

Senate Bill 254
Rodney Redmond
Unfavorable Report
February 9, 2022

I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill 254—College of Southern Maryland—Vice President of Equity and Inclusion. I do not support this bill for two reasons: failure to recognize the current and ongoing work in equity and inclusion at the College of Southern Maryland and lack of funding for this mandate.

The Board of Trustees established the College's strategic plan which includes a strategic goal of "ensuring equity in all programs and services." This is reflected in the work of every division across the college. Each division and sub-division had built into its goal equity and inclusion practices that more evenly focus on the learning experiences of our students and the work experiences of our employees. For faculty, they are examining not only the objectives of their courses, but the instructional materials used to enhance the learning for our students. Departments are working to ensure that the examples used in class reflect the student body because students learn better when they feel connected to the material they are learning. The college is reshaping the ways that our employees work and engage with each other to be more inclusive. Furthermore, the college's Equity and Inclusion Council as a part of participatory governance works to review and ensure that our policies are reviewed and revised with an eye towards equity and inclusion.

The College has undertaken two major initiatives that refocus our work in the areas of equity and inclusion: joining the Achieving the Dream Initiative and redesigning our classes to 7-week classes. Both initiatives require a thorough focus on who our students are, what they need to be successful, revising and adapting our policies, protocols and procedures to better help students complete their program of study. Achieving the dream, focusing on student equity gaps, is moving into its 4th year. The 7-week terms are an equity initiative that focuses on persistence, retention, and completion for middle to low income students. The initiative also recognizes that the traditional 15-week semester presents a structural inequity for our underrepresented student population. Furthermore, cultural and global awareness competencies are integrated throughout our General Education core curriculum. Persistence, retention and completion are key factors when considering the equity for our students especially.

Then, there is the administrative work focuses on equity and inclusion. President Murphy has one of the most diverse leadership teams among community college leaders across the state. Additionally, she is working with the CSM Foundation to endow and establish a Distinguished Professor of Equity in Education. Attention to these kinds of details and focus on conducting a national search for an Executive Director of Equity and Inclusive Diversity are hallmarks of the leadership at CSM. The campus climate survey conducted every other year reports that employees of color have a higher satisfaction rate.

With this in mind, I ask that the members of the Senate Committee for Education, Health and Environmental Affairs give this bill an unfavorable report.