

## FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

### **Goal 1: Address State-wide and regional workforce needs by preparing a changing student population for an era of complexity and globalization.**

As highlighted in the *2009 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education*, the State of Maryland recognizes a critical need for institutions of higher education to adopt “effective strategies to increase the supply of qualified graduates in high-demand fields and qualified worker shortage areas” (**MSP Goal 5**). Regional and statewide workforce development remains one of Frostburg State University’s (FSU) top priorities, as evidenced by its efforts to strengthen ongoing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) initiatives and academic programs in nursing and teacher education. Over the reporting period, the number of undergraduates enrolled in STEM programs increased by 3.9% (from 620 in 2010 to 644 in 2011, **Managing for Results – MFR - Objective 1.1**). Additionally, the number of STEM program graduates rose from 62 in 2010 to 75 in 2011, exceeding the MFR-established goal.

#### STEM Initiatives

The Sowers residence hall, which housed a community of 69 students in STEM-related majors for fall 2010, adopted a new student application and interview process in June 2011 to ensure that all residents are active participants in the program. During the reporting period, residents of the STEM program at Sowers participated in numerous campus events, activities, and seminars (e.g., the Western Maryland Science and Engineering Festival). In addition, the STEM program is collaborating with the on-campus bWell program, which offers joint programming to educate Sowers residents on the important role wellness plays in academic achievement.

In fall 2010, FSU began offering to an initial cohort of four students its upper-division courses required for the bachelor’s degree in engineering with a concentration in electrical engineering, in collaboration with Anne Arundel Community College through its University Consortium at the AACC Regional Higher Education Center at Arundel Mills. The program is being aggressively marketed to prospective regional students, and substantial program enrollment increases are expected in the near future.

One of the most “critical workforce needs” cited in the *2009 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* is in the STEM-related field of nursing (**MSP Goal 5**). Frostburg directly addresses this development need through its online Baccalaureate in Nursing (R.N. to B.S.N. completion program). Over the reporting period, enrollment in the R.N. to B.S.N. program has doubled (from 9 students in 2010 to 18 in 2011, **MFR Objective 1.3**). In addition, the first cohort of four students graduated from the program during the 2011 reporting cycle.

The nursing program is currently seeking accreditation through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). A site visit was held in April 2011 and notification of the outcome is expected in October 2011. For the future, the University plans to expand its nursing program to a Master of Science in Nursing, with a particular emphasis on preparing nursing faculty.

The program is also entering its second year of NSP II Phase 5 grant funding (\$273,967 over three years) from the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). The current phase of funding has been earmarked to improve recruitment efforts and retention of students through expanded interactive software and technology, development of student assessment and training for e-readiness, enhanced faculty training in online teaching, and improved online technical and student support services. In addition, a nursing faculty fellowship of \$20,000 was awarded by MHEC in October 2010. A \$25,000 grant from the Maryland Hospital Association was also awarded to fund development of partnerships with several community colleges and health systems throughout the State.

### Education

The *2009 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* recognizes that “teacher education is a linchpin in the Maryland educational system to ensure that effective teachers are preparing high-quality preK-12 students for their postsecondary education” (**MSP Goal 4**). Frostburg plays a significant role in meeting this important workforce development need.

Over the reporting period, FSU experienced a decline in both teacher education enrollments (from 627 in 2010 to 573 in 2011) and in the number of undergraduates and MAT post-baccalaureate students completing teacher training (from 170 in 2010 to 161 in 2011 - **MFR Objective 1.2**). Also during the reporting cycle, the 2011 PRAXIS II pass rates for education students remained high at 96 percent.

The recent economic recession and lack of teacher positions in the region have had a significant impact on teacher education program application and enrollment numbers. In addition, the decrease in the number of teacher training completers over the reporting period can be partly attributed to declining student enrollment in the 2005 and 2006 teacher education cohorts. The University expects that the number of students completing teacher training will rise as teacher education enrollments increase.

### Off-Campus Courses

The number of students enrolled in courses delivered off-campus increased by 23.8% (from 3,858 in 2010 to 4,777 in 2011 - **MFR Objective 1.4**). This significant increase is attributed to the expansion of academic programs offered at off-site instructional locations and increased enrollments in the University’s online course initiative.

Frostburg began offering its baccalaureate program in psychology at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) to an initial cohort of six students in fall 2010. Through a combination of on-site, online, and interactive video network course offerings, students are able to complete FSU’s B.S. in Psychology without ever leaving the Hagerstown region.

The *2009 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* cites the importance of increasing “the quantity and preparedness of Maryland’s teachers” in order to “meet current and emerging workforce needs” (**MSP Goal 5**). To address this need, FSU continues to expand upon its off-

campus teacher preparation programs, including FSU's Early Childhood Elementary Education program at USMH and a collaborative Ed.D. in Educational Policy and Leadership program with the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP).

Enrollment in the College of Education's Early Childhood Elementary Education program at USMH continues to grow (from 20 students in the fall of 2009 to 25 in the fall of 2010). As of May 2011, a total of 32 students have graduated from the program.

Among the most important new University initiatives is the development of an Ed.D. program in collaboration with College Park. The University of Maryland, College Park received approval from MHEC to offer an Ed.D. in Educational Policy and Leadership at USMH. Frostburg State University faculty are involved in teaching in the program, sitting on dissertation committees, advising students, and gaining valuable experience as the University prepares its proposal for an FSU Ed.D. in the near future.

The State of Maryland recognizes that distance education is "an important tool to help postsecondary institutions become more accessible" (**MSP Goal 2**). As a leader in distance learning, Frostburg continues to enhance online educational opportunities through its ongoing summer and Intersession online initiatives, which have experienced continued growth since their inception. For 2011 Intersession, 70 courses were offered and total enrollments reached 767 (a 5.9% increase from Intersession 2010). In the summer of 2011, FSU offered 136 online course sections and experienced a 6.2% increase in online course enrollments. In addition, the University's MBA was ranked ninth nationally by GetEducated.com in August 2010 as a best value in AACSB accredited online MBA programs. This award, in addition to the program offering all of its coursework entirely online, has contributed to a 25.2% increase in MBA enrollments from fall 2009 to fall 2010.

**Goal 2: Promote an institutional image of academic distinction and ensure stable institutional enrollment through admission of students prepared to succeed in college and persist to graduation.**

#### Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates

The second-year retention rate of FSU undergraduates increased from 72.0% in 2010 to 74.0% in 2011 (**MFR Objective 2.1**). At the same time, the six-year graduation rate of undergraduates decreased (from 60.5% in 2010 to 56.3% in 2011, **MFR Objective 2.2**). The strategies identified by the *Closing the Achievement Gap* Task Force (see *Campus Response to Question Raised by the Commission, Objective 2.2* below) reflect the University's commitment to improve students' academic quality and increase student persistence to graduation.

#### Undergraduate Minority Student Recruitment and Enrollment

Frostburg State University is a multicultural campus where diversity is highly valued. The Cultural Diversity Program was updated in February 2011 and submitted to the University System of Maryland and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. As outlined below, the University has made significant progress in achieving the five goals of this program.

The percentage of African-American undergraduate students decreased slightly over the reporting period, from 23.7% of the total undergraduate population in 2010 to 23.2% in 2011 (**MFR Objective 2.3**). At the same time, the University experienced a slight increase in the overall percentage of undergraduate minority students (from 28.3% in 2010 to 28.9% in 2011 - **MFR Objective 2.4**). Both performance measures meet established MFR benchmarked goals.

#### Undergraduate Minority Student Retention and Graduation Rates

The University's second-year retention rates for undergraduate African-American and all minority students increased over the reporting period. The retention rate for African-American students increased from 72.0% in 2010 to 73.3% in 2011, while the rate of all minorities increased from 72.0% in 2010 to 72.4% in 2011 (**Objectives 2.5 and 2.7**). In contrast, the University experienced a decline in the six-year graduation rate of both groups over the same time period: from 53.9% in 2010 to 49.7% in 2011 for African-Americans (**MFR Objective 2.6**) and from 55.3% in 2010 to 50.5% in 2011 for all minorities (**MFR Objective 2.8**).

In an effort to increase the graduation rate of minority and first-generation students, the University's Diversity Center and Advising Center continue to provide group tutoring and personal instruction. These programs also assist students in developing the skills necessary for academic success and ultimately for obtaining a degree.

The FSU Diversity Center's Academic Monitoring Program enrolled 280 students for the fall of 2010, which represented a significant drop from the 525 students who participated in the program in fall 2009. This decrease was due to the fact that all first-time freshmen participated in the new MAP-Works monitoring program. Of the students who participated in the Academic Monitoring Program, 124 (44%) were self-identified as minority and 156 (56%) as White. Ninety-eight percent of the minority students and 96 percent of the White students were eligible to continue their studies at FSU for the spring 2011 semester.

The Advising Center serves undergraduate students who have not yet decided on a major, those considering changing majors, and any students who just need assistance in making a successful transition to FSU. There has been a steady growth of students taking advantage of the Advising Center. The Center had 673 student appointments in AY 2009-2010, a 67 percent increase over the prior academic year.

### **Goal 3: Recruit and retain diverse and talented faculty and staff committed to student learning and University goals.**

#### Cultural Diversity of Faculty and Staff

A key goal of the *2009 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* is the "cultivation, education, recruitment, and retention of more minority faculty and professional staff throughout State-supported higher education" (**MSP Goal 3**). Through the initiatives outlined in its Cultural Diversity Program, Frostburg State University continues to commit resources to recruiting and retaining high quality faculty and staff members. Over the reporting period, the University

experienced no change in the percentage of African-American faculty (3.7% for both 2010 and 2011), while the percentage of female faculty increased slightly (from 38.8% in 2010 to 40.0% in 2011). The latter performance measure meets established MFR benchmarks.

In an effort to attract more African-American faculty, the Division of Academic Affairs and Office of Human Resources (OHR) continue to build working relationships with Historically Black Institutions (HBI) in the region that offer doctoral programs. Program chairs and deans of graduate programs at these institutions are asked to distribute FSU job announcements to their doctoral candidates. Further, doctoral students interested in learning more about Frostburg are asked if they would like to meet with an FSU faculty member and/or OHR representative. Through these meetings, prospective minority faculty can learn more about Frostburg's desire to develop a more diverse faculty and staff as well as the teaching and research opportunities available at FSU. In addition, the Office of Human Resources has requested an increase in its budget to allow for new recruitment initiatives, including receptions for potential applicants, attendance at job fairs, and travel to historically black institutions.

#### Alumni Follow-Up Survey

The results of the 2011 Alumni Follow-Up Survey showed an increase in the satisfaction of Frostburg graduates with the education they received in preparation for their employment career and a slight decrease in their satisfaction with advanced education preparation (**MFR Objectives 3.3 and 3.4**). Specifically, the percentage of graduates who rated their Frostburg education as satisfactory in meeting their needs for job preparation rose from 89% in 2008 to 95% in 2011. At the same time, Frostburg graduates who felt their education provided them with satisfactory skills in preparation for an advanced degree declined from 95% in 2008 to 94% in 2011. In addition, the 2011 follow-up survey showed a decrease in the percentage of graduates who were employed within one year of graduation. The percentage declined from 94% in 2008 to 90% in 2011 (**MFR Objective 5.1**).

#### **Goal 4: Enhance facilities and the campus environment in order to support and reinforce student learning.**

Continued reductions in state funding have made it difficult for the University to restore money to areas impacted by past cost containment measures. Instead, additional cost-cutting measures have become necessary, including temporary reductions in faculty and staff salaries. Nonetheless, faculty and staff perspectives on fiscal planning have played a major role in shaping financial decisions. Administrators regularly meet with key governance bodies of the Faculty Senate, including the Faculty Concerns Committee and the Institutional Priorities and Resources Committee. The University's operating budget can also be accessed through Frostburg's website.

Frostburg has consistently met the Board of Regents' directive to invest two percent (2%) of the replacement value of its buildings annually into facilities renewal (**MFR Objective 4.1**). Upgrading the campus facilities is a high priority of FSU's new strategic plan. In fiscal year 2012, the projected amount designated for facilities renewal was reduced to meet the cost containment reductions imposed by the State.

## **Goal 5: Promote economic development in western Maryland and in the region.**

### Headcount Enrollment

Frostburg recognizes that postsecondary education acts as a catalyst for economic development on both State and national levels (**MSP Goal 4**). During the reporting period, FSU's overall headcount enrollment increased by 1.6% (from 5,385 in 2010 to 5,470 in 2011 - **MFR Objective 5.1**). The University's fall 2010 total headcount represents the largest overall headcount enrollment in FSU history. Also over the reporting period, the number of students graduating with a bachelor's degree increased by 11.7% (from 761 in 2010 to 850 in 2011).

### Economic Development Initiatives

While there was no growth in the number of economic development initiatives over the reporting period (**MFR Objective 5.3**), FSU expects to meet this performance measure in the near future and further "promote economic growth and vitality" in the region (**MSP Goal 5**).

Over the last several years, the Tawes Technology Incubator has successfully served as an on-campus facility for small, innovative businesses. With Tawes Hall scheduled to be demolished in 2012 to make room for the University's new Center for Communications and Information Technology, it is expected that the current tenants will relocate to the Allegany Business Center.

One of the most important new tenants of the Allegany Business Center will be the University's Sustainable Energy Research Facility (SERF). This new facility, scheduled for completion in the winter of 2011, along with the University's ongoing exploration of alternative forms of energy production, including the Wind-Solar Energy Program (WISE), will quickly establish FSU as an important regional center for energy sustainable energy technologies and research.

The University is also committed to community outreach projects in Hagerstown and Frederick via its involvement in the area Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Additionally, College of Business faculty members are working closely with the City of Hagerstown to help structure a planned small business incubator. The incubator is slated to open in fall 2012 and will be located adjacent to the USMH center. Both the incubator and the SBDC will allow FSU's College of Business to continue further outreach and nurture additional visibility for University programs.

## **Goal 6: Promote activities that demonstrate the University's educational distinction.**

### The University Endowment

In June 2011, the University completed its comprehensive \$15 million campaign focusing on the themes of student, academic, and regional and cultural enrichment. The campaign exceeded expectations and passed its goal by \$1.7 million thanks to the generosity of the University's friends and supporters. In addition, the Frostburg State University Foundation Board has added a

new initiative that will extend beyond the end of the current campaign. The Board has identified a need for merit-based scholarships and will raise \$2.5 million for the Presidential Merit Scholarship program. The intent of the Board's initiative is to provide additional merit-based scholarships funded by philanthropic efforts to allow the University to redirect state funds toward more need-based scholarships.

### Educational Outreach

In addition, Frostburg's numerous and nationally recognized community-based programs and activities promote the civic engagement of its students, faculty, and staff as well as strengthen the institution's bonds with the Western Maryland region. Over the reporting period, student participation in community outreach activities decreased from 3,737 in 2010 to 3,327 in 2011.

The University's Regional Math/Science Center is a federally-funded Upward Bound academic support program that helps students develop to their full potential and achieve success in math and science fields. Summer enrollments have increased over the reporting period, from 38 in summer 2010 to 43 in summer 2011. Sixty percent (60%) of the 2011 summer participants were returning students (a 10% increase from 2010). In addition, the overall retention rate of students participating in the program was 80% for both 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

Through a grant from the Maryland State Department of Education implemented in the AY 2010-11, a total of 45 local teachers have received specialized training in working with students who have processing disorders, severe reading disorders, and disorders associated with autism. As a result of this training, 40 local middle and high school students have received individualized tutoring services to support them as they take the state assessments. Master of Arts in Teaching program candidates have also received support for field experiences in special education, specifically providing tutoring services to middle and high school students.

In addition, the grant-funded A-STAR in Western Maryland's Read to Succeed Program continues to strengthen local students' reading and writing abilities by providing free tutorial services. For AY 2010-2011, a total of 53 FSU student volunteers engaged in one-on-one mentoring sessions five times per week with an average of 30 local K-8 students at the University and in the City of Cumberland. These student volunteers served a total of 1,443 hours. The results of pre- and post-testing showed that the tutored students' reading skills increased by an average of 6.4 percent.

### **Campus Response to Question Raised by the Commission**

***Objective 2.2 – Increase the second-year retention rate of FSU undergraduates from 74% in 2009 to 76% in 2014.***

*The second-year retention rate decreased to 72.0% in 2010 at a time when retention rates increased across the state. Explain the factors that have been identified as contributing to the decline in the retention rate, discuss the extension of supplemental instruction and sophomore year experience programs discussed in the 2010 PAR, and describe any other specific strategies employed by the University to increase this performance measure.*

Frostburg State University is committed to improving student retention rates. The University's current programs to improve student persistence are described below. The decrease in the second-year retention rate of all first-time, full-time students at the University (from 74.0% in 2009 to 72.0% in 2010) can be partly attributed to an increase in voluntary withdrawals. For the current reporting period, this performance measure has increased to 74.0 percent.

#### The University Advisory Council on Retention and the Retention Work of the Colleges

The University Advisory Council on Retention has focused its recent work on two primary areas: the need for internal marketing and an examination of the sophomore year. The council believes that improving student persistence at Frostburg requires the University to better communicate its success stories to the entire campus community. The council also believes the University must improve programming for second-year students if persistence at the University is to be improved. As of this writing, the Council continues to explore these concerns.

The colleges plan to increase student persistence in their programs through improved student advising. Faculty advisors in the College of Business (COB) are supported by a central advising office where students are informed of degree requirements and helped with course selection. This model allows business faculty to focus more of their advising time with students on career counseling and mentoring. The College of Education (COE) and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) use a faculty-only advising model. However, both are examining alternative options. The dean's office in the COE is currently working on establishing an advising center that will, similar to the COB, provide supplementary advising services for students and support resources for faculty. In the CLAS, a college-level committee has recently been established to develop a plan for improving advising and to conduct a feasibility study regarding the establishment of a CLAS advising office.

#### Closing the Achievement Gap

As part of a wider University System of Maryland initiative, the University established under the Provost a *Closing the Achievement Gap* Task Force to identify and implement strategies to address the disparity in retention and graduation rates between men and women at the University.<sup>1</sup> These strategies are briefly identified below.

- *Implementing Course Redesign* – The University successfully piloted and implemented its course redesign of General Psychology in 2008. The redesign was part of the USM Course Redesign Initiative in conjunction with the National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT). Students enrolled in redesigned courses perform significantly better than those in

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<sup>1</sup> Frostburg State University has identified the achievement gap as significant differences between retention and graduation rates for males and females. Female students show stronger retention and graduation rates than male students. Frostburg State University found few differences in retention or graduation based on race or household income. Therefore, FSU's achievement gap efforts are designed to narrow the differences in attainment between male and female students. The strategies developed by the task force were informed, in part, by the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement, which is used by the institution to measure student involvement at the University.



traditionally taught courses.<sup>2</sup> A course redesign of Developmental Math (DVMT 100 Intermediate Algebra) was piloted in the spring 2011 semester with full implementation expected in fall of 2011. Plans are also underway to utilize course redesign in the Department of Communication Studies.

- *Providing Supplemental Instruction* – Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a proven method of academic support that utilizes peer-assisted, activity-based study sessions. The major difference between this approach and traditional tutoring is that it is integrated into the course design rather than being student-sought external support. Supplements attached to specific courses have been found to be effective in raising student achievement and are more cost-efficient compared to other methods of support. In the past year at FSU, SI has been piloted in the General Psychology course redesign and in the University's MATH 209 Probability and Statistics course, which is one of several math courses eligible to fulfill General Education Program requirements and which is required for some majors.
- *MAP-Works* – A new retention initiative is the University's utilization of MAP-Works, an early warning system that allows faculty, staff, and coaches to record contacts and issue alerts about students who may be experiencing difficulty in adjusting to the academic and social life of college. The aim of the program is to help students address issues early, before academic and social problems become serious. The expectation is that appropriate interventions will improve the retention rate of the freshman cohort. The program started in fall 2010 with 97% of first-time, full-time freshmen participating and 95 faculty, staff, and coaches using MAP-Works to communicate and interact with these students, share notes with other faculty/staff concerning students, and create alerts that involve specific personnel and offices in helping students resolve problems and connect with campus resources.
- *Offering Extensive Student Support and Tutoring Services* – Frostburg continues to monitor and improve upon strategies that enhance the retention and graduation rates of all its students. These strategies include the Center for Advising and Career Services (see Goal 2 above) and the University's academic support services and monitoring programs offered through the Office of Student Support Services that include tutoring, math support, study groups, peer mentoring, academic advising, career development, and assistance with the financial aid process.
- *Increasing Need-Based Financial Aid* – An important goal for FY 2010 was to increase institutional need-based financial aid. Frostburg reviewed its processes for defining and distributing institutional need-based categories of aid in an effort to identify additional aid resources for all students. The retention rate for the fall 2008 first-time male student cohort

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<sup>2</sup> Students from the redesigned General Psychology sections in more recent semesters performed significantly better (77 percent course average ) than students from the initial redesign sections during the pilot semester (70 percent course average). In turn, students from course redesign sections performed significantly better than students in the traditional sections that did not undergo course redesign (65 percent course average). These improvements in learning outcomes also resulted in significant cost savings (from \$90/student to \$25/student).

receiving institutional need-based aid is 73 percent as opposed to 69 percent for those receiving no institutional need-based aid.

### **COST CONTAINMENT**

Frostburg State University developed new methods and used continued past practices to contain costs and increase revenue in fiscal year 2011. The specific actions taken by FSU in FY 2011 are listed below:

<b>Item Description</b>	<b>Savings/Revenue Generated</b>
Signed contract with local vendors to allow FSU students to use debit cards	\$5,000
Negotiated beverage contract	\$118,000
Realized discount for UPS service	\$2,000
Completed curricular transformation in Psychology/Math-reduced sections	\$48,000
Reconfigured Human Resources duties	\$71,000
Realized savings from the use of energy efficient lighting systems	\$20,000
Recognized savings from shower head replacement on campus	\$10,000
Partnered w/ Allegany County to provide enhanced bus service to FSU students	\$29,000
Signed contract with US Cellular to build a cell phone tower on campus	\$16,000
Realized net profits from Morgan Wootten basketball camp	\$150,000
Provided incubator space in Tawes Hall	\$33,000
Partnered with USM Hagerstown Center	\$100,000
Realized savings from installation of occupancy sensors on campus	\$6,000
Received a rebate from Allegheny Power for the purchase of occupancy sensors	\$5,000
Partnered with Aramark for capital improvements in the Lane Center	\$1,200,000
Realized savings from implementation of e-billing	\$200,000
Replaced exit signs on campus with Light Emitting Diode (LED) signs	\$4,000
Utilized Advance data system	\$3,000
Set all printers to default duplex printing in all computer labs & the Library	\$5,000
Developed Student & Educational Services Division on-line forms	\$5,000
Replaced Framptom Hall with energy efficient roof & air-cooled chiller	\$4,000
Realized savings from implementing the billing module in PeopleSoft	\$5,000
Utilized in-house labor for computing projects instead of a 3 <sup>rd</sup> party vendor	\$12,000
Implemented direct deposit for student refunds	\$15,000
Realized savings from switching to virtual servers	\$30,000
Saved using payroll direct deposit and online access to pay information	\$6,000
Created an effecient parking interface and produced electronic 1099T forms	\$7,000
Realized savings from on-line efforts in Human Resources	\$5,000
Increased number of on-line course offerings in summer and winter sessions	\$600,000
Purchased and installed University's own telephone switch (PBX)	\$165,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,879,000</b>

Frostburg State University recognized expenditure reductions, revenue enhancements, cost avoidances, technological initiatives and partnerships to contain costs for FY 2011. These actions total \$2,879,000 for FSU.