

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.

Frostburg State University (FSU) recognizes the importance of developing a highly educated and technologically competent workforce to meet the needs of a modern knowledge-based economy. In congruence with *Maryland Ready*, the state's 2013 Plan for Postsecondary Education (**MSP Goal 2**), Frostburg is committed to advancing "the educational goals of all by promoting and supporting access, affordability, and completion."

An important goal of FSU's strategic plan is to "develop and support academic programs and student services that prepare a changing student population for an era of complexity and globalization." Frostburg's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) initiatives and academic programs in nursing and teacher education serve as means to achieve this goal. The number of undergraduates enrolled in STEM programs increased by 14.1% over the reporting period: from 752 in 2013 to 858 in 2014 (**Managing for Results – MFR - Objective 1.1**). Additionally, the number of STEM program graduates rose from 114 in 2013 to 150 in 2014, exceeding the MFR-established goal.

STEM Initiatives and Programs

Frostburg's STEM initiatives include a living learning community that was represented by 78 STEM majors in the fall of 2013. Additionally, the 2013-2014 academic year featured an increased focus on academic success, and the residential community has been renamed *STEM Scholars @ Sowers* to reflect this focus. The STEM Scholars Resident Peer Mentor and faculty coordinators have collaborated with other faculty and staff to develop programming on strategies for academic success.

As part of its strategic focus on STEM programs and on the recommendation of the Department of Physics and Engineering's accreditation site visit report, the University authorized the hiring of a new engineering faculty member. In the fall of 2013, the department successfully completed a search for a new full-time tenure-track faculty in the area of mechanical engineering. This faculty member has the responsibility of developing experiential learning opportunities and assisting in development of the lower-level design courses.

The *2013 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* reinforces the need for postsecondary education institutions to "provide workforce training in STEM-related fields" (**MSP Goal 5**). Frostburg directly addresses this workforce need through its R.N. to B.S.N. completion program, which has experienced a 124% increase in enrollment over the reporting period (from 100 students in 2013 to 224 in 2014 - **MFR Objective 1.3**). The University also awarded degrees to 51 B.S. in Nursing students in 2014 (a 219% increase from 2013). Additionally, the Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) program was approved in May 2014 by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), the University System of Maryland (USM), and the Board of Nursing. This new program, which began enrolling students in fall 2014, provides a professional pathway for students to pursue graduate work in nursing.

Education

Responsive to evolving workforce demands, Frostburg also embraces its responsibility to strengthen public schools through the preparation of certified teacher education graduates and preK-20 partnerships. Increased opportunities for the continuing education of teachers are achieved through the expansion of outreach and clinical partnerships with the Professional Development Schools in collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and MHEC.

In February 2014, Frostburg became the first higher education institution in the state of Maryland to receive approval for a dual elementary-middle school teacher certification. The certification was created to address a gap in the traditional preparation of teachers and was in response to the needs of Maryland's public schools. The dual certification provides the balance between knowledge of educational development that comes with elementary preparation and a deeper level of knowledge in a content area, along with classes and field experiences geared particularly to middle school students' needs. Additionally, the FSU/UMUC-Europe Teacher Education Collaborative, a joint program to offer undergraduate teacher education in Europe as part of a Department of Defense contract with UMUC, began in fall 2014.

Over the reporting period, Frostburg experienced a decline in both teacher education enrollments (from 512 in 2013 to 482 in 2014) and in the number of undergraduates and MAT post-baccalaureate students completing teacher training (from 161 in 2013 to 129 in 2014 - **MFR Objective 1.2**). Also during the reporting cycle, the 2014 PRAXIS II pass rates for education students declined slightly from 97% in 2013 to 96% in 2014.

Off-Campus Courses

Frostburg effectively uses technology to enhance instruction and provide greater access to its curricular offerings. The University's online courses and academic programs also assist students in completing their programs of study in a timely manner and allow non-traditional students to earn credentials required for career advancement.

As a leader in distance learning, FSU continues to enhance online educational opportunities through its summer and Intersession online initiatives, which have experienced continued growth since their inception. For Intersession 2014, 67 course sections were offered and total enrollments reached 702. In the summer of 2014, Frostburg offered 214 online course sections and experienced a 5.5% increase in online course enrollments from the previous year. In February 2014, Frostburg's fully online M.S. in Recreation and Parks Management was ranked a "Best Buy" among the management and administration master's programs by GetEducated.com, the consumer guide to online colleges. This program also ranked tenth among all competing options nationwide.

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.

Frostburg contributes to the state of Maryland's completion goal by providing a strong support network focused on student success and persistence. Programs and strategies that help to improve student

retention and graduation rates include FSU's partnership with Noel-Levitz Higher Education Consulting, the Academic Success Network, the Beacon early warning system, the First-Year Experience program, the course redesign initiative, and institutional need-based undergraduate financial aid. In addition, minority retention and graduation rates improved over the reporting period.

Partnership with Noel-Levitz Higher Education Consulting

Beginning in the fall of 2013, Frostburg began a partnership with Noel-Levitz Higher Education Consulting to assist with undergraduate recruitment efforts, student retention, the financial aid awarding process, and market analysis. The firm undertook an extensive review of the institution's efforts to promote student persistence and graduation; made numerous recommendations; and worked with administrators to create an action plan that established retention initiatives, upgraded academic support programs, and developed new processes and tools for AY 2014-2015.

Admissions counselors were extensively trained in territory management strategies and given access to the Noel-Levitz Forecast Plus tool to help focus their efforts on the prospective students who are most likely to ultimately enroll. The University also worked with Noel-Levitz to develop recruitment messages, marketing materials, and a web presence for potential students, and deliver messages about campus life. These efforts have helped to increase new student enrollment for fall 2014. The number of first-time students has increased from 897 in fall 2013 to 961 for fall 2014. Similarly, transfer student enrollment increased from 507 to 570 over the same time period.

Academic Success Network

Beginning in the fall of 2013, the provost established a Working Group on Retention, which met several times during the semester. Working closely with Noel-Levitz, the group formulated the Academic Success Network (ASN), which consists of the Programs for Advancing Student Success, Student Support Services, Disability Support Services, and the newly established Center for Academic Advising and Retention (CAAR). Designed to serve all undergraduates, the CAAR provides a system of individualized advising and intervention to assist students in developing strategies for personal problem solving. The center also monitors freshman engagement through a support network that includes faculty, academic advisors, coaches, and peer mentors. The ASN's purpose is to provide a unified approach to persistence efforts under one administrative umbrella.

Beacon Early Warning System

Frostburg has seen a dramatic increase in the number of faculty and staff utilizing its Beacon early warning system - from 71 users in spring 2013 to 153 in spring 2014. All students and faculty were enrolled in the Beacon system in September 2013. In addition, all coaches and select advisors to student organizations were also enrolled and connected to their athletes and program participants so that they would have the ability to respond to updates or alerts posted by instructors. The number of updates and alerts posted also increased significantly over the reporting period: from 681 in AY 2012-2013 to 2,853 in AY 2013-2014. Eighty percent of freshmen (776 students) completed the Student Strengths Inventory (SSI) as part of their Introduction to Higher Education course and were scored on six non-cognitive factors. These scores were then used to determine individual risk indices for retention probably and academic success.

The First-Year Experience Program

Frostburg continues to recognize the critical nature of students' first year on campus and provides opportunities to better integrate these students into campus life, both socially and academically. In AY 2013-2014, members of the First-Year Experience (FYE) Work Group determined that, in order for the FYE program to be successful, it must focus on the teaching of core skills and the implementation of strategies for students' academic success. The group conducted surveys and campus forums to solicit input from faculty and staff. Four forums in AY 2013-2014 addressed topics such as past survey data from students and instructors, curricular design, workload, resources, and second-semester and summer programming.

The *Championship Forum*, a program funded by a Maryland College Access Challenge Grant and designed to improve the persistence rate of Pell-awarded, academically at-risk freshman and sophomore male students, continued for fall 2013 and concluded in spring 2014. Program participants met regularly with a coach/mentor; attended workshops on learning strategies, financial literacy, and personal development; and participated in weekly study halls with tutors. In AY 2013-2014, fifty-two students participated in the program, with 94.1% enrolled in fall 2013 semester and 90.1% returning for spring 2014. Both rates were 20% higher than the persistence rate of a comparable cohort of non-participants. In addition, 90.4% of the participants were in good academic standing at the conclusion of the spring 2014 semester.

In March 2014, another Maryland College Access Challenge Grant was awarded to FSU, allowing for the *Championship Forum* program to continue for a third year with a new cohort of students. Of the 43 participants in the spring 2014 semester, 84.1% ended the semester in good academic standing. Their first full semester in the program will take place in fall 2014.

Course Redesign

For fall 2013, four FSU departments applied the National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT) model to selected introductory courses in biology, chemistry, nursing, and mass communication. Previous redesign efforts have resulted in increased course pass rates, reduced course bottlenecks, and a narrowing the gender gap, suggesting students enrolled in redesigned courses perform significantly better than those in traditionally taught courses. Students from the redesigned General Psychology sections in more recent semesters performed significantly better (77% course average) than students from the initial redesign sections during the pilot semester (70% course average). In turn, students from course redesign sections performed significantly better than students in the traditional sections (65% course average). These improvements in learning outcomes have also resulted in significant cost savings (from \$90/student to \$25/student).

Institutional Need-Based Undergraduate Financial Aid

An important University goal is to increase institutional need-based financial aid for undergraduate students. As part of the enhancement funding process, Frostburg reviewed its processes for defining and distributing institutional need-based aid. The University's enhancement fund strategy included the increased allocation of need-based student financial aid to make education more affordable. More than 80% of FSU students receive some form of financial aid. Spending on institutional need-based (1108)

undergraduate financial aid has increased by 55% between 2007 and 2013. Specifically, FSU increased its undergraduate institutional need-based financial aid from \$2,140,689 in fiscal 2011 to \$2,734,180 in fiscal 2013. Further, the University increased the average award from \$1,464 in fiscal 2012 to \$1,667 in fiscal 2013. Frostburg intends to continue increasing the amount of need-based awards allocated to students over the coming years.

Undergraduate Minority Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Persistence, and Graduation

Frostburg's minority student population represented 36.5% of its overall undergraduate population in 2014 (**MFR Objective 2.4**). Additionally, African-American student headcount increased from 25.0% in 2013 to 27.0% in 2014 (**MFR Objective 2.3**). Both of these performance measures meet established MFR benchmarks.

The University strives to maintain a diverse student population by continuing to improve the retention and graduation rates of its minority students. For 2014, FSU's second-year retention rates for African Americans (80.0%) and minorities (78.0%) exceed that of the total student population (77.0%). The retention rates for all three of these groups increased significantly from 2013 to 2014 - from 76.0% to 80.0% for African Americans, from 74.0% to 78.0% for all minorities, and from 72.0% to 77.0% for all first-time, full-time students (**MFR Objectives 2.1, 2.5, and 2.7**). Six-year graduation rates also rose over the reporting period: from 47.4% to 53.3% for African-Americans, from 46.3% to 52.6% for all minorities, and from 52.6% to 56.1% for all first-time, full-time students (**MFR Objectives 2.2, 2.6, and 2.8**).

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

Faculty Workload Ad Hoc Committee

The Faculty Workload Ad Hoc Committee was formed in November 2013 and charged by the Chair of Faculty and the Faculty Senate with reviewing processes and providing recommendations and rationale for proposed changes to current faculty workload policies. The committee conducted an in-depth literature review and compared Frostburg's current workload guidelines to USM policies in order to ensure fairness and equitability across all colleges and departments. The committee will continue to evaluate specific policies during the fall 2014 semester and will submit a final report to the Chair of Faculty in November 2014.

Faculty Salary Equity Study

In September 2013, the Institutional Priorities and Resources (IPR) Committee of the Faculty Senate was charged by the president with developing a prioritized list of expenditure recommendations that would have the greatest positive impact on faculty morale, student instruction, and the institution as a whole. During the fall of 2013, the IPR Committee conducted research and identified priority areas for spending that would guide the University as resources become available. In its April 2014 report, the committee determined that the faculty Salary Equity Model was the fairest and most effective way to address problems with salary inversion/compression and relatively low salary levels.

Cultural Diversity of Faculty and Staff

The University includes in its Cultural Diversity Program several strategies that focus on the effective recruitment, enrollment, and retention of faculty and staff from traditionally underrepresented groups. Over the reporting period, the University experienced a slight decrease in the percentage of African-American faculty (from 3.7% in 2013 to 3.6% in 2014) and the percentage of female faculty (from 41.0% in 2013 to 40.0% in 2014 – **MFR Objective 3.1**). The latter performance measure continues to meet established MFR benchmarks.

The need for diversity is emphasized in all employee searches, specifically in the recruitment of female, black, and Latino faculty and staff. Over the reporting period, minority applicants represented 23% of all applicants, 26% of candidates in campus interviews, and 6.1 % of applicants recommended for hire. Frostburg also works to create a welcoming and safe environment that promotes the understanding of diversity both domestically and internationally.

Faculty and Staff Development Opportunities

In FY 2014, the Office of Human Resources provided several professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. These opportunities included a day-long professional development experience in April 2014 entitled *Creating a World of Experiences through Leadership* and a leadership development series entitled the *Employee Development and Leadership Series* in August 2014. Topics included managing an increasingly diverse workforce and fostering an inclusive workplace environment characterized by fairness, understanding, mutual respect, and civility.

Professional Accreditation

The University received notification in August 2014 that its B.S. in Engineering concentrations in Materials Engineering and Electrical Engineering were accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) through 2020. In addition, Frostburg's B.S. in Engineering program concentration in Electrical Engineering offered at Arundel Mills Regional Higher Education Center also was accredited through 2020. Since these programs join FSU's already ABET-accredited Collaborative Mechanical Engineering Program, there was no increase to the number of programs awarded professional accreditation (**MFR Objective 3.2**). Additionally, the undergraduate secondary social studies teacher education program received national recognition in August 2014 from the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) for Frostburg's reaccreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

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

As outlined in its strategic plan, Frostburg is committed to building, renovating, and improving major academic, student life, and housing facilities consistent with 21st century technology and environmental standards and technology. Budget constraints in FY 2014 limited the amount of funding spent on facilities and allowed for only a 0.6% distribution in FY 2014. Additionally, the percentage of operating budget reallocation decreased to 1.7% (**MFR Objective 4.1**). The Cost Containment section below outlines expenditure reductions, revenue enhancements, cost avoidances, technological initiatives, and partnerships that helped to contain costs over the reporting period.

In addition to renovations in existing facilities (e.g., the Guild Center, Cambridge Hall, and the Cordts Physical Education Center), the University also completed several new facilities projects in FY 2014. The Center for Communications and Information Technology (CCIT) opened in August 2014 and is now home to the University's television station; the NPR affiliate station; the Instructional Technology department; the academic departments of Mass Communication, Computer Science, and Mathematics; and the Graphic Design minor. In addition, an upgrade to the Bobcat Stadium were completed in summer 2014. Over the 2014 legislative session, funding was approved for the construction of an FSU Public Safety building that will house University Police, which is slated for the planning phase in FY 2015 and for construction to begin in FY 2016.

Goal 5: Promote economic development in Western Maryland and in the region.

Headcount Enrollment

Frostburg's overall headcount enrollment over the reporting period increased from 5,421 in 2013 to 5,474 in 2014 - **MFR Objective 5.1**). Also over the reporting period, the number of students graduating with a bachelor's degree rose from 969 in 2013 to 1,011 in 2014.

Economic Development Initiatives

As cited in the *Maryland Ready* State Plan, institutions of higher education must help to meet the economic development and public service needs of the state and region (**MSP Goal 5**). Frostburg State University is an important and significant contributor to the economic prosperity of Western Maryland. With the inclusion of a newly funded Geochemistry Lab, the number of University economic development initiatives grew to ten over the reporting period (**MFR Objective 5.3**), including the well-established Allegany Business Center at Frostburg State University and participation with the Maryland Industrial Partnerships (MIPS), which are funding research and development projects between FSU faculty members and regional companies.

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

Educational Outreach

Frostburg continues to provide increased opportunities for students to engage in service learning, volunteerism, and community service. Over the reporting period, student participation in community outreach activities rose from 4,055 in 2013 to 4,121 in 2014 (**MFR Objective 6.2**). In addition, Frostburg's EHOSTARS program, a living-learning-serving community, received two statewide service awards in November 2013: the Community Partnership Award from Maryland-DC Campus Compact and a Governor's Service Award as a Special AmeriCorps Honoree. These awards came as A STAR! in Western Maryland, the AmeriCorps program of which EHOSTARS is a part, marked its 20th year at the University.

In September 2013, Frostburg was selected to participate in a national initiative on civic learning and democratic engagement, one of 73 colleges and universities nationwide designated as a Lead Institution by NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, the leading voice for the student affairs profession. As a participating institution in NASPA's initiative, the University will continue to

encourage students' civic development through thoughtful community partnerships, engaging leadership opportunities, and democratic participation.

Frostburg has also been honored by the Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS) as a leader among institutions of higher education for its support of volunteerism, service-learning, and civic engagement for the past three years by admitting the University to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll (PHECSHR). Due to a shift in the awarding schedule for CNCS, FSU has again applied for the PHECSHR and expect to be admitted for the fourth year in a row when the honor roll is announced in fall 2014.

The University remains committed to developing high school students' abilities in the mathematics and science fields through its federally-funded, Upward Bound academic support program, the Regional Math/Science Center. The grant-funded A STAR! in Western Maryland's Read to Succeed Program also continued to strengthen local students' reading and writing abilities by providing free mentoring and academic enrichment services.

Frostburg State University Strategic Plan

During the reporting period, the President's Advisory Committee for Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE) continued to assist in the creation, implementation, and reporting of individual planning unit's action priorities, which are key components of and have direct impact upon the University's Strategic Plan. The committee, which is comprised of both faculty and staff, successfully implemented a planning module within Compliance Assist that allows for a centralized reporting process linking each planning unit's action priorities across departmental, divisional, and institutional levels. During the August 2014 President's Leadership Advance, a report of PACIE's progress was presented and used to further inform strategic planning.

Middle States Visitation

In fall 2013, Frostburg sent two representatives to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) conference for advanced training on the expectations for the decennial MSCHE Self-Study. Working groups, consisting of a balance of faculty and staff, were formed, received training, and began meeting. A half-day workshop in January 2014 was conducted to discuss evidence-based analytics, timelines, and MSCHE expectations. Research questions were devised and refined. The Self-Study Design document, which matched Frostburg strategic plan items to the MSCHE Characteristics of Excellence, was enthusiastically approved by the MSCHE liaison in April 2014. The Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research and the co-chairs of Frostburg's Middle States Steering Committee began meeting with divisional and unit planning groups to populate a data warehouse to serve both as an archive and a continuous reporting structure that can be used for annual reports long after the self-study concludes.

COST CONTAINMENT

Frostburg State University developed new methods and used continued past practices to contain costs and increase revenue in fiscal year 2014. The specific actions taken by FSU in FY2014 are listed below:

Item Description	Savings/Revenue Generated
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One-time and temporary actions:

Savings realized in discount advertising for second consecutive year	\$18,000
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Permanent actions:

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
Renegotiated printer contracts to reduce monthly rental in Printing Services	\$1,000
Completed curricular transformation in multiple areas - reduced sections	\$58,000
Consolidated satellite bookstore locations, eliminated one position	\$40,000
Utilized the Diners Club travel card program	\$2,000
Repaired network equipment instead of replacing with new equipment	\$30,000
Savings from eliminating a position by closing the University Children Center	\$45,000
Develop interface between PeopleSoft and Blackboard in-house	\$26,000
Savings realized in Conferences & Events by utilizing group advertising	\$2,000
Restructured staffing in the University Bookstore	\$65,000
Reduced campus mail deliveries - delayed hiring in Mail Department	\$50,000
Realized savings from the use of energy efficient lighting systems	\$17,000
Recognized savings from shower head replacement on campus	\$10,000
Installed natural gas heaters instead of electric heat pumps in the Press Box	\$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
Partnered with USM Hagerstown Center	\$100,000
Realized savings from installation of occupancy sensors on campus	\$6,000
Participation in the demand/response program for electrical consumption	\$16,000
Realized savings from implementation of e-billing	\$200,000
Utilized Advance data system	\$4,000
Utilized an existing software package for the campus alert system	\$7,000
Developed Student & Educational Services Division on-line forms	\$5,000
Replaced Framptom Hall with energy efficient roof & air-cooled chiller	\$4,000
Savings from added insulation under the roof of three existing buildings	\$3,000
Savings from replacing micro-fridges with energy star rated equipment	\$10,000
Reduce the need for submitting paper request forms in Printing Services	\$1,000
Realized savings from switching to virtual servers	\$30,000
Saved using payroll direct deposit and online access to pay information	\$6,000

Created an efficient parking interface and produced electronic 1099T forms	\$7,000
Realized savings from on-line efforts in Human Resources	\$6,000
Implementation of HR web-based recruitment and retention software	\$5,000
Increased direct deposit usage for student refunds by 20%	\$1,000
Decrease candidate expense through the purchase of Skype	\$24,000
Savings realized by submitting State transmittals by CD	\$3,000
Savings from eliminating watermarked letterhead from the storeroom inventory	\$3,000
Purchased and installed University's own telephone switch (PBX)	\$165,000
Total	\$1,300,000

Frostburg State University recognized expenditure reductions, revenue enhancements, cost avoidances, technological initiatives and partnerships to contain costs for FY 2014. These actions total \$1,300,000 for the University.