

MISSION

Frostburg State University is a student-centered teaching and learning institution featuring experiential opportunities. The University offers students a distinctive and distinguished baccalaureate education along with a select set of applied master's and doctoral programs. Frostburg serves regional and statewide economic and workforce development; promotes cultural enrichment, civic responsibility, and sustainability; and prepares future leaders to meet the challenges of a complex and changing global society.

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.

Maryland Ready, the state's 2013 *Plan for Postsecondary Education (MSP)*, states "special efforts to increase STEM graduates, including teachers who can provide high-quality STEM instruction at the PreK-12 level, are needed to meet employment projections." Frostburg State University's STEM initiatives and academic programs in nursing and teacher education serve as means to achieve this goal. The number of STEM program graduates rose from 128 in 2016 to 150 in 2017 (**Managing for Results – MFR - Objective 1.1**).

Over the reporting period, Frostburg experienced a decline in both teacher education enrollments (from 414 in 2016 to 322 in 2017) and in the number of undergraduates and MAT post-baccalaureate students completing teacher training (from 113 in 2016 to 95 in 2017 - **MFR Objective 1.2**). The primary causes for declining teacher preparation enrollment at FSU and across the state are believed to be external pressures impacting the job market; therefore, impacting student's decisions to choose teaching as a career option. This is particularly true for Western Maryland school systems (FSU's major market area for teacher preparation programs), where decreased funding and student enrollments have resulted in the need to find efficiencies through teacher attrition and elimination of teacher positions. In Allegany County alone, 124 teacher positions have been eliminated since 2009.

STEM Initiatives and Programs

Frostburg's academic programs within the STEM fields continue to grow, particularly in the area of health sciences. In August 2017, Frostburg received approval from the University System of Maryland (USM) and Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to offer two additional concentrations within the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program: Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Psychiatric and Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP). Scheduled to begin in fall 2018, these MSN programs will help to fill the primary care provider shortage (especially in rural, underserved areas) and provide a pipeline of health care professionals who can treat addictions. The MSN nurse practitioner programs are ideal for students living in rural southwestern Pennsylvania, the Potomac Highlands of West Virginia, and Western Maryland.

The University was also awarded several grants over the reporting period for the implementation and planning of its new nursing programs. The Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission in July 2017 awarded FSU a five-year, \$3.8 million grant for the implementation of the Nurse Practitioner Program and a two-year, \$212,257 grant for the planning of a proposed Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. The proposed DNP program, which will seek approval from USM and MHEC in February 2021, is being designed to serve nursing professionals who want to continue academic research and meet anticipated industry demand for entry-level nurse practitioners to hold a doctoral degree.

Frostburg is also developing a Master of Science in Physician Assistant (PA) Studies in collaboration with the University of Maryland, Baltimore that will focus on educating PAs dedicated to practicing medicine in rural and medically underserved communities. In August 2017, the University hired a PA program director, whose responsibilities include preparing documentation for an accreditation site visit scheduled in October 2018 as well as developing the curriculum and securing clinical placement sites. Pending a successful site visit, FSU will be admitting its first PA cohort in summer 2019.

In addition to academic offerings, FSU faculty members continue to engage in educational outreach programs. These efforts include a May 2017 STEM Festival attended by 778 K-12 students and parents.

Education

Frostburg State University continues to reach out regionally in the expansion of new and existing academic programs designed to meet the educational needs of working professionals in Maryland. These programs include the Teacher Quality Partnership grant, Utilizing Diverse Children's Literature in Teacher Preparation grant, and STEM-Based Best Practices for Diverse Learners grant.

The five-year, \$3.6 million Teacher Quality Partnership grant was awarded by the U. S. Department of Education to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement in diverse classrooms. This grant provides funding to build a collaborative, sustainable partnership between Frostburg State and Coppin State, professional development schools in their respective communities, personnel within the Maryland Department of Education (MDSE), the Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation, and business leaders.

Funded by the MSDE, the Utilizing Diverse Children's Literature in Teacher Preparation grant helps teacher candidates broaden their cultural perspectives by utilizing instructional strategies and integration of diverse children's literature to develop effective instruction. As part of this grant, teacher candidates and P-9 students interact with a celebrated author/illustrator of award-winning diverse children's literature, and practicing teachers and mentors in partnering school systems have opportunities to better utilize diverse children's literature in their classrooms.

Additional funding from the MSDE's STEM-Based Best Practices for Diverse Learners grant was used to develop a regional conference in June 2017 that supported STEM for teachers, FSU education candidates, and faculty members. At the conference, teachers experienced and developed skills in learning about students' cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources for use in instruction, developing and aligning STEM activities with content standards; explaining and modeling content, practices, and strategies; and analyzing instruction for the purpose of improving it. Frostburg faculty will also implement professional development within the teacher education program to enhance the skills of pre-service interns while they complete field experiences in Professional Development Schools. Further, funds will also support faculty attendance at the Maryland Common Ground Conference and other conferences that support initiatives in STEM and information that may help diverse populations.

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.

As part of its role in developing a comprehensive Student Success Plan designed to increase student retention, FSU's Student Success Committee/Workgroup reviewed the outcomes of efforts in AY 2016-2017 in order to improve current practices and provide feedback to initiative owners to increase effectiveness. The Committee supports the members of the Academic Success Network (ASN) to expand faculty response rates of early alert systems, arrange workshops for ORIE instructors, increase the number of students that receive academic assistance in targeted courses, enhance the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) program, and incorporate student success dashboards into *HelioCampus*. The Committee is also designing a new university withdrawal form and process, with the aim on capturing better information about students leaving FSU, and creating an inventory of student success initiatives sponsored by each college, the Division of Student Affairs, and the Athletics Department.

Also over the reporting period, the Programs Advancing Student Success (PASS) office participated in a pilot program to help incoming students prepare for the mathematics placement test. Frostburg marketed the mathematics portion of the EdReady program to incoming new students prior to its June 2017 PreviewFSU sessions, encouraged them to complete the initial assessments for FSU's math placement test, and recommended they improve their scores to eliminate the need to take developmental mathematics courses once enrolled at Frostburg. Of the 102 students completed the initial assessment in EdReady prior to coming to a Preview session, about half students improved their initial score by at least 10 points. As a result of their placement test score, 76 of participating students were eligible to take a college-level mathematics course during their first semester and 26 were placed in a developmental mathematics course, a rate (25%) slightly lower than the overall placement rate (31%).

The Center for Academic Advising and Retention (CAAR) expanded outreach over the reporting period, including filling two new academic counselor positions to support retention and intervention efforts for targeted student populations - first year, undeclared, academic recovery, students in transition between majors. These counselors provide peer mentoring supervision, are active in the START academic recovery program, serve as college bound liaisons, and perform registration audits and unregistered student outreach.

Frostburg received enhancement funding in FY 2017 from the University System of Maryland to become an early adopter of *HelioCampus*, an analytic software platform that provides the University with real-time data to better analyze budget expenditures, enrollment trends, academic programs, and other metrics. Access to this information also allows departments throughout campus to make data-informed decisions that will improve student outcomes and success. Concurrently, the University has implemented Hobson's Predictive Analytics Reporting Framework (PAR), which provides predictive student success models related to student and course information. Programs for Advancing Student Success (PASS) is using PAR to identify courses that have a high retake rate and courses that predict low retention for students receiving less than a C grade. PASS staff will collaborate with academic departments to provide tutoring and other supports for students in these courses. The information provided by *HelioCampus* and

PAR is critical across divisions to address questions about student recruitment, persistence, and graduation.

As of September 2017, all vice presidents, academic deans, and faculty leadership have received presentations on the use of *HelioCampus*, conducted by the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research. Data validation, model building, and technical and analytical staff training represents the foundational efforts thus far completed with the implementation of each platform. The first dashboards utilized by functional users are focused on enrollment issues. Among the next dashboards are those that have been created to assist department chairs in the management of academic departments, including issues related to student success.

Undergraduate Minority Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Persistence, and Graduation

Frostburg's minority student population represented 43.8% of its overall undergraduate population in 2017 (**MFR Objective 2.3**). Additionally, African-American student headcount increased from 30.8% in 2016 to 31.4% in 2017 (**MFR Objective 2.2**). 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 2017, FSU's second-year retention rates for African Americans (78.2%) and minorities (76.8%) exceeded that of the total student population (76.7%). However, the retention rates for all three of these groups declined from 2016 to 2017 - from 83.2% to 78.2% for African Americans, from 82.3% to 76.8% for all minorities, and from 76.8% to 76.7% for all first-time, full-time students (**MFR Objectives 2.1, 2.4, and 2.6**). Six-year graduation rates also decreased over the reporting period: from 62.0% to 48.8% for African-Americans, from 61.9% to 51.3% for all minorities, and from 61.7% to 55.2% for all first-time, full-time students (**MFR Objectives 2.1, 2.5, and 2.7**).

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

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 decrease in the percentage of African-American faculty (from 4.8% in 2016 to 3.9% in 2017) and a slight increase in the percentage of female faculty (from 41.0% in 2016 to 42.0% in 2017 – **MFR Objective 3.1**).

In March 2017, the Center for Teaching Excellence and the Office of the Provost hosted *Closing the Loop: A Mini-Conference on Teaching and Assessment*, with approximately 20 faculty and staff in attendance. In May 2017, *CampusLabs* consultants facilitated two onsite trainings tailored for non-academic areas: 1) *Articulating and Measuring Success* and 2) *Using Campus Labs to Inform and Improve Student Success*. Training materials are accessible via the Assessment and Institutional Research site.

In the spring of 2017, the University offered Compliance Assist training for all units/departments within each division to assist with the development of annual reporting. In June 2017, the President and the Executive Cabinet participated in a *Best Practices in Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness* training facilitated by consultant Dr. Jodi Levine Laufgraben, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Assessment at Temple University.

The number of professionally accredited programs at Frostburg increased from nine to 10 over the reporting period (**MFR Objective 3.2**), meeting the established MFR benchmarked goal. Frostburg State University's Exercise and Sport Science program was granted initial accreditation in July 2017 by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the Committee on Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences. Initial CAAHEP accreditation remains valid through July 2022.

In November 2016, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accredited two of FSU's online nursing programs, granting initial accreditation for its new online Master of Science in Nursing program and giving continuing accreditation for the popular Bachelor of Science in Nursing completion program. Frostburg's MSN program is accredited through 2019 and its BSN program has been reaccruited through 2026.

Frostburg State University's Recreation and Parks Management Program was reaccruited in March 2017 by the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreations, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT), which found the program to be fully in compliance. The accreditation by COAPRT is valid until the program's next review in 2022.

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

In addition to its commitment to meeting the USM Board of Regents' (BOR) facilities renewal goal, FSU also strives reach a balance in replacing aging infrastructure, making public areas more attractive, and improving both academic and nonacademic spaces. These efforts are evidenced in the amount of funding expended in facilities renewal over the reporting period, which increased from 1.2% in 2016 to 1.6% in 2017 (**MFR Objective 4.1**).

Formally dedicated in September 2017, FSU's new Public Safety Building was designed and built to serve as a modern, sustainable, versatile base of operations for University Police. Also over the reporting period, Frostburg began the planning stage of BOR-approved renovations to its five largest on-campus residence halls, which began in FY 2018. The Board of Regents also approved a new 425-bed residence hall, for which planning began in FY 2017 and construction is slated for FY 2018.

Additional funds in the amount of \$1 million were approved by the Maryland Department of Budget and Management in FY 2018 for FSU's planned Education and Health Sciences Center, and \$3 million has been requested for FY 2019 to continue with planning and design. Construction is slated in February 2020 for occupancy beginning in August 2022.

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

Headcount Enrollment

Frostburg's overall headcount enrollment over the reporting period decreased from 5,756 in 2016 to 5,676 in 2017 (**MFR Objective 5.1**). Also over the reporting period, the number of students graduating with a bachelor's degree rose from 963 in 2016 to 1,061 in 2017. This represents one of the largest graduating classes at Frostburg, which has impacted the fall enrollment figure above. For the future, FSU is undertaking a number of new marketing initiatives, including more advertising on social media and additional advertising throughout the state and local region. Frostburg will also be activating a new online application form that will allow prospective students to complete their applications and monitor the status of their application from any internet-based device.

Economic Development Initiatives

Frostburg joined regional economic development offices to organize and sponsor a visit by Startup Maryland to its campus in October 2016. Startup Maryland is, in part, sponsored by the Maryland Department of Commerce and gives local entrepreneurs and opportunity to pitch their ideas and gain funding through a competitive process.

The University applied in September 2016 for funds from the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) for a Rural Entrepreneurship Development grant in support of the University's "Red Tire" project. Under the grant, FSU received funds to study the feasibility of providing succession plans for businesses in Allegany and Garrett County.

Frostburg organized and helped to sponsor the Maryland's Department of Minority Affairs' Ready-Set-Grow economic development regional conference in October 2016 that was attended by the Governor and several of his cabinet members. The University also organized a visit in November 2016 of the Vice Chancellor for Economic Development to discuss economic development with officials from Garrett and Allegany counties.

The University worked with the Allegany Public Schools and Allegany College of Maryland to include FSU as an active partner in the P-Tech grant and program. The P-Tech mission is to provide students with an education that starts in grade nine and culminates in the attainment of an Associate degree. Frostburg will provide a pathway for students completing the P-Tech program to continue on and earn a B.A. in Computer Science from the University. P-Tech is considering an important economic development initiative in Allegany County.

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 slightly (from 4,566 in 2016 to 4,610 in 2017) and continues to exceed the established benchmark (**MFR Objective 6.2**).

Strategic Planning

In September 2016, President Nowaczyk announced that the campus would begin engaging in a new strategic planning process. A collaborative and inclusive planning process during AY 2016-2017 led to an updated set of strategic goals to focus the institution through its 125th anniversary year in 2023. Given the call for greater communication and transparency in the recent Middle States Self-Study, active involvement of the university and regional community was a priority. This was achieved through a strategic planning task force of 50+ members led by three co-chairs (two faculty members and a vice-president). Information on the process was communicated via an FSU webpage. Input and comments were received from over 1,000 stakeholders within the university community as well as individuals from the local community, region, and state.

There is clear consensus for the vision statement and set of four strategic goals. The USM Board of Regents was briefed on these goals, which align with the USM strategic plan, at its June 2017 meeting. The process of identifying action initiatives with corresponding measureable goals began with the 2017 summer planning retreat. A draft set of initiatives was identified and ranked by participants in order to establish the strategic funding priorities for AY 2017-2018. The planning co-chairs scheduled several meetings in September 2017 to finalize a set of initiatives with appropriate metrics. Consistent with past practice, the final plan will be communicated broadly and shared with the USM as required as part of FSU's annual reporting process and its commitment to shared governance and transparency.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education Accreditation

In its Self-Study follow-up report, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) warned Frostburg State University that its accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence of compliance with Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment) and Standard 12 (General Education). Subsequent to the submission of a monitoring report and small team visit by the Commission's representatives in March 2017, the MSCHE noted that Frostburg was in compliance with Standard 12, but continued to provide insufficient evidence that it is in compliance with Standard 7. Submission of a second monitoring report, due in September 2017, was required to document evidence of a "documented, organized, and sustained institutional effectiveness assessment process, with evidence that assessment information is used to improve programs, services, and processes and is shared and discussed with appropriate constituents." A

second small team visit is scheduled for October 2017. Upon reaffirmation of accreditation, the next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2024-2025.

General Education Assessment

In the fall of 2016, Frostburg established the General Education Program Review Committee as a standing university committee. The Committee's charter was also revised and approved by the Faculty Senate in December 2016, charging its members with providing oversight into the quality and delivery of the GEP at Frostburg. Membership primarily includes department chairs and faculty directly involved in the assessment process serving staggered terms on the Committee to ensure that institutional memory is preserved.

Culture of Assessment and Improvement

In an effort to better promote effective communication and governance at Frostburg State University, President Nowaczyk in June 2016 announced the formation of the University Advisory Council (UAC), which was approved as a permanent committee in December 2016. As part of its role to enhance shared governance at FSU, the UAC focuses on campus-wide strategic and operational planning and implementation and facilitates real-time understanding and discussion of pressing matters affecting the mission and operations of the University. Dr. Nowaczyk also began an email campaign that includes an emphasis on a culture of assessment and transparent communication.

In January 2017, Dr. Nowaczyk approved the by-laws for the creation of the FSU Staff Senate. Additionally, a Staff Senate subcommittee spent the fall of 2016 developing the Senate concept, which complements the Faculty Senate and Student Government Association in an effort to continue to recognize shared governance at the University.

National Recognition

In September 2017, FSU was again ranked one of the "Best Colleges for Your Money" by MONEY Magazine in its analysis of America's 711 best-performing colleges for 2017-2018. Frostburg appeared on MONEY's inaugural ranking last year and moved up more than 100 places in the new ranking. This ranking is based on a number of factors, including the cost to attend FSU as well as the successful outcomes of its graduates.

Frostburg State University has also been named the 2016 Public Institution of the Year by The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars (TWC), America's largest academic internship program. TWC partners with more than 500 U.S. colleges and universities.

BestComputerScienceDegrees.com, an online resource for individuals interested in computer science degrees, recently ranked FSU's online Master's in Applied Computer Science fifth among the top 30 best online master's in computer science degree programs for 2017. In addition, the SR Education Group, an education publisher, recently ranked FSU's online master's in computer science among the top 23 most affordable online computer science master's degrees in the nation for 2017.

Campus Response to Questions Raised by the Commission

Objective 5.3: Sustain or increase the number of economic development initiatives established in 2015 (11) through 2019. Commission Assessment: In its 2016 Performance Accountability Report, the University briefly described two initiatives aimed at supporting economic development in the region. One initiative is a contract with a Texas company hired to identify area industries which would likely employ University graduates to keep them in the area, and the other is a partnership with Allegany College of Maryland to provide seamless transfer to the University. Please share with the Commission the results of these collaborations and any resulting practice and/or policy implications.

The University-based Target Industry Analysis and marketing plan was completed in February 2017 and the final presentation was made by the consultants on campus. A core group of stakeholders was formed, including municipal and County economic developers and Frostburg State representatives, and will lead an effort, termed Frostburg Forward using the Strategic Doing model, facilitated by the director of the Western Maryland Small Business Development Center at FSU. The larger implementation group will be comprised of business, government, and community representatives, as well as FSU faculty, administration, and staff. Frostburg Forward will accomplish outcomes that address economic development coordination, workforce, and marketing to fully leverage Frostburg State University's assets for economic development in the region.

Over the reporting period, Frostburg's Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Allegany College of Maryland's (ACM) Senior Vice President of Instructional and Student Affairs collaborated to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a Dual Admissions Program between the two the two institutions. The Provost solicited input from FSU technical experts representing enrollment management, admissions, and the registrar's office as the MOU was shaped. The latest version of the MOU and answers to questions posed by ACM were sent the Senior Vice President in a correspondence that also requested a meeting between the Provost and Senior Vice President and their teams (admissions, registrar, financial aid, and legal staff) to discuss and finalize the agreement.