

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Goal 1: Serve as a catalyst for economic development in western Maryland and in the region.

The *2004 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* establishes a need for Maryland's postsecondary institutions to "provide rich and diverse educational opportunities for research, learning, and preparation for initial employment, career advancement, and career changes" (**MSP Goal 5**). The strategies and initiatives developed by Frostburg State University's Vice President for Economic Development and Government Relations are closely aligned with statewide goals and promote the economic growth and vitality of the region.

In 2008, Frostburg State University (FSU) increased the number of businesses located in its Tawes technology incubator to eight, exceeding the established goal (**MFR Objective 1.1**). Located on the FSU campus, the Tawes incubator was established to build Allegany County's business base in technology and environmental resource management and development. The incubator added three new tenants in FY 2008: the Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council, Integrated Software Solutions, and Instant Access Networks, LLC.

In February 2008, the information technology company InfoSpherix occupied the first building of the Allegany Business Center at Frostburg State University (ABC@FSU). A cooperative venture among the University, Allegany County, private developers, and the state of Maryland, the ABC@FSU hosts businesses that support internships, student employment, and faculty and student research. The University has entered into an agreement to host the Western Region Small Business Development Center, which will be relocated to the ABC@FSU during the summer of 2008. Prospective tenants are presently negotiating for approximately 6,000 square feet.

The University is also investing in economic development through the historic Lyric Building on Main Street in Frostburg, which will house the offices of University Advancement, the Alumni Association, the FSU Foundation, and a branch of the University's bookstore. Renovations are expected to be completed in the summer of 2008 and include the re-creation of a turn of the century theater venue for use by community and University interests. This venue will play a major role in the City of Frostburg's plan to seek an Arts and Entertainment District designation for its downtown area. Ultimately it is hoped that a physical link can be created utilizing the Arts District designation of corridors connecting the University to Main Street.

Goal 2: Meet critical workforce needs in the region and the state.

Frostburg continues to enhance its programs in the fields of information technology and teacher education in order to meet regional and statewide workforce shortages and address its students' need for professional development within a well-rounded education (**MSP Goal 5**). The University has also endeavored to increase the number of programs in these fields to provide additional student opportunities and meet changing workforce needs.

Information Technology Programs

During the reporting period, undergraduate enrollment in information technology programs declined slightly (from 351 in 2007 to 331 in 2008 - **MFR Objective 2.1**). However, the University anticipates that newly approved programs will lead to increased information technology enrollments. Approved by the University System of Maryland Board of Regents and the Maryland Higher Education Commission in May of 2008, the following programs will be offered at FSU beginning in the fall of 2008: a B.S. and a minor in Information Technology, and a B.S. in Engineering with concentrations in electrical engineering, materials engineering, industrial chemistry, and engineering management. Frostburg will continue to offer its B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, a collaborative program with the University of Maryland, College Park.

In the spring of 2008, the University received approval from the Maryland Department of Budget and Management for the construction of its Center for Communications and Information Technology (CCIT), which will house programs in computer science, mass communication, mathematics, and graphic design. The Center will better position FSU to attract students to meet emerging education and career opportunities in technology-based disciplines.

Education

The number of Frostburg State University education graduates teaching in Maryland schools increased from 102 in 2006 to 114 in 2007. Over the reporting period, the University experienced an increase in the number of initial certification students enrolled in teacher education (from 573 in 2007 to 581 in 2008 - **MFR Objective 2.2**). The 2008 PRAXIS pass rates for education students remain high at 97%, evidence that FSU ensures its education graduates are knowledgeable about what and how they teach (**MSP Goal 4**).

Goal 3: Provide access to higher education for residents of Maryland and the region.

Undergraduate Enrollment

In an effort to provide increased educational accessibility and affordability for all Marylanders (**MSP Goal 2**), Frostburg State University continues to develop strategies to recruit qualified students from Maryland and the tri-state area and provide them with access to desired programs of study. Maryland residents comprise over 90% of the fall 2007 freshman cohort, representing an increase of 1.3 percent over the previous two years.

The University's headcount enrollment rose from 4,910 in 2007 to 4,993 in 2008 (**MFR Objective 3.1**). These strong enrollment gains are partly attributable to the efforts of FSU's Enrollment Management Committee, which has developed new strategies to aid in the recruitment of undergraduate and graduate students. During the reporting period, the committee has developed stronger articulation agreements with two-year colleges, expanded scholarship efforts, established an alumni recruitment group, reviewed admissions policies, and sought out new recruitment possibilities. These efforts have helped the University to enroll the largest

freshman class in its history and have fostered a significant increase in the number of transfer students.

Enrollment efforts have also gained support from the Marketing and Branding Task Force, which has developed a student-centered message strategy that highlights the benefits of a Frostburg State University education and emphasizes its attributes to prospective students. This strategy is based on three primary themes (engagement, discovery, and integration) that have been incorporated into new enrollment management materials in production for distribution in FY 2009.

Retention and Graduation Rates of Undergraduate Students

While graduation rates rose during the reporting period, FSU experienced a slight decline in its retention rates. However, the University is confident that student persistence will increase over the next few years. The second-year retention rate of undergraduates decreased in 2008 (from 75.5% in 2007 to 72.4% in 2008 – **MFR Objective 3.3**). During the reporting period, FSU experienced an increase in the six-year graduation rate of its undergraduate students (from 55.1% in 2007 to 59.1% in 2008 – **MFR Objective 3.4**).

Frostburg continues to vigorously pursue strategies designed to enhance the retention rate among all of its students. The University's Learning Community Program, which links students in a set of courses that explore a common theme, career path, and/or potential major, has had a significant impact on the retention of first-year students. Given its record of success, the University expanded its Learning Community Program to be available to all first-time college students; previously it was elective for about half of entering freshmen.

The Phoenix Program, implemented in the spring of 2007, is an intervention effort designed to provide intensive support for those students who previously faced dismissal following their first semester. Low-performing students are placed in special course offerings where they receive personal assistance in improving their academic records.

In August 2007, the Center for Advising and Career Services combined services that together provide essential support for undecided students. Institutional data show that the students with the lowest rate of retention are those without declared majors. Consequently, the Advising and Career Services Center is dedicated primarily to helping those students who have not yet declared majors. The Center, which is supervised by the Assistant Vice President for Student Services, works directly with undeclared students and provides individual assistance to transfer and other student groups.

In addition, the University invests significant resources in its Office of Student Support Services (SSS). The academic support services and monitoring programs offered through SSS include tutoring, math support, study groups, peer mentoring, academic advising, career development, and assistance with the financial aid process.

The University continues to emphasize its online learning opportunities. By offering online intensive courses during the regular academic term in a six-week time frame, students move

more quickly toward graduation. Another factor that helps expedite time to degree at FSU is its strong summer and January online programs, which allow students to take needed coursework while away from the campus.

Off-Campus Courses

Commensurate with the *2004 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education (MSP Goal 2)*, Frostburg State University continues to offer more off-campus courses in an effort to provide greater student access to its academic programs (**MFR Objective 3.2**). The number of off-campus course enrollments has increased during the reporting period (from 2,748 in 2007 to 3,141 in 2008) and exceeds the established goal of 2,902.

In an effort to provide more certified teachers for Maryland schools (**MSP Goal 4**), the University has expanded the number of teacher program options available to its students. In the fall of 2007, the first cohort of 16 candidates who began the final two years of their B.S. in Early Childhood/Elementary Education at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) will be eligible to complete the program in the spring of 2009. Additionally, the Alternative Certification program, in partnership with Frederick and Washington Counties, prepared three secondary education teachers. This program is designed to help conditional certification teachers obtain professional certification.

Finally, plans have been set for FSU to be intensely involved with the University of Maryland, College Park to begin a practical doctorate degree, the Ed.D in Educational Leadership, at the USMH. A similar doctoral degree would be brought to the Frostburg campus in the near future.

In addition to its distance education programs at the USMH delivered through interactive video instruction, the University also offers an increasing number of online courses during the summer and Intersession terms to help non-traditional students gain access to its courses. In the summer of 2007, online course enrollment totaled 915, an increase of 18% from the previous summer session. A total of 78 online course sections were offered in the summer of 2007 and 47 were scheduled during Intersession 2008. Overall, enrollment for online summer courses has grown 176% between 2003 and 2007.

So that its faculty can offer the very best in online education, the University expanded its online training program in January 2008 by becoming an affiliate in the University System of Maryland (USM) Quality Matters™ Statewide Subscription. The nationally recognized Quality Matters™ organization promotes inter-institutional quality assurance and continuous improvement of online and blended (hybrid) courses and provides member institutions a rubric comprised of online course design standards of excellence derived from national standards and research literature. In June 2008, FSU integrated instructions on applying the Quality Matters™ Rubric standards for online course design and development into its two-week professional development program for new online instructors.

In an effort to improve upon the campus infrastructure and increase the use of technology in the classroom (**MSP Goal 1**), the University enhanced its computer network substantially by completing Phase I of its network upgrade and doubling its access bandwidth to the Internet

through fiber to the University of Maryland, College Park in August 2007. During the same time period, the University also conducted an upgrade to its Blackboard Learning System. The predominant value of using Blackboard is to provide instructors and their students a framework and a set of tools for facilitating online, blended, and face-to-face learning. The upgrade provided beneficial enhancements to existing functionality including improved announcements, additional grade book features, and discussion board improvements. A number of new features were also implemented with the upgrade, including the release of the Outcomes Systems used for planning, tracking, and evaluating academic performance and the ability for instructors to proactively measure and monitor student performance based on key metrics with the Early Warning System.

Goal 4: Continue efforts to create an environment that prepares students to live and work in a diverse society.

Recruiting and Retaining Minority Students

Frostburg State University continues to increase the diversity of its student body and supports statewide plans to ensure equal opportunity for Maryland's diverse citizenry (**MSP Goal 3**). The percentage of minority undergraduate students at the University grew from 20.6% of the total undergraduate population in 2007 to 23.7% in 2008 (**MFR Objective 4.3**). African-American students comprised the largest minority segment (19.6%) of all undergraduate students in the fall of 2007, exceeding the established goal of 12.3% (**MFR Objective 4.2**).

The University's minority student recruitment efforts, which are an important component of its Minority Achievement Plan, include targeted mailings to minority students who meet FSU's admission criteria, recruitment travel to urban high schools in Maryland, and University-sponsored bus trips to the campus from targeted recruitment areas. The University's summer outreach programs and opportunities through Upward Bound, Gear Up, and the Regional Math/Science Center continue to be integral in its minority student recruitment efforts.

The second-year retention rate for African-American students decreased from 80.6% in 2007 to 77.7% in 2008 (**MFR Objective 4.4**). The second year retention rate of minority students also declined over the same period of time (from 78.1% in 2007 to 75.0% in 2008); however, this rate is expected to increase in 2009 (**MFR Objective 4.5**). The University's Minority Achievement Plan incorporates several initiatives that help to increase minority student retention rates and meet or maintain established MFR goals.

The Diversity Center continues to work closely with minority student organizations to offer activities, workshops, and programs that encourage understanding of cultural differences, ensure the University's environment is welcoming and inclusive for all students, and provide strategies for academic success. In 2008, the Center worked closely with students to strengthen the Latin American Student Organization (LASO) and the Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) and developed plans to reformat the diversity component of the freshman Introduction to Higher Education course.

Minority student retention is also supported through the University's Undergraduate Education Initiative (UEI), a plan that ensures diversity issues are addressed in the curriculum. The UEI establishes Identity and Difference courses within the General Education Program that foster students' insight into the ways cultural identities and experiences shape individual perspectives of the world. Since the fall of 2005, the University has offered 26 Identity and Difference courses within 14 different disciplines.

Minority Graduation Rates

The *2004 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* emphasizes the need to improve upon graduation rates of minority students in Maryland (**MSP Goal 3**), and the strategies of Frostburg State University's Minority Achievement Plan are commensurate with this goal. The University's 2008 six-year graduation rates for African-American students (49.1%) and for all minorities (54.3%) exceed the established goals for the institution (**MFR Objectives 4.6 and 4.7**). Efforts to increase minority student graduation rates include the activities of the Black Student Alliance, Student Government Association, and the GOLD and HallSTARS! programs. These organizations and programs prepare students for campus-wide leadership roles and foster a high level of student performance and commitment to the University and the larger community. FSU's Programs for Academic Support and Study (PASS) also support minority graduation rates by providing individual and group tutoring in a wide range of subjects along with personal instruction through the University's Writing Center. Student Support Services works specifically with first-generation, low income, and/or disabled students.

Faculty Diversity

Frostburg State University is committed to fostering diversity among its faculty and staff (**MSP Goal 3**). The percentage of African-American faculty increased slightly in 2008 (from 4.2% in 2007 to 4.3% in 2008), while the percentage of female faculty experienced a slight decline (from 38.3% in 2007 to 37.3% in 2008- **MFR Objective 4.1**). In order to attract and retain highly-qualified minority faculty, the University continues to award state-supported Henry C. Welcome Fellowships. A total of eight FSU faculty members have been recipients of this prestigious award since 1998.

Complementing FSU's Minority Achievement Plan, the EEO Compliance Office's Minority Recruitment Plan offers new strategies at the level of the hiring unit for achieving a more diverse workforce at the University. Frostburg advertises available positions online through several professional organizations' websites and sends direct mailings regarding available faculty and staff positions to all USM institutions. In addition, campus search committees often directly contact historically black institutions as part of their equal employment opportunity efforts. The University also works closely with USM's Associate Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Diversity and Academic Leadership Development to identify appropriate professional organizations with minority registries.

In an effort to actively participate in the recruitment process, FSU faculty from various departments interview potential candidates from diverse backgrounds at professional conferences. The College of Education continues to be in close contact with historically black institutions, providing them with information on teaching opportunities at FSU for doctoral

candidates completing their dissertations. In addition to these recruitment strategies, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences provides departmental mentoring opportunities for all of its new full-time faculty members. The accreditation of the College of Business by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International in the spring of 2006 has also helped to attract minority faculty to departments within the college.

Goal 5: Increase recognition for the University's academic programs through national accreditations of teacher education, business and other selected programs.

Professional Accreditation

As an indication of the University's academic quality and overall effectiveness (**MSP Goal 1**), the College of Education and the Professional Education Unit were granted continued accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's Unit Accreditation Board in October 2007. Under this status, the College of Education will remain nationally accredited by NCATE and the Maryland State Department of Education for the next seven years. Frostburg's Social Work program was also granted continued accreditation for the next eight years in the summer of 2007 by the Council on Social Work Education.

Subsequent to the University reaching its MFR six-year goal of achieving professional accreditation for seven of its academic programs in FY 2006 (**MFR Objective 5.1**) the University's Computer Science department applied for accreditation in January 2008 through the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). The department is currently conducting its self study, which it will submit to ABET in July 2008. An evaluation team visit is scheduled for the fall of 2008 and the department plans to be fully accredited beginning in the fall of 2009.

Goal 6: Promote Outreach Programs that Benefit the Campus and Broader Community

Frostburg State University has been recognized in recent years by both the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) as a national model for its public service and outreach programs that connect students, faculty, and staff to the local community. The number of public service days per FTE faculty increased from 9.6 in 2006 to 9.9 in 2007, approaching the goal of 10.0 set for 2009 (**MFR Objective 6.2**). Many FSU faculty members not only serve as volunteers but also fill leadership roles for various community organizations.

Students also play key roles in the University's commitment to outreach programs and volunteerism. In FY 2008, 3,045 students volunteered or participated in service-learning opportunities, contributing over 37,375 hours. This exceeds the 2009 goal of 2,800 students being involved in community outreach (**MFR Objective 6.3**).

Educational Outreach

The University has given strong emphasis to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) initiatives that promote outreach to benefit the campus and broader community. Principal efforts are categorized into K-12 student programming, teacher training, university student training, and community outreach.

Outreach to K-12 students provides Maryland Summer Center for Gifted and Talented students with residential and non-residential options. The Maryland Summer Centers for Future Engineers Robotic Design serves high school students through two one-week offerings in which students learn how to program intelligent robotic systems and solve realistic problems. The Maryland Summer Center for Mathematics serves students grades five through nine and focuses on problem solving, data analysis, algebra, geometry, and technology. The Maryland Summer Center for Physics of Wind and Solar Power offers students in grades six through nine mathematics skills in the modeling of energy. The Savage Mountain Arts Academy offers a variety of summer workshops for high school students, including programs in creative writing, wind chamber music, and stage combat. Fifty-two students participated in three summer centers offerings in FY 2008.

The Regional Math and Science Center Program (Education Upward Bound) prepares qualified high school students for successful admission into and completion of secondary degree programs that will lead to careers in math and science. Students attending three- or six-week summer residential programs at the University also receive continuing support throughout the academic year. The Center serves students from Baltimore City and 22 counties in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

Professional development for teachers is provided through the ITQ/TOPPS Physics Teacher Training Program. The initiative is designed to help teachers gain physics content area knowledge, develop teaching strategies, integrate instructional technologies, and attain “Highly Qualified” status. A cohort of 24 teachers is currently in the second year of study in the program. Additional outreach is provided through the FSU Math Symposium, with a focus on teaching, learning, and exploration of mathematics at various levels of instruction.

Frostburg State University and the Allegany County Board of Education collaboratively developed teaching modules using enhanced technology and active learning strategies to increase student participation in Earth Science. The University’s College of Education has emphasized active learning in Science Methods for elementary majors and increased the requirement to three credit hours.

Community and student outreach is further served via five developing programs: Chemical Analysis of Coal and Shale Reserves in Western Maryland, Biodiesel Fuel Generation, Wind and Solar Energy Projects, Ethnobotanical Studies, and Nanotechnology. These programs provide study in academic disciplines, development of economic opportunities, and data to support environmental applications.

Cultural Outreach

Frostburg State University provides the local tri-state community with cultural exposure and outreach centered on professional performances, workshops, master classes, and events sponsored by the Cultural Events Series (CES). The academic departments of Music and Theatre/Dance supplement this cultural exposure through the production of student performances and guest artist series. These departments collaborate with CES to foster an appreciation for the fundamental value of the performing arts and expand its patron base within the tri-state region. In addition to the general tri-state population benefiting from the University's artistic presence in the region, special focus is aimed at underserved populations including low-income elementary school children and their families who participate in monthly arts access activities. Local high school students improve their performance and technical skills and are exposed to professional performances. Adjudicated youth from the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services camps also regularly work backstage at cultural events and attend workshops and performances. A FY 2008 survey of community arts patrons indicated 97% of those responding agree the Cultural Events Series is an important component of the community and the University.

National Service and Volunteerism

Frostburg State University's Center for Volunteerism and National Service serves as a capstone program for promoting the University's theme of "engagement and discovery," fostering opportunities for Frostburg students and faculty to engage in service-learning, volunteerism, and national service activities from Carroll to Garrett County, Maryland.

In 2007, the Center administered four volunteer, national service, and service-learning programs to help strengthen the economic and educational life of western Maryland and beyond: the VISTA Institute for Service-Learning, the *A STAR!* In Western Maryland AmeriCorps program, the *HallSTARS!* living-learning-serving community, and the FSU Student Center for Volunteerism. Through the Center for Volunteerism and National Service, Frostburg State University students, faculty, and staff have served in over 45 area non-profit agencies and community and faith-based organizations. Special signature programs included a student voter registration campaign, Special Olympics, Earth Day, and the University Neighbor's Community initiative with the City of Frostburg.

COST CONTAINMENT

Frostburg State University built upon continuing past practices and developed new methods to contain costs and increase revenue in FY 2008. Specific actions taken by the University are presented below.

Item Description	Savings/Revenue Generated
Increased profit from summer session	\$400,000
Increased profit from Intersession term	\$200,000
Received donated scientific equipment from Bayer Corporation	\$225,000
Utilized in-house labor to replace PE lighting system	\$60,000
Partnered with Allegany County Transit Authority bus service	\$50,000
Signed contract with U.S. Cellular to build a cell phone tower on campus	\$9,000
Realized net profits from Morgan Wootten basketball camp	\$150,000
Provided facilities for U.S. Geological Services	\$22,000
Provided incubator space in Tawes Hall	\$61,000
Partnered with USM Hagerstown Center	\$100,000
Provided internet services to local apartments that house FSU students	\$3,000
Realized savings from implementation of e-billing	\$200,000
Developed Student and Educational Services Division on-line forms	\$5,000
Purchased and installed University's own telephone switch (PBX)	\$165,000
Signed contract with local vendors to allow FSU students to use debit cards	\$5,000
Merged Advising Center and Career Services Offices	\$40,000
Realigned Administration and Finance Division	\$112,000
Total	\$1,807,000

Frostburg State University utilized the above expenditure reductions, revenue enhancements, cost avoidances, technological initiatives, and partnerships to contain costs in fiscal year 2008, which totaled \$1,807,000.

Response to Objective 1.3 – Sustain effective and efficient use of resources through 2009 by allocating at least 2 percent of replacement costs to facilities renewal and achieve at least 2 percent of operating budget for reallocation to priorities.

Frostburg State University's facility renewal expenditures have increased from FY 2006 to 2007 and again in FY 2008 with the completion of important state-supported facility projects. The University's expenditures continue to be more than the amount budgeted yearly.