**FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**

**2022 Institutional Performance Accountability Report**

**September 2022**

**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.

**INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT**

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

The *2017-2021 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* (**MSP**), notes that “employers (have) become increasingly dependent upon a highly skilled workforce” (**MSP Strategy 7**) and that “Maryland’s economy depends on high-skill jobs requiring experience and advanced education” (**MSP Strategy 8**). Frostburg’s initiatives and programs in STEM disciplines, teacher education, business, and multidisciplinary studies serve to reinforce statewide and regional workforce goals.

**STEM Initiatives and Programs**

The number of undergraduates enrolled in STEM programs decreased over the reporting period (from 631 in 2021 to 535 in 2022), while the number of STEM-program graduates remained stable (131 in both 2021 and 2022). The decline in enrollment continues to be in line with the overall enrollment decreases experienced in part because of the pandemic. Frostburg expects these performance measures will increase significantly in the future, as new STEM programs attract an increasing number of students.

While the RN to BSN program continued to experience declining enrollment (from 424 students in 2021 to 384 in 2022) and the number of nursing program graduates remained steady (139 for both 2021 and 2022 - **MFR Objective 1.3**), enrollments in the Master of Science in Nursing program continued to grow significantly over the reporting period (from 77 in 2021 to 93 in 2022, **MSP Strategies 4 and 6**).

Additionally, and pending Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) approval, Frostburg plans to begin offering an LPN to BSN degree, which would serve licensed practical nurses across the tristate area by providing an online option for them to continue their education and fill critical RN workforce vacancies. The proposed LPN to BSN nursing program would build on an LPN’s scope of practice and provide all the content, skills, and clinical experience required for the student to sit for the NCLEX RN licensure exam. The Nursing department is also working on developing an on-campus Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and is discussing the possibility of a Doctor of Nursing Practice program.

**Education**

In response to evolving workforce demands, Frostburg embraces its responsibility to strengthen public schools through the preparation of certified teacher education graduates and pre-K to 20 partnerships (**MSP Strategy 1**). Over the reporting period, 229 students were enrolled in undergraduate teacher education and Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) post-baccalaureate programs. Enrollment in this area has steadily declined since 2018, as have the number of candidates who successfully complete teacher training (from 78 in 2021 to 73 in 2022, **MFR Objective 1.2**). Additionally, pass rates for undergraduate and MAT post-baccalaureate students on the PRAXIS II have also continued to decline (67% in 2022). In response, the university is developing several initiatives in an effort to reverse these trends.

Designed for certified teachers who hold a Master’s degree from a fully-accredited institution of higher education, Frostburg’s 18-credit hour Post-Master’s Certificate in Educational Leadership is fully aligned with the standards set forth by the Maryland State Department of Education for Administrator I endorsement. The purpose of this certificate is to prepare students for entry-level positions in educational leadership by equipping them with the techniques, skills, and concepts appropriate to the field. Throughout the program’s coursework, post master’s certificate candidates are thoroughly introduced and tested for mastery of standards-based assessments.

Frostburg has also requested approval from MHEC for the addition of a Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW) Post-Master’s Certificate (PMC) within the existing Master of Education (M.Ed.)’s area of concentration for its School Counseling program. This certificate is designed specifically to provide a pathway to Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW) certification for those candidates who hold a master’s degree in pupil personnel or a related field.

As part of an agreement with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the College of Education is also developing an online high-school Level 1 Physical Education course for Maryland public schools. MSDE recognized a need for an online physical education course that could reach students statewide, especially those with individual circumstances and/or scheduling challenges that make traditional face-to-face courses difficult.

**College of Business and Multidisciplinary Studies**

In an effort to provide real-world, high-quality training to working adults, Frostburg State University launched its Working Professional Certificates program in fall 2021 in Manufacturing Leadership, Retail Management, Small Business Management and Nonprofit Management. The Working Professional Certificates program is designed to take one year of part-time study, earning 12-18 credits. Coursework will be entirely online, with accessible scheduling for working adults. Since courses are offered for undergraduate credit, students can take the certification or apply the courses toward a bachelor’s degree in the future. In September 2022, the College of Business received MHEC approval to begin offering Upper Division Certificates in Crisis Leadership, Diversity Leadership, and Social Entrepreneurship.

Also in the fall 2022, Frostburg began offering a fully online Multidisciplinary Studies major, which utilizes a flexible curriculum that can lead to a degree for liberal studies students who have not found a ‘home’ in another major or for students who need an accessible online route to finishing a bachelor’s degree.

**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 State University critically reviews and strengthens its efforts to attract quality students and its increase student retention and graduation rates. Over the reporting period, the university experienced declines in the percentage of African-American and minority undergraduates enrolled: 27.0% of the total undergraduate population for African Americans (**MFR Objective 2.2**) and 38.6% for minorities (**MFR Objective 2.3**).

Frostburg’s second-year retention rate for undergraduates remained stable over the reporting period (73.6% for both 2021 and 2022, **MFR Objective 2.1**). Over the same time period, the second-year retention rates for African-American students increased slightly (from 69.6% in 2021 to 70.3% in 2022, **MFR Objective 2.4**) and decreased slightly for all minorities (from 70.4% to 69.8%, **MFR Objective 2.6**).

While the six-year graduation rate of undergraduates remained stable over the reporting period (from 61.0% for 2021 to 60.7% for 2022, **MFR Objective 2.1**), this performance measure declined for both African-Americans (from 64.3% to 58.9%, **MFR Objective 2.5**) and for all minorities (from 62.4% to 57.9%, **MFR Objective 2.7**).

Frostburg is in the second year of implementing major improvements to academic advising following the completion of the Excellence in Academic Advising Project (NACADA and Gardner Institute). It is expanding the dual advising model. All first- and second-year students, and some special populations (e.g., RN-to-BSN students) now have both a university advisor to provide holistic advising and support as well as a faculty mentor to help students with their professional goals. The university recently launched the EAB Navigate platform to support advising and student success efforts, including early alerts and referrals, appointment tracking, communication campaigns, and case management. As an early measure of success, FSU’s continuing student reenrollment rates for fall 2022 are higher than fall 2021 for every undergraduate student cohort. Reenrollment rates for transfer students are at five-year highs.

Over the spring 2022 semester, FSU’s President met with each academic department chair (along with the Provost, Academic Affairs staff, Deans, and Admissions and Marketing staff) to discuss academic program enrollment trends and to learn more about departmental initiatives. Insights from these meetings were submitted to the University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents as part of Frostburg’s Strategic Enrollment Management Plan in April 2022.

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

**Cultural Diversity of Faculty and Staff**

One of FSU’s fundamental goals is to increase the diversity of its faculty and staff through the initiatives and strategies contained in its Cultural Diversity Program (**MSP Strategies 9 and 11**). While Frostburg experienced a slight decrease in the percentage of African-American faculty (from 5.0% in 2021 to 4.3% in 2022), it conversely experienced an increase in the percentage of female faculty (from 45.6% for 2021 to 48.7% in 2022, **MFR Objective 3.1**).

In July 2022, Dr. Traki L. Taylor, previously Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion officer for the State University System of Florida, joined FSU as the new Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Dr. Taylor’s experience and leadership at both the university and higher education system levels will greatly assist Frostburg with identifying opportunities for its academic programs and addressing the challenges facing higher education, both regionally and nationally.

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

Frostburg recognizes its responsibility to provide the infrastructure necessary for modern modalities of instruction and applied learning experiences (**MSP Strategy 6**) in order to promote an appropriate environment for high quality teaching, learning, scholarship, and co-curricular programming. The amount of funds spent on facilities decreased over the reporting period, from 2.3% in 2021 to 1.3% in 2022 (**MFR Objective 4.1**). While the university expects to meet its goal in FY 2022 of maintaining a 2% rate of operating budget reallocation (**MFR Objective 4.1**), it cannot confirm these data until the USM Effectiveness and Efficiency reporting is completed in late October 2022 (**MSP Strategy 6**). Several projects with a completion date of December 2022 include interior renovations to the Adams/Wyche Multicultural Center and Frederick Hall as well as design work for Cambridge Hall.

Frostburg has experienced supply chain problems that are impacting the schedule for completion of the Education and Health Sciences Building. The project manager met with the faculty and staff representatives in February 2022 who were involved in the design and construction of the building to provide an update. Current projections are that the building will not be completed until near the end of 2022, with occupancy beginning at the start of the spring 2023 semester. Because most materials were purchased prior to the pandemic, FSU is not experiencing an increase in the cost of the building. However, delays in the delivery of materials are having an impact on the building schedule.

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

Expanding outreach and engagement into the surrounding region has historically been a key goal for Frostburg. Under the direction of the Vice President for Regional Development and Engagement (RDE), the number of economic development initiatives at FSU (**MFR Objective 5.3**) increased from seven in 2021 to 11 in 2022. The Office of RDE continues to work toward integrating university resources with regional partners to help communities and companies remain competitive and meet the challenges of economic and community development (**MSP Strategies 8, 10, and 11**).

In February of 2022, the City of Frostburg donated the old City Hall on Main Street to the university for a future FSU Regional Science Center (RSC). The donation will make it easier for Frostburg to accept the building and begin the process of renovation, which will allow the university to begin work on installing the Challenger Learning Center as the centerpiece of the RSC.

In April 2022, FSU received a $750,000 grant from the Maryland Energy Administration to help cover the costs of installing a clean energy microgrid on campus. The microgrid will safeguard critical operations from energy disruptions, integrate an emergency shelter for the surrounding community and meet the university’s sustainability goals.

Frostburg passed its first hurdle in July 2022 toward the creation of the Regional Recreation Complex at FSU, including an indoor recreational facility that will be available to the campus, as well as members of the community, including local sports teams. A $5 million appropriation in the supplemental state of Maryland budget allowed the university to begin the design process and site preparation starting in the summer of 2022.

In partnership with FSU and Allegany County Economic Development, the City of Frostburg signed a binding letter of intent in September 2022 with a developer to construct and operate a mixed-use development on the one-acre block of Center Street. The total project cost ($1,435,757) to acquire and prepare the site was funded by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the Allegany County Community Enhancement Program, and the City of Frostburg. The initiative, for which the developer has just begun a due diligence period, is expected to take several years to complete. It will include construction of a two- to four-story mixed-use development, with ground floor space that is retail, office, or a combination thereof, and upper floors that are market rate residential units designed to attract professionals at nearby employers, including Frostburg State University.

**Goal 6: Promote activities that demonstrate FSU’s educational distinction.**

Frostburg’s President Ronald Nowaczyk was recognized in October 2021 as a Top 50 Leader in Higher Education by the National Diversity and Leadership Conference. The Top 50 Leaders in Education are innovators, strategists, and pioneers in the dynamic sector of local and global educators are pivotal for the growth and development of individuals and subsequently, the organizations for which their students work.

The *Chronicle of Higher Education*’s October 2021 report on “Recruiting and Retaining Students in a Challenging Market” listed the highest graduation rates of African American students among public master’s universities nationwide. Frostburg State University came in 24th and was the only Maryland university to make the top 25 list.

A National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) external reviewer visited campus in February 2022 to meet with athletics staff and campus staff and faculty to review Frostburg’s progress toward D2 membership. If FSU’s reports to the NCAA membership committee meet expectations, the university will be full D2 members in the NCAA with its student-athletes eligible to compete for NCAA championships.

In July 2022, Frostburg was ranked as one of the top Best Value Colleges and Universities in Maryland by SmartAsset, a New York-based financial company. As the highest-ranking university in Maryland with fewer than 10,000 students, FSU ranked among the top five institutions, along with the University of Maryland College Park, Johns Hopkins University, University of Maryland Baltimore County, and Towson University.

**Campus Response to Questions Raised by the Commission**

*What is the biggest challenge your institution faces as it attempts to equitably meet the goals, objectives, and performance measures in the 2017-2021 State Plan for Postsecondary Education?*

Frostburg’s greatest challenge in meeting the goals of the *2017-2021 State Plan for Postsecondary Education* has been declining undergraduate enrollment. Over the last five years, the number of undergraduates enrolled at FSU has decreased by 22.2% (from 4,725 in fall 2017 to 3,677 in fall 2021). This decline has been in line with decreased undergraduate enrollments experienced by all USM institutions, in part because of the pandemic. Frostburg expects its enrollment-related performance measures will increase significantly in the future as several programs and initiatives will attract more undergraduate students.

*Has your institution used disaggregated data to identify equity issues in students’ educational opportunities and outcomes? If so, how has this disaggregation of data provided insight into your institution’s educational equities and inequities? If not, what data has been used to understand student outcomes?*

Frostburg State University’s strategic plan has goals, action priorities, and action items that support improved academic advising and professional development for students. The strategic plan also supports inclusivity, cultural competence, and respect for diversity of ideas and backgrounds, which are critical to advising FSU’s diverse student population.

As part of this plan, FSU established an Excellence in Academic Advising Committee who reported that, beyond the student’s first year, advising was decentralized, with each department and college having its own procedures and practices. This advising structure led to a lack of consistency in advising across the institution, a key conclusion from the 2018 advising town halls reinforced by the self-study findings. Overall, FSU lacked five critical components that would promote consistency and quality improvement:

1. an institutional advising framework, including a shared definition for advising, an institutional mission statement for advising, advising goals to inform practice and improvement efforts, and advising learning outcomes.
2. an assessment plan for advising to drive quality improvement.
3. recognized institutional leadership for advising to management and coordinate assessment, training, communication, and quality improvement.
4. regular training and professional development for all advisors.
5. a communication plan to share advising information with students, advisors, and other stakeholders.

The committee also determined that the greatest opportunities for improvement expand existing practices to benefit all students and advisors were as follows:

1. Frostburg needed to implement a shared model for academic advising that extends the advising approach used in ORIE 101. This model will feature shared responsibility between students and advisors for academic, personal, and professional develop and be built on a partnership between faculty and staff for integrated advising services. This model needs to support students throughout their full lifecycle at FSU, not just during the first year.
2. The university also needed to integrate the data and processes contained in existing technology for advising to provide comprehensive support for advising and retention efforts. Frostburg should also promote widespread use of effective alternative advising delivery practices (e.g., advising and professional development courses, virtual advising, and group advising) that occur in some units, but not others. Advising is a teaching and learning activity that supports the rest of a student’s education. It is more than those few transactions that occur in order to register for classes.