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Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.  
Acting Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 28, 2024

TO: Dr. Jay Perman, University System of Maryland  
Dr. Brad Phillips, Maryland Association of Community Colleges  
Dr. Tuajuanda Jordan, Saint Mary's College of Maryland  
Dr. David Wilson, Morgan State University

FROM: Sanjay Rai, Ph.D., Acting Secretary *SKR*

SUBJECT: §11-406 – Plan for Program of Cultural Diversity

This memo is designed to provide additional guidance regarding the requirements for the annual Cultural Diversity<sup>1</sup> report. Please read this memo carefully, as changes have been made from prior year's report guidelines. In particular, please note the revised components of the report and the associated page limits.

In accordance with §11-406 of the Education Article (attached), the governing body of each Maryland public college and university is required to develop and implement a plan for a program of cultural diversity. These plans must be submitted to each institution's board by July 1, 2024.

Further, statute requires that each institution submit, by September 1 of each year, a report to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) summarizing institutional progress toward the implementation of its plan for cultural diversity. According to statute, the Commission must monitor each institution's progress toward achieving the goals outlined in its plan and ensure compliance with the State's goals for higher education.

Additionally, the Commission is required to report its findings to the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee; the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee; the House Appropriations Committee; and the House Committee on Ways and Means by December 1 of each year.

This year's reporting guidance ensures compliance with the law. Each institutional submission should include a **brief narrative (no more than seven pages)**, consisting of the sections outlined below. Please ensure all submissions adhere to these guidelines. Additional supplemental information such as data analysis or more comprehensive programmatic information may be provided as an appendix; this appendix, if included, **MUST** be submitted as a separate document. All institutional narratives must adequately address the required elements within the seven-page limit to be considered compliant with the reporting requirement.

Each institutional submission should include a **seven-page narrative**, consisting of the five major sections outlined below. Please ensure all submissions adhere to these guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> Education Article §11-406 defines cultural diversity as the "inclusion of those racial and ethnic groups and individuals that are or have been underrepresented in higher education."

- A summary of the institution’s plan<sup>2</sup> to improve cultural diversity as required by Education Article §11-406. Include all major goals, areas of emphasis, strategy for implementation and progress on those goals. Also provide an explanation of how progress is being evaluated. Please indicate where progress has been achieved, and some best practices identified that aided the institution in making progress. If there is no formal plan approved by the institutional governing board, describe how the institution intends to come into compliance by July 1, 2025. (no more than four pages).
- A summary of how the 2023 Supreme Court’s decision to strike down race-conscious admissions practices has affected your campuses policies and practices. Specifically provide information on the following (no more than three pages):
  - a. *Outreach and Support Programs:* Are there any new initiatives or programs being implemented to support underrepresented minority groups or enhance access to higher education for historically marginalized communities?
  - b. *Community Engagement:* How is your institution engaging with stakeholders, including students, faculty, alumni, and community partners, to navigate these policy changes and ensure ongoing commitment to diversity and equity?
  - c. *Equity and Access:* In light of the ruling, how is your institution ensuring continued access and equity for historically underrepresented groups in higher education?
  - d. *Monitoring and Evaluation:* What mechanisms are in place to monitor the impact of policy changes on student demographics, campus climate, and educational outcomes? How will your institution evaluate the effectiveness of these adjustments over time?

In addition to these narratives, each institution should provide, **as an appendix**, a copy of the cultural diversity plan in place during the reporting year (Academic Year 2023-2024). This should be the plan approved by the institution’s Board on or before July 1, 2023. Those institutions that operate under a multi-year plan should provide the plan approved on or before July 1, 2023. Note that the required elements of this plan are defined in §11-406 of the Education Article and footnoted above.

Along with a narrative summary provided by MHEC, the Commission will include, unedited, these institutional reports and Cultural Diversity plans in the 2024 Report on Institutional Programs of Cultural Diversity.

Please submit your narratives and 2023-2024 Cultural Diversity Plan **in searchable PDF format** and the completed cover sheet certifying Board approval (attached) at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd5iFC\\_CrJ4-rQ-XuWIoagH74bNh0AHdwUR4QFS\\_RxPr5iCA/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd5iFC_CrJ4-rQ-XuWIoagH74bNh0AHdwUR4QFS_RxPr5iCA/viewform?usp=sf_link) Any submissions not including the required cover sheet or in excess of the seven-page limit will be returned to the institution for

<sup>2</sup> The plan shall include: (a) A description of the way the institution addresses cultural diversity among its student, faculty, and staff populations; (b) A description of how the institution plans to enhance cultural diversity, if improvement is needed; (c) A process for reporting campus-based hate crimes, as defined under Title 10, Subtitle 3 of the Criminal Law Article and consistent with federal requirements under 20 U.S.C. 1092(f), known as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act; and (d) A summary of any resources, including State grants, needed by the institution to effectively recruit and retain a culturally diverse student body. Additionally:

- The plan shall enhance cultural diversity programming and sensitivity to cultural diversity through instruction and training of the student body, faculty, and staff at the institution of higher education.
- The plan shall include an implementation strategy and a time line for meeting goals within the plan.
- The plan shall be submitted to the governing body of the institution for the governing body’s review, on or before July 1 every year.

revision.

Electronic copies of these documents must be submitted to MHEC on or before Friday, September 1, 2024, in accordance with statutory requirements. **Please note that MHEC does not have the statutory authority to grant exceptions to this deadline. If your governing board does not meet during the summer months, please ensure you provide sufficient time for approval prior to this statutory deadline for submission to the Commission.** Additionally, please note that any necessary revisions may require additional board approval; if there are questions regarding the required elements of the submission, please ensure that you contact the Commission as soon as possible for clarification to ensure that you will remain compliant with the September 1 statutory deadline for submission to MHEC.

If you have any further questions about this report, please feel free to contact the Commission directly. Thank you for your cooperation.

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Matthew Power, Maryland Independent College and University Association