



ALLEGANY COLLEGE
of MARYLAND

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2028



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STRATEGIC PLAN INTRODUCTION

As is ever the case in higher education, Allegany College of Maryland faces new opportunities and challenges each year. Like other institutions, there are concerns about funding, artificial intelligence, and equitable treatment of all persons on campus while maintaining a focus on the main Mission of the College: to deliver diverse and relevant education centered around student success in a supportive and engaging community.

With the development of a new Strategic Plan, the College has a unique opportunity to reflect on what it does well, where it has opportunities for improvement, and how to prioritize its resources to ensure ongoing commitment to students and stakeholders. Through gathering and analyzing data, prior plans are evaluated and new plans are developed using stakeholder input and intentional consideration of the College's future. Using this process, distilling the myriad possible directions the College could go down to a few key priorities allows resources to be allocated where they can have the greatest impact on students and learning experiences.

Since the last Strategic Plan was undertaken, the College is faced with a number of challenges, including:

- 2024-25 will see the retirement of President Dr. Cynthia Bambara, who has led the institution for thirteen years along with many other long-serving key employees.
- Funding from Maryland and Allegany County have changed as the state moves to implement the sweeping changes required of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and the County faces budget challenges of its own.
- Growth in online education represents the changing expectations of students regarding course delivery modalities.

- The value and perception of higher education continue to shift in the cultural zeitgeist, discussing the return on investment and whether attending college is worth the investment.

The core concepts of student success and student access, however, remain critical to the role ACM plays in its community. The 2022 American Community Survey shows that 68.5% of Allegany County residents over 25 years old have less than an Associate's degree in education. The median household income is \$46,913, about half the amount for the state of Maryland at large. Education continues to be one of the best predictors of career earnings and improving life circumstances, further reinforcing the need for the opportunities provided by the College.

Amidst this backdrop, the College is well-positioned to continue providing education, opportunities, and improving lives through learning experiences. Some of the great things that have happened recently or will soon include:

- ACM has seen enrollment growth over the last two years for the first time in over a decade. This is attributable to many things coming together, but among them are the rapid expansion of the online Nursing program, re-development of the Early College dual enrollment system, and renewal of Athletics.
- A number of important facilities upgrades and renovations have occurred, including operationalizing the updated Technology building, renovations of Athletics facilities, a new correctional training facility for industry partners, complete overhaul of the College theater, and the upcoming large facility project to renovate the Continuing Education building.



- The College has integrated key software programs to assist in the student experience, chief among them being Navigate and Brightspace which offer new ways to assist students, engage with them, and ensure their education progresses appropriately.

While the specific obstacles facing the College in the coming years may feel new and intimidating, they are similar to those faced historically. New technologies come about every few years. Community colleges are constantly forced to make due with the funds available rather than the funds that are warranted. But the basic principles on which the College was founded have not changed, and so the ongoing strategic application of institutional resources towards its key priorities will allow ACM to serve its students and community well into the future.

Every year shows that the College is more than any individual, more than any department. Through the service of hundreds of individuals, ACM is able to provide continuity and quality to thousands of students every year. Focusing on key priority areas ensures that this continues to be the case into the future.

With the implementation of the Strategic Plan, priority work groups will be convened to determine what the actions and objectives of each priority should be in the coming academic year. These actions will be conveyed to individual programs and units as appropriate and will be reported out on annually (see Timeline).



STUDENT ACCESS

Rationale

Internal:

ACM's mission notes that the education offered by the College is "Centered around student success." All other actions and activities are in service to this one intention of the institution. What student success means varies from one student to the next; it may be completing a single course or successfully retraining to shift from one career to the next. Whatever motivation a student has for attending ACM, their success while here is the main focus of institutional priorities. The College's Educational Master Plan (2022-2025) additionally outlines the importance of student success, steps to be taken to improve it, and mechanisms for evaluating its success. The Strategic Plan's role is to observe Student Success at a macro level, evaluating how the entire institution is doing.

Allegany County has the lowest educational attainment in Maryland, with 77% of residents having no higher than an Associate's Degree compared with 56.3% statewide. The opportunity for students to improve their livelihoods and career opportunities through education necessarily requires that the College supports their ability to transition from student to graduate in a timely and effective manner. Although an increasing number of ACM students are enrolled from outside the county, the primary service regions affected by the institution continue to demonstrate demand for graduates prepared by the institution.

College data consistently shows strong graduation rates for ACM students relative to other Maryland community colleges. For the first time cohort entering in Fall 2018, 62.2% of ACM students graduated or transferred

within four years (200% time) compared with 52.4% of students statewide. Students are able to achieve these successes despite being highly likely to be a first-generation student, likely to be working at least 20 hours a week, and facing educational and financial hurdles. The support services, faculty and staff professional development opportunities, and technical infrastructure necessary to maintain academic excellence are a focus of this priority and underpin the student academic experience from application to graduation.

External:

One of the goals of the Maryland State Plan for Higher Education is Success – to "Promote and implement practices and policies that will ensure student success." The State of Maryland enumerates its expectations that institutions of higher education continue to demonstrate excellence regarding the development and delivery of academic programming. Emphasis is placed on communication with local industry, on the assessment and review of academic programs, and ensuring graduation within a reasonable time frame. Recommendations from the State Plan focus on things like the Near Completer Initiative, improving credit for prior learning, and refocusing on general education learning outcomes.

Additionally, the focus for education in Maryland has expanded dramatically to include the requirements and purview of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. With changing expectations for what it means to be college ready, ACM will need to continue its emphasis on quickly preparing students for college-level



material regardless of their level at entry and transitioning them through their curricular expectations into success.

As a key component of the College's Mission, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education places the ongoing expectation that the College fulfills its intent to students to help them find success during their educational experience.

Data

Informing

ACM Graduates	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
ACM Graduates	494	459	536	471	509
# Awards Earned	580	566	650	560	622
Regional Educational Attainment	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Associate's Degree (25+)	10.2%	9.6%	9.6%	10.8%	8.7%
Some College, No Degree (25+)	20.1%	16.1%	20.4%	17.8%	18.9%
High School Graduate (25+)	43.1%	43.2%	40.5%	40.3%	40.8%
Student Demographics	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Credit Students Receiving Pell Grants	38.1%	35.6%	35.3%	30.6%	32.1%
First-Time Students with Developmental Education Needs	64.8%	42.9%	33.6%	30.5%	32.9%
Credit Students Employed More than 20 Hours Per Week*	34.1%	36%	(NA)	53%	41%
First Generation College Students*	40.1%	38%	(NA)	57%	55%

* Methodology for these two questions changed in FY2022

Assessing

Retention	2018FA	2019FA	2020FA	2021FA	2022FA
Fall to Spring (First-Time Full-Time Cohort)	83.1%	80.2%	83.7%	81.7%	82%
Fall to Fall (First-Time Full-Time Cohort)	58.1%	51.9%	41.2%	58.2%	57.4%
Progression	2018FA	2019FA	2020FA	2021FA	2022FA
12 Credit Accumulation (1 Semester)	45.0%	55.5%	58.7%	47.7%	41.1%
24 Credit Accumulation (2 Semester)	37.9%	43.7%	48.4%	34.0%	33.1%
36 Credit Accumulation (3 Semester)	33.3%	33.7%	36.9%	35.3%	35.0%
Transfer	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018
150% Transfer Rate (First-Time Full-Time Cohort)	29.7%	25%	30.3%	34.4%	32.1%
200% Transfer Rate (First-Time Full-Time Cohort)	34.7%	31.3%	37.4%	38.2%	35.8%
Graduation	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018
150% Graduation Rate (First-Time Full-Time Cohort)	20%	20.5%	15.9%	15.5%	29.3%
200% Graduation Rate (First-Time Full-Time Cohort)	29.9%	23.1%	21.1%	21.4%	34.2%



Targets

- 1** Increase Applicant conversion rate to a three-year average of 33% by 2028.
- 2** Increase Annual Credit enrollment to 3,300 by 2028.
- 3** Increase Degree-Seeking Conversion rates of Early College students to 25% by 2028.

Possible Action Steps

- Continue Financial Aid efforts to educate prospective students and their families regarding the new FAFSA.
- Ensure ongoing resource allocation towards the Marketing Plan.
- Reevaluate efforts to communicate with and reengage stop-out students and evaluate effectiveness of those methods.
- Support ongoing efforts by the Foundation to ensure student access to higher education.
- Leverage Blueprint for Maryland opportunities to continue supporting dual enrollment opportunities, including developing pathways for Early College students.
- Evaluate which degrees can be made available online.
- Eliminate technology barriers faced by students in the onboarding process.
- Consider how to implement a mandatory orientation for students with flexible modules reflecting student needs.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Rationale

Internal:

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Targets

- 1** Increase first semester credit accumulation to 55% by 2028.
- 2** Increase 200% Transfer rate to 38% (3 year average) by 2028.
- 3** Increase 200% Graduation rate to 35% (3 year average) by 2028.

Possible Action Steps

- Expand faculty awareness of Learning Commons resources to utilize in curricula.
- Apply results of Student Learning Outcomes assessment to development of annual objectives for Strategic Plan and EDMP.
- Leverage Navigate early notifications to improve first semester student outcomes.
- Conduct an analysis of simultaneous course combinations for success.
- Expand professional development opportunities for faculty and staff related to student success and instructional methods.
- Look at DWF rates to see where the interventions are necessary utilizing best practices.
- Ensure student onboarding is as seamless as possible.
- Improve outreach opportunities for at-risk students including faculty/staff mentoring.
- Streamline access to emergency funding for students at risk of dropping out.
- Increase support for students with different abilities.
- Consider how to market ACM as an academic bridge for Early College students looking to complete their higher education work at a four-year institution.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND JUSTICE

Rationale

Internal:

Since its inception in 2022, the College's Educational Master Plan (EDMP) has emphasized the need for the College to support Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) activities within the Instructional and Student Affairs area. Including DEIJ in the Strategic Plan presents the opportunity to expand support for these important endeavors throughout institutional operations and dedicate resources where possible and appropriate.

The College has seen its Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Committee is working on developing a plan for advancing DEIJ opportunities institutionally. Recognizing that these components each represent a variety of important stakeholder groups, the College can realize the opportunity to ensure equitability across all institutional offerings, both academic and non-academic.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, non-white students have seen their transfer, success, and persistence numbers fall off. The equity gap, which is the difference in success and persistence between white students and non-white students, reached institutional highs for the Fall 2018 cohort. This is largely driven by the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affecting students of color and their ability to successfully complete their education.

Students surveyed each Spring have shown increases in the feeling that inclusion and

diversity are important at ACM, but the number agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement is still a very low number. Non-white students attending Allegany College of Maryland represent a growth area. This is partially due to the national growth of the Online LPN-RN program, but also represents the College's residential facilities for on-campus students.

Additionally, other areas of Diversity warrant further research and commitment of resources, including but not limited to gender and identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, age, and ability.

External:

The College's accreditor, the Middle States Commission for Higher Education (MSCHE) has updated its Standards of Affiliation with implementation effective July 1, 2023. Included in this update is the guiding principle of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice, which has been interwoven into the Standards. Institutions are expected to demonstrate how they define and implement DEIJ practices for students and stakeholders.

The 2022 State of Maryland Plan for Higher Education has equity as its primary focus with recognition given to the diversity of students served by Maryland institutions and the gaps in academic success between different groups. As a result, the State has placed greater emphasis on reporting from the colleges on issues of equity.



Long-time educational partner EAB (the Educational Advising Board) has developed mechanisms for evaluating existing equity practices at institutions of higher education, identifying gaps, and implementing improvements.

The DEIJ Committee has attended multiple workshops and trainings with Transform Mid-Atlantic (formerly Regional Campus Compact)

designing a self-assessment instrument and action plan. Recommendations have been submitted to the SVPIA and President’s Staff.

Individual third-party accreditors have identified the importance of DEIJ within their standards, including most if not all of the allied health programs.

Data

Informing

	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022
ACM Enrollment					
Non-White Credit Students	16.7%	16.5%	16.3%	17.9%	19.8%
White Credit Students	83.3%	83.5%	83.7%	82.1%	80.3%
ACM Employees	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022
% Non-White Full-time Faculty	3.0%	3.2%	2.2%	1.0%	2%
% Non-White Full-time administration/staff	1.8%	1.8%	1.0%	1.8%	1.7%
Regional Representation	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Allegany County, White population	63197	62148	61563	57953	58450
Allegany County, non-White population	8418	8827	8853	10153	9279
Allegany County, % non-White	11.8%	12.4%	12.6%	14.9%	13.7%
Allegany County, Total Population	71615	70975	70416	68106	67729

Data

Assessing

Employee Survey		Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	
The College demonstrates commitment to valuing diversity.		3.04	3.13	3.16	3.17	3.14	
ACM fosters cultural competency in its employees.		2.95	3.01	3.09	3.02	3.03	
Revealing Institutional Strengths and Characteristics (RISC) Survey		First administered in Spring 2021		Spring 2021	Spring 2022	Spring 2023	
RISC - 3a	Did not feel welcome because due to my race or ethnicity			0.2%	1.2%	1%	
RISC - C.1.6	Inclusion and diversity are important at ACM			18.2%	26.3%	34.0%	
Graduation		Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	
200% Graduation Rate (Black or African American)		15.4%	13.0%	11.1%	11.5%	14.3%	
200% Graduation or Transfer (Black or African American)		66.4%	55.6%	62.0%	64.4%	47.1%	
200% Successful or Persisting (Black or African American)		68.5%	56.5%	65.7%	71.2%	57.1%	
200% Success/Persistence Gap		1.7%	6.5%	8.4%	5.2%	19.1%	





Targets

- 1 Return the Success/Persistence gap to pre-COVID numbers – 5% gap by 2028.
- 2 Increase the percentage of students who agree or strongly agree that inclusion and diversity are important at ACM to 70% by 2028.
- 3 Increase the rate of employees who agree or strongly agree that the College demonstrates commitment to valuing diversity to 3.5 by 2028.

Possible Action Steps

As discussed in the College’s annual Diversity report for the state of Maryland, some possible action steps include:

- Developing, finalizing, and implementing the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Committee’s plan
- Creating and delivering focused content for student-athletes
- Development of support mechanisms for faculty to incorporate principles of DEIJ into coursework
- Targeted improvement of general education learning outcomes (GELO) relating to DEIJ
- Reviewing individual courses for language and operational barriers to student success and engagement

Evaluate curriculum revisions to focus on inclusivity of diverse points of view where possible.

Develop a plan for leadership based on the recommendations from EAB forthcoming following the Diversity survey being conducted.

Improve coordination and centralization of DEIJ efforts on campus between all relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to, the DEIJ Committee, Aspiring Young Mentors, Residence Life, and Student Life.

In conjunction with the DEIJ Committee’s Planning efforts, develop and distribute a report card and/or research appropriate for evaluating ongoing DEIJ work institutionally.

Dedicate budget resources towards DEIJ initiatives, including professional development and training.

Determine how DEIJ components can be incorporated into tenure, promotion, and in-class advancement.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Rationale

Internal:

Over the last two years, Continuing Education and Workforce Development has demonstrated consistent high amounts of growth, recovering from the difficulties imposed on workforce education by the COVID-19 pandemic with resilience. This substantial increase, coupled with evident shifts in offerings, highlights the enduring value of workforce education not only to the College, but also to the community it serves. With additional institutional support, the success of Continuing Education and Workforce Development can be expanded and sustained into the future.

Additionally, the Continuing Education and Workforce Development building itself is due for renovation and modernization, encompassing both its physical infrastructure and the range of services provided. These improvements will help to better serve the community and enrich workforce training opportunities offered by the College.

By including Workforce Development in the Strategic Plan, we can ensure that ACM contributes directly to the local economy by providing skilled workers, attracting businesses, and fostering entrepreneurship by giving students equitable access to all educational opportunities. We can make sure that our workforce programs are aligned directly with the current and future needs of local industries. Workforce development programs also serve as a pathway for individuals to enhance their skills, increase

earning potential and achieve upward mobility. Workforce Development can swiftly adapt to address regional skills gaps by offering targeted training programs and stackable credentials that meet the specific needs of employers.

Workforce Development places a priority on supporting underserved populations and possesses the capacity to promptly address community and employer needs, including business closures. This proactive approach contributes significantly to diminishing socio-economic disparities within the community and effectively meets students where they are.

External:

The Maryland State Plan emphasizes workforce development activities through a variety of avenues, including Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) offices, Adult Education and Literacy Services, and more. The College has been able to utilize Maryland state funding to improve offerings within Continuing Education and Workforce Development and facilities around campus. The Maryland Sequential Scholarships, WIOA funding, Promise Scholarships, as well as Opportunity Scholarships have added to the success of our students and leveled the playing field in recent years making Workforce Development more affordable. Additionally, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future was initially developed by the Governor's Workforce Development Board and focuses heavily on the role of education in creating

career ready individuals. It is anticipated that Continuing Education and Workforce Development will play an ever- increasing role.

The Federal government has expanded its workforce opportunities for higher education with initiatives such as the Second Chance Pell (allowing Pell access for incarcerated persons) and its ongoing Perkins programs (as distributed through the state of Maryland).

Moreover, Continuing Education and Workforce Development persistently cultivates and fosters local partnerships, broadening

programming opportunities in collaboration with key organizations such as the Greater Cumberland Committee (TGCC), economic development entities, and Tourism & Recreation initiatives.

Additional partnerships extend across various sectors, including healthcare, cosmetology, educational alliances, and career pathways planning aligned with the Maryland Blueprint. Additionally, the College remains dedicated to expanding its network of local collaborations, amplifying the scope and impact of its programming initiatives.

Data

Informing

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Poverty					
Under 18	22.4%	24.1%	19.7%	17.4%	15.1%
18-64	16.9%	16.3%	16.5%	15.8%	21.5%
Income					
Median Family	\$ 59,383	\$ 61,181	\$ 62,954	\$ 66,549	\$ 75,725
Median Household	\$ 44,065	\$ 45,893	\$ 49,449	\$ 51,090	\$ 46,913
Median Earnings	\$ 26,513	\$ 26,882	\$ 27,456	\$ 30,910	\$ 36,585
With Food Stamp/SNAP in past 12 months	19.3%	20.5%	20.2%	21.2%	22.9%
Unemployment					
Annual Rate of Unemployment	8.5%	7.4%	7.5%	6.9%	6.7%
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Non-Credit FTE	604.36	587.85	368.55	375.87	583.39

Assessing

Course Enrollments	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Enrollment in CE Workforce development courses	9552	9256	7239	5110	5473
Enrollment in courses leading to government or industry-required certifications or licensure.	5092	4817	3765	2573	2091
Enrollment in Contract training courses	7879	8006	6815	4479	5040
Enrollment in Adult Basic Education	725	988	700	469	477



Targets

- 1 Continue growth of Non-Credit (Continuing Education) FTE – 15% growth by 2028.
- 2 Grow contract training courses – 10% growth by 2028.

Possible Action Steps

- Expansion of partnerships with the prison and jail systems of Allegany County and surrounding Pennsylvania counties.
 - o May include CDL A Training.
- Expand industry partnerships within the County while developing new and robust programming for existing partners.
- Digitize and modernize the CE registration and scheduling processes
- Develop data solutions based on 5-year trend data within CE with Maryland Labor and Industry data to inform CE decision making.
- Develop Young Entrepreneurs Academy as well as Adult Entrepreneur Programs in partnership with Allegany County Chamber and Allegany County Economic Development.
- Develop and Implement new Cosmetology Program.
- Develop and implement new Innovations Center with locations at Cumberland main campus and Western Maryland Works.
- Expand upon CDL B and Forklift training currently in partnership through a grant with Hagerstown Community College including heavy equipment.

Strategic Plan Timeline

Strategic Plan 2024-2028 Timeline	Time	Responsibility
Begin development of new Strategic Plan	Fall 2023	OIERP
Refine institutional priorities, goals, and measures	Spring 2024	Strategic Planning Council
Finalize new Strategic Plan	April 2024	Strategic Planning Council
Priority Teams meet to outline strategies	Spring 2024	Priority Teams
Present Strategic Plan to College and Board of Trustees	April 2024	OIERP
Begin implementation of Strategic Plan 2021-2023	May-December 2024	Institutional
Mid-year check-in	January-February 2025	Strategic Planning Council
Collect and Analyze End of Year Data	May-June 2025	OIERP
End of Year 1 Meeting	July 2025	Strategic Planning Council
End of Year 1 Report Out	August 2025	SPC to All-College
End of Year 1 Report to Board of Trustees	September 2025	SPC to Board of Trustees
Priority Teams Meet to Outline Year 2 strategies	September 2025	Priority Teams
Implementation of Year 2 strategies	FY25	Institutional
Mid-year check-in	February 2026	Strategic Planning Council
End of Year 2 Meeting	July 2026	Strategic Planning Council
End of Year 2 Report Out	August 2026	SPC to All-College
End of Year 2 Report to Board of Trustees	September 2026	SPC to Board of Trustees
Priority Teams Meet to Outline Year 3 strategies	September 2026	Priority Teams
Begin Data Collection for new Strategic Plan	November 2026	OIERP
Implementation of Year 3 strategies	FY26	Institutional
Mid-year check-in	February 2027	Strategic Planning Council
Gather Institutional Stakeholder Input for new Strategic Plan	Spring 2027	Strategic Planning Council
End of Year 3 Meeting	June 2027	Strategic Planning Council
Priority Teams Meet to Outline Year 4 strategies	September 2027	Priority Teams
Begin Data Collection for new Strategic Plan	November 2027	OIERP
Implementation of Year 4 strategies	FY27	Institutional
Mid-year check-in	February 2028	Strategic Planning Council
Gather Institutional Stakeholder Input for new Strategic Plan	Spring 2028	Strategic Planning Council
End of Year 4 Meeting	June 2028	Strategic Planning Council
Renew Strategic Planning Council Membership	June 2028	President's Staff
Begin development of new Strategic Plan	July-August 2028	Strategic Planning Council
End of FY24-28 Strategic Plan Report to Board	September 2028	Strategic Planning Council

Cumberland Campus

12401 Willowbrook Road, SE • Cumberland, MD 21502-2596
301-784-5000

Bedford County Campus

18 North River Lane • Everett, PA 15537-1410
814-652-9528

Somerset County Technology Center

281 Technology Drive • Somerset, PA 15501-4300
814-445-9848



Bedford County Technical Center

195 Pennknoll Road • Everett, PA 15537-6946
814-623-2760

School of Hospitality Management and Culinary Arts

The Culinary Café / Gateway Center
110-114 Baltimore Street • Cumberland, MD 21502-2302
301-784-5410

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For inquiries related to this policy, please contact:

Dr. Renee Conner, Dean of Student and Legal Affairs
Title IX Coordinator | ADA/504 Coordinator
12401 Willowbrook Road | Cumberland, MD 21502
College Center 152
301-784-5206 | rconner@allegany.edu
www.allegany.edu/title-ix | www.allegany.edu/ADA-504

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