLC) was formed in 2019 and co-chaired by Dr. Beth Douthirt Cohen and Dr. Ivy Chevers. Twelve faculty and staff comprise the committee who meet once a month. The committee facilitates the development of on-and off-campus global experiences that help students, faculty, and staff gain the knowledge and skills necessary to become responsible, successful citizens in a globally connected world. The committee began with providing professional development for staff and faculty, supervising travel abroad, and reviewing travel abroad policies. In 2020-22 GLC hosted International Education Week events, Black History Month events, and Global Coffee Chats via Zoom.

### **DEI Data and Metrics**

In its efforts to close racial equity gaps, the College is currently tracking 16 key performance indicators located in the College's Institutional Racial Equity Plan. There are eleven success-based benchmarks, including successful-persister rates; graduation-transfer rates; 150% graduation rates; course failure rates; learning modalities; percentage of adult education students achieving one ABE educational functional level; percentage of adult educational students achieving at least one ESL educational functional level; and workforce training completers. Additionally, the College has identified 5 access benchmarks, including the percent of credit enrollment compared to the Frederick county population; the percent of Continuing Education and Workforce Development (CEWD) enrollment compared to the Frederick county population (15 years or older and 5-14 years of age); percent of credit students accessing financial aid; and the number of high school-based dual enrollment courses taken by high school students. Each of these indicators is broken out by Latinx, Asian, Black/African American, and White student groups.

The College produced several dashboards to share data access to employees that help them better understand the impact of their work. Currently, dashboards have been created around CEWD enrollment, credit enrollment, course modality enrollment, students with disabilities, campus student population diversity, time to graduation, grade distribution, retention and transfer rates, student success alerts, transfer-out statistics, program report card, HS to FCC enrollment within 365 days, and FCPS-to-FCC transitions. All of these dashboards include, where available, demographic filters (ethnicity, gender, and age groups) so that users can evaluate data and address equity gaps where appropriate.

As part of the College's formal assessment processes, program managers in both the Continuing Education and Workforce Development (CEWD) and credit areas are asked to assess their programs for equity gaps. As part of the credit review, program managers are asked to look at students' declared majors, retention, degrees/certificates awarded, fall course enrollment, and course success. In this review they are to discuss student demographics and identify equity gaps as well as identify practices or procedures in the program that should be revisited or implemented to improve equity outcomes.

All of these data initiatives are designed to inform faculty and staff about their individual impact on student success and

goal achievement. Furthermore, these data-informed projects are aimed at helping employees understand how institutional barriers can impact student outcomes. With that in mind, the initiatives listed above will be continually reviewed to adjust the College's lens from a place of deficit thinking to better identify equity gaps, and remove institutional barriers that create these gaps. Many of these barriers have persisted since the institution's inception and prior to serving underrepresented populations.

## **Student Voices and Diverse Perspectives**

### **Student Climate Survey**

In alignment with Strategic Domain 4 of the DEI Plan, "*Ensure a more welcoming and inclusive learning and workplace environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors,*" the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) worked with the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research (OPAIR) to conduct the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climate (NACCC). This survey is designed to assess students' perception of the institution's commitment to meet their needs and foster a sense of belonging.

The survey covered six domains, including: institutional commitment to racial diversity and leaders' response to racial problems on campus; student safety both on and off campus; diverse perspectives in student learning and preparation to live and work in a diverse society; encounters of racial stress that might interfere with academic studies; students' perception of their relevance on and off campus; and cross-racial engagement.

With the support of the Center for Student Leadership and Engagement, the survey was incentivized with 40 \$25 gift cards and three Apple iPads as grand prizes. The survey ran from March 1-April 25, 2022. Out of a sample of 4,893 students, 623 (12.73%) students successfully completed the survey.

### **MOSAIC Center**

During the Spring 2022 semester, the Office of the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs facilitated a survey regarding the MOSAIC (Making Our Space an Inclusive Community) Center and desired DEI-programming in that space. Based on the responses, students were interested in programming and activities that focused on respectful communication, diversity and inclusion, unconscious bias, antiracism, and discrimination and harassment. In the survey's qualitative responses, echoing themes were diversity, culture, and representation. Students shared their vision for the MOSAIC Center as an inclusive and safe space to celebrate culture and express appreciation of different facets of the world. Other initiatives planned for the 2022-23 academic year include the [LGBTQIA+ Safe Space Training](#), [Student Parent Reading Circle](#), [Food Locker Program](#), discussions on structured inequality, and using HEERF (Higher Education Emergency Relief) funding to address food insecurity and mental health for underrepresented students.

DEI initiatives at Frederick Community College demonstrate a commitment from faculty, non-faculty, and administrators to live out the College's value of diversity that centers on "embracing the visible and invisible human differences that affect the learning and success of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the community." This value rings clear in student programming, strategic planning to close racial equity gaps, professional development, and inclusion and retention efforts. This ongoing collaboration to move DEI initiatives forward makes FCC a place where all can learn, develop, and grow.