



METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Affinity Groups

At MCC



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MCC Affinity Groups

About Affinity Groups

The Society of Human Resource Management observes “Affinity groups, also known as employee resource groups (ERGs), bring together employees with similar backgrounds or interests and can have a powerful influence in the workplace” (SHRM, 2019). Affinity Groups have a long history at MCC, dating back to the founding of the first group in 2008. For MCC, Affinity groups serve an important role in creating a welcoming culture of inclusion and a climate of employee engagement. In addition, Affinity Groups function as part of the Shared Governance structure in that its leaders serve as advisors and conduits through membership on the Chancellor’s Advisory Council. All new employees are invited to participate and join affinity groups during orientation and outreach, whether they share an identity with the group or are an ally.

Metropolitan Community College Affinity Groups serve to offer a place of support and safety to members of historically marginalized communities within the MCC employee community. Affinity Groups are employee-guided networks of and for employees structured around non-majority dimensions of diversity, that support professional development, community engagement and outreach and recruitment and retention of underserved students, faculty and staff. Dimensions of diversity are traits that impact a person at home, at work, and in society. Examples include gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, generation, or physical ability. While Affinity Groups are usually composed of employees with a shared dimension of diversity, **all** interested employees are welcome to join.

For more information about current affinity groups please visit:

mccck.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/get-involved.aspx

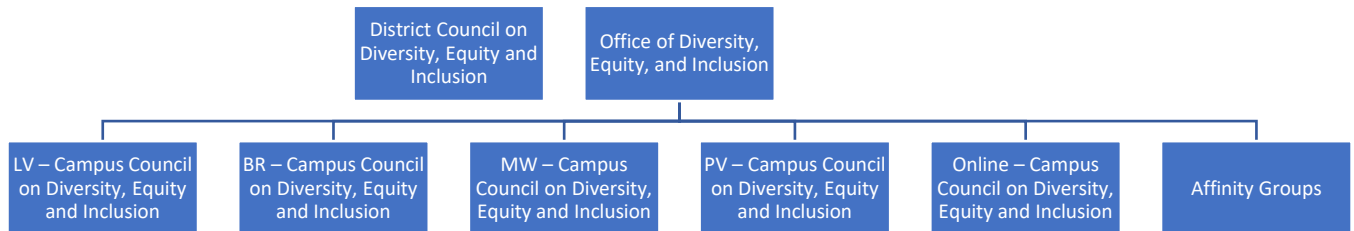


Organizational Alignment and Structure

Affinity Groups are purposefully aligned with Metropolitan Community College’s vision, mission, values, and strategic plan. As noted above, they serve an important role in fostering a climate of welcome and inclusion, so that employees can feel a sense of belonging to the organization and serve as a valuable

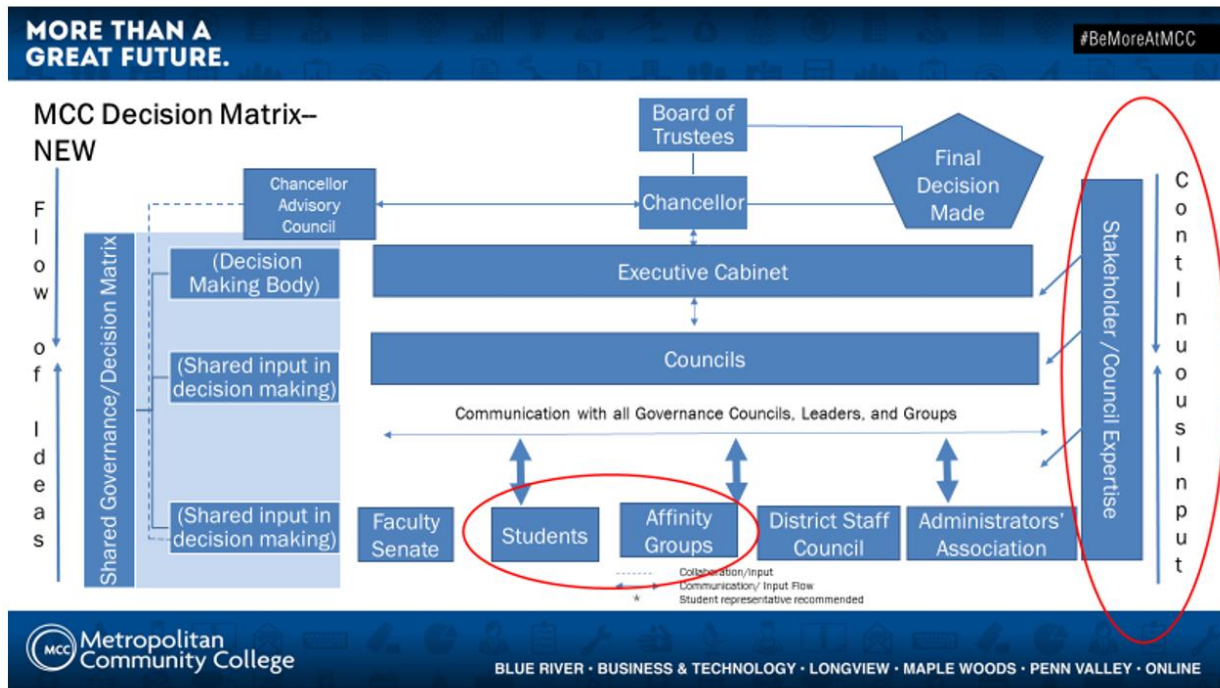
contributor to the mission and purpose of the College. Additionally, Affinity Groups support the institutional value of Equity, through collaboration and professional development.

Affinity Groups, while independently organized by its members, are administered and supported by the District Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. The graphic representation below demonstrates the collaborative nature of the Affinity Groups within a larger DEI eco-system.



Affinity Groups are integrated into the ‘Shared Governance Structure’ (see example below) and are represented on the Chancellor’s Advisory Council. Affinity Groups are supported by the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and their efforts align with the goals and objectives of MCC’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 3-year plan and Strategic Plan.

Shared Governance Decision Matrix



Each Affinity Group shall define its governance structure and processes through its charter, which should be approved by its respective membership. In light of Affinity Groups falling under the umbrella of the 'Shared Governance' structure, each Affinity Group should utilize the charter template which can be found in Appendix A.

Affinity Group Membership & Activities

All employees of Metropolitan Community College (MCC) are eligible to participate in any Affinity Group and all groups are inclusive. Both hourly and salaried employees, including student workers, may participate in Affinity Groups equally. It is strongly encouraged that members be allowed to participate in Affinity Group-related programs without the use of their own PTO when business needs allow. Non-MCC employees are not eligible to participate. Affinity Groups may not implement additionally restrictive membership criteria and will not charge membership fees.

Some examples of Affinity Group activities and events are:

- Host guest speakers and professional development programming
- Disseminate information throughout the organization relevant to professional development and educational opportunities
- Participate in MCC marketing campaigns
- Partner with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to deliver education and training
- Participate in community service activities
- Provide networking events and opportunities
- Create, host, and/or support other events that promote diversity and inclusion, the mission of MCC, and further MCC connection with employees and/or the community

Affinity Group Leadership

All employees of Metropolitan Community College (MCC) are eligible to participate in Affinity Groups and to serve in leadership roles within the groups. Employees can either be nominated or self-nominated for positions. Nominated individuals have the right to reject any nomination without question or explanation. The Charters should identify the process and frequency by which new leaders of Affinity Groups are transitioned into their roles. Additionally, the Charter should identify the scope and duties of each leadership role.

Accountability and Expectations

Affinity Groups serve to represent at both the Chancellor's Advisory Council as well as the District Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council. They are expected to continually share out accomplishments, feedback, insights and recommendations to the other Shared Governance venues. Additionally, Affinity Groups will submit any successes for publication in the annual MCC Equity Report.

Communication

Affinity Groups may use MCC email systems, copiers, printers, meeting room facilities, etc. for Affinity Group activities and programming, in accordance with all MCC policies. These actions should not interfere with MCC operations. Affinity Group practices should adhere to MCC communications policies and guidelines.

New Group Formation

In the instance of starting a new Affinity Group, the interested party should submit a “Letter of Interest” to the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Affinity group leaders or representatives will work with the interested individuals to assess the potential for the group’s formation; determine the group’s purpose, alignment to mission, and objectives. Affinity Groups may not be formed around employment categories (i.e., exempt, non-exempt, part-time), individual religious, social, or political groups or movements. For additional assistance in considering the launch of a new Affinity Group, please refer to “Appendix B” entitled “New Affinity Group Checklist”.

Budget and Expenses

Each Affinity Group is allocated an annual budget at each Fiscal Year (July – June), which is currently held and expended from the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Dependent on the fiscal performance of the College, each Affinity Group is allocated approximately \$750 per group per academic year. Each group wishing to raise additional funds for a special initiative (ie – raising funds for a named scholarship) shall receive approval from the MCC Foundation in order to determine the restricted fund accounting oversight.

Logistics, Policies & Procedures

A comprehensive review of relevant policies and procedures should occur during the onboarding process of Affinity Group leadership teams:

- Standards of Conduct
- Review of Shared Governance guidelines and Affinity Group Charter
- Non-fraternization policy
- Social Media Policy

Staff from the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion are available to help support and facilitate training on MCC policies and procedures if appropriate.

Affinity Group Charter Template

Name of Council/ Committee:

Date Template Completed:

Specific Committee/Council Functions and Responsibilities:

- Review:
- Evaluate:
- Recommend:
- Implement:

Committee/Council Authorized By:

Date Implemented:

Committee/Council Chair:

Committee/Council Recorder:

Committee/Council Members:

Standing Members/ Representation:

Leadership Selection Process:

Term Length:

Meeting Schedule:

Location of Minutes and Committee/Council Documents:

Alignment of Charge to Strategic Plan:

Committee/ Council Process to Communicate Progress to District/ Campus:

Checklist for Starting an Affinity Group at MCC

FORMATION OF INITIAL CONCEPT OF AFFINITY GROUP

- Understand the purpose and parameters of Affinity Groups
- Understand MCC's commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Submit a **Letter of Interest** to the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- If you have interested colleagues identified, submit their names as well
- Ensure that your purpose is in line with the shared values and policies of MCC
 - Affinity Groups may not be formed around employment categories (i.e., exempt, non-exempt, part-time), individual religious, social, or political groups or movements.
- Inquiries can be made via email diversityequityinclusion@mcckc.edu

INITIAL FORMATION OF AFFINITY GROUPS

- Identify leaders and potential members
- Determine Affinity Group member requirements
- Get guidance and resources from Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Set meeting times and places
- Set decision making processes for future
- Consider possible risks and challenges Affinity Group may face and plan for solutions
- Plan for future training to educate new leaders
- Develop Affinity Group Charter using template; additional information for the group's consideration in the Charter
 - Group structure
 - Define leadership positions (e.g., chair, vice chair, secretary)
 - Responsibilities of officers
 - Terms, elections, and resignations/termination of officers
 - Responsibilities of members (E.G., participation and attendance)
 - Define standing committees
 - Frequency of Meetings
 - Group size

START UP & IMPLEMENTATION

- Convene group and follow Charter and Guidelines
- Schedule meetings at least 6 month out to secure meeting space
- Identify and prioritize budget needs of the group
- Leadership development training can be provided by the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- Begin programming and meetings
- Contact Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion with questions or concerns

BEST PRACTICES FOR AFFINITY GROUPS

- Plan ahead—it will save you time and energy in the long run
- Create a timeline for your Affinity Group every year—this will help you manage your budget application and meet your group goals
- Decide upon your own methods to measure success every year and track progress in comparison to these goals
- Communicate with your members and other DEI stakeholders across the College
- Look to Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion for organizational support
- Update members and MCC community often about events, upcoming and past
- Keep records of meetings (through minutes) and of events (through photos)
- Contact other Affinity Groups about advice and their best practices
- Hold events often and promote as much as possible (we recommend at least 2 events per year)
- Always be open to new ideas and people; Create an environment on inclusion – all are welcome!
- Track key accomplishments and submit for publication in MCC Equity Report:
 - ✓ Community relations and presence
 - ✓ Event and sponsorship results
 - ✓ Effects on recruitment and retention
 - ✓ Business impact
 - ✓ Improved Employee Engagement