FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Periodic Review Report

prepared for the

Commission on Higher Education

of the

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

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Periodic Review Report

Presented by: Frostburg State University

Date: June 1, 2011

Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Jonathan Gibralter

Date of evaluation team's most recent visit:
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FOREWORD

The Periodic Review Report (PRR) Drafting Group would like to express its deep appreciation to the many individuals at Frostburg State University who generously contributed to the report presented here. Members of the PRR Drafting Group include Dr. Tom Bowling, Vice President for Student and Educational Services; Dr. John Bowman, Vice Provost; Dr. Mark Gallagher, Department of Music; Dr. Jay Hegeman, Assistant Vice President for Educational Services and Registrar; Dr. Jeff McClellan, Department of Management; Dr. Mary Mumper, Department of Chemistry/Chair of the Faculty; Dr. Randall Rhodes, Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Dr. Doris Santamaria-Makang, Department of Educational Professions; Mr. Dave Rose, Vice President for Administration and Finance; and Mr. Robert Smith, Assistant Vice President for Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research. A special thank you goes to Ms. Linda Steele, Ms. Colleen Stump, Ms. Candis Johnson, Mr. Sean Morton, Ms. Denise Murphy, and Ms. Stacey Utley-Bernhardt for helping to prepare the final version of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Frostburg State University Mission Statement

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 Identity

Frostburg State University (FSU) has provided paths to success for students for well over a century. Founded in 1898 to prepare teachers, the University today is a constituent member of the University System of Maryland (USM) offering a wide array of programs at the undergraduate level and select applied graduate programs. FSU's Carnegie classification is Master's L. The only USM institution west of the Baltimore-Washington corridor, Frostburg serves as the premier educational and cultural center for Western Maryland.

In the fall 2010, FSU enrollment reached 5,470, the largest number in the history of the institution (4,866 undergraduate students and 604 graduate students). The University draws its students from all counties in Maryland, as well as from numerous other states and foreign countries, with minorities comprising 28.9 percent of the student population. The University employed 245 full-time and 121 part-time faculty members in the fall of 2010. Eighty percent of the full-time faculty members hold terminal degrees. The University student-centered atmosphere is enhanced with a student-to-faculty ratio of 18 to 1.

The academic experience of undergraduate students includes a rigorous interdisciplinary general education program in the liberal arts and sciences, and the development of core skills. Major areas of undergraduate specialization are offered in education, business, science and technology (STEM) disciplines, the creative and performing arts, and selected programs in the humanities and social sciences.

Graduate programs provide specialized instruction for students involved in or preparing for professional careers. Previously, graduate-level programs have been limited to the master's level. Frostburg is currently developing plans to offer an Ed.D. in Educational Policy and Leadership, which will support Maryland's workforce development needs in teacher preparation.

The University is also strongly committed to preserving the environment through sustainability. Through its Learning Green, Living Green (LGLG) programs, FSU is preparing students, faculty, staff, and community members to better address environmental issues. The University's commitment to sustainability also extends to the health and wellness of its students, faculty, and staff. Through its programs and policies, the University promotes overall good health through the prevention of disease and disability by promoting nutrition, exercise, and active lifestyles.

The University is closely connected to the community through its regional economic and workforce development efforts. 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.

Administrative Structure and Academic Programs

The University is organized into four major divisions: Academic Affairs, Student and Educational Services, Administration and Finance, and University Advancement. Academic Affairs houses three colleges: Liberal Arts and Sciences, Education, and Business. Frostburg offers 45 majors, 45 minors and a collaborative undergraduate engineering degree with the University of Maryland, College Park. Master's degrees are offered in business administration, education, biological sciences, counseling psychology, computer science, and recreation and parks management.

Preparation of the Periodic Review Report

This report was prepared by the PRR Drafting Group composed of faculty and staff. In preparing the report, the group gathered information and narratives from across the campus; conducted interviews; and surveyed faculty, staff, and students. An initial draft of this report was completed in April 2011. The drafting group created opportunities for both groups and individual members of the campus community to offer comments, suggestions, and concerns about the report.

Significant Changes and Developments

Dr. Jonathan Gibralter is now completing his fifth year as president of Frostburg State University. Under Dr. Gibralter's leadership, some of the most important institutional achievements since the last decennial accreditation in 2006 are listed below.

- Enrolling in the fall of 2010 the largest number of students in the history of the institution (5,470). In fall 2006 when Dr. Gibralter began his presidency, he encountered the lowest student enrollment at the University in 17 years.

- Adopting a new mission statement and a revised strategic plan that will move the institution to a position of national distinction and academic excellence by making more intentional the University's focus on experiential and applied learning opportunities for students, improving the University's facilities so that students live and learn in a modern and technologically sophisticated environment, and increasing student quality and improving student persistence to graduation.

- Internationalizing the campus by significantly expanding the number of international students attending FSU, including those from Europe, China, and the Middle East, and increasing study abroad opportunities for Frostburg students.

- Gaining approval for the 2012 construction of the University's new Center for Communications and Information Technology (CCIT) and completing the renovation and expansion of the Lane University Center in January 2011. These important capital projects will greatly enhance the campus and will help meet the instructional and co-curricular programming needs of Frostburg students.

- Acquiring federal funding of the University's new Sustainable Energy Research Facility (SERF) to be located at Allegany Business Center at Frostburg State University. Construction of the facility in 2011 will highlight the University's role as an important regional center for energy policy discussion and renewable resources research and development.

- Submitting in September 2009 its Climate Action Plan to the Association for Sustainability in Higher Education. With a goal of climate neutrality in 2030, the University has identified 49 strategic initiatives to be implemented within two years. In the fall of 2010, the University launched its new and innovative academic minor in Sustainability Studies.

- Expanding the University's academic programs offered at off-site instructional locations, including B.S. degrees in Psychology at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) and Engineering at the Anne Arundel Community College at Arundel Mills Regional Higher Education Center.

- Making academic programs accessible to a greater number of students by offering fully online its Master of Business Administration (MBA), M.S. in Recreation and Parks Management, and the R.N. to B.S. in nursing program. The University's MBA was recently ranked ninth nationally by *Get Educated.com* as a best value in accredited online MBA programs.

- Addressing University retention and graduation rates through innovative programming, including the *Closing the Achievement Gap* initiatives. The University has also taken steps to improve student learning through its innovative *Course Redesign* initiative.

- Helping students make better choices about their health and wellness through the University's Creating Healthy, Informed, Lasting Lifestyles (CHILL) program and the reduction of binge drinking.

- Providing unique student leadership development and volunteerism opportunities through the President's Leadership Circle and the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement.

- Successfully pursuing the University's *Staking Our Claim: The Campaign for Frostburg*, a $15 million funding effort focusing on the themes of academic, regional, and cultural enrichment. In January 2011, the campaign exceeded expectations and passed its goal thanks to the generosity of the University's friends and supporters.

Overview of the Periodic Review Report

Chapter One

The University's PRR Drafting Group began its work well over a year before the PRR submission date to have the time necessary to review the University's compliance with Middle States standards of accreditation. An important tool for preparing the report was the results of a faculty, staff, and student survey conducted by the drafting group. The survey results also helped to shape the contents of the University's new mission statement and draft strategic plan.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two discusses the actions taken by the University in response to the recommendations made in its 2006 self-study and to the formal recommendations of the 2006 Middle States Evaluation Team.

Chapter Two's discussion of **Mission, Planning, and Resources** introduces the University's new strategic plan's priorities of experiential and applied learning opportunities, improved campus facilities, increased student quality, and improved student persistence to graduation. The University's effort to engage the broader campus community in the planning process and to provide transparency within the process is also discussed, including the establishment of the new President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE).

Under the topic of **Governance and Administration**, the PRR discusses increased faculty participation in shared governance, including the Faculty Senate and its committees. The PRR also reports that after the completion of a first draft report on the role of department chair at the University, the provost requested a second review and a new report is expected in June 2011.

The **Institutional Assessment** section provides a general overview of the assessment work taking place at the University, both at the institutional and divisional levels, and supported by the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research.

The **Students** section discusses FSU's efforts to increase enrollment through the establishment of the University's Enrollment Management Committee and the implementation of new student recruitment strategies. Improved University marketing strategies are also reported. New efforts to increase student persistence to graduation, including strategies identified by the University's *Closing the Achievement Gap* initiative are presented.

Chapter Two's discussion of **Faculty** centers on the University's efforts to increase adjunct faculty salaries and to integrate non-tenure-track faculty into the campus community. University support for faculty professional development is also reviewed. Frostburg's efforts to increase the diversity of faculty and staff through actions identified by its Minority Recruitment and Retention plan are also presented in this section of the report.

Chapter Two's **Academic Programs** section includes a discussion of graduate education at the University, including recent marketing efforts and the development of new entirely online graduate programs, which has led to increased enrollments. The library's work to expand first-

year student instruction in information literacy and the delivery of online courses is also presented. The University's actions to authenticate student identity in online courses are also reviewed as well as the measures it is taking to ensure the quality of its online courses and support online teaching and learning.

The review of **General Education and Assessment** in Chapter Two presents an overview of the student learning outcomes assessment work of the colleges, with a more detailed discussion appearing in Chapter Five of the document. A full discussion of the General Education Program (GEP) follows, including a report on a pilot GEP assessment process. This process establishes guidelines, definitions, and format for GEP/core skills course assessment.

Chapter Two ends with a review of the **University in the Community**. This section reports on recent University-wide projects that offer regional economic development opportunities, including the expansion of the Allegany Business Center at FSU and the University's investment in downtown Frostburg. Support of educational outreach and student volunteerism in the community is also discussed.

Chapter Three

The University's new mission statement clearly sets the future direction of the institution. Chapter Three presents the following opportunities and challenges that are suggested by the mission statement and relevant to one or more Middle States accreditation standards.

Institutional Excellence: Frostburg State University's new strategic plan, which puts into action its mission statement, is intended to move the institution to a position of national distinction and academic excellence. The plan identifies three institutional priorities designed to enhance teaching and learning at FSU: (1) make more intentional the University's focus on experiential and applied learning opportunities for students both inside and outside the classroom as the hallmark of an FSU education, (2) improve the University's facilities so that students live and learn in a modern and technologically sophisticated environment, and (3) increase student quality and improve student persistence to graduation.

Faculty and Staff Hiring and Compensation: Over the last four years, all University employees have experienced salary reduction days; FSU faculty salaries are the lowest in the University System of Maryland.

Environmental Sustainability: Frostburg State University is strongly committed to preserving the environment through sustainability and is a 2007 signatory of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. Through FSU's own LGLG initiative, the University is preparing students, faculty, staff, and community members to address environmental issues. In spring 2010, FSU was listed in the *Princeton Review Guide to 286 Green Colleges*. Future initiatives include the planned opening of the University's Sustainable Energy Research Facility (SERF) during the 2011-2012 academic year.

Student Cultural Diversity: Frostburg State University is a multicultural campus where diversity is highly valued. The University's Cultural Diversity Program is updated yearly and

submitted to the University System of Maryland and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The plan contains strategies to promote student cultural diversity through: (1) recruiting and enrolling undergraduate minority and first-generation students, (2) increasing retention and graduation rates of undergraduate minority and first generation students, (3) promoting student diversity through international education, and (4) creating a campus environment that promotes the valuing of cultural diversity.

Student Health and Wellness: The University is helping students to make healthier choices and encouraging student wellness through its CHILL program, funded through a generous grant from the AstraZeneca Foundation. Significant progress has been made over the past five years to combat binge drinking, with the University achieving national recognition through its efforts under Dr. Gibralter's leadership regarding this important issue.

Workforce Development: The University continues to develop and strengthen its STEM initiatives and has developed academic programs in nursing and teacher education to address critical workforce shortages in Maryland.

Cultural Enrichment: Frostburg State University leads the region in offering hundreds of high-quality cultural and artistic programming events each year.

Instructional Programs at Off-Campus Centers: Program offerings for transfer students have been enhanced through Frostburg's expanded presence at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) and the offering of the B.S. in engineering program at the Arundel Mills (Maryland) Regional Higher Education Center.

The University Endowment: The University's $15 million campaign exceeded its goal in January 2011 and continues to generate funds to help support faculty development and other initiatives. A new initiative has begun to raise $2.5 million for merit-based scholarships, which will extend beyond the end of the current campaign.

Chapter Four

University **enrollment and financial information** is presented in Chapter Four. Over the last five years, overall headcount at FSU increased by 11.4 percent, from 4,910 in the fall of 2006 to 5,470 in fall 2010. While undergraduate enrollment has increased by 14.4 percent since the fall of 2006, graduate enrollment has decreased 8.2 percent over this same time period. The University is currently projecting an increase of 2.5 percent in headcount from fall 2010 to fall 2020.

The second-year retention rate of all first-time, full-time undergraduates increased from 67 percent for the fall 2006 cohort to 74 percent for the fall 2009 cohort. Over the same time period, the second-year retention rate of first-time, full-time minority students increased slightly from 71 percent to 72 percent. The University experienced a slight increase in the graduation rate of all first-time, full-time students from 47 percent for the 2000 cohort group to 48 percent for the 2004 cohort group. Over the same time period, the graduation rate of first-time, full-time minority students decreased from 45 percent to 41 percent.

Fiscal years 2008 to 2012 (estimated) have been a period of state-mandated operating budget reductions, fund balance reversions, and employee furloughs. However, the **University's financial status** remains strong due to prudent fiscal management and increased enrollment that has produced revenues to help the institution meet its budgetary needs.

Chapter Five

Chapter Five discusses assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes at the University. **The assessment of institutional priorities and goals** is conducted through the work of the PACIE and the University's implementation of the Performance Accountability Report/Managing for Results (PAR/MFR) report. The PACIE was formed in August 2010 as a consultative body to the president's Executive Committee and to the University's Strategic Planning Committee. The Council will assist in the future development of the University's strategic plan and will monitor its implementation and progress based on Middle States standards and measures of effectiveness. The University's PAR/MFR goals reflect the FSU strategic plan and the progress toward their attainment is monitored by the University and reported annually to the Maryland Higher Education Commission, the University System of Maryland, and the Maryland Department of Budget and Management. This assessment report, in turn, will help to guide the work of the University's Strategic Planning Committee and the allocation of institutional resources. The University's participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) will help to provide a transparent and systematic approach for information disclosure that allows for comparison among four-year public universities.

The assessment of academic programming involves the evaluation of both campus-wide curricular offerings as well as the University's undergraduate academic programs. The assessment of FSU's Learning Community Program for first-year students and the University's online education courses are examples of assessment of campus-wide curricular offerings and are intended to improve the quality of these important programs. Frostburg State University's undergraduate academic programs are assessed through the Periodic Program Review process, which is required by the University System of Maryland, and obligates programs to evaluate the learning outcomes of their students and the relationship between their programs and the University's mission. External program accreditation for a number of FSU's programs also involves an extensive review of curriculum, faculty, budget, facilities, library, and student learning outcomes.

The **assessment of student services programming** has resulted in a major redesign of the Developmental Mathematics Program and creation of a new instructional program coordinator position. A task group has been working to systematize and strengthen assessment across the Student and Educational Services division. A framework for periodic departmental self-study and program review has been developed and departments are working to develop their own assessment plans.

The assessment of student learning outcomes takes place within each of the University's colleges. The Professional Education Unit of the College of Education has a comprehensive assessment system in place to document candidates' successful completion of program outcomes. The Unit's *Conceptual Framework* provides goals for all of its programs and is

consistently used by faculty as a guide for redesigning programs, syllabi, assessments, and early field and intern evaluation forms. The College of Business maintains a comprehensive assessment program that links the mission of the College to the University's mission. Its Assurance of Learning Committee evaluates student achievement relative to learning goals using both direct and indirect methods. In the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), each academic program has developed learning goals and has begun to implement its student learning assessment plan. The CLAS Assessment Council continues to work with academic departments to craft their plans and implement mechanisms to enhance the assessment of student learning.

Chapter Six

Frostburg State University's draft strategic plan is designed to put into action the University's mission statement. In addition to institutional priorities (see Chapter Three), the plan identifies the following six major goals that will shape the direction of the institution through 2020: (1) develop and support academic programs and student services that prepare a changing student population for an era of complexity and globalization, (2) enhance facilities and the campus environment in order to support and reinforce student learning, (3) increase student quality and institutional retention and graduation rates while encouraging baccalaureate students to graduate within a four-year time frame, (4) recruit and retain diverse and talented faculty and staff committed to student learning and University goals, (5) promote activities that demonstrate the University's educational distinction, and (6) promote economic development in Western Maryland and in the region.

The University is committed to allocating institutional resources based on its mission and institutional priorities and goals. Chapter Six provides examples of the link that exists between the University's planning process and its budgetary process, including the allocation of $900,000 for construction of the SERF in support of FSU's strategic focus on environmental sustainability and regional economic development. The University also has requested strategic enhancement funding from the University System of Maryland for new initiatives that support both the new University System of Maryland strategic plan and FSU's own priorities and goals.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE PERIODIC REVIEW REPORT

APPROACH TO PREPARING THE REPORT

The University's PRR Drafting Group began its work well over a year before the report's submission date in order to have the time necessary to review the University's compliance with Middle States standards for accreditation. This review strengthened the drafting group's understanding of the institution's efforts to address the recommendations of the University's own 2006 self-study and those of the Middle States visitation team.

In preparing this report, the drafting group gathered information and narratives from offices and departments throughout the campus. In addition, members of the group conducted interviews with faculty and staff involved in many of the programs and initiatives discussed in this report. An initial draft of this report was completed in April 2011 in order to create opportunities for members of the campus community to offer comments, suggestions, and concerns about the report.

In the spring of 2010, as part of the preparation of this report, the drafting group surveyed faculty, staff, and students in an attempt to gauge the sense of the FSU community and to identify major themes and initiatives important to the campus.[1] Student focus groups were also held to gather additional information.

By far, the primary issue that emerged from the survey was the belief among respondents that the University should make greater efforts to recruit and retain students at the high end of academic achievement. Of 267 responses from faculty and staff, that issue was ranked the first or second highest priority in 236 cases. Of 175 responses from students, it was ranked the first or second highest priority in 135 cases. When asked to select the five most important issues facing the University, student quality was selected as number one by 49 percent of faculty and staff and by 35 percent of the students, by far the most important ranking by both groups.

Meetings with student focus groups mirrored the results of the survey. Frostburg students participating in these groups said they want their school to be recognized as a superior institution, where the education they receive will prepare them to work in an increasingly demanding global environment. They want FSU to be student-centered, where they know their faculty well, and where they can learn in an atmosphere that promotes and demands the best from them.

The other issues that garnered the most support from all survey respondents include: (1) the importance of student-centered learning at Frostburg as a core University value; (2) the need to continue efforts to attract higher quality faculty; (2) the need for FSU programs to prepare students to live, work, and lead in a global environment; (3) the importance of augmenting

[1] Two separate nonscientific surveys were developed and administered, one for faculty and staff and the other for students. The response rate was 28.7 percent from faculty and staff and approximately 5 percent from students, but similar issues and priorities arose from both groups. The survey results appear in Appendix A.

interdisciplinary studies, experiential learning, and extracurricular activities to better distinguish the University's curriculum; and (4) the need for the University to continue to build upon its fundraising campaigns (faculty and staff respondents only).

The PRR Drafting Group used survey and student focus group information to identify topics for this report, including Chapter Three's discussion of important University challenges and opportunities. The results of the survey also helped to shape the new mission statement of the University, as well as major aspects of the University's draft strategic plan. Both the new mission statement and the draft strategic plan are discussed throughout this report.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This Periodic Review Report is organized into six chapters, beginning with Chapter One, Introduction to the Periodic Review Report. The material presented in Chapter Two through Chapter Six is summarized in table format at the end of this document. These chapter overviews provide useful guides to the information contained in this report. Appendices to this report are separately bound.

The chapter topics are as follows:

- Chapter Two presents the University's responses to the recommendations made by the University's 2006 self-study and, where applicable, to the formal recommendations of the Middle States visitation team.
- Chapter Three discusses many of the major challenges and opportunities facing the University, all of which are relevant to one or more Middle States accreditation standards.
- Chapter Four details University enrollment, retention, graduation, and financial information.
- Chapter Five presents an overview of the University's assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes.
- Chapter Six discusses strategic planning at Frostburg, the University's new strategic plan, and the allocation of institutional resources.

CHAPTER TWO

RESPONSES TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SELF-STUDY AND EVALUATION TEAM

Chapter Two is organized around the content areas discussed in the eight chapters of the University's 2006 Middle States Self-Study:

1. Mission, Planning, and Resources (Standards 1-3)
2. Governance and Administration (Standards 4-6)
3. Institutional Assessment (Standard 7)
4. The Students (Standards 8 & 9)
5. The Faculty (Standard 10)
6. Academic Programs (Standards 11 &13)
7. General Education and Assessment (Standards 12 &14)
8. The University and the Community (Special Emphasis)

The narrative under each of the areas includes a summary of the recommendations made by the University's self-study and, where applicable, the formal recommendations of the Middle States Evaluation Team in 2006. Under the heading "The University's Response," this chapter discusses the actions taken by the University in response to the recommendations and the results achieved.

The University has acted in a thoughtful and thorough manner to address the recommendations of its own self-study and the formal recommendations of the Middle States Evaluation Team. Not all challenges identified in those recommendations have been entirely met, but the University has made meaningful progress over the last five years to strengthen and improve the institution.

MISSION, PLANNING, AND RESOURCES

RECOMMENDATIONS

The University's self-study made a number of recommendations in this area, including engaging the broader campus community in institutional planning and incorporating assessment as a key component of the planning process. The self-study also recommended the self-funding of key University activities instead of relying on extramural sources, assessing the impact of cost-containment measures on departments and offices, and developing a plan to restore funding to areas where budget reductions were unfortunately necessary over the last several years.

The Evaluation Team concurred with the self-study's call for wider campus participation in the overall institutional planning process. The team expressed "greater concern" regarding the approaches used for budget planning and resource allocation, which it observed involved "a limited number of campus personnel and had created considerable frustration and mistrust among faculty, staff, and administrators." It noted that Frostburg had managed its finances well, but the team observed that declines in University enrollment had negatively impacted the financial health of the University. The team concurred with the self-study recommendation

calling for the campus community to explore ways for offices and departments to assist in the recruitment and retention work of the University. (The University's recruitment and retention efforts are discussed under the Student section of this chapter.)

Middle States Recommendation Number One: Frostburg should fully review and revise its planning and resource allocation process to more fully engage the broader campus community and to provide for transparency within the process, including the provision of explanations for establishing priorities and analyses of how budget decisions impact each division.

THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE

In response to both the visiting team's recommendations and those outlined in the self-study, Frostburg State University has taken significant steps to improve institutional planning and effectiveness, and to ensure that its strategic planning process, including decisions regarding the allocation of institutional resources, includes the University community. In addition, the colleges are working to align their own planning cycles with those of the broader campus community (see Chapter Six for a complete discussion of strategic planning at the University since the Middle States campus visit in 2006).

University Strategic Planning

After arriving at the University in 2006, Dr. Gibralter asked that a comprehensive institutional plan be developed through a process that fully involved the entire University community. In April of 2008, a draft plan was distributed to the University community, with the final version of the plan published in 2009. As implementation of the plan began, it became evident that it was too expansive to be useful as a strategic document. In the summer and fall of 2010, a new and more streamlined strategic plan was drafted that put a greater institutional focus on the areas of experiential and applied learning opportunities, improved campus facilities, increased student quality, and improved student persistence to graduation (see Chapters Three and Six).[2] These identified institutional priorities are commensurate with the University System of Maryland (USM) strategic plan, which calls for USM to achieve and sustain national eminence through attracting and retaining highly qualified students and staff, and by building and maintaining world-class facilities.[3]

To help move the new strategic plan forward and to ensure full campus participation in its further development and implementation, Dr. Gibralter established a new President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE) in August 2010. (The president's charge to the PACIE appears in Appendix B.) As of March 2011, the council is assisting in the review of the University's strategic plan, and will monitor its implementation and progress based on Middle States standards and measures of effectiveness. In addition, the council is charged with ensuring

[2] As of May 2011, the University's new strategic plan is in draft form. A final review of the document will take place in the summer of 2011.

[3] *Powering Maryland Forward: USM's 2020 Plan for More Degrees, A Stronger Innovation Economy, A Higher Quality of Life.* December 2010.

that all segments of the University are included in the future reviews of the strategic plan and the expenditure of University resources (see Chapters Five and Six for a further discussion of the PACIE).

Strategic Planning by the Colleges

In addition to the work being done at the University level, individual colleges are strengthening their strategic planning efforts and making them more inclusive. The College of Business has developed a comprehensive strategic planning process, which is outlined in the college's process manual available on its website. The current process does not include broader inclusion of the campus community beyond the College of Business; however, means for doing so are currently being explored (see Appendix C for the College of Business strategic plan).

In the past, the strategic work of the College of Education (COE) has been "top down," responding to strategic needs as they arose and taking its direction from the dean of the college and the University. While the COE will still respond to the needs and the direction of the University, it will develop a longer-term visionary approach to identifying strategies to promote the growth and development of the college as opposed to simply responding to needs as they arise. Development and implementation of its strategic plan will be more proactive, comprehensive and inclusive, involving the broader college community, faculty, and staff (see Appendix D for the College of Education strategic plan).

The planning process in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is initiated by the dean's leadership team and implemented with broad-based input and support from the faculty and staff at large. The strategic planning process begins each summer with the establishment of strategic directions and initiatives for the college (see Appendix E for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences strategic plan). These are presented to and refined by the faculty at the beginning of the fall semester. Departments then develop their own plans and objectives in alignment with the new strategic directions and present their accomplishments from the preceding year in the early fall. The college summarizes and presents its successes at the conclusion of the spring semester.

Funding Institutional Priorities

While the University is working to bolster strategic planning and institutional effectiveness, reduction in state support has made it difficult for the institution to self-fund several of its key activities, as recommended by the self-study. Instead, the University continues to seek extramural funds to support many of these programs and initiatives. For instance, the University's undergraduate nursing program won an important Maryland Higher Education Commission grant of $278,000 in spring 2010 to support the online delivery of the program's curriculum. Major federal funding for the University's new Sustainable Energy Research Facility (SERF - $856,350) and the existing Appalachian Center for Ethnobotanical Studies ($1.4 million) was also secured by the University in spring 2010.

Continued reductions in state funding have also made it difficult for the University to follow the recommendation of the self-study to restore money to areas impacted by past cost containment measures (see Chapter Four for a discussion of state funding to the University). Instead, increased 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.

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

The University's self-study called on current faculty leaders to do more to encourage wider faculty involvement in shared governance. The self-study also recommended that a greater effort be made by University leaders and the Student Government Association (SGA) to increase student awareness of the role of SGA on campus and the opportunity for student involvement in University governance committees. Regarding academic administration, the self-study suggested the University "investigate what factors are contributing to a minority of faculty describing their relationship with the administration as satisfactory." It also recommended a formal review of the position of the department chair at the University.

The Evaluation Team reported that the University had a well-defined system of governance, and that the "evaluation of the leadership of the university occurs at all levels." The team endorsed the campus recommendation calling for a review of the department chairs' "role, compensation, appointment and termination process, and position within the structure of the administration." It also noted the self-study's comments on the faculty's relationship with the administration and urged that steps be taken to improve communication within and among divisions of the University.

The Evaluation Team found the integrity of the institution, relative to its published policies and processes, "consistent, clear, and readily available to both the university community and the public." The team also found faculty aware of University policies and procedures that impact their professional life and growth. Finally, the team cited Frostburg's "exceptional student diversity for a rural university," and the effective measures the University had established to "address issues of mutual concern and respect."

THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE

Increasing Participation in Shared Governance

The Faculty Senate continues to be one of the most visible of the presidential advisory groups on campus. Participation has grown over the last few years, particularly in the number of constituents vying for seats. In the past, election for Faculty Senate was rarely contested, in many cases having only one candidate per open seat. However, for the last two years, more than 20 faculty members have been self-nominated for the 12-13 open seats in the Senate. New faculty members are being encouraged to become involved in governance by their chairs and colleagues, and that has resulted in the full staffing of Senate committees and work groups.

Relationships between University administrators and the chair of the faculty /major Faculty Senate committee chairs have been cordial and productive in the last five years. The president and the provost regularly consult with the chair of the faculty on a wide variety of issues, from strategic planning to creation of special professional development opportunities and retention policy, to name just a few. In addition, representation to the Council of University System Faculty (CUSF, the system-wide faculty advisory group to the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland and Board of Regents) has stabilized in the last two years. The University's Faculty Senate receives regular reports from its representatives on CUSF, which are disseminated to the campus community.

The appointment of the PACIE has opened another channel for the flow of information, both up and down the administrative chain. The council has representation from all of the areas of the University and it is a unique body in that respect. Meetings are held monthly and work is progressing toward a more transparent planning process.

The chair of the faculty met with the Student Government Association (SGA) Executive Board in October of 2010 and has established an effective dialogue with student government on campus. Many more members of SGA now sit on University committees and sub-committees and their voices are being heard in those bodies.

Review of the Department Chair Position

In March 2007, the provost formed a Department Chair Task Force to review the role of the department chair at the University. As stated in the provost's charge to the group, the overall goal of the task force was to formulate recommendations for his review that would "strengthen the chairs' role in terms of their ability to lead their departments, but also make sure that chairs have meaningful input into University decision making and are accountable to the University for implementing University policies and priorities."[4]

After a year of deliberation, the Task Force issued its draft report to the provost and the Chairs' Council in April 2008. The report made specific recommendations regarding the role and responsibilities of the department chair; department chair training and support; department chair selection, reappointment, and evaluation; and department chair workload and compensation.[5] An initial review of the draft report by members of the Chairs' Council and several academic departments was not favorable, with strong objections raised regarding several important recommendations of the task force.

After closely consulting with the chair of the faculty, the provost and the Faculty Senate together formed a reconstituted Chairs' Task Force in the fall of 2009 to review the original report and make new recommendations that would be presented both to the Office of the Provost and the Faculty Senate. The report of the reconstituted task force is expected in June 2011.

[4] Provost's Charge to the Department Chair Task Force, March 6, 2007
[5] Draft Department Chair Task Force Report, April 2008

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establishing a university-wide institutional assessment and planning entity that reports to the president and is part of the governance system was a central recommendation of the self-study. Given equal importance by the self-study was the recommendation to create an institutional assessment plan that demonstrates a clear linkage between assessment, planning, and resource allocation. The self-study also urged that planning cycles at the division or departmental levels of the University be coordinated with those of the institutional assessment plan to assure continuity of planning and the engagement of the University community.

The Evaluation Team reported that the University had many "elements of assessment in place in various divisions across campus," but that assessment efforts were "uneven across the University and had "not yet served as a significant component for university-wide planning and budgeting." The team called upon the University to fully develop, implement and utilize its draft Institutional Assessment Plan and endorsed the self-study's call for the "establishment of a university-wide entity to coordinate and advocate for assessment on campus."

Middle States Recommendation Number Two: Frostburg should move quickly to adopt and implement its draft Institutional Assessment Plan. Full implementation requires evidence that results from the institutional assessments are used in the decision-making process.

THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE

Assessment at Frostburg State University

The University's 2006 draft Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP) was designed to support and facilitate the University's strategic plan at the time. With the development of a new strategic plan and planning process in 2011, the University has set aside major aspects of the draft IAP. Presently, assessment work at the University is supported by the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research and takes two important directions. The first focuses on the University's strategic goals and priorities and assessment at the institutional level. The second direction is at the divisional level and involves the assessment of academic and student programming, as well as the assessment of student learning outcomes. [6] At both levels, significant and careful efforts have been made to integrate assessment efforts with the strategic planning work of the institution. Chapter Five of this report addresses institutional assessment and effectiveness in detail.

[6] The assessment of student learning outcomes is discussed in this chapter under *General Education and the Assessment of Student Learning.* A broader discussion of student learning assessment appears in Chapter Five.

THE STUDENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to declining student enrollments, the University's self-study called for an in-depth analysis of the enrollment issues facing the institution and a re-examination of its marketing activities. In addition, it called on the University's Retention Council to develop and implement a comprehensive student persistence plan, with assigned leadership responsibilities, that was based on a fresh look at student retention issues facing the University.

In the area of academic advising, the self-study called for a clear delineation of the responsibilities of various programs and personnel, with particular attention paid to the declaration of major process. The self-study also recommended that all student service offices develop assessment plans that focus on student learning outcomes and other indicators of program efficacy to inform policy and planning.

The Evaluation Team noted the self-study's concern with declining student enrollments and suggested the University "aggressively take steps to identify the reasons for the decline, and take whatever steps are necessary to reverse this trend." It called on Frostburg to establish enrollment targets, and quickly design and implement a comprehensive enrollment plan. The team also agreed with the self-study that the University's marketing strategies and retention efforts must be improved. It suggested that efforts to improve retention (and graduation) rates would benefit from greater coordination and cooperation, especially across divisional lines. It urged the University to continue its study of student attrition patterns so appropriate follow-up steps could be taken and the recruitment work of the Admissions Office better informed.

In the area of student support services, the team noted the University's "periodic, careful assessments of available student services" as well as its "long history of nationally recognized professional leadership that provides students with personal and academic support through innovative programs that link academic and student educational services."

THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE

The University has seen significant growth in its student population over the last several years. In fall 2010, the University welcomed more than 1,000 entering freshmen and enrolled a total of 5,470 students, the largest number in the history of the institution. Seventy-four percent of first-time freshmen entering Frostburg on a full-time basis last year returned to continue their education in fall 2010, which represents a two percent increase in freshman retention at the University. In addition, international student enrollment at FSU has tripled during the past five years, growing from 19 students from 15 countries in Fall Semester 2006, to its highest enrollment of 69 students from 19 countries in Spring Semester 2011 (see Chapter Three).[7]

[7] Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research

The Work of the Enrollment Management Committee

The upswing in the University's student population is in large part due to the efforts of the campus-wide Enrollment Management Committee (EMC). The EMC was formed by President Gibralter in 2006 and is chaired by the associate vice president for enrollment management. Both faculty and administrators sit on the committee and President Gibralter regularly attends its meetings.

Over the last three years, the EMC has devised and implemented new student recruitment strategies, including developing stronger relationships with high schools and community colleges. The committee also revised the University's undergraduate admission policies and procedures, and expanded undergraduate scholarships. The EMC regularly reviews graduate student enrollments and has helped to develop new marketing strategies for the University's graduate programs (see discussion of graduate education in this chapter under *Academic Programs*).

The Enrollment Management Committee was also pleased to learn that prospective students have been drawn to the University because of its rating in the *Princeton Review's Guide to 286 Green Colleges*, which recognized Frostburg and its commitment to sustainability in its infrastructure, activities, and initiatives.

Finally, with the support of the Enrollment Management Committee, the University is working to make its academic programs accessible to a greater number of students through online education. The University now offers its Master of Business Administration (MBA), M.S. in Recreation and Parks Management, and the R.N. to B.S. in nursing program fully online. The University's MBA was recently ranked ninth nationally as a best value in AACSB accredited online MBA programs (see discussion of online education below under *Academic Program*).[8]

Marketing the University

In 2006, President Gibralter formed the University's Marketing and Branding Task Force, a broad-based committee of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members charged with clarifying and refining a brand upon which the University could base the marketing of the institution. The task force carefully reviewed promotional documents sent to external constituents; evaluated existing research; and conducted surveys among prospective and current students, faculty and staff, alumni, and the community. The task force also reviewed information collected for the University's strategic planning process.

From these broad-based efforts, a marketing campaign was established to promote Frostburg State University's unique strengths, to support the president's charge of raising the bar on academic standards, and to establish FSU as a distinctive and distinguished institution. Starting in 2007, additional funds were allocated to support marketing and branding efforts, increasing the budget from $25,000 in 2006 to $164,900 in 2011.

[8] GetEducated.com, August 2010

The following marketing themes, identified through the Marketing and Branding Task Force, are based on the University's strategic plan and evolving mission statement and drive FSU's marketing:

- Our role in sustainability, both broader environmental and human, even humane, sustainability
- Our role as an engine for regional workforce and economic development
- Our role as the cultural center for the Western Maryland region
- Our willingness to take a leadership role in our community and our nation, and our success in building future leaders
- Our alumni, leaders in their own fields and communities, who are our strongest measure of success
- Experiential opportunities – hands-on research, study abroad, internships, community service – that are readily available to FSU students
- Our academic quality, including our national and international accreditations
- Our faculty and staff who take a particular interest in our students' success
- Our wellness-centered campus culture, where students have access to a variety of resources and activities that encourage health and wellness as part of their daily lives
- Celebrating our beautiful, mountainous location and its proximity to unique recreational opportunities, such as biking, hiking, skiing, kayaking, etc.

These themes were the inspiration in the development of the new Frostburg State University logo, introduced in 2008. A new visual identity has since been incorporated into all advertising, promotional and recruiting materials, the website and other elements of FSU's public "face." The Office of Communications and Media Relations, which is now responsible for the marketing of the institution, has also developed and implemented a range of print, radio, and online advertising materials.

In addition to planned marketing through paid advertising, significant efforts have been directed toward enhancing the University's image through media coverage. The staff of News and Media Services (part of Communications and Media Relations) has worked to raise the media profile of the University by building relationships with influential news reporters in the region and using opportunities to pair the name of Frostburg State University with its most stellar students and with its broad base of cultural and educational events.

The University is also taking advantage of the rapidly growing area of social media to promote institutional programs and initiatives and to build a sense of community among students, faculty and staff, friends, and alumni. In 2009, an existing position in Communications and Media Relations was reclassified to incorporate social media and new technology. Focusing the University's communications and marketing efforts on the use of new media such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter has increased the involvement in University events of a growing number of alumni, current and prospective students, and members of the community. In 2010, marketing and branding efforts have expanded to include internal marketing to reinforce the wisdom of a student's choice of FSU, with a hoped-for benefit of reducing the number of students who leave FSU for other institutions.

Student Retention and Graduation Rates

Frostburg State University is committed to improving student retention and graduation rates. The University's current programs to improve student persistence and time to degree are described in this section of the report. The second-year retention rate of all first-time, full-time students at the University increased from 67 percent for the 2006 cohort group to 74 percent for the 2009 cohort group. The second-year retention rate of first-time, full-time minority students increased slightly from 71 percent for the 2006 cohort group to 72 percent for the 2009 cohort group.

The graduation rate of all first-time, full-time students increased slightly from 47 percent in the 2000 cohort group to 48 percent in the 2004 cohort group. Over the same time period, the University experienced a decline in the graduation rate of first-time, full-time minority students: from 45 percent in the 2000 cohort group to 41 percent for the 2004 cohort group.

The University Advisory Council on Retention

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 Retention Work of the Colleges

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.[9] These strategies are briefly identified below.

- *Expanding Learning Communities to Include All Freshmen* – The University's Learning Community Program is specifically designed to enhance student academic performance and second-year retention. In fall 2006, this program was expanded to give all first-semester freshmen the opportunity to enroll in learning communities. Learning communities link students in a set of courses that explore an academic major, life skill, or topic by enrolling them in thematically linked courses. Learning communities also help students establish support networks with peers, faculty, and University staff; assist with decisions about possible academic majors; and explore the importance of communicating effectively with other cultures. A fall 2009 satisfaction survey revealed that 89 percent of student respondents felt they had increased basic study skills through their involvement with learning communities. Ninety-six percent thought their participation led to a better understanding of basic college attitudes, such as attending class regularly and completing class assignments in a timely fashion.

- *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 traditionally taught courses.[10] 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

[9] 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. See Chapter Three for a discussion of the University's efforts to increase the retention and graduation rates of students from underrepresented groups. 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.

[10] 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).

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 nearly all (97 percent) first-time, full-time freshmen participating. Ninety-five faculty, staff, and coaches used MAP-Works in fall 2010 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 Phoenix Program, which provides intensive support for those students facing dismissal following their first semester; the Center for Advising and Career Services, which combines services that provide essential support for undecided students; 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 receiving institutional need-based aid is 73 percent as opposed to 69 percent for those receiving no institutional need-based aid.

Improving Student Proficiency in Mathematics

Frostburg State University has identified preparation for success in mathematics as a significant barrier to degree completion. The University is pursuing two new strategies intended to improve success in developmental mathematics. First, as discussed above, the University is applying the NCAT course redesign model to its DVMT 100 (Intermediate Algebra) developmental mathematics course beginning in the spring of 2011 with full implementation planned for fall 2011. Second, as a strategy for improving time to degree, the University will continue to expand Developmental Math (DVMT 095 Pre-Algebra Mathematics) course

offerings through its established Summer Online Freshman Initiative (SOFI) program.[11] Through the SOFI program, incoming freshmen who need remediation in mathematics can complete DVMT 095 online in the summer before the start of their first semester at FSU. By successfully completing DVMT 095 prior to their arrival on campus, these students are less likely to fall behind in satisfying their core mathematics requirements at the University.

Expanding and Strengthening Support, Monitoring, and Advising Programs

In an effort to increase the graduation rate of minority and first-generation students, the University's Programs for Academic Support and Studies (PASS) 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 percent) were self-identified as minority and 156 (56 percent) 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 2010 semester.[12]

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. The Center was established in January 2006, as a result of a task force study of transfer student advising practices, and administratively coupled with the Career Center in 2007 to take advantage of the two offices' complementary services.

There has been a steady growth of students taking advantage of the Advising Center. The Center had 673 student appointments in the 2009-2010 academic year, a 67 percent increase over the prior academic year, and the current academic year is on target to exceed last year's number of students served. Recent activities and accomplishments of the Advising Center include:

- Created new procedures to facilitate the declaration of major process
- Collaborated with the faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to improve the advising of undeclared students
- Collaborated with the Registrar and Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research to create a process to better identify undeclared students
- Redesigned and updated the Transfer Student Guide
- Created and sponsor an annual Majors Fair
- Assist with the new student orientation sessions
- Provide workshops in the residence halls and for Introduction to Higher Education classes

[11] The University's Summer Online Freshman Initiative (SOFI) program allows incoming freshmen to take developmental courses or popular introductory General Education Program courses online in the summer before the start of the first semester at FSU.
[12] Frostburg State University Diversity Center

- Advise high school and non-degree students taking classes at FSU
- Assist students who are looking for an internship
- Act as a resource for students who are academically and emotionally distressed, experiencing adjustment issues across campus, or are not sure where to seek assistance.

The provost and the vice president for student and educational services have appointed a work group to examine the current state of academic advising at FSU include the goals, effectiveness, training, and administrative structure. The task group, consisting of SES staff members and faculty members, will complete their report and make recommendations during the next academic year.

THE FACULTY

RECOMMENDATIONS

The self-study made several recommendations regarding the faculty, including increasing adjunct faculty salaries and developing new strategies to integrate adjuncts more fully into the University community. The self-study also called for increased funding to support faculty professional development. Noting the University's commitment to diversity among its faculty, the self-study urged the institution to increase its efforts to both recruit and retain minority faculty and staff, and gain a fuller understanding of reasons for the attrition of minority employees.

The Evaluation Team described Frostburg's faculty as "dedicated, well qualified, and committed to the education of its students, with an impressive record of research productivity, grant acquisition, and professional development." The team supported the self-study recommendations regarding part-time faculty compensation and their role at the University.

Regarding faculty morale, the team observed that while external administrative mandates and state funding problems accounted for some of the faculty discontent reported in the self-study, the more serious and direct cause was "ineffective communication on critical issues of institutional planning and budget allocation" (see discussion under *Mission, Planning, and Resources*). The report to the campus also noted that administrative financial support for professional development had difficulties keeping pace with rising research expenses and "the expanding ambitions of the faculty."

Finally, the team shared the self-study's concern regarding faculty diversity and concluded that there was "inconclusive evidence that faculty diversity occupies a sufficiently high priority within the institution." It strongly encouraged the University to consult available outside resources and expertise as part of its efforts to diversify its faculty.

Middle States Recommendation Number Three: Frostburg should develop and implement a comprehensive plan for improving the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty. The effort requires special emphasis on the coordination of campus-wide initiatives to expand the size and diversity of applicant pools.

THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE

Providing for the Diversity of Faculty and Staff

A fundamental goal of Frostburg State University is increasing diversity among its faculty and staff. As of November 2010, the University's workforce consists of 922 full- and part-time employees (366 faculty and 556 staff). The percentage of tenured/tenure-track minority faculty members (currently 13.5 percent) has remained fairly constant over the past three years. Full-time minority staff members are currently employed at a rate of 5.6 percent (a 0.8 percent increase since 2008).[13]

The University's Minority Recruitment and Retention Plan

In January 2009, the Office of Human Resources (OHR) instituted the University's Minority Recruitment and Retention Plan (MRRP). This plan, which has been incorporated into the University Cultural Diversity Program, expands the activities of the ADA/EEO and Title IX Compliance Office, creates new strategies to attract and retain African-American faculty, and provides additional support for college and departmental minority faculty recruitment and retention strategies (see Chapter Three for more information on the University's Cultural Diversity Program).

An important expansion of the ADA/EEO and Title IX Compliance Office is the assignment of an Equity Officer to each college or division to help monitor and coordinate diversity initiatives. This officer works with the Director of ADA/EEO and Title IX Compliance to ensure that current minority recruitment and retention strategies are in place and that new initiatives are developed and implemented as needed. Furthermore, all search committees for faculty and staff positions are required to designate one member of the committee to be responsible for ensuring that minority outreach is a priority. The chair of the search committee and the Director of ADA/EEO and Title IX Compliance review applicants selected for interview at which time documentation must be submitted to demonstrate what efforts have been made with regard to minority recruitment.

In an effort to attract more African-American faculty, the Division of Academic Affairs and Office of Human Resources are building 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 FSU 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 FSU's desire to develop a more diverse faculty and staff as well as the teaching and research opportunities available at Frostburg. The Office of Human Resources has also 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.

[13] Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research

An important new initiative to promote the retention of all University employees is the Staff Mentoring Program. The mentoring program, initiated in the fall of 2009 by the Office of Human Resources, is designed to ensure new administrative employees are welcomed and made to feel a part of the campus community. The program includes a fall welcoming reception for the University community, the subsidizing of mentor/mentee tickets to cultural events, and the distribution of welcome baskets to new employees. By assisting new employees through the first and perhaps most critical year of employment at FSU, the program hopes to increase the diversity of staff at the University. Through the work of the President's Advisory Council on Diversity (PACD), the University also created in fall 2010 the FSU diversity website, which provides information regarding PACD and the entire University's efforts to create a welcoming environment on campus that values different genders, races, cultural backgrounds, nationalities, and lifestyles.

Within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, many departments have mentoring programs for new faculty, but all new full-time faculty in the college have an additional mentor outside of their departments to provide support and introduce them to the university and community culture. This mentoring program was started in 2007, and the associate dean coordinates it.

Supporting Non-Tenure-Track University Faculty

Frostburg is strongly committed to connecting full-time and part-time, non-tenure-track (adjunct) faculty to the University and fully supporting them in their work. Adjunct faculty presently represent 33.1 percent of the FSU faculty and in the fall of 2010 they taught 18.1 percent of course sections.[14]

Part-time faculty members are typically compensated at the rate of $2,000 per three credit hour course (increased from $1,800 in fall of 2007). This compensation level may be adjusted by the appropriate college dean for courses with small enrollments. The standard level of compensation is set by the president of the University and the Executive Committee as part of the budget process. In accordance with new University System of Maryland adjunct policies, non-salaried part-time faculty who are determined by Frostburg to have a consistent record of high-quality instruction will receive an increment in their standard level of compensation.[15]

All non-tenure-track faculty (full-time and part-time) are invited to participate in the University's August orientation for new faculty and administrators conducted by the Office of the Provost. In addition, many academic departments include adjunct faculty in their activities, programs, and meetings. All non-tenure-track faculty members are provided the University information they need to become familiar through the University's *Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Handbook*.

[14] The University currently employs 245 full-time and 121 part-time faculty members. (FSU), Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research)

[15] University System of Maryland (USM) Policy on the Employment of Adjunct Faculty in the University System of Maryland, December 2010. The University System of Maryland has a separate policy regarding the employment of salaried, part-time faculty, USM Policy II – 1.06 – Policy on the Employment of Salaried, Part-Time, Non-tenure-track Instructional Faculty in the University System of Maryland (July 1, 2007).

The University also supports the professional development of its non-tenure-track faculty. Full-time non-tenure-track faculty are eligible to apply for University faculty development funds to support their research and work in the classroom. They are also eligible to participate in grant-writing workshops supported by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and academic departments are also encouraged to include them in their faculty development activities.

Over the years, many non-tenure-track faculty have participated in training programs conducted by the Office of Human Resources. The Center for Instructional Technologies also provides training in online teaching to all faculty, including adjunct instructors. Many adjunct faculty members now take part in that training, which qualifies them to teach fully online courses at Frostburg. Finally, a few of the academic departments provide formal training for their adjuncts to help them be more effective teachers. Examples include the English Department's work with adjuncts teaching English composition and the Psychology Department's work with adjuncts participating in its General Psychology course redesign project where some of the instruction takes place online.

The University believes that non-tenure-track faculty must be connected to the University through their participation in shared governance. Two seats on the Faculty Senate have been allocated to non-tenure-track faculty and these senators also sit on the University's Faculty Concerns Committee. Through this important participation in shared governance, the voice of non-tenure-track faculty at Frostburg can be clearly heard.

Supporting Faculty Professional Development

Frostburg State University supports a comprehensive faculty development program that falls under the purview of the Faculty Development and Sabbatical Subcommittee, a subcommittee of the Faculty Concerns Committee of the Faculty Senate. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) also promotes faculty development through its professional grant-training program.

Faculty Development Grants

Funding for other faculty development initiatives is allocated through the Office of the Provost to the Faculty Development and Sabbatical Subcommittee. A competitive process that begins with a call for applications by the Subcommittee from the entire faculty population culminates in the awarding of funds to over 30 faculty applicants each year. Funding has remained constant since at least FY2005 at $25,000, although it was doubled in FY2009 ($50,000). Due to financial circumstances, the FY2011 funding level was again set at $25,000. The FSU Foundation also makes funds available for faculty and staff development through an annual RFP process. In 2010, the Foundation awarded a total of $75,000 to 26 selected proposals submitted by the campus community.

Grant Proposal Incentive Fund

Through use of the Grant Proposal Incentive Fund, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs provides support and training for interested University faculty and staff. The GPIF is funded by a percentage of recovered indirect costs. Faculty and staff can apply for GPIF support

for pre-application initiatives. Recipients agree to develop within one year a full grant application for external funds in support of University-directed research or programming. Over the past seven years (FY2004-FY2010), the GPIF provided application development funds for 17 faculty members in the amount of $56,273. Twelve proposals were submitted in compliance with Grant Proposal Incentive Fund guidelines, generating $221,397 in new grant initiatives.

Grant Training Program

Three-day grant-writing workshops are offered on campus under the leadership of a nationally renowned grant-writing expert. Sessions focus on seeking out public and private funding sources, proposal development and submission, understanding state and federal guidelines, budget development and management, grant administration, and reporting requirements. Each participant has the opportunity for one-on-one counseling with the trainer and is offered follow-up counseling at the trainer's headquarters on a case-by-case basis. Since 2008, 60 faculty and staff members have received comprehensive training through the workshop, which generated 28 grants valued at $1,685,448.[16]

FSU Foundation Annual Fund Awards

The Frostburg State University Foundation, through its Annual Fund, awards funding to project proposals submitted by faculty as part of its ongoing efforts to reinvest in the campus community. These financial resources ensure that faculty members are able to take advantage of important professional development opportunities and pursue ideas that give them a sense of ownership in FSU's overall educational experience. Selected proposals must focus on the goals of student enrichment, academic enrichment and regional and cultural enrichment. Past awards have supported conference and meeting attendance, the purchase of equipment and other supplies that enhance teaching and research and the development of cultural events and activities that strengthen FSU's relationship with its surrounding community.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

RECOMMENDATIONS

The self-study, drawing on the June 2006 report of the University's Graduate Education Task Force Report, recommended the creation of a new administrative structure to oversee graduate studies. The self-study also observed that the emphasis placed on information literacy was putting additional demands on the faculty of the library, and recommended that restoring library faculty positions should be a high priority of the University.

The Evaluation Team recognized the broad range of curricular programs available at Frostburg, all of which were "designed with close faculty review and oversight." "Through the governance system," the team reported, "the faculty provides thoughtful, serious-minded stewardship of curriculum development, accounting in large measure for the high regard in which the educational program is held by students, employers, and members of the local community." The team noted the "ambitious, wide-ranging scope" of the University's review of

[16] Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

graduate education, and voiced its support of the self-study recommendation regarding reconsideration of the administrative structure for graduate studies.

In the area of "Related Educational Activities" (Standard 13), the Evaluation Team observed that the University's programs at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown had increased learning opportunities at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition, it noted the rapid growth of distance education at the University and commended Frostburg on the quality of its support structure for online learning. As a suggestion, the Evaluation Team advised Frostburg to ensure that the "online instructional support systems, which are considered model programs, are revised and adjusted to effectively accommodate the significant growth projected for this delivery mode."

THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE

Graduate Education at Frostburg

The June 2006 University's Task Force on Graduate Education report made a series of recommendations regarding graduate program development, delivery, and marketing. The report also recommended that the Office of Graduate Education be restructured as a new administrative entity led by a senior administrator, who would be supported by the Director of Graduate Services, report directly to the provost, and be a member of the Deans' Council and president's Cabinet. Although budgetary constraints have not allowed the University to hire a new senior administrator to direct graduate education, the role of the Director of Graduate Services has been expanded to include many of the program development and marketing responsibilities the report identified as most important to the growth of graduate education at the University.

Prior to 2007, graduate enrollment was experiencing significant annual decline, most of which was the result of the 2004 closing of the University's MBA instructional site located in Frederick, Maryland. Other factors contributing to this enrollment decline include lack of marketing and competition with emerging online graduate programs. Efforts in the areas of marketing, program development, and internal process redesign have resulted in expanded graduate education opportunities designed to reverse the decline in graduate enrollment trends experienced since 2006 (see Chapter Four).[17]

Marketing Graduate Programs

The Director of Graduate Services and the University's Office of Communications and Media Relations cooperatively developed a marketing plan in 2006 targeted to increase awareness of FSU graduate programs regionally. The University also committed funds to enhance both event and image marketing. These efforts have resulted in increased recruitment events, additional print advertising, and the development of recruitment materials for the University's graduate

[17] The graduate enrollment decline in Fall 2010 can be attributed to a significant decrease in the Master of Arts in Teaching program which is a regional program designed for career changers. The recent economic recession and lack of teacher positions in the region have had a significant impact on application and enrollment numbers for this program.

programs. More recently, Frostburg has adopted Internet advertising strategies that have proven to be successful, particularly in advertising the University's new online graduate programs.

New Online Graduate Programs

In 2007, the College of Business began to expand its graduate online course offerings with the ultimate goal of creating an entirely online MBA option that would be attractive to the working professional. As a result, the past decline in MBA enrollment stabilized immediately. In spring 2010, Frostburg was approved to offer an entirely online MBA degree option. This approval, along with expanded marketing of this new option, has resulted in a 25 percent increase in MBA enrollments from fall 2009 to fall 2010. The College of Business has also developed new partnerships in India and China for students in those countries to begin its MBA program online and finish at the FSU campus.

In fall 2010, the College of Education launched the Master of Science in Recreation and Parks Management program as a fully online program. Changing this program to fully online has also proven very beneficial, with enrollment in fall 2010 equaling the second largest cohort for the program in the past several years.

Looking to the Future

As FSU looks to the future for increasing graduate program enrollment, continuing its efforts in marketing, particularly Internet and social marketing, will be an area of concentration. There is also tremendous potential for the University in the area of online graduate education. With two of its graduate programs online for the first time in fall 2010, student satisfaction in these programs will be carefully assessed as the University reviews other programs that may have the potential for online expansion. Linking online programs with international student recruitment also remains a priority for FSU in the coming years as a strategy to increase graduate enrollment.

Frostburg is also committed to developing new programs like the fall 2010 College of Education STEM initiative that offers a combined BS/MAT program in the STEM areas to recruit students early in their college career. The University is also pursuing a new Master of Science in Nursing Program and an Ed.D. in Educational Policy and Leadership.

The Lewis J. Ort Library

The Lewis J. Ort Library serves as a major academic support system for FSU's students, faculty, and staff, particularly in its utilization and provision of information and instructional technology. The library faculty continually evaluates the quality and accessibility of the library's vast array of information resources, both in print and electronic formats, to enhance undergraduate and graduate studies and to facilitate research and lifelong learning. Since 2006, the library has further addressed ever-increasing demands for better access to these resources and guidance in how to use them efficiently through a more effective application of technology and by augmenting its information literacy instruction program. To accomplish these objectives, the library hired an additional library faculty member to coordinate instruction for first-year students, reallocated space to expand access to computing technology and to provide students

with accommodations and equipment for collaborative projects, and incorporated new platforms of delivery that foster active learning and support both traditional and online courses.

Information Literacy Instruction and Instructional Technology

In accordance with the University's self-study that recommended the restoration of library positions to support the increasing demand of information literacy instruction, a new teaching library faculty position was added to the staff in 2009 to serve as Coordinator of Library Instruction to first-year students. This coordinator assists students with the transition from high school to college-level research, scholarship and academic autonomy, and works with Orientation 101 Introduction to Higher Education (ORIE) instructors to develop information literacy skills in first-year students. In addition to onsite group instruction, the new coordinator developed an online component of library resource materials accessible via the *BlackBoard* platform.

Each semester since spring 2006, the library has administered an information literacy survey to first-year English 101 students to assess student learning outcomes as defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Overall, correct response rates have increased beyond the established 70 percent benchmark since 2007. The Coordinator of Library Instruction has also taken steps to assess the quality of library instruction by introducing a collaborative peer evaluation procedure to review library instructors in the classroom. In addition to promoting a consistent level of excellence in library instruction, the objectives of this program are to offer constructive feedback to participating library faculty and to recommend effective ways to impart tenets of information literacy and information fluency to students.

The library's information literacy instruction program is centered on students emulating the instructor, inputting searches, and working through assigned research problems. In fiscal year 2011, the Ort Library received the necessary funding from the University to renovate its instruction classroom, resulting in a complete reconfiguration and upgrade of the technology to utilize the space more efficiently to accommodate increasing class sizes. It now provides hands-on functionality for 32 students and the instructor.

Electronic Resources and Access to Information

The Evaluation Team acknowledged the library's "ongoing conversion to electronic resources" and that "new consortium arrangements with other colleges and universities" help to "maximize strained collection and acquisition budgets." Ort Library has made a concerted effort to increase the availability of electronic resources to students and faculty since 2006. A large migration of the library's collection from physical to online format began with a faculty survey administered in 2007 regarding the value and usefulness of the library's periodical and database subscriptions supporting academic departments and programs.

As a result of this review, the library has increased the proportion of its collection available in electronic format by expanding the number of database subscriptions that aggregate the full text articles of journals and other publications. Access to these and other online resources is available through the library's website, continually evolving to provide organization to the myriad of

information sources available on the Internet and to assist users in identifying those materials that are most relevant to their needs. The physical space of the Ort Library has been restructured in the past four years to add more computers and printers to facilitate student access to electronic resources. Wireless receivers were upgraded in 2009 to support a proliferation in the use of personal laptop computers within the library.

The library continues to maximize its limited acquisitions' budget by utilizing its memberships in various academic library consortia to share resources and pursue the most favorable subscription and collection purchase agreement. Through these consortial agreements, the library has been able to identify and to provide electronic collections that support most curricular needs on campus, but accommodating new academic programs will provide a challenge in the current fiscal climate.

The Growth of Online Education at Frostburg

Online interest at FSU continues to grow with new programs and initiatives. The University has greatly expanded the number of online course offerings over the last several years. Overall enrollment for online summer courses has grown 299 percent between 2003 and 2010. During the 2010 intersession, 60 undergraduate and graduate courses were offered and total enrollments reached 724 (a 2.6 percent increase from intersession 2009).[18] The University also offers its RN to BSN (fall 2009) fully online and, as mentioned above, has added to its fully online programs the Master of Science in Recreation and Parks Management (fall 2010), and the Master of Business Administration (fall 2010).

Authenticating Student Identity in Online Courses

As higher education accreditation regulations begin to evolve surrounding the topic of student identity in online courses, the University has researched, tested, and planned a course of action for added security. The Higher Education Reauthorization Act (HERA), effective August 14, 2008, entails new regulations for accrediting agencies. During the accreditation process, institutions must verify that processes are in place to establish that the distance learning student who registers for a course is the same as the student who performs the work. Presently, the University meets HERA standards by requiring that students use a secure user ID and password to access online distance education coursework. A complex password protocol is enforced to ensure a high level of protection. As new identification technologies are developed and become more sophisticated, it is expected that institutions will be required to verify the identity of students beyond a user ID and password. It is expected that a student's privacy will be protected regardless of the verification method.

The University has researched an authentication solution called Acxiom that integrates with Blackboard. When taking an online exam, Acxiom prompts the student with directory information (name, address, and phone) questions. The answers are matched to a daily-updated database to verify identity. The University piloted Acxiom in the summer of 2010, but system performance problems have delayed implementation until Blackboard is upgraded in

[18] Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research

August 2011. Once implemented, this process will strengthen academic integrity in FSU's distance learning programs and exceed minimum requirements for online student verification as established by the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

Ensuring the Quality of Online Courses

To ensure the quality of its online courses and programs, the University expanded its faculty-training program in January 2008 by becoming an affiliate in the University System of Maryland *Quality Matters* statewide subscription. The nationally recognized *Quality Matters* organization promotes inter-institutional quality assurance and continuous improvement of online and blended (hybrid) courses. It also provides member institutions a rubric comprised of online course design standards of excellence derived from national guidelines and research literature. In June 2008, the University fully integrated the *Quality Matters* rubric standards into its faculty-training program, which is required for all new FSU online instructors. The duration of this program (Faculty Online Certification Program) has also recently been expanded from two weeks to six weeks, with the majority of the content delivered online.

In addition to the *Quality Matters* program, the University's Center for Instructional Technologies (CIT) coordinates and presents at the beginning of each academic year a full-day conference to introduce faculty to new technologies and teaching strategies that can be used in their face-to-face and online courses. This program, "Technology and Strategies for Teaching Excellence," has become a mainstay in introducing technology to interested faculty. This conference has resulted in more faculty participation in the Faculty Online Certification Program as well.

Supporting Online Teaching and Learning

Frostburg has increased staffing in the CIT, which is responsible for designing and conducting the University's online education faculty-training program. Two new instructional designers will help individual faculty members build effective online courses for both undergraduate and graduate students. They will also carefully work to support academic programs offered entirely online by the University.

Over the last two years, the Department of Academic Computing has upgraded the University's Blackboard Learning System, which serves as Frostburg's vehicle for online course delivery and provides instructors with tools for effective online teaching. Recent upgrades include improved course communication and grading tools, which greatly facilitate the tracking and evaluation of student academic performance in ways that lead to greater student success. The University's latest version of Blackboard also contains enhanced methods for posting assignments and plagiarism detection. In addition, in the summer of 2010 the University adopted *Elluminate*, which allows "real-time" or synchronous interaction between students and instructors. The synchronous sessions can be recorded to accommodate students who could not attend the session.

GENERAL EDUCATION AND THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

RECOMMENDATIONS

The self-study reported on the University's Undergraduate Education Initiative that put into place the institution's new program in General Education. The self-study also reported on plans to establish assessments of student learning in general education. A detailed review of assessment of the student learning in all three colleges of the University was also presented.

In the College of Business, the self-study suggested a "clear and systematic linkage" between assessments of student learning and improvements in "teaching and student learning" needed to be established. The self-study recommended that the College of Education make a more "systematic use" of assessment results to improve teaching, and to recognize excellence in teaching. Given the large size of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the self-study recommended the establishment of a college-wide assessment council that would align assessment efforts in the college with campus-wide activities in student learning assessment.

The Evaluation Team praised the University's reform of general education, citing the Frostburg's Undergraduate Education Initiative (UEI) as modeling "some of the best practices of first-phase curriculum development." The team observed that the University had "on the whole" developed "appropriate learning outcomes and thoughtful rationale for the knowledge and skills areas within the new general education program." The UEI, according to the team, "shows strength and boldness in its commitment to interdisciplinary learning, learning communities, and special emphasis on the first-year academic experience. However, the team concurred with the self-study's finding that outcome assessment in general education was insufficiently developed."

The Evaluation Team, while noting Frostburg's lateness in including student learning and institutional assessment into its major institutional goals, recognized the energy the institution had invested into both areas. However, the team found that "outside of certain areas of strong assessment" (often driven by external professional accrediting bodies) "sparse evidence was presented to demonstrate that assessment informed decisions to celebrate or improve student learning."

Middle States Recommendation Number Four: Frostburg should move quickly to implement all components of its proposed student learning assessment plan. This effort requires addressing the unevenness in assessment within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, full implementation of the proposed General Education assessment plan, and evidence that results from the student learning outcomes assessments are used in the decision-making process.

THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE

Assessment of Student Learning

One of the major priorities of the University and its colleges has been to strengthen assessment of student learning. Each of the colleges has moved to establish, strengthen, and expand its efforts in this area. An overview of the student learning assessment in each of the University's colleges is presented below followed by a discussion of the assessment of student

learning in the General Education Program. (Chapter Five presents a more detailed discussion of the assessment of student learning in each of the colleges.)

The College of Education

While the COE had developed a comprehensive assessment process in 2006, the self-study recommended that the college should make more systematic use of the results of its extensive assessment efforts to improve teaching and to recognize excellence in teaching. In response, the COE has further developed and refined its comprehensive assessment program based on student learning outcomes. In the College's own 2007 reaccreditation visit, the visiting team indicated that there were "no areas for improvement" in relation to their assessment system.[19] The COE system includes methods for identification and use of assessment results as a means of informing and improving educational practices. This is accomplished by having a group that annually reviews and summarizes the assessment data. This information is then used by the College of Education to identify areas for improvement.

The College of Business

The COB has developed and maintains a comprehensive assessment program that focuses on the teaching and learning activities that reflect its mission. The fundamental components of the assessment program are the learning goals for the bachelor's and MBA degree programs. The goals, which reflect institutional learning goals, were developed with faculty, student, administrator, advisory boards (executives, students), and other stakeholder input.

Assessment activities have been ongoing for several years commencing in 2001 at which time curriculum review across all COB programs and courses took place. Learning goals and objectives were established and matrices were prepared that demonstrated how instructional activities of various courses supported the learning goals. An Assurance of Learning Committee (AOLC) was established in 2003. In 2006, an Assurance of Learning (AOL) plan was prepared by the AOLC and accepted by the faculty. An assessment coordinator position was also created at that time to support the work of the AOLC.

Since its establishment in 2003, the AOLC, using both direct and indirect assessment methods, evaluates student achievement each semester relative to established COB learning goals. Direct assessment tools include tests and a variety of course-embedded tasks and activities, with much of the embedded assessment work accomplished within capstone courses in the bachelor's degree program and in the MBA program. The end goal of all of these efforts is to promote continuous improvement and student learning. To ensure that this occurs, multiple efforts have been made to use data mined from AOL processes to improve upon current learning.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Academic programs within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) have made significant progress on student learning assessment. By March 1, 2011, all of the 34 continuing

[19] NCATE Board of Examiners Report, April 21, 2007

academic programs achieved a "green" assessment rating, having established effective student learning assessment plans (see below).

The CLAS Assessment Council was formed in fall 2007 to improve student learning assessment within the college, as recommended in the 2006 Middle States Evaluation Report. The council's role is to provide CLAS programs with guidance and feedback on establishing and implementing effective plans that link program objectives and learning goals with the University's institutional learning goals. The council collected assessment plans, reviewed them using a standardized checklist, and met with program representatives to provide feedback. Programs were ranked according to the following categories:

- Green rating – The program has developed a student learning assessment plan that addresses all assessment categories.
- Yellow rating – The program has made progress in establishing an assessment plan and has addressed most assessment categories.
- Red rating – The program's assessment plan needs improvement, or no plan is submitted.

Through partnership and collaboration with CLAS program representatives, the percentage of green-rated programs has increased from 29 percent in AY 2008-2009 to 56 percent in AY 2009-2010 to 100 percent in AY 2010-2011. The council has also begun collecting data and updates from programs that have already met this goal to ensure that assessment data is being collected, reviewed, and used to enhance student learning outcomes.

Assessment of the General Education Program

In August 2009, the assistant dean of CLAS was charged with devising and implementing assessment strategies for the General Education Program/Core Skills courses.

Traditionally, direct assessments of student learning include written work, performances, presentations, portfolios, exams, etc. Scores on locally designed multiple choice and/or essay tests, such as final examinations in key courses, comprehensive exams, or pass rates on appropriate licensure/certification exams, may be appropriate. While it is important to respect the fluidity of assessment mechanisms and methodologies as they are applied to courses across a wide spectrum of disciplines, assessing the University's GEP/Core Skills courses must demonstrate their linkage to institutional expectations.

Piloting a GEP Assessment Process

With the implementation of a pilot GEP assessment process beginning in spring 2010, the guidelines, definitions, and format for GEP/Core Skills course assessment were presented to the Student Learning Assessment Advisory Group (SLAAG), the provost, deans, and department chairs of COE, COB, and CLAS. Each department was expected to offer at least one course to be included in the pilot, and a workshop was presented in January 2010 for participating faculty and department chairs.

Portfolios for courses included in the pilot were to include a syllabus, linkages of course goals/objective to those of the GEP and institution, examples of student products, and instructor feedback to students (samples of assessment). When applicable, sponsors outlined the course's

connection to at least three goals of the GEP and specific course activities that support those goals. For courses submitted as emphasizing GEP core skills (technological fluency, oral communication, written communication, and information literary courses), expectations were specifically listed. A total of 37 GEP/core skills courses were assessed in the pilot.[20]

A course reviewer, designated by the sponsoring academic department, received the course portfolio and completed a cover sheet titled the Course Review Form. The reviewer was also asked to score the course as "below, meets, or above standards" per each dimension outlined on the form. Guidelines for scoring the course as "below, meets, and above standards" were provided to departments. The assembled portfolio and completed Course Review were to be forwarded to the assistant dean by the summer of 2010.

Findings of the Pilot

Of the 37 GEP courses evaluated, two were rated as "below standards," 14 courses rated as "meet standards," and 21 courses were rated as "above standards." Courses most recently approved by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Requirements (UUCR) Subcommittee fared the best, especially those that were taught for the first time. Courses taught by new faculty received higher scores, as perhaps, new faculty rethought course assumptions. Courses with lower scores were approved years ago and may currently be taught by faculty other than those who proposed them to the UUCR Subcommittee.

To close the loop within the assessment of GEP courses, it is necessary to interpret the evidence and make decisions to improve curricular offerings, perhaps including altering the curriculum content, the teaching method, the assignments, and/or the schedule. Since FSU has recently instituted this assessment process, it is too early to determine whether recommendations resulting from the review were informative for course or program improvement.

Next Steps

A Phase II pilot will be conducted during the 2010-2011 academic year, with between 30 and 40 courses under review:

- Courses that were evaluated as "below standards" during Phase I will be reassessed.
- Courses will be selected by the assistant dean to vary the distribution across categories of the GEP and core skills.
- There will be a more equitable inclusion of courses taught by part-time, non-tenure-track (PTNTT) and full-time, non-tenure-track (FTNTT) faculty members.
- Departments that have exhausted their GEP offerings in Phase I, or that do not offer GEP courses, will assess courses within the major programs that focus on discipline-specific skill enhancement.

[20] Goals for the General Education Program reflect the new Mission Statement of the University and its Undergraduate Institutional Learning Goals through a focus on four specific areas of learning: (1) Core Skills; (2) Liberal Knowledge and Skills of Inquiry, Critical Thinking, and Synthesis; (3) Values and Social Responsibility; and (4) Appreciation of Cultural Identities. A brief discussion of the University's Undergraduate Institutional Learning Goals appears in Chapter Five.

There is need for further communication and, potentially, a workshop on institutional expectations and the goals of the GEP and core skills. While the topic is of interest for tenured and tenure-track faculty, focus should be placed on informing adjuncts and new and first-year returning faculty as these instructors are often charged with the delivery of the GEP.

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY

RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the important role of the University in the economic development of the region, the self-study recommended the appointment of a "Coordinator of Regional Economic Development Outreach," who would report directly to the president and work to publicize more effectively the University's activities and programs to the local business community. It also called on FSU to establish a campus-wide committee to study the scope and effectiveness of its educational outreach efforts and determine how they should be coordinated, publicized, and evaluated. It was also suggested that this committee consider how faculty and staff should be recognized for their participation in outreach programs. Finally, the self-study recommended that the University form community partnerships in Hagerstown that would allow FSU students attending USMH an opportunity to participate in outreach and volunteer activities in the Hagerstown region.

The Evaluation Team commended FSU on its success in serving the needs of the region. It noted the University's role as a cultural hub for the region and its national recognition for student volunteerism and community services learning efforts. The team recognized FSU's strong work in economic development outreach and fully endorsed the self-study recommendation that a coordinator of these efforts be appointed and fully supported.

THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE

Regional Economic Development

Under the leadership of Dr. Gibralter, Frostburg State University plays an active and important role in the economic development of Western Maryland. Dr. Gibralter's first administrative appointment as president was a new chief of staff and vice president for economic development and government relations. It is the responsibility of this vice president to work with faculty and staff to coordinate the University's economic outreach efforts and its work with state and regional economic development agencies to support growth and change in the area.

Recent University-wide projects led by Dr. Gibralter that offer regional development opportunities include the continued operation of FSU's Tawes Technology Incubator, expansion of the Allegany Business Center at Frostburg State University, and the University-supported renovation of the Lyric Building in downtown Frostburg.

Over the 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 Communication and Information Technology, it is expected that the current tenants will relocate to the Allegany Business Center. This center has

grown to include information and technology firms, environmental agencies, and two of the University's economic development partners – the Maryland Small Business Development Center (Western Region) and the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland.

One of the most important new tenants of the Allegany Business Center will be the University's SERF, which will serve as an academic center for the display of residential-quality sustainable energy technologies and research. This new facility, scheduled for construction in the spring 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 the University as an important regional center for energy issues and policy (see Chapter Three).

The relocation of several University offices from campus to the historic Lyric Building on Main Street in Frostburg has provided additional support for economic growth in the region. In November 2008, the FSU Foundation, the Office of Alumni Programs, and a branch of the University Store moved into the newly renovated building. The University also relocated its Center for Creative Writing to the Lyric Building in August 2009. The center provides space for students and Frostburg residents to pursue creative endeavors and augment the University's visibility in the community. Located across the street from the Lyric Building, Mountain City Traditional Arts opened in June 2009 and is staffed by FSU students and a University professor/folklorist. This cooperative works closely with the Allegany Arts Council to provide retail opportunities for local artists.

The College of Business also works to promote economic development through its Center for Leadership Development and the Trident Initiative, which focuses on supporting small business development in the region. The College's Center for Regional Progress analyzes and disseminates economic development information for the area and acts as a clearinghouse for economic ideas, statistics, data, and services, including providing research and forecasting for government agencies and businesses.

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 University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) in downtown Hagerstown. Both the incubator and the SBDC will allow FSU's College of Business to continue further outreach and nurture additional visibility for University programs.

Educational Outreach, Community Service, and Volunteerism

In 2008, Frostburg State University combined the Center for Volunteerism and National Service with its leadership programs to create the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement (OLCE). This new office works to put into place at Frostburg best practices in the field of educational outreach, continuously reevaluates how the University can help meet community needs, and collaborates to improve the University's educational outreach program.

The Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement has successfully collaborated with the University's AmeriCorps national service program, the FSU Cultural Events Series, the Allegany County Board of Education, and other existing organizations and programs to create meaningful educational outreach within the region. Additionally, the newly created Social Media Team provides the OLCE with the opportunity to efficiently and effectively reach target audiences through professional digital documentation of events, innovative marketing techniques, and the promotion of programs and activities through traditional and advanced social media strategies.

Frostburg State University continues to reach out and expand its community involvement initiatives. Freshmen in the ECHOSTARS (formerly HallSTARS!) program serve not only in the Allegany and Garrett County areas, but also in their hometowns over the winter and spring breaks. The University's National Service (A STAR! and VISTA) programs reach the four western counties (Garrett, Allegany, Washington and Frederick) to truly serve all of Western Maryland. The director of the University's A STAR! AmeriCorps program is located in Washington County at the USMH and has a satellite office in Frederick, Maryland. These offices allow FSU to act as a hub for service opportunities for interested students and community members at the USMH campus, local schools and other non-profit agencies.

In addition to improving outreach efforts, the partnerships and collaborations that occur through the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement have enabled Frostburg State University to recognize members of the University community for their participation in, and contributions to, outreach programs. The annual Campus Leadership Awards program has expanded to celebrate volunteerism, service-learning, and national service efforts. This award program recognizes faculty members who provide through their classes valuable service-learning opportunities for students, recognizes students who give back to the community, and honors area AmeriCorps members who have made a lasting impact on the students and community in the region.

CHAPTER THREE

MAJOR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The University's new mission statement clearly sets the future direction of the institution:

> 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 (see Appendix F for the University's mission statement document).[21]

Chapter Two discusses selected University opportunities and challenges suggested by the University's mission statement and identified as important campus issues by many faculty, staff and students in a survey conducted by the PRR Drafting Group in the spring of 2010 (see Chapter One). All of the topics discussed in the chapter are relevant to one or more Middle States standards for accreditation.

INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE

Putting Academics First

Frostburg State University's new strategic plan, which puts into action the University's mission statement, is intended to move the institution to a position of national distinction and academic excellence. The plan has identified three institutional priorities designed to enhance teaching and learning at the University.[22]

1. *Make more intentional the University's focus on experiential and applied learning opportunities for students both inside and outside the classroom as the hallmark of an FSU education.*

Frostburg has long encouraged students to engage in activities outside the classroom as part of their education at the University. However, the availability of experiential learning opportunities for students has been uneven across academic programs. Expanding experiential learning at Frostburg was highly endorsed by faculty, staff, and student respondents to the PRR survey in the spring of 2010 (see Chapter One). The University is developing an inventory of existing experiential offerings that will help it to further develop opportunities for students in this area.

[21] Approval of the University's mission statement by the Maryland Higher Education Commission is expected by June 1, 2011.
[22] See Chapter Six for a full discussion of the University current strategic plan and planning process.

In fall 2010, Dr. Gibralter announced the establishment of the President's Experiential Learning Enhancement Fund (PELEF). Working with the chair of the faculty, the provost, and the college deans, Dr. Gibralter identified $35,000 to support faculty efforts to promote learning activities that enhance experiential learning. Because of the PELEF, students will be more systematically able to apply and augment classroom learning through a wide range of experiential opportunities, including internships, volunteerism and leadership development activities, undergraduate research and study abroad. These experiences will help students connect what they are mastering in the classroom with the real world. It is the University's hope and expectation that the PELEF will be available to faculty in subsequent academic years.

2. *Improve the University's facilities so that students live and learn in a modern and technologically sophisticated environment.*

Achieving academic excellence requires modern campus facilities. Construction began in late fall of 2009 for the renovation and expansion of the Lane University Center and was completed in January 2011. The new addition to the building includes a fitness center, student activity center, 24/7 student computer lab, and the University Store.

After years of planning, the construction of the University's new Center for Communications and Information Technology will begin in 2013. This important facility, which will house programs in computer science, mass communication, mathematics, and graphic design, will better position FSU to attract students to meet emerging education and career opportunities in technology-based disciplines.

The University's Sustainable Energy Research Facility (SERF) will serve as an academic center for the display of residential-quality sustainable energy technologies and research. This new U.S. Department of Energy-funded facility, scheduled for construction in 2011, along with the University's ongoing exploration of alternative forms of energy production like the Wind-Solar Energy (WISE) Program, will highlight the University's role as an important regional center for energy policy discussion and renewable resources research and development. These efforts, when linked to ongoing University initiatives in environmental sustainability, will make FSU a leading center for the development of 21st century standards for new technologies (see discussion below under Sustainability).

These important capital projects, plus the recent renovation of the smaller residence halls on campus, will help the University meet student and faculty needs. However, the University remains deeply concerned over the deteriorating condition of the institution's physical plant. The Maryland Department of Budget and Management reports that Frostburg has, on average, the oldest academic buildings in the University System of Maryland.

The expedited planning and construction of Frostburg's recently proposed Education and Allied Health Building would help to address the University's concerns about the worsening condition of its facilities. However, the state of Maryland must take steps on a broader scale to replace the University's aging academic buildings that are increasingly unable to support the important teaching, scholarship, and learning that are occurring at Frostburg. The University has

the ability to become a growth institution for the University System of Maryland if, and when, its academic facilities are brought to 21st century standards.

3. Increase student quality and improve student persistence to graduation.

In 2006, enrollment at Frostburg State University was at the lowest it had been in 17 years. Through the leadership of Dr. Gibralter and the work of the Enrollment Management Committee, undergraduate enrollments have steadily grown since 2007. In fall 2010, Frostburg welcomed more than 1,000 entering freshmen and enrolled a total of 5,470 students, the largest number in the history of the institution (see Chapter Two).

Growing enrollments have helped to create the financial circumstances necessary for the University to address important issues facing the institution, including support for faculty professional development and salary equity for new tenure-track faculty and adjunct faculty. Just as importantly, revenue from growing enrollments has allowed the University to avoid layoffs as the State of Maryland's fiscal condition worsened over the last several years.

With the steep decline in enrollments reversed, the University is now attempting to increase student academic quality. The goal of recruiting and enrolling more academically qualified students was strongly supported by all members of the University community, including present students, in the spring 2010 PRR survey (see Chapter One). As of spring 2011, Frostburg is more selective in its undergraduate admission decisions and will admit and enroll students with better academic credentials.

A range of marketing materials with the primary focus of increasing enrollment of well-qualified students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels is being implemented. Undergraduate admissions marketing strategies are being targeted to students with higher SAT scores. It is expected that these students will make stronger contributions to the campus community and help to increase the University's retention and graduation rates. For the fall 2011 freshman class, the University has raised the bar on incoming SAT minimums and will closely monitor the academic performance as well as the retention and graduation rates of these students (see Chapter Two for a discussion of the University's efforts to increase student retention and graduation rates).

The SHARP Initiative

The new Students' High Achievement Resource Program (SHARP) is an important part of the University's effort to attract high-quality students. The program provides high school and transfer honor and merit students with the information and resources they need to closely examine the University's academic offerings for high-achieving students. It also provides these students special academic opportunities, including merit scholarships, assignment of faculty mentors, and association with the University's Honors Program.

FACULTY AND STAFF HIRING AND COMPENSATION

Frostburg's commitment to building academic excellence at the institution requires a strong, engaged, and properly compensated faculty and staff. However, over the last four years, all University employees have endured salary reductions and have gone without cost-of-living and merit salary increases.

Frostburg State University faculty salaries are the lowest in the University System of Maryland. Dr. Gibralter authorized an increase in the salaries of new assistant professors and those of adjunct faculty soon after arriving at Frostburg in 2006, but budgetary constraints have made it impossible for the University to increase full-time faculty salaries. Inadequate and eroding salaries at Frostburg are highly demoralizing for faculty and staff, who work tirelessly for the University and remain committed to the institution. As resources become available, the University will address faculty and staff compensation through application of a salary equity model.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Learning Green, Living Green

As reflected in its mission statement and current strategic plan, Frostburg State University is strongly committed to preserving the environment through sustainability. Through the Learning Green, Living Green (LGLG) sustainability initiative and numerous related measures, the University is preparing students, faculty, staff, and community members to address environmental issues.

In spring of 2010, Frostburg State University was listed in the *Princeton Review Guide to 286 Green Colleges*. This recognition reflects the University's strong commitment to sustainability in the areas of leadership, academics, and infrastructure. With sustainability as a cornerstone of institutional planning, FSU aims to further strengthen its role as an environmental leader in higher education.

In fulfilling its role as a signatory of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), FSU published a Climate Action Plan in 2009. The University pledges to achieve climate neutrality by 2030 as part of its commitment to advance the emergence of a sustainable society.

Leadership

President Gibralter has laid the foundation for sustainability awareness at FSU through his vision and leadership. By signing the ACUPCC in 2007, Dr. Gibralter initiated a campus-wide discourse that resulted in the establishment of the LGLG sustainability initiative. A member of the ACUPCC Leadership Circle, Dr. Gibralter was recently appointed to its 2011-2012 Steering Committee, where he will work to further emphasize higher education's role in addressing climate change. President Gibralter also participated in the 2010 Second Nature National Transportation Policy Task Force, and was a member of the 2007-2008 Maryland Commission on Climate Change Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Mitigation Working Group.

The University hired a new safety and sustainability coordinator in 2010 to oversee the implementation of FSU's Climate Action Plan and to chair the LGLG Executive Board and Steering Committee. Members of this committee collaborate to engage students, faculty, staff, and the community in completing projects that create sustainable solutions to environmental, social, and economic needs.

Academics

Through collaboration among University colleges and divisions, FSU is committed to incorporating sustainability education in all areas of the curriculum so that every graduating student gains experiences in this evolving field.

In fall of 2010, FSU began offering a minor in sustainability studies in an ongoing effort to respond to workforce needs and uphold a commitment to environmental education. The interdisciplinary minor encourages students to explore environmental, economic, and social equity issues while emphasizing interaction and experiential opportunities. A new course titled *Introduction to Sustainability Studies* introduces the minor and serves as a general education option for undergraduates.

The $E=(LG)^2$ Magazine is an example of how FSU faculty members have successfully incorporated sustainability into the classroom. Advised by a faculty member from the English department, the magazine is dedicated to educating students on sustainability issues. $E=(LG)^2$ is the only known magazine on sustainability that is entirely written and edited by college students.

To promote environmental awareness through co-curricular learning, FSU holds major sustainability events every semester. In the fall, LGLG hosts environmental speakers in an effort to reach out to new and transfer students. Each spring as part of Earth Week events, LGLG hosts Focus Frostburg, an annual day of learning on sustainability and climate awareness. In 2010, attendance exceeded 1,000, with over 20 presentations and exhibits held throughout the day.

Future Plans

With a number of projects and initiatives underway for future development, Frostburg State University plans to further strengthen its role as a sustainability leader in higher education. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Frostburg's federally funded SERF is expected to open in the 2011-2012 academic year. The SERF will be used to conduct extended research, education, and community outreach programs on renewable energy applications developed by FSU faculty, students, and external partners. The facility will also serve as an example of a self-sufficient off-grid building.

In addition, LGLG and the FSU Residence Hall Association are partnering to promote recycling and conservation among on-campus students through residence hall competitions. Each semester beginning in fall of 2011, rewards will be issued to those residence hall occupants who achieve the greatest improvement in recycling, energy conservation, and water conservation. LGLG is also exploring ways to engage faculty and staff by implementing similar programs in other campus buildings.

The University's Physical Plant is working to identify appropriate facilities upgrades to help the University realize its carbon neutrality goals. By 2012, the University plans to replace current lighting systems in several academic buildings with energy-efficient options. Also by 2012, FSU will install occupancy sensors in several buildings, with the goal of eventually implementing this technology in all appropriate campus locations.

Learning Green, Living Green representatives are participating in the *Grow-It-Local Greenhouse Initiative* to establish a greenhouse located near campus that will provide fresh, locally grown produce for use on-campus and in the community. The greenhouse initiative will greatly reduce the carbon footprint of food consumed in the region and will generate sustainable jobs for local residents.

STUDENT CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The Cultural Diversity Program

Frostburg State University is a multicultural campus where diversity is highly valued. The University's Cultural Diversity Program is intended to help the institution more effectively recruit and retain individuals and groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher education.[23] It is also designed to promote cultural understanding and appreciation among all members of the University community.[24] Strategies identified by the plan to increase the diversity of FSU faculty and staff were discussed in Chapter Two. Student diversity and the University's ongoing efforts to promote a valuing of different cultures are discussed below. The most recent update of the University's Cultural Diversity Program appears in Appendix G.

Recruiting and Enrolling Undergraduate Minority and First-Generation Students

The Cultural Diversity Program includes recruitment strategies and activities that focus on familiarizing students from underrepresented groups, and their parents, teachers, counselors, and school administrators, with the programs and services available to students at the University. The University also sponsors a number of programs designed to prepare and encourage underrepresented student groups to continue their education beyond secondary school.[25]

The successful implementation of these strategies has helped to increase student diversity at the University. The total number of undergraduate minority students presently enrolled at Frostburg is 1,454 or 28.9 percent of the undergraduate student body (fall 2010).

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[23] The University's Cultural Diversity Program was first adopted in February 2009. It is updated yearly and submitted to the University System of Maryland and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The program, in part, incorporates ideas and successful strategies first presented in the University's 2002 *Minority Achievement Report* to the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

[24] The Cultural Diversity Program establishes the following five University goals: (1) Recruit and Enroll a Growing Number of Undergraduate Minority and First-Generation Students, (2) Increase the Retention and Graduation Rates of Undergraduate Minority and First-Generation Students, (3) Enhance the Cultural Diversity of Faculty and Staff, (4) Create a Campus Environment that Promotes the Valuing of Cultural Diversity, and (5) Promote the Understanding of International Cultures.

[25] Examples of these programs include Upward Bound, Regional Math/Science Center and Gear Up.

African-American students represent an overwhelming proportion of FSU's total minority student population (23.2 percent of the total undergraduate student population in the fall of 2010).[26]

Increasing the Retention and Graduation Rates of Undergraduate Minority and First-Generation Students

The Cultural Diversity Program incorporates a number of initiatives that are designed to increase the retention and graduation rates of undergraduate minority and first-generation students.[27] One of the most important of these, the University's Learning Community Program, open to all freshman students, includes three fall-semester student support communities that are sponsored by FSU's TRIO Student Support Services program. This program works specifically to help low-income and first-generation college students make a successful transition from high school to college life. Through the collaborative efforts of the Tutoring Center, Student Support Services, and the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, the University has also increased services to those students whose first language is not English.

Promoting Student Diversity through International Education

The University has also endeavored to enhance the cultural diversity of the campus through revitalizing international student recruitment and study abroad programs. As cited in Chapter Two, international student enrollment at FSU has more than tripled during the past five years, growing from 19 students from 15 countries in Fall Semester 2006, to its highest enrollment of 69 students from 19 countries in Spring Semester 2011.

To help bring additional international students to the campus, the University established a formal exchange agreement with Hunan Normal University in Changsha, China, in 2008. The University has also revitalized existing exchange agreements with Mary Immaculate College in Limerick, Ireland; Northumbria University in Newcastle, England; and KDAS/University College UCC in Copenhagen, Denmark.

New institutional agreements were signed in July 2010 between FSU and two universities in India, Santhigiri University and the Institute of Business Studies and Research (IBSAR) that will bring Indian MBA students to the Frostburg campus. The University also received approval from the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission in October 2009 to enroll students receiving full government scholarships from that country.

The total number of student participants enrolled in study abroad programs administered by the FSU Center for International Education showed a slight increase from 38 students in 2008-2009 to 42 students in 2010-2011. However the number of students whose home institution was FSU (as opposed to guest student participants) showed a significant increase from 27 to 39 students (44.4 percent) over the past three years.

[26] Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research

[27] See Chapter Two for a comprehensive discussion of the University's Cultural Diversity Program initiatives to increase retention and graduation rate at the University.

Additional opportunities for FSU students and faculty from the College of Business to study/teach abroad are currently being negotiated with Hunan University of Commerce in Changsha, China. The University is also considering the addition of Global Experiences, a company specializing in international experiential education and internships, to the current list of study abroad affiliated providers. Other institutional partnership opportunities under consideration include Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Beppu, Japan, and Southern Taiwan University in Tainan, Taiwan.

Creating a Campus Environment that Promotes the Valuing of Cultural Diversity

In an ongoing effort to foster a sense of community among students of all races, genders, and national origins, FSU's Diversity Center continues to offer activities, programs, retreats, resources, services, and workshops to help students develop an understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and social justice issues. In support of re-establishing FSU's National Coalition Building Institute Chapter at the University, the Center offered two pilot programs: a two-hour introductory workshop for the full residence life student staff during the summer 2010 training session, and a full-day workshop for 54 students and 6 staff during the fall 2010 Diversity Retreat.

The President's Advisory Council on Diversity (PACD) plays a significant role in promoting cultural understanding and fostering a respect for diversity at the University. In addition to initiatives designed to increase faculty and staff diversity at the University (see Chapter Two), the PACD has focused on recruiting and retaining diverse students from the local community, developing cross-cultural activities on campus, and introducing English as a Second Language (ESL) tutoring and support through the University's Tutoring Center.

The Center for International Education (CIE) has implemented a number of initiatives within the past year to promote the academic success of international students and facilitate their integration into the campus and local community. Through the work of the center, the University now offers intermediate- and advanced-level ESL classes for exchange students who require additional language training. The center has also arranged for an international section of ORIE 101 Introduction to Higher Education for all international students who are enrolled in ESL courses.

In addition to monthly social and cultural activities offered by the CIE and designed to aid students in the acculturation process, student clubs and campus organizations have become actively involved in this process. Organizations that are in the process of being formed to support international students include a Muslim Students Association and an International Student Club.

STUDENT CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY AND LEADERSHIP

The University has increased its commitment and support of leadership development programs. Since 2009 the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement has had both a full-time director and an associate director. It was during 2009-2010 that this office launched the President's Leadership Circle, a group that includes 15-20 undergraduate students whose leadership has made significant contributions to the University. Faculty and staff members nominate students and the selection process includes both an application and an interview. These

students have helped to increase the visibility of leadership programs on the campus. The development of these students' multicultural competence has been an important dimension of this program; nine members of the President's Leadership Circle spent their spring break in March 2011 in China as part of a leadership study-tour. The group went to both Beijing and to Changsha, the home of Hunan Normal University, an institution that Frostburg has partnered with during the past few years. The students were accompanied by two faculty members (the co-coordinators of the Leadership Studies Minor), and the Director of the Center for International Education.

There has also been more intentional collaboration on leadership programs between the Division of Student and Educational Services and the Division of University Advancement. For the past two years, a meeting of the FSU Foundation Board has been held to coincide with the Sloop Leadership Institute. This has enabled major donors and supporters of the University an opportunity to meet undergraduate student leaders; many of the Board members have also been involved in some of the programs of the Institute. The theme of leadership development has resonated with funders; one of our newest and most generous scholarships stipulates that the award will be made to a member of the President's Leadership Circle. The University will continue to explore how alumni and other external stakeholders can be more integrally involved in its leadership development programs.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The CHILL Program

One of the major new initiatives of the University that has developed since the Evaluation Team's visit in 2006 is the commitment that has been made to encourage students to make healthy choices. This initiative has been supported through a generous grant from the AstraZeneca Foundation. Since its inaugural year (2008-09), the University will have received $949,123 in funding to support the CHILL (Creating Healthy, Informed, Lasting Lifestyles) program and its biomedical screenings, intervention, and programming.

In the first three years of the program, over 1,600 biomedical screenings have been administered through CHILL. These screenings have included blood pressure, body composition, BMI, and lipid panel, cholesterol screening, smoking and substance abuse prevention and cessation, as well as exercise and other health and diagnostic indicators. The results reveal that a disturbingly large number of students are beginning their college careers with health risks that would not normally be expected until much later in life. Those students with abnormal results were contacted and given the opportunity to meet with a registered nurse or dietician in the student health center. Many of these students with significant cardiovascular health risks would not have been diagnosed for years; a significant percentage of them have made lifestyle changes as a result of the intervention they received through this program. Sustaining these changes will greatly increase the likelihood that they will be able to enjoy healthy lives.

Among the activities of CHILL are a yearly "Biggest Loser"-style competition, in which teams earn points not through weight loss, but through documenting health practices such as keeping workout and food logs and by participating in the numerous wellness education

programs that are offered. During its third year, CHILL has broadened its mission to add binge-drinking prevention, sexual health, and smoking cessation to its model of wellness for college students. The University has also debuted "bWell," a residential learning community with a focus on wellness that is currently home to 72 students.

The University has made institutional changes to make healthy options more readily available to students by renovating the fitness center in the physical education center, and including a cardio-focused fitness center in the renovated Lane University Center. On-campus food service has also increased its healthy options and has been providing nutritional information to students in a more intentional and consistent manner.

Frostburg State University has begun receiving recognition for its efforts to enhance wellness among its students, as well as faculty and staff. The University has been named a "Fit Friendly Company" by the American Heart Association for the past three years (2009, 2010, 2011), and was only one of three recipients of the regional Workplace Innovation Award.

The University has succeeded in its efforts to infuse wellness-oriented themes and lessons into course curricula. The University's first-year seminar, ORIE 101 Introduction to Higher Education, required for all FSU freshmen, has served as a valuable vehicle to introduce themes of health and wellness to new students each semester. Current efforts include guest lectures by the coordinator for university wellness, the CHILL nurse, or the registered dietician and five wellness-oriented lesson plans cultivated for ORIE through the use of the wellness website developed by Education Dynamics for CHILL.

As CHILL enters its fourth and last year of funding through AstraZeneca, the University is making progress in institutionalizing this program. The position of the coordinator for university wellness is now completely funded by the University and FSU is exploring how to identify funding for the nurse and the administrative assistant positions in the health center that are now supported by the AstraZeneca grant.

Progress in Combating Alcohol Abuse

The University has made significant progress during the past five years in its efforts to combat the negative impact of binge drinking. The University has received national attention for its efforts. Articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the *New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal* have noted the University's success in this arena as measured by a marked decrease in the binge-drinking among our students, an increase in the number of students who identify themselves as abstainers, and a decrease in average number of drinks consumed by those students who drink.[28]

President Gibralter has been a visible leader for prevention on campus and throughout the nation. In September 2008, Dr. Gibralter was honored with the national Presidential Leadership Award from a group of seven major higher education organizations for his efforts in promoting a

[28] The University has a comprehensive campus prevention program that emphasizes an environmental management model that uses several evidence-based strategies to reduce substance abuse among students: policy and enforcement, social marketing, social programming, educational efforts, and early intervention. The University's Alcohol Task Force coordinates efforts and reports to the president.

campus climate that de-emphasizes alcohol and for his leadership in fighting binge-drinking at colleges and universities across the country. As the inaugural recipient of this award, he has shared collaborative strategies with numerous higher education stakeholders and has urged his fellow college and university presidents to exert their leadership on this critical issue. Because of his leadership on this issue, he was recently invited to join the College Presidents Working Group of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

After examining data that demonstrated that most high-risk drinking was occurring off-campus, the University initiated a partnership with local law enforcement agencies that has been particularly effective. The City of Frostburg now systematically shares with the University civil citations that are issued to students. This practice has enabled the University to utilize its student conduct system to address this behavior. Actions include parental notification. These measures, together with efforts to reach out to bar owners, landlords, and local residents, have resulted in a marked decline in the number of off-campus civil citations issued to students for underage drinking.

The growing national reputation that Frostburg has achieved for its efforts was evidenced most recently by the visit in February 2011 by officials from the Department of Health and Human Services, the White House, and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. During their visit, they applauded the University for its progress and noted the huge impact that presidential leadership can have on this issue. While the University is encouraged by its progress, it recognizes that there remains considerable work ahead as FSU continues its efforts to address this difficult and complex issue.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Frostburg State University is fully aware of the importance of developing a highly educated and technologically competent workforce in today's knowledge economy. The University continues to develop and strengthen academic programs in response to the needs of businesses and industries in the region and the state. In particular, the University's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) initiatives and academic programs in nursing and teacher education directly address critical workforce shortages in Maryland.

STEM

The University continues to expand offerings in STEM-related fields through its partnerships and collaborations with community colleges. In fall 2010, Frostburg finalized an agreement with Hagerstown Community College (HCC) to offer an articulated program leading to the award of an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Biotechnology Transfer from HCC and a Bachelor of Science in Biology, Biotechnology Concentration from Frostburg. In Fall 2010, the University also established a collaborative B.S. in Engineering with Anne Arundel Community College at the Arundel Mills Regional Higher Education Center (Maryland).

The University also promotes workforce development through initiatives to build STEM education and capacity in the region. Through a grant from the University System of Maryland, FSU and members of the Western Maryland Education Consortium completed the Western Maryland STEM Plan (WMSP) in fall 2009. The WMSP is intended to increase career readiness

and enhance workforce development in Western Maryland by promoting STEM awareness and education in the region over the next five years.[29] The plan is intended to contribute to the economic sustainability of the region by helping students build STEM knowledge and skills that are important and valued, by helping existing regional STEM businesses more easily find qualified employees, and by encouraging potential businesses to locate in the region.

Nursing

Frostburg State University is helping to address Maryland's workforce development need for nurses through its new R.N. to B.S.N. completion program. The program has applied for accreditation through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The University plans to expand its nursing program to a Master of Science in Nursing, with a particular emphasis on preparing nursing faculty. The R.N. to B.S.N. program has gained strong statewide support, including major development grants and scholarships funds.

Education

The *2009 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* states that "only through an increase in the quantity and preparedness of Maryland's teachers can a workforce be grown and stimulated to meet current and emerging workforce needs" [30] Frostburg continues to be a leader in teacher preparation and pre-K-16 partnerships. 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 the Maryland Higher Education Commission to offer an Ed.D. in Educational Policy and Leadership at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) beginning this year. Frostburg State University faculty are involved in teaching in the program, sitting on dissertation committees, and advising students, gaining valuable experience as the University prepares its proposal for an FSU Ed.D. in the near future. Increased opportunities for the continuing education of teachers will also be accomplished through the expansion of outreach and clinical partnerships with the Professional Development Schools in collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

The University continues to lead the region in offering a large number of high-quality cultural and artistic programming events. Through the University's Cultural Events Series and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences hundreds of events and performances are presented each year to the region. The University also works closely with community and regional arts organizations to expand and coordinate cultural offerings.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Departments

Both the University music and theatre departments present dozens of performances per year at

[29] The Western Maryland Education Consortium (WestMEC) is a network of universities, community colleges, county public school systems (Allegany, Garrett, and Washington), and a regional economic development agency. As of fall 2010, WestMEC has identified only limited funding to implement the WMSP.

[30] *The 2009 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education*, Maryland Higher Education Commission. June 2009.

little or no cost to the community. These performances consist of a wide variety of theatre offerings, faculty and student recitals, guest artists, large-scale choral and wind ensemble concerts, chamber music, opera, and holiday productions. Additionally, these departments have worked with the local community and arts organizations, such as the Allegany Arts Council and the Maryland Council for the Arts, to create outreach programs to local schools and organize special events on campus for local school students, including individual workshops and master classes. The FSU Visual Arts Department has several gallery exhibitions each year highlighting works by faculty, students, and regional and national artists.

Additionally, several departments within the College of Liberals Arts and Sciences host guest lecturers in science, history, political science, and philosophy throughout the academic year. The Center for Creative Writing, located in its new facility in downtown Frostburg, serves Western Maryland and the surrounding area by celebrating the literary arts through a variety of public events and productions, by educating and broadening an interested audience for literature, and by fostering new writers and their work. The University has worked closely with local and state arts organizations, as well as the National Endowment for the Arts, to aid in the funding of several cultural initiatives.

The Cultural Events Series

The University Cultural Events Series (CES) provides opportunities for economic, educational, and cultural engagement through its dedication to bringing national and international performing artists to the tri-state region. It is in this way that the CES enhances and expands the socio-cultural fabric of the region. The CES allows participants to experience and celebrate the arts through live performance, educational outreach, and experiential education, providing them with new ways to view, explain, interact, and promote global understanding and dialogue through the appreciation and acceptance of cultural differences.

The average number of CES activities and events taking place annually is 73; this includes public performances, school day programs for local children, master classes, lectures, film viewings, and experiential education programs. Performance attendance is consistently high, and audience development initiatives ensure that CES continues to build an awareness and love of the arts within the community. Total attendance at events between September 2005 and June 2010 was 68,022, with an annual average attendance of 13,604.

Through educational outreach initiatives, CES works to build the audiences of the future. Total youth attendance between FY2006 and FY2010 was 22,956, with an annual average of 4,591. Active, successful partnerships within the community ensure that CES thrives in its goal of developing an enthusiastic, knowledgeable arts audience. Among the regional organizations collaborating annually with CES program directors are the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, whose teens take part in CES's annual *Arts for Adjudicated Youth* program and the 21st Century Afterschool Program, which allows low-income children from four Cumberland elementary schools to attend monthly arts programs. Other regular collaborators include regional school systems, home schooling organizations, and GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs).

FSU INSTUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AT OFF-CAMPUS CENTERS

Improved access to the University's programs for many transfer students in the region will come primarily through expanding Frostburg's presence at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) and by further developing the FSU engineering program at the Anne Arundel Community College at Arundel Mills Regional Higher Education Center.

The University System of Maryland at Hagerstown

The USMH opened in 2003 as a regional educational center with degree programs offered through several USM institutions. By far offering the largest number of programs at USMH, Frostburg enrolled 194 students in graduate programs and 140 students in undergraduate programs in the fall of 2010.

From fall 2006 to fall 2010, on average the University offered 78 course sections taught by approximately five full-time faculty based in Hagerstown, 20 local part-time adjuncts, and 15 full-time faculty based in Frostburg. Each semester several courses originating from the Frostburg campus are taught using a fiber optic interactive video system.

The College of Education's program is the largest component of FSU's presence at the USMH. Education programs offered at USMH include an M.Ed. with concentrations in curriculum and instruction (elementary education or educational technology), reading, administration and supervision, and special education; an MAT program in elementary education or secondary education, and an undergraduate early childhood/elementary education major leading to eligibility for certification in nursery school though grade six. [31]

As discussed earlier in this chapter, an important action taken by the College of Education at USMH is the development of an Ed.D. program in collaboration with the University of Maryland, College Park. In addition, the College of Education has also made a professional commitment to help Maryland public education by partnering with Washington County Public Schools under the Professional Development Schools program. Washington County provides diverse internship opportunities for FSU's elementary education MAT students, as well as the University's undergraduate early childhood majors. In turn, Washington County utilizes Frostburg's educational specialists for faculty development opportunities such as workshops and lectures.

The College of Business also offers degree programs at USMH. In addition to its MBA program and B.S. in Business Administration, the college launched a concentration at the undergraduate level in small business/entrepreneurship at the USMH Center in fall 2009.

In addition to its existing bachelor's degree programs in sociology and liberal studies, FSU's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences began offering its baccalaureate program in psychology at

[31] Additionally, an interdisciplinary program combines two majors with an education core for professionals in business, nursing, higher education and other fields outside of public school education.

the USMH Center in fall 2010. Through a combination of on-site, online, and interactive video network course offerings, students are able to complete FSU's Bachelor of Science in Psychology without ever leaving the Hagerstown region.

ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT ARUNDEL MILLS REGIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

In fall 2010, FSU began offering 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 designed to meet the needs of modern industry and is open to community college graduates who have completed an A.S. in Engineering. FSU offers engineering and upper-division courses through a combination of methods – on site at Arundel Mills, by interactive video, and online.

The collaborative program is designed to serve both the state of Maryland's economic development and Anne Arundel County-area students. The Arundel Mills center's proximity to Fort Meade, as well as the influx of positions through the Base Closure and Realignment Commission, is leading to expanded opportunities in disciplines related to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

THE UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT

The University has continued its comprehensive $15 million campaign focusing on the themes of student, academic, and regional and cultural enrichment. In January 2011, the campaign exceeded expectations and passed its goal thanks to the generosity of the University's friends and supporters. As 2011 progresses, the campaign continues to generate funds to help support faculty development and other University initiatives. 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.

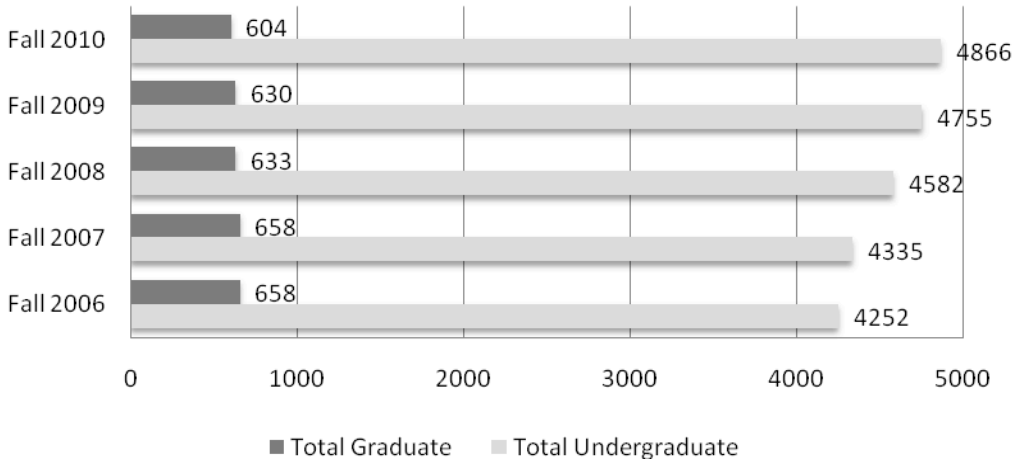
CHAPTER FOUR

ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

FIVE-YEAR UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT TRENDS

Frostburg State University is committed to a comprehensive enrollment management process that results in stable growth and the recruitment of qualified undergraduate and graduate students. Over the past five years, FSU has experienced a period of total enrollment growth. Overall headcount increased by 11.4 percent, from 4,910 in fall 2006 to 5,470 in fall 2010 (see Chart 4.1 for fall headcount enrollment). The University's total headcount in fall 2010 represented the largest overall enrollment in its 113-year history.

Chart 4.1
Frostburg State University
Headcount Enrollment
Fall Semesters 2006 - 2010



Growth in Undergraduate Enrollment

In August of 2006, President Gibralter formed a campus-wide Enrollment Management Committee, which brings together faculty and staff to devise and implement strategies to attract qualified students to the University (see Chapter Two). The continuing work of the Enrollment Management Committee has contributed to the University's experiencing the largest incoming freshman class in its history in fall 2007 and to a 14.4 percent increase in undergraduate headcount since fall 2006. Most recently, FSU signed a dual admission agreement with Frederick Community College in April 2009. Like previous agreements with Allegany College of Maryland and Hagerstown Community College, this partnership will increase the likelihood that students will transfer from community colleges to Frostburg State University.

Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates

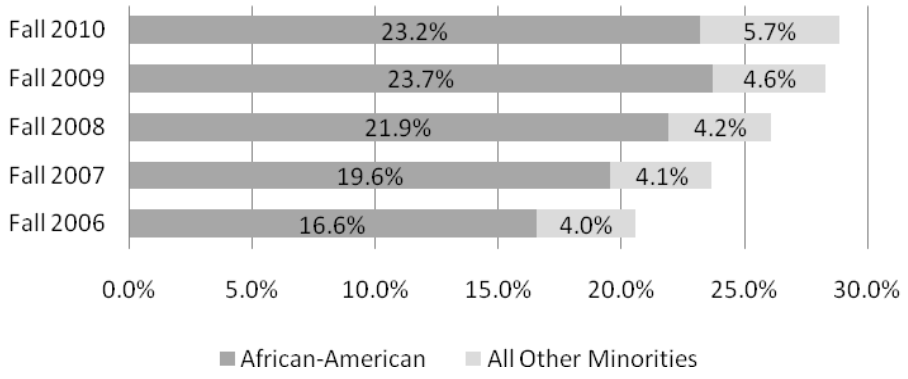
The second-year retention rate of all first-time, full-time FSU undergraduates increased from 67 percent for the fall 2006 cohort to 74 percent for the fall 2009 cohort. Over the same time period, the six-year graduation rate of all first-time, full-time undergraduates remained fairly consistent at approximately 48 percent.

The work of the *Closing the Achievement Gap* Task Force (see Chapter Two) is a key factor in FSU's efforts to achieve Performance Accountability Report/Managing for Results (PAR/MFR)[32] benchmarked goals in retention and graduation rate performance measures. The University's *Closing the Achievement Gap* initiatives include implementing a supplemental instruction program designed to reach students who may not otherwise seek out support services and expanding the successful course redesign effort in psychology to other programs, including mathematics. In addition, Frostburg is examining "the sophomore year experience" to identify strategies to provide greater attention to this group of students who are often not reached through programs that focus on other student populations.

Undergraduate Minority Student Recruitment and Enrollment

The strategies and initiatives incorporated into FSU's Cultural Diversity Program (see Chapter Three) have contributed to its success in recruiting and enrolling a growing number of minority students. The percentage of African-American undergraduate students increased from 16.6 percent of the total undergraduate population in fall 2006 to 23.2 percent in fall 2010. Over the same time period, the University experienced an increase from 20.6 percent to 28.9 percent in the overall percentage of undergraduate minority students (see Chart 4.2 for trends in the percent of minority undergraduates).

Chart 4.2
Frostburg State University
Percent of Minority Undergraduates
Fall Semesters 2006 - 2010



[32] For a discussion of the PAR/MFR report, see Chapter Five.

Undergraduate Minority Student Retention and Graduation Rates

The second-year retention rate of first-time, full-time minority students increased slightly from 71 percent for the 2006 cohort group to 72 percent for the 2009 cohort group. The graduation rate of first-time, full-time minority students decreased from 45 percent for the 2000 cohort group to 41 percent for the 2004 cohort group.

The University's Cultural Diversity Program incorporates a number of initiatives that are designed to increase the retention and graduation rates of undergraduate minority and first-generation students. The University's Learning Community Program, open to all freshman students, includes three fall-semester student support communities that are sponsored by FSU's TRIO Student Support Services program. This program works specifically to help low-income and first-generation college students make a successful transition from high school to college life. Of the 43 students enrolled in Student Support Services communities in the fall of 2008, 33 (76.7 percent) continued to be enrolled at FSU in the fall of 2009. Several other communities focus on the development of students' core competencies and the improvement of skills necessary for college success (see Chapter Two).

Graduate Enrollment

Table 4.1 presents unduplicated graduate student headcount over the last five years. During this time, graduate enrollment at Frostburg State University decreased 8.2 percent, from 658 in fall 2006 to 604 in fall 2010. Full-time graduate student headcount increased from 192 to 247 over the last five years, while part-time headcount has declined from 466 to 357 over the same period.

Chapter Two outlines several initiatives that have been implemented in an effort to reverse the decline in overall graduate enrollment, including offering the Master of Business Administration (MBA)[33] and M.S. in Recreation and Parks Management programs in a fully online format. The University expects that the combined effect of these strategies will increase graduate enrollment from 604 in fall 2010 to 635 in fall 2020 (see Table 4.3 in Five-Year Fiscal Trends section below).

Table 4.1
Trend in Unduplicated Graduate Student Headcount
Fall 2006 to Fall 2010

	Semester				
Status	**Fall 2006**	**Fall 2007**	**Fall 2008**	**Fall 2009**	**Fall 2010**
Full-time	192	215	195	243	247
Part-time	466	443	438	387	357
Total	**658**	**658**	**633**	**630**	**604**

Data Source: P409 Student Research Population File

[33] For a discussion on MBA enrollment increases, see Chapter Two.

Frostburg also projects that programmatic changes will contribute to expected growth in graduate enrollment. The University is in the planning stage of expanding its fully online R.N. to B.S.N. completion program to a Master of Science in Nursing, with a particular emphasis on preparing nursing faculty. In addition, FSU anticipates the submittal of a proposal for its own Ed.D. in Educational Policy and Leadership, which will be modeled after the University of Maryland, College Park's program at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (see Chapter Three for additional information on these programs).

FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL TRENDS

Fiscal years 2008 to 2012 have been a period of state-mandated operating budget reductions, fund balance reversions, and employee furloughs. The University's financial status remains strong due to prudent fiscal management and increased enrollment that has produced additional revenue to help the institution meet its budgetary needs.

Revenues

From fiscal year 2008 to 2012, the University's total revenues increased 12.7 percent (from $89.3 million to $100.7 million). Table 4.2 summarizes FSU's revenues for these years. The "Unrestricted Funds" category shows the growth in the University's state appropriations, student tuition, and auxiliary enterprises. Over this period, FSU's unrestricted revenues increased by 8.5 percent. The increase in tuition revenue is attributed to enrollment growth due to the restricted tuition increases set by the State of Maryland. (A modest tuition increase was instituted by the state in fiscal years 2011 and 2012 for in-state undergraduate students.[34]) Frostburg State University's growth in tuition revenue during this time has come primarily from increased enrollment. It is important to note that tuition in the University System of Maryland has decreased from 6th highest in the nation to an estimated 35th highest in fiscal year 2012.

Expansion in "Restricted Funds" is largely from federal and state grants and contracts and from matching funds. The 59.9 percent increase in this category reflects the University's increased emphasis on acquiring external resources to supplement revenues from state appropriations and tuition (see Chapter Two).

[34] Out-of-state undergraduate tuition has not increased in the last four years to allow for market adjustments.

Table 4.2
FSU Tuition Rates and Revenue for FY 2008 - FY 2012
(FY 2011 and FY 2012 are budgeted amounts)

	Fiscal Year				
	FY 2008	**FY 2009**	**FY 2010**	**FY 2011**	**FY 2012**
TUITION RATES					
Maryland Resident Undergraduate Tuition	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,150	5,304
Non-Resident Undergraduate Tuition	14,612	15,196	15,196	15,196	15,196
REVENUES					
CURRENT UNRESTRICTED REVENUES					
Tuition and Fees	28,833,368	30,101,453	31,584,885	31,895,034	32,580,516
State Appropriations	31,116,909	32,765,066	32,711,204	32,851,678	33,264,996
Sales & Services of Educational Act.	1,131,905	1,116,701	1,076,420	1,032,990	1,032,990
Sales & Services of Auxiliary Ent.	19,045,837	20,248,391	20,837,754	20,784,972	21,390,906
Other Sources	1,888,278	1,545,359	1,431,276	873,632	1,042,671
Transferred to Restricted Revenue	167,390	-257,066	-1,582,603	-110,306	-110,306
TOTAL Unrestricted Revenue	82,183,687	85,519,904	86,058,936	87,328,000	89,201,773
CURRENT RESTRICTED REVENUES					
TOTAL Restricted Revenue	7,194,856	8,760,606	11,024,777	11,502,000	11,502,000
TOTAL REVENUES	89,378,543	94,280,510	97,083,713	98,830,000	100,703,773
Percent Change in Resident Tuition from prior yr		0.00%	0.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Percent Change in State Approp. from prior yr		5.30%	-0.20%	0.40%	1.30%
Percent Change in Total Revenue from prior yr		5.50%	3.00%	1.80%	1.90%

Decreasing State Appropriations

Beginning in 1991, FSU income from state appropriations began to decrease from approximately the 50 percent level. By fiscal year 2011, state support had declined to only 33.2 percent of the institution's total revenues (see Table 4.3). In addition, the University's state appropriation has been reduced from its budgeted appropriations by $2.5 million since fiscal 2009 for cost containment measures. As part of the state's efforts to balance its budget, FSU's fund balance was reduced by $5.5 million, beginning in fiscal year 2009. These amounts include over $1.6 million in reductions for furlough and salary reduction days (see discussion below).

Table 4.3
Student Enrollment and Funding
FY 2008 - FY 2012

Annualized	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	Percent Change**
Headcount*						
Undergraduates	4,187	4,393	4,573	4,686	4,766	13.80%
Graduate Students	643	617	637	621	610	-5.1%
Total Headcount	4,830	5,010	5,210	5,307	5,376	11.30%
Full-Time Equivalent Students						
Undergraduates	3,931	4,124	4,296	4,389	4,420	12.40%
Graduate Students	334	310	350	344	330	-1.20%
Total FTES	4,265	4,434	4,646	4,733	4,750	11.40%
State Appropriation per FTE	7,296	7,390	7,040	6,941	7,003	
State Appropriations	$31,116,909	$32,765,066	$32,711,204	$32,851,678	$33,264,996	6.90%
Total Budget	$89,378,543	$94,280,510	$97,083,713	$98,830,000	$100,703,773	12.70%
Percent State Appropriation/Total Budget	34.80%	34.80%	33.70%	33.20%	33.00%	

*Headcount calculation is fall plus spring headcount/2. Calculations for full-time equivalent students (FTEs) are: for undergraduates, total UG credit hours/30 (15 cr. hrs. is the standard full-time load each semester for undergraduate students); for graduate students, total G credit hours/24 (12 cr. hrs. is the standard semester load for graduate students).

**This column shows percentage change from FY 2008 to FY 2012.

NOTE: Figures for FY 2008 to FY 2010 are actuals; figures for FY 2011 to FY2012 are estimates for student enrollment and budgeted amounts for revenues.

Expenditures

Trends in the University's expenditures, summarized in Table 4.4, reflect the priorities of the past five years. Faculty and staff have not received merit and COLA since 2009 (none are budgeted for fiscal year 2012) and have been subjected to furlough and salary reduction in fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011. Despite the need to meet state-mandated funding reduction targets (cost containment) during these years, the University has avoided instituting layoffs.

The change in salaries and wages indicated in Table 4.4 is primarily due to increases in health insurance, retirees' health insurance, and the cost of retirement plans. Prior to mandated salary freezes as a result of the economic downturn, the University addressed salary equity by investing $250,000 into faculty salary equity and establishing minimum salaries for tenured, tenure-track, and library faculty in June of 2008. As resources become available, the University will apply its established equity model to improve faculty and staff salaries.

Technical and special fees include an increase in adjunct faculty stipends from $1,800 to $2,000 per course in fiscal year 2008. In fiscal year 2009, full-time, non-tenure-track (FTNTT) faculty were offered health insurance and FTNTT faculty who qualified are now eligible to enroll in retirement plans. The overall net decrease in technical and special fees is due to the intentional conversion of contractual employees into fully benefited positions. Over the five-year period, 39 employees were converted to positions with full benefits. Position realignment allowed the University to convert 39 employees while the total position count only increased by 14 for this period.

Frostburg State University is committed to providing access to education and continues to allocate funds to student financial aid to make education more affordable. More than 72 percent of FSU students receive some form of financial aid. Since 2006, FSU has allocated an additional $1.1 million toward need-based awards. The percentage of institutional aid allocated to need-based aid increased from 33 percent in fiscal year 2006 to 51 percent in fiscal year 2010. Consistent with Board of Regents' recommendations, the University intends to commit additional resources to need-based aid over the next five years.

Even during tight budgetary times and with some of the oldest buildings in the USM, Frostburg has consistently met the Board of Regents' directive to invest 2 percent of the replacement value of its buildings annually into facilities renewal. Upgrading the campus facilities is a high priority of FSU's new Strategic Plan (see Chapter Three). In fiscal year 2012, the projected amount designated for facilities renewal was reduced to meet the cost containment reductions imposed by the state. The intention of the University is to replenish these funds if excess attainment is gained.

Table 4.4
Comparison of FY 2008 and FY 2012
Budget by Category

		Fiscal Year		
Object Code	**Description**	**2008**	**2012**	**% Change**
	Total PIN Count	707	721	2.00%
1	Salaries and Wages	$45,886,575	$52,747,288	15.00%
2	Technical and Special Fees	$6,863,849	$6,718,991	-2.10%
3	Communication	$428,363	$835,668	95.10%
4	Travel	$1,006,907	$857,237	-14.90%
5	Food	$0	$0	0%
6	Fuel and Utilities	$4,051,097	$4,555,000	12.40%
7	Motor Vehicle Ops/Maint.	$553,638	$277,315	-49.90%
8	Contractual Services	$5,698,556	$8,292,620	45.50%
9	Supplies and Materials	$4,924,213	$6,271,377	27.40%
10	Equipment-Replacement	$650,431	$410,996	-36.80%
11	Equipment-Additional	$585,240	$1,096,560	87.40%
12	Grants, Subsidies, and Contributions	$8,528,318	$12,561,386	47.30%
13	Fixed Charges	$5,160,146	$5,378,066	4.20%
14	Land and Structures	$5,041,210	$701,269	-86.10%
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	$89,378,543	$100,703,773	12.70%

NOTE: Figures for FY 2008 are actuals; figures for FY 2012 are budgeted amounts.

FIVE-YEAR PROJECTIONS OF ENROLLMENT AND FINANCE

Enrollment Projections

The University is currently projecting an increase of 2.5 percent in headcount from fall 2010 to fall 2020. At this rate of growth, the University expects to have a total enrollment of 5,578 by fall of 2015 and 5,606 by fall of 2020. Student FTE is expected to increase 2.9 percent from FY 2011 to FY 2021 (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5
Enrollment Targets and Projections
For Fall Semesters 2010-2020

		Fall										Change From Fall 2010 - Fall 2020	
Fall Student Data	**Actual**	**Projections**											
	2010	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**#**	**Percent**
Headcount Total	5,470	5,550	5,559	5,565	5,571	5,578	5,584	5,590	5,596	5,601	5,606	136	2.50%
Undergraduate Total	4,866	4,940	4,946	4,949	4,952	4,956	4,959	4,962	4,965	4,968	4,971	105	2.20%
Full-time	4,544	4,614	4,617	4,620	4,623	4,627	4,630	4,633	4,636	4,639	4,642	98	2.20%
Part-time	322	326	329	329	329	329	329	329	329	329	329	7	2.20%
Grad./First Prof. Total	604	610	613	616	619	622	625	628	631	633	635	31	5.10%
Full-time	247	250	253	256	259	262	265	268	271	273	275	28	11.30%
Part-time	357	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	3	0.80%
FTDE Students	3,901	3,947	3,953	3,959	3,965	3,971	3,977	3,983	3,989	3,995	4,001	100	2.60%

Fiscal Year Full-Time Equivalent Data

		FISCAL YEAR										Change from	
	Est.	Projections										FY2011 - FY 2021	
	2011	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**#**	**Percent**
FTE Students	4,670	4,750	4,756	4,762	4,768	4,774	4,780	4,786	4,792	4,798	4,804	134	2.90%

Financial Projections

Table 4.6 presents budget estimates for fiscal years 2013 to 2017. Projected revenues and expenditures are based on a series of assumptions regarding future enrollments, level of state support, economic and market conditions, and other measures considered important to FSU's future.

Table 4.6:
Budget Estimates
for FY 2013 - FY 2017

REVENUES	**FY 2013**	**FY 2014**	**FY 2015**	**FY 2016**	**FY 2017**
CURRENT UNRESTRICTED REVENUES					
Tuition and Fees	33,916,317	35,306,886	36,754,468	38,261,402	39,830,119
State Appropriations	34,211,862	35,187,134	36,191,665	37,226,331	38,292,037
Sales & Services of Educational Act.	1,032,990	1,032,990	1,032,990	1,032,990	1,032,990
Sales & Services of Auxiliary Ent.	21,925,679	22,473,821	23,035,667	23,611,558	24,201,847
Other Sources	1,042,671	1,042,671	1,042,671	1,042,671	1,042,671
Transferred to Restricted Revenue	-110,306	-110,306	-110,306	-110,306	-110,306
TOTAL Unrestricted Revenue	92,019,213	94,933,196	97,947,155	101,064,646	104,289,358
CURRENT RESTRICTED REVENUES					
TOTAL Restricted Revenue	11,617,020	11,733,190	11,850,522	11,969,027	12,088,718
TOTAL REVENUES	103,636,233	106,666,386	109,797,677	113,033,673	116,378,076
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	54,857,180	57,051,467	59,333,525	61,706,866	64,175,141
Technical and Special Fees	6,853,371	6,990,438	7,130,247	7,272,852	7,418,309
Communication	835,668	835,668	835,668	835,668	835,668
Travel	865,809	874,467	883,212	892,044	900,965
Food	0	0	0	0	0
Fuel and Utilities	4,600,550	4,646,556	4,693,021	4,739,951	4,787,351
Motor Vehicle Operations and Maint.	285,634	294,203	303,030	312,120	321,484
Contractual Services	8,375,546	8,459,301	8,543,895	8,629,335	8,715,627
Supplies and Materials	6,302,734	6,334,248	6,365,919	6,397,748	6,429,737
Equipment-Replacement	415,105	419,257	423,450	427,684	431,961
Equipment-Additional	1,107,526	1,118,601	1,129,787	1,141,085	1,152,496
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	12,875,421	13,197,306	13,527,239	13,865,420	14,212,055
Fixed Charges	5,455,230	5,517,446	5,562,142	5,586,376	5,586,780
Land and Structures	806,459	927,428	1,066,542	1,226,524	1,410,502
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	103,636,233	106,666,386	109,797,677	113,033,673	116,378,076

Assumptions - Revenues

- Tuition and Fees: The projected increase in revenues generated from tuition and fees is based on an assumed 0.1 percent annual growth in headcount and a 4 percent annual increase in tuition. (The dollar amount generated through student fees is assumed to be the same in each of the five years.)
- State Appropriations: It is assumed that state appropriations will increase by 3 percent each year.
- Sales and Services of Educational Activities: Annual increases in this category are not assumed, since revenue amounts generated by these activities are not consistently impacted by changes in enrollments.
- Sales and Services of Auxiliary Services: Historically, the University has annually increased residence hall room rates and board rates by 2 to 3 percent. The projected growth of revenue amounts in this category each year assumes these increases. Since the residence halls are currently at full capacity, the projected growth in revenues is not predicated on an expectation of higher occupancy rates.
- Other Sources (e.g., student deferred payment revenue, interest income): Revenues are not expected to increase annually in this category.
- Current Restricted Revenue: Restricted revenue is projected to increase 1 percent annually for the next five years.

Assumptions - Expenditures

- Salaries and Wages: Expenditures for salaries and fringe benefits combined are expected to increase at least 4 percent annually over the next five years due to COLA, merit pay raises, increases in health insurance rates, and the need to fund new benefited positions.
- Technical and Special Fees: Expenditures are projected to increase 2 percent annually for costs associated with higher fringes, health insurance increases for full-time, non-tenure-track faculty, and potential increases in minimum wage.
- Communication: Expenditures are expected to stay steady in area of communication.
- Travel: Slight increases in this category are expected, given the anticipated increases in travel expenses.
- Fuel and Utilities: Likely competition in the marketplace for energy supplies and general inflation will result in higher fuel and utility expenditures for the University.
- Motor Vehicle Operations and Maintenance: Expenditures are projected to increase, due to the rising cost of gasoline and vehicles predicted over the five-year period.
- Contractual Services: Expenditures in this category are expected to rise due to inflation.
- Supplies: Increased expenditures for supplies are expected due to inflation.
- Equipment-Replacement and Additional: Increased expenditures for equipment are expected due to inflation and the need to provide appropriate and accessible technology to students, faculty, and staff.
- Grants, Subsidies, and Contributions: Additional expenditures in this category each year result from the need for additional student scholarship money as the University's tuition increases and the need to help make education affordable to students.
- Fixed Charges: Increased expenditures due to inflation are expected in this category.

- Land and Structure: In the next five years, the University will try to restore facility funding that was reduced during FY 2012 budget reductions. Major projects are financed through requests made to the State for special capital funding.

STATE-FUNDED CAPITAL PROJECTS

Center for Communications and Information Technology Building (CCIT)

This project proposes the construction of a 127,000 GSF (68,101 NASF) Center for Communications and Instructional Technology (CCIT) Building. This facility will be constructed in 2012, following the demolition of Tawes Hall. The CCIT will support the departments of Mass Communication, Computer Science, and Mathematics as well as the Graphic Design program of the Visual Arts Department. The building will also house the Channel 3 television station, WFWM Radio, and a multi-media classroom facility that will include a new Planetarium, the Academic Computing lab and support offices, and the Center for Instructional Technologies/Center for Teaching Excellence. The construction of the CCIT will create new laboratories, classrooms, and offices to accommodate the growth of the University and its academic programs.

Education and Health Sciences Building

This project proposes the construction of a 102,573 GSF (58,950 NSF) Education and Health Sciences Building. The Center will house most of the programs offered through the College of Education, the newly created R.N. to B.S.N. completion program, and the proposed Ed.D. in Educational Policy and Leadership and Master of Science in Nursing programs. The facility will also include space for an Education Resource Center, the Brady Health Center, a variety of state-of-the-art teacher preparation laboratories, a student wellness center, and several areas dedicated to student exhibits and research projects.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The assessment of institutional effectiveness is an ongoing process that evaluates the attainment of University goals and objectives at different levels of the institution. This chapter discusses the assessment of key University priorities and goals found in the University's Mission Statement and strategic plan.[35] The chapter also presents an overview of assessments taking place at the divisional level involving academic and student services programs and initiatives.[36] The chapter then turns its attention to a separate review of the assessment of student learning outcomes.

THE UNIVERSITY'S ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY

Assessment at Frostburg State University is intended to promote systematic reflection and an improvement-oriented culture and positive restlessness at the institution. Positive restlessness implies that the University should never be satisfied with its performance and is constantly reworking practices and policies to improve. To accomplish this, assessment takes place at all levels of the institution. All results and decisions based on those outcomes, directly or indirectly, may influence the planning, policies, and practices of other units. Key to this process is the design and implementation of a thoughtful approach to assessment planning, the design and implementation of data collection approaches, and the examination, sharing, and implementing of assessment findings. Frostburg's assessment process illustrates the dynamic and ongoing nature of institutional assessment.

THE ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES AND GOALS

The assessment of the institutional priorities and goals as set forth in the University's mission statement and its strategic plan is conducted through the work of the President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness and the University's implementation of the Maryland Higher Education Commission's "Performance Accountability Report/Managing for Results" guidelines. Both of these mechanisms allow for ongoing evaluation of the University's progress in attaining the desired outcomes of its strategic plan.

The President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness

In August 2010, Dr. Gibralter formed the President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE) as a consultative body to the president's Executive Committee and to the University's Strategic Planning Committee. Membership on the council includes both faculty and administrators. The council will assist in the future development of the University's strategic plan and will monitor its implementation and progress based on Middle States standards and measures of effectiveness. In addition, the PACIE is charged with ensuring that

[35] See Chapter 6 for a discussion of the University's strategic planning process and its link to University resource allocation.
[36] A discussion of the assessment of General Education is presented in Chapter Two.

all segments of the University are included in reviews of the strategic plan and the expenditure of institutional resources. Tasks assigned to the council are as follows:

a. Promote, monitor, and evaluate progress on ongoing institutional renewal and effectiveness.
b. Establish and revise as necessary the process for ensuring that the University meets Middle States accreditation standards.
c. Ensure an integrated planning model in which the strategic plan drives planning across all the divisions and planning units of the University.
d. Provide, with the strategic planning process, a focal point for working with planning units to develop annual planning goals and budget priorities.
e. Recommend actions to the president of the University for consideration in the budgeting and resource allocation cycle.

At its October 2010 meeting, the PACIE carefully reviewed the *Draft Outline: USM in 2020 Strategic Plan* and the *Draft Frostburg State University Mission and Goals* with the intent to isolate key issues for discussion during this academic year. Thirteen such issues were identified and included experiential education, student quality and persistence, facilities, graduates' preparedness for success, and defining aspects that are distinctive and distinguished.

Members of PACIE were asked to review this list and rank their top five issues. Based on the survey results, a topic was assigned to each upcoming meeting. Key campus resource people were invited to present institutional accomplishments and challenges and review appropriate documents and data. The Council's report on the strengths, challenges, and recommendations on each issue listed above will be presented to Dr. Gibralter in June 2011.

Performance Accountability Report/Managing for Results Guidelines

The "Performance Accountability Report/Managing for Results" (PAR/MFR) guidelines exemplify the type of external accountability that has become part of the University's management priorities. The PAR/MFR focuses on the attainment of preferred institutional outcomes as measures of institutional achievement and performance. The PAR/MFR was first introduced in 1997 in response to a State of Maryland mandate that a quantitative measurement tool be developed to gauge effectively the progress of educational institutions.

Under the PAR/MFR process, the University, with the approval of MHEC and the Board of Regents, determines its own mission and goals. Furthermore, the University defines its own objectives and benchmarks and establishes a timetable for their attainment. As such, although the University is held financially accountable for its performance under PAR/MFR, the process allows it the freedom to establish its own vision and the standards used by the state to judge the effectiveness of the institution.

In the fall of 2010, based on its new mission statement and strategic plan, the University submitted revised PAR/MFR goals for review by the University System of Maryland and appropriate state agencies. These new PAR/MFR goals, which have been approved by the president and his Executive Committee, are as follows:

- Serve as a catalyst for economic development in Western Maryland and in the region
- Meet critical workforce needs in the region and the state
- Provide access to higher education for residents of Maryland and the region
- Continue efforts to create an environment that prepares students to live and work in a diverse society
- Increase recognition for the University's academic programs through national accreditations of teacher education, business, and other selected programs
- Promote outreach programs that benefit the campus and broader community

The University's progress in attaining these six goals is evaluated by the assistant vice president for planning and assessment and will be reviewed by the new President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness. These assessments, in turn, will help to guide the work of the Strategic Planning Committee and the allocation of University resources. In September of each year, a report on the institution's performance is also sent to the University System of Maryland and the Maryland Department of Budget and Management.

Voluntary System of Accountability

The Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) is in response to the Commission on the Future of Higher Education (convened by then United States Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings) to provide a transparent and systematic approach for information disclosure that allows for comparisons among four-year public colleges and universities.

In early 2007, the University System of Maryland chancellor, Dr. William E. Kirwan, and senior vice chancellor, Dr. Irwin L. Goldstein, joined 76 other public college and university administrators from across the nation to develop recommendations for the design of the system.

Frostburg State University, along with all other University System of Maryland (USM) institutions, is participating in the VSA to supply clear, accessible, and comparable information on the undergraduate student experience to important constituencies, including students and parents, through a common web report – *The College Portrait.* Over 300 institutions have joined the VSA as of March 2010.

THE ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

The University carefully assesses both campus-wide curricular initiatives as well as its academic programs. These assessments are used to improve instruction and enhance the quality of education at the University. Two examples of the assessment of campus-wide curricular initiatives are presented in this section: The Learning Community Program and Online Education. The University's use of Periodic Program Reviews to assess and improve its undergraduate curricular programs is also discussed.

Assessment of Learning Communities

The University's learning communities offer first-year, entering students the opportunity to explore a major, a life skill, or a theme through the creation of linkages between and among courses from the General Education Program. The Learning Community Program at Frostburg began in 1997 with a handful of communities meeting the curricular interests of a select number of students. In 2006, the program was extended to all incoming students.

The learning community program is evaluated on an annual basis. The instrument for assessment is the Student Experience Survey. Distributed to each community during the final weeks of the semester, the survey is designed to gather the following information:

- How the student became aware of learning communities, and why he or she subsequently chose that particular community
- Attitudes about different aspects of the learning community experience including the development of strategies for success
- The degree of student and instructor engagement

In the fall of 2010, the director of the program, the assistant dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, met with the vice president for student and educational services and his staff to discuss a reassessment of the Learning Community Program in response to student and instructor feedback and discussions across campus. It has become clear that the program's outcomes and expectations have drifted from the original vision for the program. While retention rates markedly improved when participation in the program became required for all entering freshmen, the quality of the experiences varies from community to community. Key issues include the uneven distribution of communities across the academic departments and colleges, the variance in number of credit hours involved in the communities, the oftentimes lack of coordination between community instructors, and the implementation of experiential learning opportunities associated with learning communities (e.g., field trips, simulations, and campus/community volunteerism). The President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness and the Achievement Gap Task Force plan to review the program in the spring of 2011 and will make recommendations to the president and to the provost regarding needed changes.

Assessment of Online Education

The principal mission of online education at Frostburg State University is to enhance student access to the University's academic programs. Of equal importance, FSU online education is intended to help students acquire the technical skills and online learning strategies important to the pursuit of their academic and career goals. By developing and teaching online courses, FSU faculty members also acquire new instructional skills important to their professional growth and development. The University is committed to providing both students and faculty with the support and resources they need to succeed as participants in online education.

The Assessment of Student Online Experiences

All online courses and instruction at the University must be formally evaluated. The formal assessment of faculty teaching performance in online courses is conducted through the University's standard faculty evaluation process. In addition to this evaluation, the academic and technical experiences of students enrolled in online courses are closely monitored and evaluated by the University's Distance Education Advisory Group (DEAG).[37] It is the responsibility of the DEAG to recommend to the provost policies and practices governing the delivery of online courses by the University.

The assessment of student experiences as online learners at the University is necessary to: (1) improve the overall quality of online courses; (2) inform faculty members regarding the degree to which their performance matches the expectation of their departments, colleges, and the University; and (3) supply information and guidance to faculty for professional improvement and development. Consequently, data about student experiences in online courses are provided to instructors and their department chairs. The DEAG, the provost, and the deans routinely review aggregate data.

The University's assessment of student experiences as online learners is conducted through the administration of the *Student Online Learning Survey*. This survey has been administered since 2003, with an overall response rate of 48 percent of students enrolled in FSU online courses during the summer and Intersession terms.[38] Results from over the last eight years indicate that online learners at Frostburg are extremely pleased with their online courses:

- Sixty-six percent of survey respondents agreed that technical help with their online courses was available when needed.
- Eighty-two percent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the online course delivery method was conducive to their learning.
- Eighty-five percent of respondents felt the instructor presented the course materials in a clear and organized manner.
- Seventy-two percent of respondents felt a high level of quality interaction existed in their online course.
- Seventy-eight percent of respondents indicated that they learned just as much or more in their online course than in their traditional course.
- Forty-three percent of respondents indicated they would definitely take another online course, with an additional 41 percent indicating they would enroll in another course if it fits their needs.

[37] Members of the Distance Education Advisory Group, chaired by the vice provost, include both faculty and staff. The DEAG is part of the University governance.

[38] In the past, the University's online efforts were primarily focused on summer sessions and Intersession (January). Consequently, the University's assessment of student experiences as online learners was limited to courses offered during these terms. However, with the recent growth of online education at FSU through the addition of fully online programs, the University's assessment of online learning will in the future include courses offered during the fall and spring terms.

Based on these results and the institution's obligation to support the growing number of students enrolled in its new online degree programs, the University plans to study the feasibility of outsourcing some of its Help Desk service as a way to provide online students with greater access to technical help and support. Results from the *Student Online Learning Survey* also suggest that the University's Faculty Online Certification Program, which is conducted by the Center for Instructional Technologies (CIT), should continue to stress the importance of frequent substantive interaction between faculty and their online students. The Faculty Online Certification Program is continually reviewed and evaluated by both the CIT and the DEAG to ensure that nationally recognized standards for online education are met at the University.[39]

Periodic Program Review

Periodic Program Reviews (PPRs) have been a USM requirement since the late 1980s.[40] USM stipulated that academic programs be evaluated once every five years, and that cost and productivity issues be included in the reviews. The PPR also requires academic departments to assess the learning outcomes of their students and to evaluate the relationship between their programs and the mission of the University.

The revised PPR process approved by the Board of Regents permits each USM institution to establish its own report guidelines and procedures. The University's PPR guidelines, established in July 2006, seek to balance program costs and productivity issues, allowing reviews to focus on program quality, student learning outcomes, and alumni and employer satisfaction (see Appendix H for the Periodic Program Review Self-Assessment Guidelines).

Under the University's guidelines, PPRs must report student and faculty profiles, the service and professional development activities of faculty, and the adequacy of library holdings and facilities. Just as importantly, they must also discuss the relationship of the program to the mission and evaluate the program's course of study and curricular materials. Moreover, an evaluation must be made of student technology fluency and the application of information technology to instruction (e.g., the web enhancement of instructional materials, the deployment of online courses, and the use of interactive video). Reviews must also include an evaluation of student learning outcomes in relation to educational objectives, using departmental, institutional, or common indicators of student performance (Praxis, LSAT, GRE, portfolio, internships, field experience, etc.). The experiences and views of graduates, as ascertained by the Frostburg State University Alumni Survey, are also carefully evaluated.

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[39] A discussion of the University's use of *Quality Matters* standards in online education appears in Chapter Two. A brief report from CIT on ongoing evaluation of the Faculty Online Certification Program appears in Appendix I.

[40] This requirement is outlined in SB682, Sec.12-106IV of the Code of Maryland: The Board of Regents shall, on an ongoing basis, review and determine whether any University programs are inconsistent with the University's mission or whether any constituent institution's programs are inconsistent with that institution's mission. The Board shall also assure that the University's programs are not unproductive or unreasonably duplicative, taking into account the mission of the institution, student demand, and efficient use of the University's resources.

Importance of the PPR to Frostburg's Assessment Activities

Periodic Program Reviews plays a vital role in the University's student learning outcomes assessment. The PPR review schedule (based on reviews every five years) serves as the foundation for assessment initiatives, including student-learning outcomes, through its identification of priorities for the coming cycle. Halfway through the cycle (i.e., at two and a half years), an interim report is submitted by academic programs that reflect the status of their assessment activities. The University has opted for this interim reporting cycle because many academic programs on campus believe that it provides an optimum period of time to design, implement, and evaluate assessments and to use the assessment results for continuous improvement. The mid-cycle reports are reviewed by the college deans and the Student Learning Assessment Advisory Group. Recommendations are made to the provost concerning findings in the interim review.

External Program Accreditation

Frostburg State University has a long tradition of external program accreditation. The University values and encourages external accreditation as an indicator of program excellence. Equally valued by the University is the required and extensive review of the curriculum, faculty, budget, facilities, library, and student learning outcomes. The following University programs presently have earned external accreditation recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education:

- College of Business programs: AACSB International (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)
- B.A./B.S. in Athletic Training: Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)
- B.A./B.S. program in Mechanical Engineering, in collaboration with the University of Maryland College Park: Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)
- B.A./B.S. in Recreation and Parks Management: National Recreation and Park Association/American Association for Leisure and Recreation (NRPA/AALR)
- B.A./B.S. in Social Work: Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
- Teacher Education programs: National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE); also approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) as consistent with the Maryland Redesign of Teacher Education
- Specialized Accreditation: M.S. in Counseling Psychology: Master in Psychology Accreditation Council (MPAC)

THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAMMING

The Division of Student and Educational Services (SES) continues to embrace assessment as a means to guide program improvement. For example, two major changes in the Developmental Mathematics Program were made based on substantial program assessment data. The program was selected for a major redesign effort funded by the Lumina Foundation and is offering a pilot section during the spring 2011 semester. In addition, institutional resources were redistributed to

create a new position, Instructional Coordinator for Developmental Mathematics, to help implement the course redesign (see Chapter Two).

In an effort to systematize and strengthen assessment across the division and to address the self-study recommendation that "All student services should develop assessment plans that focus on student learning outcomes yet include other indicators of program efficacy to inform policy and planning," the vice president created an SES Program Review Task Group in fall 2009. The charge to the group was as follows:

1. Develop a framework for periodic departmental self-study and program review that involves continuing annual assessment of goals and outcomes and encourages regular exploration of in-depth topics. The framework should, at a minimum, be designed to:
   - produce self-studies that are substantive, evidence-based, useful for the unit, tied to University goals, and founded in departmental missions that are connected to the University's mission;
   - include a purpose, aims, principles, definitions, processes, and dissemination plan; and
   - promote a culture of positive restlessness, mindfulness, and evidence-informed decision making.

2. Develop timelines for departmental program reviews, according to division and departmental needs and processes. The timelines will likely entail a comprehensive departmental self-study approximately every three years. However, the timeline for departments preparing reports for external accrediting groups should be coordinated with the work already being completed for this purpose. Grant submission timelines should also be taken into account.

3. Assist departments in developing their own plans. This will include an emphasis on:
   - appropriate methods of assessment;
   - how FSU programs, activities and services are being improved by the use the University is making of the results of its assessment efforts; and
   - the development and assessment of student learning outcomes, wherever appropriate.

4. Assist units to connect department assessment, institutional effectiveness, and University strategic planning.

5. Create an assessment of the progress SES and constituent units are making toward developing a "culture of assessment."

The 10-member task group met bi-weekly throughout the 2009-2010 academic year to study effective assessment models at other institutions and created an SES program review process template that involves both a program self-study and an outside team review. The task group produced a number of documents to guide programs through the review process: a Quick Start (to Program Assessment) Guide, a Program Review Checklist, a set of assessment and program review definitions, a Program Review Timetable, and a Program Reviewer's Template for

reporting the review team's findings. An initial group of 10 programs are scheduled to complete their program reviews in Spring of 2011.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The assessment of student learning outcomes is primarily conducted by the individual colleges of the University, the exception being assessment within the General Education Program (see Chapter Two). [41] The expected student learning outcomes identified by each of the colleges are, in part, based on the University's Undergraduate Institutional Learning Goals (see Appendix J for a list of expected student learning outcomes for each of the listed goals). [42] These goals, which were adopted by the University in 2003, reflect the University's new mission statement through a focus on the following five areas of student learning:

1. ***Liberal Knowledge and Skills of Inquiry, Critical Thinking, and Synthesis***: Students will acquire knowledge in the humanities, the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts, which collectively embody the human cultural heritage. Students will develop their abilities to practice higher-level critical thinking.

2. ***Core Skills***: Students will become proficient in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They will also develop quantitative literacy and technological fluency.

3. ***Acquisition and Application of Specialized Knowledge***: Students will gain knowledge and skills appropriate both for their fields of study and to enter into the professional sector and/or graduate school.

4. ***Values and Social Responsibility***: Students will critically explore, evaluate, and define their values and become responsible citizens in a complex and changing society.

5. ***Appreciation of Cultural Identities***: Students will gain insight into the ways cultural identities and experiences shape individual perspectives of the world and influence interactions with people from different backgrounds.

College of Education Professional Education Unit

The Assessment System of the Professional Education Unit at Frostburg State University is a comprehensive system designed to document candidates' successful completion of program

[41] The student learning assessment work of the colleges is coordinated by the campus-wide Student Learning Assessment Group, which is chaired by the assistant vice president for planning and assessment.

[42] The University's encourages individual departments, programs, and services to provide opportunities, where appropriate, for students to attain the skills and dispositions identified by the University as essential to education. For instance, the General Education Program's Learning Goals are taken from the Institutional Learning Goals (Goal Number Three: "Acquisition and Application of Specialized Knowledge" is excluded from the list of GEP learning goals.)

outcomes. Through this assessment system, the Unit is engaged in continuous quality improvement of its programs.[43]

The Unit's professional commitments to knowledge, teaching competence, and student learning are evident in the Unit's *Conceptual Framework*.[44] The *Conceptual Framework* provides the underlying philosophy and goals for all programs in the Unit since the framework's inception in 2000. All the program assessment tasks, expectations, and outcomes are designed to meet the *Unit's Conceptual Framework.* The following six outcomes of the *Conceptual Framework* represent the major attributes that graduates should exhibit and that the Unit faculty value:[45]

1. Dedicated Professional
2. Instructional Leader
3. Continuous Assessor
4. Educational Advocate
5. Collaborative Bridge Builder
6. Reflective Decision-Maker

Level(s) at Which Competency Is Assessed

The *Conceptual Framework* has been consistently used by faculty members in the professional education programs as a guide for redesigning the programs, syllabi, assessments, and early field and intern evaluation forms. Major course assignments and assessments across programs provide evidence that all candidates can demonstrate each of the six attributes included in the *Conceptual Framework*. All course syllabi within programs of the Unit follow a specific format. This ensures uniformity in the communication of student learning outcomes, congruence with the conceptual framework, and assessments of each course outcome. Rubrics are utilized for a majority of course assessments. Course assessment data and course/faculty evaluations are continually utilized to revise syllabi.

Processes Used to Evaluate Competency Levels

All programs within the Unit have identified learning goals that relate to student learning outcomes according to the Conceptual Framework, General Education Competency Areas, professional standards, and state content standards. Programs utilize a variety of assessments to measure outcomes, including standardized tests, comprehensive exams, internship evaluations, entrance and exit

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[43] The Professional Education Unit refers to the colleges, schools, departments, or other administrative bodies in the University with the responsibility for managing or coordinating all programs offered for the preparation of teachers and other school professionals, regardless of where these programs are administratively housed in the institution. Unit Programs include: (1) Initial Teacher Certification Programs: Elementary Education, Early Childhood/Elementary Education, Secondary Education, P-12 Education, and Master of Arts in Teaching Elementary and Secondary; and (2) Advanced Programs: Master of Education programs for teachers and other school professionals.

[44] The Professional Education Unit's *Conceptual Framework* is described in Appendix K.

[45] The *Unit's Conceptual Framework* is aligned with the student competencies included in the Learning Goals of the General Education Program. (*Written and Oral Communication, Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning, Critical Analysis and Reasoning*, and *Technological Competency*), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standards (INTASC), the NCATE Standards, the Institutional Performance Criteria of the Maryland Redesign of Teacher Education, and the Specialty Professional Association (SPA) Standards.

interviews, creation of integrated and concept units, service learning projects, and developmental and showcase portfolios.

Course syllabi in the Unit follow a common format. As part of this format, major assessments are listed in categories of knowledge, skills, or dispositions. Since initial certification programs have common standards, common assessments are administered across the programs. Internship evaluations and portfolio presentations are assessed using the same rubric and similar processes. For the advanced programs, major program assessments were developed to meet the Specialty Professional Associations (SPA) standards.

Use of Results for Improvement of Candidate Performance

The Education Unit has a systematic process for evaluating courses, programs, clinical experiences, and candidate performance. Program committees and/or program advisory councils meet at least once a semester to review course, program, and clinical experience data and make recommendations for improvement. Recommendations are presented to the Unit faculty for discussion and action plans are submitted. The program coordinators maintain minutes of these meetings.

Course instructors are responsible for administering and scoring candidate standards-based assessments. They are also responsible for discussing a candidate's performance with him or her and for having the candidate reflect on his or her performance. Depending on the assessment, if a satisfactory performance is not demonstrated, candidates may have the opportunity to repeat the performance and resubmit assessments until an acceptable level of mastery is met.

For initial certification programs, candidates are assessed before entrance into a Professional Development School (PDS) for internship experiences and are assessed at various points throughout their internships. Data from the candidates' internship performances are shared several times throughout the internship through three-way conferences among the candidate, the university supervisor, and the mentor teacher. Evaluations and discussions from these conferences are used to guide the candidates in development of their skills and dispositions as future educators. If it is determined that a candidate is not performing at an acceptable level at any of the assessment points, the supervisor consults with the candidate and the mentor teacher and together they develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP). These candidates are provisionally advanced to the internship experience to correct the deficiencies addressed in the IDP while in the initial weeks of their clinical experiences.

Initial and advanced program candidates not meeting decision point performance levels have several options, depending on the criteria not met. At several points there are opportunities for remediation, instructional assistance, or repeating a course/assessment. Otherwise, a candidate may write a formal request for continuing in the program. This request is submitted to the Unit monitoring committee for undergraduate candidate requests or the Unit Graduate Committee and/or the appropriate program coordinator for graduate candidate requests. The committees meet as needed to review requests and make recommendations about candidate requests for exceptions.

Data-Driven Changes

Instructors use course data from student assessments to review the course assessments and scoring tools to determine if modifications need to be made. Rubrics for assignments and assessments are revised each year, depending on candidate performance and feedback.

Unit assessment data and specific program data are given to the program coordinators. Coordinators meet with program and advisory committees to discuss the results and make recommendations for changes in assessments and programs.

Faculty members receive course evaluation data at the end of each semester. The opportunity to evaluate a course and the instructor's performance in delivery of the course is offered to all students in a course. Faculty members are expected to use this data when reviewing course content and delivery.

College of Business

The College of Business (COB) maintains a comprehensive assessment program that links the mission of the college to the University's mission. The fundamentals of the assessment program are the learning goals developed for the bachelor's and Master of Business Administration degree program levels.

As part of the college governance structure there is an Assurance of Learning Committee (AOLC) that is composed of faculty representatives from the four academic departments and student representatives. Serving on the AOLC, as permanent committee chair, is the AOL coordinator, a faculty member whose part-time assignment is to manage the AOL efforts of the college. Depending upon its tasks and recommendations, the AOLC works with the academic departments, the College Curriculum Committee, the College Graduate Policy Committee, the College Executive Committee, and the dean and associate dean.

The AOLC and the college are guided by two documents prepared exclusively for the management of the AOL efforts of the college. These documents are the AOL Plan, and the AOL Management System. Both documents are the product of deliberations by faculty. The plan was created in 2006, with revisions following, and the management system was created in 2007, with minor revisions following. These documents offer the details of the purpose, scope, tasks, and responsibilities of the AOL effort.

For Assurance of Learning (AOL) purposes, the faculty formulated learning goals and objectives in the years prior to the college's receipt of initial AACSB accreditation in academic year 2005-2006. During the review cycle, some of the goals and objectives have been modified. Helping to guide the COB, the AOLC is guided by the following concepts:

1. Student achievement, learning goals, and objectives are the most important elements in assessment efforts.
2. For the COB, the goal of assessment is to enable COB faculty and administrators to make decisions that will improve instruction and the educational experiences of students.

3. Faculty must be fully involved in all substantive assessment planning and implementation.
4. The college will use a variety of assessment measures and tools, both direct and indirect.
5. The college desires to improve, continuously, student achievement and learning. To this end, it will develop a cycle of assessment activities and will make decisions, annually, regarding improvement of instruction.
6. Students will be significantly involved in decisions made regarding assessment policies and practices through appointments to faculty committees (Assurance of Learning, Curriculum, Student Advisory Committee, and Advisory Board).

Using both direct and indirect assessment methods, from semester-to-semester, the AOLC evaluates student achievement relative to the several learning goals. Direct assessment tools include tests and a variety of course-embedded tasks and activities, with much of the embedded assessment work accomplished within capstone courses in the bachelor's degree program and in the MBA program. Embedded assessment collects information about student performance and learning that is built into course teaching-learning processes and activities and is usually reflective of knowledge acquisition and its application.

Lessons Learned

The COB faculty and administration have learned that assessment does not lead to a destination. It is a journey. The college has identified several learning goals that it has set out to assess, mostly via course-embedded assessment and testing. Present student persistence patterns present challenges to instruction and to modes and practices of assessment. In some instances, the college needs to find better, more effective, and efficient means to assess student learning. Members of the COB faculty have a need for more dialog and conversation to discover the means to help students become more effective. The faculty has also learned that it is possible, practical, and realistic to involve members of the College Advisory Board directly in the assessment of student work.

Over the past five years, the COB has benefited from having many of its faculty attend AOL workshops and conferences hosted by AACSB. The college's faculty have a much broader understanding of learning assessment on a program level after attending these meetings. The college has a highly dedicated, committed group of faculty who have created and refined the college's Professional Development II course (BUAD 400), in which several critical assessment activities occur. For several years, the COB has had the benefit of a motivated, talented, and engaged AOL committee composed of college faculty and student representatives. The college's assessment consultant visited the COB twice (in April of 2008 and 2009), and helped conceptualize efforts on a macro-scale and has guided specific plans and efforts. The former COB dean is a highly experienced AACSB accreditation visiting team member who has guided and shaped the college's AOL program and has shared his wide experience and his wisdom regarding continuous improvement of academic programs and student learning. COB currently has the support, involvement, and encouragement of the new dean of the college. All of these things have helped college faculty learn about and engage in meaningful assessment of student learning.

For the Future

For the immediate future the college needs to continue to take steps to enable all or nearly all its faculty to become engaged in the assessment effort. This includes direct assistance with course-embedded assessment, service on the AOL committee, and service on *ad hoc*, short-term committees intended to investigate special issues. It is also very important to support the efforts of the faculty who are instructors for the Professional Development courses, One and Two, as these courses are the locus for much of the assessment work. The college also needs to continue to find ways to assist students in performing better in the important areas, including writing, analysis/computation, and business knowledge. Finally, the college needs to continue to improve its testing program.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) has made tremendous strides to ensure the assessment of student learning in each of its programs. Promoted by the administration as a college priority, assessment has been embraced by CLAS faculty who consider assessment as a vital tool for evaluating and improving student learning, curriculum, and programmatic effectiveness. Each academic unit within CLAS has developed learning goals tied to the University's Institutional Learning Goals.

During the past two years, CLAS has made significant progress in implementing a program of student learning assessment:

- Program Learning Goals have been posted on the CLAS website as a public pronouncement of the expectations the departments and college have established for their students.
- Each department has designed and begun to implement student learning assessment plans within their academic programs.
- Within these documents and the program reviews, assessment plans are linked to institutional learning goals and to the college and institutional vision and mission statements.

The CLAS has focused resources on working with departments to craft departmental plans and implement mechanisms to systematically enhance the assessment of student learning. The college's efforts have established a foundation for assessment and the programs continue their work to use the data to inform decision making.

As of the writing of this document, CLAS has put into place the beginnings of an aggressive multi-year schedule of measurement that encompasses a broad spectrum of assessment issues. The issue of resource allocation for student learning assessment activities will also be addressed in earnest. An important goal for AY 2011-2012 is to initiate a process of providing the necessary faculty development and institutional financial support to implement and, in many cases, refine assessment strategies within the college.

CHAPTER SIX

STRATEGIC PLANNING AT FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

BACKGROUND

When arriving at the University in 2006, Dr. Gibralter quickly moved to make strategic planning the guiding force behind decision making at Frostburg State University. In the first year of his presidency, the University conducted a careful evaluation of its earlier planning process to determine the best-fit planning model for moving the institution forward in the next 10 years. This review was also based on the recommendations made by the Middle States Evaluation Team earlier that year (see Chapter Two).

In fall 2007, President Gibralter created a Strategic Planning Team, composed of a cross-section of representatives from throughout the University community, to develop the new planning process. Each vice president was asked to identify representatives from within their division to serve on the team, and various entities within Academic Affairs - the deans, Chairs' Council, and Faculty Senate - nominated faculty to participate as members. The president established the following principles to guide the planning process.

1. As a comprehensive liberal arts university, Frostburg State University must establish strategic priorities in the context of the economic realities of the region. At the same time, the University must seek to preserve the enormous value of the humanities and liberal arts.

2. Frostburg State University is at a pivotal time in its history. It is therefore critical that a focus on the recruitment, retention, and professional development of faculty and professional staff be a high priority.

3. Recruitment of students and enrollment growth are essential to Frostburg State University's future. However, growth must be modest and in line with faculty and staff support. Academic qualifications of accepted students must be discussed.

4. Enhancing the quality of campus life through co-curricular and experiential learning that engages FSU students beyond the traditional boundaries of the campus is an important aspect of future growth and development.

5. A focus on the environment and sustainability is crucial to the future of the nation and the University. Frostburg is uniquely situated to deal with the issue of sustainability.

With these guiding principles in mind, the team set about its work. During academic year 2007-2008, the team drafted new vision and mission statements, core values, master goals, and 17 strategic directions. The campus was kept apprised of the work of the team through a dedicated website, campus dialogue, e-mails, and presentations to numerous campus constituencies.

In April of 2008, the team presented a draft of the strategic plan to the University community for discussion and review. The final version of the plan was published in the fall of 2009. Dr. Gibralter's convocation address to the campus community that fall emphasized the four strategic directions for the University presented in the plan:

- **Sustainability.** The University promotes environmental, fiscal, and social sustainability initiatives, as well as the sustainability of personal health and wellness.
- **Engagement.** The University provides members of the FSU community with opportunities for educational, economic, and cultural engagement.
- **Academics.** The University provides traditional and interdisciplinary programs that promote critical thinking and learning, and maintain quality through learning outcomes assessment.
- **Leadership.** The University attracts and builds leaders by providing exceptional development opportunities, including service learning and experiential learning.

As the University set about implementing the strategic plan, it became clear that the campus was struggling under the weight of the plan's 17 strategic directions. Recognizing this difficulty, the president convened a series of meetings with his Executive Committee throughout the 2009-2010 academic year. The goal of these discussions was to streamline the existing strategic plan and the University's planning process.

The campus' work to develop a more manageable strategic plan culminated in the summer of 2010 with a daylong planning workshop facilitated by an external consultant. For this workshop, the president brought together his Executive Committee, key administrators, the deans, and the chair of the faculty. At the workshop, it was suggested that a greater institutional focus was needed in the areas of experiential and applied learning opportunities, improved campus facilities, increased student quality, and improved student persistence to graduation.

As a result of the discussions held at the workshop, and informed by the results of surveys and student focus groups conducted by the PRR Drafting Group (see Chapter One), a new University mission statement and strategic plan were developed for review and discussion by members of the University community. The strategic planning process at Frostburg State University was also revised and now involves a number of important university-wide groups. It is through the following entities that the planning process takes place and links to the budgetary process are made:

- Strategic Planning Committee
- President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE)
- Faculty Senate
- Student Government Association (SGA)
- Office of Assessment and Institutional Planning (OAIP)

With the help of the PACIE, the Strategic Planning Committee formulates and reviews the strategic plan and sets budget priorities that support its implementation[46]. The plan is reviewed by the Faculty Senate and its appropriate committees, and the SGA. Final approval of the plan rests with the president of the University. The Office of Assessment and Institutional Planning, along with the PACIE, monitors the implementation of the strategic plan to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY'S NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Frostburg State University's new draft strategic plan is designed to put into action the University's mission of providing student-centered and experiential learning; offering distinctive and distinguished academic programs; serving statewide economic needs; promoting cultural enrichment, civic responsibility, and sustainability; and preparing future leaders of the state and nation. The University's strategic plan also helps to implement the University System of Maryland strategic plan 2010-2020, *Powering Maryland Forward.* [47]

The University's Strategic Priorities and Goals

Frostburg State University's new strategic plan will help move the University to a position of national distinction and academic excellence. As fully discussed in Chapter Three, the plan identifies three institutional priorities designed to enhance teaching and learning at the University:

1. Make more intentional the University's focus on providing experiential and applied learning opportunities for students both inside and outside the classroom
2. Improve facilities so that students live and learn in a modern and technologically sophisticated environment
3. Increase student quality and improve student persistence to graduation

Informed by the mission of the University, the strategic plan also identifies the following six major goals and associated implementation strategies that will shape the direction of the institution through 2020. These goals and strategies currently are under review by relevant Faculty Senate committees.

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[46] Current members of the Strategic Planning Group include President Gibralter, the vice presidents of the University, the assistant vice president for educational services/registrar, the assistant vice president for planning, assessment, and institutional research, the deans of the colleges, and the chair of the faculty.

[47] The USM strategic plan establishes five strategic themes for USM and its constituent institutions through 2020:

1. Access, Affordability, and Attainment – Helping the State of Maryland Achieve Its Goal of 55 percent College Completion (Associate's Degree through the Baccalaureate) while Maintaining Quality
2. Maryland's Economic Development and the Health and Quality of Life of Its Citizens – Ensuring Maryland Competitiveness in the New Economy
3. Transforming the Academic Model to Meet the Higher Education and Leadership Needs of Maryland 21st Century Students, Citizens, and Businesses
4. Identifying New and More Effective Ways to Build and Leverage the Resources Available to USM for the Benefit of Maryland and Its Citizens
5. Achieving and Sustaining National Eminence through the Quality of Our People, Our Programs, and Our Facilities

Goal One: Develop and support academic programs and student services that prepare a changing student population for an era of complexity and globalization.

Implementation Strategies:

a. Make more intentional the University's focus on providing experiential and applied learning opportunities for students both inside and outside the classroom
b. Encourage students to integrate and apply knowledge across disciplinary lines
c. Support and develop academic programs that address statewide and regional economic and workforce development needs
d. Encourage globalization of the campus by attracting international students to campus and promoting study abroad opportunities for native students
e. Develop clear criteria to help programs clarify their contributions to the institutional mission

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

Implementation Strategies:

a. Plan to build or renovate major academic, student life, and housing facilities consistent with 21st century environmental standards and technology
b. Steadily improve building and classroom environments to encourage learning (e.g., through renovation, painting, and furniture upgrades)
c. Encourage programs, extracurricular activities, and housing opportunities that reinforce University goals
d. Promote sustainability and wellness in all aspects of the institutional culture and work to implement the Climate Action Plan

Goal Three: Increase student quality and institutional retention and graduation rates while encouraging baccalaureate students to graduate within a four-year time frame.

Implementation Strategies:

a. Revise current admissions standards in order to better ensure admission of students prepared to succeed in college
b. Upgrade academic advising and student support services designed to increase student retention and facilitate persistence to graduation

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

Implementation Strategies:

a. Ensure an environment in which faculty and staff feel valued and appreciated (e.g., through the celebration of excellence and achievement)
b. Emphasize the need for diversity in all searches, emphasizing the recruitment of women, black, and Latino faculty and staff

c. Enhance faculty and staff development opportunities
d. Reward programs and services that incorporate active learning and experiential education opportunities
e. Use individual evaluation and reward structures to reinforce and support contributions to University, division, and college goals

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

Implementation Strategies:

a. Encourage fundraising efforts through the FSU Foundation, grants, and contracts that support University priorities
b. Encourage and reward faculty and professional staff to engage in activities such as scholarship, workshops, professional presentations, and artistic performances and creative activities that reflect positively on the University
c. Review and revise as needed institutional image and marketing strategies

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

Implementation Strategies:

a. Work with state and local government agencies and private corporations to attract new tenants to the ABC@FSU
b. Establish the planned Sustainable Energy Research Facility at the ABC@FSU
c. Encourage ABC@FSU partners to employ student interns and develop collaborative research with faculty

THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND ALLOCATING INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

The University is committed to allocating institutional resources based on its mission and institutional priorities and goals. The following actions, all of which are discussed in this Periodic Review Report, are examples of the link that exists between the University's planning process and its budgetary decisions.

- Allocating $900,000 for construction of the Sustainable Energy Research Facility in support of the University's strategic focus on environmental sustainability and regional economic development. The total cost of the facility is $2.2 million dollars.
- Using approximately $18 million dollars in auxiliary funds to expand and renovate the Lane University Center. This new student center is the first step in the University's strategic efforts to improve academic and student facilities on campus.
- Identifying $35,000 for the newly established President's Experiential Learning Enhancement Fund (PELEF). This fund furthers the University's focus on experiential and applied learning by helping faculty develop these opportunities for students.
- Committing $15,000 in grant matching funds to support the University's *Course Redesign* program, which is intended to improve student learning and advance the University strategic priority of improved retention and graduation rates.

- Committing $471,000 over three years in grant matching funds to establish and support the University's fully online R.N. to B.S. in nursing program.

THE FUTURE FUNDING OF THE FSU STRATEGIC PLAN

In January 2011, the University System of Maryland requested constituent institutions to identify FY 2012 strategic enhancement funding needed to implement the USM strategic plan on their campuses. Frostburg State University requested FY 2012 enhancement funding to begin implementation of its contributions to the USM strategic plan through actions linked to the University's own strategic plan. These actions are listed below.

1. Expansion of academic programs on the main campus and at off-site locations.
2. Advancement of new academic programs in STEM, nursing, and teacher preparation
3. Addition of new faculty and staff resources needed to support the University's course redesign program and faculty curricular innovations.
4. Continued full implementation of the University's Learning Green, Living Green (LGLG) sustainability program.
5. Expansion of experiential learning for students and the renovation of educational facilities.

As of this writing, future USM enhancement funding to help support actions is uncertain. Without this funding, the University's implementation of these important actions will be more difficult. However, the University will continue to move forward with these important strategic initiatives.

CHAPTER TWO: RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SELF-STUDY AND THE VISITATION TEAM

Content Area	Middle States Recommendations	University Response	Page Ref.
I. Mission, Planning and Resources	**Self-Study Recommendations**		
	* Engage the broader campus community in institutional planning and incorporate assessment as a key component of the planning process.	a) New strategic plan developed, which includes institutional priorities related to enhancing the focus on experiential and applied learning opportunities, improved campus facilities, increased student quality, and improved student persistence to graduation.	4
	*Identify internal funding to support key University activities to reduce reliance on external sources.	b) President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE) established to assist in review of the University's strategic plan and monitoring its implementation and progress based on Middle States standards and measures of effectiveness.	4
		c) Strategic planning at the college level strengthened, with efforts undertaken to make the planning process more inclusive of the broader campus community.	5
	Middle States Recommendation:		
	(1) Fully review and revise the planning and resource allocation process to more fully engage the broader campus community and to provide for transparency within the process, including the provision of explanations for establishing priorities and analyses of how budget decisions impact each division.	d) Continued to secure extramural funds to support important programs and initiatives, including $278,000 for the nursing program, $856,350 for the University's new Sustainable Energy Research Facility, and $1.4 million for the Appalachian Center for Ethnobotanical Studies.	5
		e) Conducting regular meetings of administrators with key governance bodies of Faculty Senate for budget updates. The University's operating budget is now accessible through FSU's website.	5
II. Governance and Administration	**Self-Study Recommendations:**		
	* Increase faculty involvement in shared governance.	a) Participation in Faculty Senate has grown over the last few years. New faculty members are being encouraged to become involved in governance through their chairs and colleagues, resulting in the full staffing of University subcommittees and work groups. The president and provost regularly consult with the chair of the faculty on a wide variety of issues. The Faculty Senate now receives regular reports from the Council of University System Faculty, which are disseminated to the campus community. The appointment of the President's Council for Institutional Effectiveness has opened another channel for information flow.	6
	* Increase student awareness of the role of SGA on campus and the opportunity for student involvement in University governance committees.	b) The chair of the faculty met with the SGA executive board in October of 2010 and has set up dialogue with the student government on campus. Many more members of SGA now sit on University committees and subcommittees and their voices are being heard on those bodies.	7
	*Review the department chair position at the University.	c) In March 2007, the provost formed a Department Chair Task Force to review the role of department chair at the University. The task force issued a draft report to the provost and Chairs' Council in April 2008. The report made specific recommendations regarding the role and responsibilities of chairs, department chair training and support, selection, reappointment and evaluation of chairs, workload and compensation. An initial review of the draft report was not favorable, with objections to several recommendations. The provost and Faculty Senate have formed a reconstituted task force to review the original report and make new recommendations. The report is expected by June 2011.	7

Content Area	Middle States Recommendations	University Response	Page Ref.
III. Institutional Assessment	**Self-Study Recommendations** * Establish a university-wide institutional assessment and planning entity that reports to the president and is part of the governance system. *Create an institutional assessment plan that demonstrates a clear linkage between assessment, planning and resource allocation. *Coordinate planning cycles at the division or department levels with those of the institutional assessment plan to assure continuity of planning and the engagement of the University community. **Middle States Recommendation:** (2) Frostburg should move quickly to adopt and implement its draft Institutional Assessment Plan. Full implementation requires evidence that results from the institutional assessments are used in the decision-making process.	Assessment work at the University is supported by the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research and takes two important directions. The first focuses on the University's strategic goals and priorities and assessment at the institutional level. The second direction is at the divisional level and involves the assessment of academic and student programming, as well as the assessment of student learning outcomes. At both levels, significant and careful efforts have been made to integrate assessment efforts with the strategic planning work of the institution. Chapter 5 addresses institutional assessment and effectiveness in detail.	8
IV. Students	**Self-Study Recommendations** * Conduct an in-depth analysis of enrollment issues facing the institution and reexamine marketing activities. * Through the University Retention Council, develop and implement a comprehensive student persistence plan. * Clearly delineate responsibilities of programs and personnel related to academic advising, with particular attention to the declaration of major process. * For all student service offices, develop assessment plans that focus on student learning outcomes and other indicators of program efficacy.	a) Enrollment Management Committee has devised and implemented new student recruitment strategies, including developing stronger relationships with high schools and community colleges. The committee revised the University's undergraduate admission policies and procedures, and expanded undergraduate scholarships. The committee has also helped to develop new marketing strategies for the graduate programs. b) Online program offerings have been expanded to include the Master of Business Administration, M.S. in Recreation and Parks Management, and the RN-BSN nursing program. c) Marketing and Branding Task Force formed in 2006 to clarify and refine a brand for the University's marketing efforts. The work of the task force led to development of a new logo, which has been incorporated into all advertising, promotional and recruiting materials, and the website. A range of print, radio and online advertising materials have also been developed and implemented. FSU is also utilizing social media to promote institutional programs and initiatives and build a sense of community. Internal marketing efforts are also underway with a goal of reducing the number of students who leave the University.	10 10 10

Content Area	Middle States Recommendations	University Response	Page Ref.
		d) The University Advisory Council on Retention is working with the Achievement Gap Task Force to develop strategies to increase student persistence at the University. These efforts are focused on improved internal marketing and examination of the sophomore year.	12
		e) The colleges are working to increase student persistence in their programs through improved student advising. College of Business is supported by a central advising office, while College of Education and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are examining alternatives to the current faculty-only advising model.	12
		f) Closing the Achievement Gap Task Force formed to identify and implement strategies to address disparity in retention and graduation rates between men and women at the University. Strategies include: * Expanding learning communities to include all freshmen * Implementing course redesign * Providing supplemental instruction * Utilizing MAP-Works, an early warning system to address issues for students having trouble adjusting to college life * Offering extensive student support and tutoring services * Increasing need-based financial aid	13
		g) Improving student proficiency in developmental mathematics by redesigning DVMT 100 Intermediate Algebra and expanding offerings of DVMT 095 Pre-Algebra Mathematics in the Summer Online Freshman Initiative program.	14
		h) The University continues to expand and strengthen its support, monitoring, and advising programs offered through Programs for Academic Support and Studies (PASS), the Writing Center, and the Diversity Center's Academic Monitoring Program.	15
		i) The University's Advising Center was established in 2006, as a result of a task force study of transfer student advising practices, and administratively coupled with the Career Center in 2007 to take advantage of the two offices' complementary services. The Advising Center serves undergraduate students who have not yet decided on a major, considering changing majors, or need assistance in making a successful transition to FSU. There has been steady growth in the number of students utilizing the Center. Activities have included creation of a Majors Fair, new procedures for major declaration, improved methods for identifying undeclared students, and advising for high school and non-degree students enrolled at FSU.	15
		j) The provost and vice president for student and educational services have appointed a work group to examine academic advising at FSU. The group will complete their report and make recommendations during the next academic year.	16

Content Area	Middle States Recommendations	University Response	Page Ref.
V. Faculty	**Self-Study Recommendation** *Increase efforts to recruit and retain minority faculty and staff, and gain a fuller understanding for the attrition of minority employees. **Middle States Recommendation** (3) Frostburg should develop and implement a comprehensive plan for improving the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty. The effort requires special emphasis on the coordination of campus-wide initiatives to expand the size and diversity of applicant pools.	a) Office of Human Resources instituted the University's Minority Recruitment and Retention Plan. The plan expands the activities of the ADA/EEO and Title IX Compliance Office, creates new strategies to attract and retain African-American faculty, and provides additional support for college and departmental minority faculty recruitment and retention strategies. Each college or division has been assigned an equity officer to help monitor and coordinate diversity initiatives. All search committees are required to designate one member of the committee to ensure that minority outreach is a priority. b) Academic Affairs and the Office of Human Resources are building working relationships with Historically Black Institutions in the region that offer doctoral programs. c) Staff mentoring program was initiated in fall 2009. This includes a fall welcoming reception for the University community, subsidizing of mentor/mentee tickets to cultural events, and distribution of welcome baskets to new employees. The University has also created a fall 2010 diversity website. In addition, CLAS instituted a mentoring program in 2007 for all new full-time faculty.	17 17 17
V. Faculty	**Self-Study Recommendation** *Increase adjunct faculty salaries and develop new strategies to integrate adjunct faculty more fully into the University community.	a) Part-time faculty members are typically compensated at a rate of $2,000 per three credit hour course (increased from $1,800 in fall 2007). Non-salaried part-time faculty with a consistent record of high-quality instruction will receive an increment in standard level of compensation, in accordance with USM policy. b) All non-tenure-track faculty are invited to participate in the University's August orientation for new faculty and administrators. Many academic departments also include adjunct faculty in their programs and meetings. All non-tenure-track faculty are provided with a Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Handbook. c) The University supports professional development of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty, making them eligible for University faculty development opportunities. All non-tenure track faculty may participate in training programs conducted by the Office of Human Resources, and training in online teaching. d) Two seats on Faculty Senate have been allocated to non tenure-track faculty and these senators sit on the Faculty Concerns Committee.	18 18 18 19
	Self-Study Recommendation *Increase funding to support faculty professional development.	a) Faculty development grant funding has remained constant since at least FY 2005 at $25,000, although it was doubled in FY 2009. The FSU Foundation also makes funds available for faculty and staff development through an annual RFP process, with $75,000 awarded for 26 proposals in 2010. Faculty can apply to the Grant Proposal Incentive Fund for support with grant applications, with $56,263 provided to 17 faculty members in the past seven years. Faculty can participate in a grant training workshop, with 60 faculty and staff participating to date, generating grants valued at $1.6 million. The FSU Foundation, through its Annual Fund, awards funding to faculty to take advantage of important professional development opportunities.	19

Content Area	Middle States Recommendations	University Response	Page Ref.
VI. Academic Programs	**Self-Study Recommendation**		
	* Create a new administrative structure to oversee graduate services.	a) Although budgetary constraints have not allowed the University to hire a new senior administrator to direct graduate education, the role of Director of Graduate Services has been expanded to include new program development and marketing responsibilities. A marketing plan was developed in 2006 to increase awareness of graduate programs regionally. The University has also committed funds to enhance both event and image marketing, resulting in increased recruitment events, additional print advertising, and development of recruitment materials for the graduate programs. Internet advertising strategies have also been adopted. New online graduate programs (MBA and M.S. in Recreation and Park Management) have led to increased enrollments.	21
	* Restore library faculty positions as soon as possible, due to increased demands placed on faculty by the emphasis on information literacy.	b) The library hired an additional faculty member to coordinate instruction for first-year students, reallocated space to expand access to computing technology and to provide students with accommodations and equipment for collaborative projects, and incorporated new platforms of delivery that foster active learning and support both traditional and online courses.	22
	Middle States Suggestion		
	* Ensure that online instructional support systems are revised and adjusted to effectively accommodate the significant growth projected for this delivery mode.	c) The University presently requires that students use a secure user ID and password to access online distance education coursework. The University has researched an authentication solution called Acxiom that would integrate with Blackboard but system performance problems have delayed implementation until Blackboard is upgraded in August 2011.	24
		d) The University expanded its faculty training program in January 2008 to become an affiliate in the University System of Maryland Quality Matters statewide subscription. The University fully integrated the Quality Matters rubric standards into its faculty training program, which is required for all new online instructors. The duration of the faculty online certification program has been expanded from two weeks to six weeks as well. A one-day conference is also held at the beginning of each academic year to introduce faculty to new technologies and teaching strategies that can be used in their courses.	25
		e) FSU has added two new instructional designers in the Center for Instructional Technologies, which is responsible for the University's online education faculty training program. The University's Blackboard learning system has been upgraded with improved communication and grading tools, as well as enhanced methods for posting assignments and plagiarism detection. The University also adopted Elluminate software, allowing for synchronous interaction between students and instructors.	25
VII. General Education and Assessment	**Middle States Recommendation**		
	(4) Frostburg should move quickly to implement all components of its proposed student learning assessment plan. This effort requires addressing the unevenness in assessment within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, full implementation of the proposed General Education assessment plan, and evidence that results from the student learning outcomes assessments are used in the decision-making process.	a) The College of Education has further developed and refined its comprehensive assessment program based on student learning outcomes. COE has a group that annually reviews and summarizes the assessment data, with this information used then to identify areas for improvement.	27
		b) The College of Business established an Assurance of Learning Committee in 2003, and an Assurance of Learning Plan was prepared in 2006 and accepted by the faculty. An assessment coordinator position was created to support the work of the committee. The committee uses both direct and indirect assessment methods to evaluate student achievement each semester relative to established COB learning goals.	27

Content Area	Middle States Recommendations	University Response	Page Ref.
	Self-Study Recommendations		
	* Strengthen assessment of student learning in each of the colleges.	c) The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences formed an assessment council in 2007 to improve student learning assessment within the college. The council collected assessment plans from all 34 academic programs, reviewed them using a standardized checklist, and met with program representatives to provide feedback to ensure that the plans link program objectives and learning goals with institutional learning goals. By March 2011, all 34 programs achieved a passing assessment plan rating.	27
	*Strengthen assessment of the general education program.	d) In August 2009, the assistant dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was charged with devising and implementing assessment strategies for the general education program/core skills courses. A pilot GEP assessment process was implemented in spring 2010, with each department expected to offer at least one course to be included in the pilot. A course reviewer examined a portfolio for each course and scored the course. Of the 37 GEP courses evaluated, two were related as below standards, 14 as meet standards, and 21 courses were rated as above standards. A phase II pilot will be conducted during the 2010-2011 academic year, with 30-40 courses under review. Courses that were evaluated as below standards during phase I will be reassessed as part of this review.	28
VIII. University and the Community	**Self-Study Recommendations**		
	*Appoint a Coordinator of Regional Economic Development Outreach who would report directly to the president and work to publicize more effectively the University's activities and programs to the local business community.	a) A new chief of staff and vice president for economic development and government relations was appointed by the president. This vice president is responsible for working with faculty and staff to coordinate economic outreach efforts and work with state and regional economic development agencies to support growth and change in the area. Recent University-wide projects that offer regional economic development opportunities include the continued operation of FSU's Tawes Technology Incubator, expansion of the Allegany Business Center at Frostburg State University, and the University supported renovation of the Lyric Building in downtown Frostburg. The College of Business promotes economic development through its Center for Leadership Development, Trident Initiative, and Center for Regional Progress. The University is working on community outreach projects in Hagerstown and Frederick through its involvement in the area Small Business Development Center. College of Business faculty are working with the City of Hagerstown to help structure a planned small business incubator there.	30
	*Establish a campus-wide committee to study the scope and effectiveness of the University's educational outreach efforts and determine how they should be coordinated, publicized, and evaluated.	b) FSU combined the Center for Volunteerism and National Service with its leadership programs to create the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement. This new office has successfully collaborated with the University's AmeriCorps national service program, FSU Cultural Events Series, Allegany County Board of Education, and other organizations and programs to create educational outreach within the region. The newly created Social Media Team provides the office with the opportunity to reach target audiences through professional digital documentation of events, innovative marketing techniques, and promotion of programs and activities through social media strategies. FSU continues to expand its community involvement initiatives through the freshmen ECHOSTARS program, A STAR! And VISTA programs. The annual Campus Leadership Awards program has been expanded to celebrate volunteerism, service-learning, and national service efforts.	31
	*Form community partnerships in Hagerstown that would allow FSU students attending USMH an opportunity to participate in outreach and volunteer activities in the Hagerstown region.	c) The University's National Service (A STAR! And VISTA) programs reach Washington County. The director of the University's A STAR! AmeriCorps program is located at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown and has a satellite office in Frederick, MD. These offices allow FSU to act as a hub for service opportunities for interested students and community members at the USMH campus, local schools and other non-profit agencies.	32

CHAPTER THREE: MAJOR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Content Area	Challenges and Opportunities	Page Reference
I. Institutional Excellence	FSU's new strategic plan has identified three institutional priorities designed to enhance teaching and learning at the University: ***1) Make more intentional the University's focus on experiential and applied learning opportunities for students both inside and outside the classroom as the hallmark of an FSU education.*** In fall 2010, Dr. Gibralter announced the establishment of the President's Experiential Learning Enhancement Fund (PELEF), identifying $35,000 in faculty support to promote learning activities that enhance experiential learning. ***2) Improve the University's facilities so that students live and learn in a modern and technologically sophisticated environment.*** The Lane University Center was renovated and expanded in January 2011. The new addition includes a fitness center, student activity center, 24/7 student computer lab, and the University bookstore. Construction of a new Center for Communications and Information Technology will begin in 2013, which will house computer science, mass communication, mathematics, and graphic design. The Sustainable Energy Research Facility is scheduled for construction in 2011. Some smaller residence halls have also been renovated. Concerns remain over the deteriorating condition of the institution's physical plant since many of the aging academic buildings are increasingly unable to support teaching, scholarship, and learning that is occurring at Frostburg. ***3) Increase student quality and improve student persistence to graduation.*** Through the work of the Enrollment Management Committee, undergraduate enrollments have steadily grown since 2007, with the University enrolling its largest number of students ever in fall 2010. Growing enrollments have helped to create the financial circumstances necessary for the University to address important issues, including support for faculty professional development and salary equity for new tenure-track and adjunct faculty. Revenue from growing enrollments has allowed the University to avoid layoffs as the state's fiscal condition has worsened. In an effort to increase student quality, FSU is now more selective in undergraduate admission decisions, enrolling students with better academic credentials. New marketing strategies are being implemented, targeting students with higher SAT scores. For the fall 2011 freshman class, student academic performance will be closely monitored, as well as retention and graduation rates of these students. A new Students' High Achievement Resource Program (SHARP) is being initiated to provide high school and transfer honor and merit students with special academic opportunities at FSU.	33 34 35
II. Faculty and Staff Hiring and Compensation	Over the last four years, all University employees have experienced salary reduction days and have gone without cost of living and merit salary increases. FSU faculty salaries are the lowest in the University System of Maryland. Dr. Gibralter increased the salaries of new assistant professors and adjunct faculty, but budgetary constraints have not allowed an increase of full-time faculty salaries. As resources become available, the University will address faculty and staff compensation through application of a salary equity model.	36

Content Area	Challenges and Opportunities	Page Reference
III. Environmental Sustainability	Dr. Gibralter signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment in 2007. As a result, a campus-wide Learning Green, Living Green (LGLG) sustainability initiative was established. FSU published a Climate Action Plan in 2009, pledging to achieve climate neutrality by 2030. The University hired a sustainability coordinator in 2010 to oversee implementation of the Climate Action Plan and to chair the LGLG. In fall 2010, FSU began offering an interdisciplinary minor in sustainability studies. A magazine, E=(LG)2, is written entirely by FSU students and published on campus. The publication is dedicated to educating the campus on sustainability issues. FSU holds major sustainability events every semester, including hosting environmental speakers in the fall to reach out to new students and an annual day of learning on sustainability and climate awareness in the spring. Future initiatives will include the opening of the Sustainable Energy Research Facility during the 2011-2012 academic year; residence hall competitions centered on recycling, energy conservation, and water conservation; facilities upgrades to include more energy-efficient lighting systems and occupancy sensors in several buildings; establishment of a greenhouse located near campus to provide fresh, locally grown produce for use on-campus and in the community.	36 37 37
IV. Student Cultural Diversity	The University's Cultural Diversity Program is updated yearly and submitted to the University System of Maryland and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The plan contains the following strategies to promote student cultural diversity: ***1) Recruiting and enrolling undergraduate minority and first-generation students*** Strategies outlined under the plan have helped to increase student diversity. Minority students now represent 28.9 percent of the student body (fall 2010), with African American students representing a large proportion of those minority students (23.2 percent in fall 2010). ***2) Increasing retention and graduation rates of undergraduate minority and first-generation students*** The University offers three learning communities for first-semester freshmen through the TRIO Student Support Services program which work specifically to help low income and first-generation college students make a successful transition from high school to college life. Services to students whose first language is not English have also been enhanced through the Tutoring Center, Student Support Services, and the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature.	 38 39

Content Area	Challenges and Opportunities	Page Reference
	3) Promoting student diversity through international education a) FSU is recruiting international students through new agreements with Hunan Normal University in Changsha, China, as well as Santhigiri University and the Institute of Business Studies and Research in India. Exchange agreements have been revitalized with Mary Immaculate College in Ireland, Northumbria University in England, and KDAS/University College UCC in Denmark. FSU received approval in 2009 through the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission to enroll students receiving full government scholarships from that country. b) The College of Business is negotiating study/teach abroad opportunities with Hunan University of Commerce in China. The University is considering adding Global Experiences, a company specializing in international experiential education and internships, to the list of study abroad affiliated providers. Other institutional partnership opportunities under consideration include universities in Japan and Taiwan. ***4) Creating a campus environment that promotes the valuing of cultural diversity*** a) Diversity Center activities include re-establishment of FSU's National Coalition Building Institute Chapter. b) President's Advisory Council on Diversity introduced English as a Second Language tutoring, developed cross-cultural and co-activities on campus, focused on recruitment and retention of diverse students in the local community. c) Center for International Education is offering intermediate and advanced level ESL classes for exchange students. The center has also arranged for an international section of the Introduction to Higher Education course for all international students enrolled in ESL courses. d) Clubs and organizations are being formed to support international students, including a Muslim Students Association and an International Student Club.	39 40
V. Student Civic Responsibility and Leadership	Since 2009, the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement has both a full-time director and an associate director. During 2009-2010, this office launched the President's Leadership Circle, a group that includes 15-20 undergraduate students, nominated and selected by faculty and staff, who have helped to increase the visibility of leadership programs on campus. Development of these students' multicultural competence has been an important part of the program; nine members of the President's Leadership Circle spent their spring break in March 2011 in China as a part of a leadership study tour. There has also been more intentional collaboration on leadership programs between the Division of Student and Educational Services and the Division of University Advancement. For the past two years, a meeting of the FSU Foundation Board has been held to coincide with the Sloop Leadership Institute, enabling major donors and supporters of the University to meet undergraduate student leaders. The theme of leadership development has resonated with funders; one of the newest and most generous scholarships stipulates that the award will be made to a member of the President's Leadership Circle. The University will continue to explore ways to involve alumni and other external stakeholders in its leadership development programs.	40

Content Area	Challenges and Opportunities	Page Reference
VI. Student Health and Wellness	**1) CHILL (Creating Healthy, Informed, Lasting Lifestyles) Program** The CHILL program is an initiative designed to encourage students to make healthy choices, supported through a generous grant from the AstraZeneca Foundation. Since its inaugural year (2008-2009), the University has received $949,123 in funding to support the program and its biomedical screenings, intervention, and programming. In the first three years of the program, over 1,600 biomedical screenings have been administered, with students abnormal results provided with the opportunity to meet with a registered nurse or dietician. CHILL activities include a "Biggest Loser" style competition where points are earned for documenting health practices, as well as programs on binge drinking prevention, sexual health, and smoking cessation. Institutional changes to broaden healthy options for students include renovating the fitness center in the physical education center, adding a cardio-focused fitness facility in the renovated Lane Center, and expanding healthy options offered by campus food service. FSU has been named a "Fit Friendly Company" by the American Heart Association for the past three years in recognition of its efforts and was only one of three recipients for the regional Workplace Innovation Award. Wellness-oriented lessons have also been incorporated into the Introduction to Higher Education Course, required for all freshmen. As CHILL enters its fourth and last year of funding through AstraZeneca, the University is working to institutionalize the program, with the Coordinator for University Wellness position now completely funded by FSU. The University is trying to identify funding for the nurse and administrative positions in the health center that are now supported by the AstraZeneca grant.	41
	2) Progress in Combating Alcohol Abuse The University has made significant progress during the past five years in its efforts to combat the negative impact of binge drinking. Articles in the Chronicle of Higher Education, the New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal have noted the University's success as measured by a marked decrease in binge drinking among FSU students, an increase in the number of students identifying themselves as abstainers, and a decrease in average number of drinks consumed by students who do drink. In September 2008, President Gibralter was honored with the national Presidential Leadership Award from a group of seven major higher education organizations for his efforts in promoting a campus climate that de-emphasizes alcohol and for his leadership in fighting binge-drinking at colleges and universities across the country. Because of his leadership, he was recently invited to join the College Presidents Working Group of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. In February 2011, officials from the Department of Health and Human Services, the White House, and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism visited the University and applauded its progress, noting the huge impact that presidential leadership can have on this issue. The University has initiated a partnership with local law enforcement agencies, with the City of Frostburg now issuing civil citations to students, enabling the University to utilize its student conduct system to address this behavior. Actions include parental notification.	42

Content Area	Challenges and Opportunities	Page Reference
VII. Workforce Development	1) Expansion of offerings in STEM-related fields through partnerships and collaborations with community colleges a) Collaborative engineering program with Anne Arundel Community College offered at the Arundel Mills Regional Higher Education Center. b) Articulated program with Hagerstown Community College leading to the aware of an Associate of Applied Science in Biotechnology Transfer from HCC and a B.S. in Biology (Biotechnology concentration) from FSU c) Western Maryland STEM Plan completed in Fall 2009 in collaboration with the Western Maryland Education Consortium and funded through a grant from the University System of Maryland	43
	2) R.N. to B.S.N. program for nurses established. The University plans to expand its offerings to include a Master of Science in Nursing.	44
	3) Ed.D. program under development with University of Maryland, College Park at University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH). The goal for the future is to establish an FSU Ed.D. program in the near future.	44
VIII. Cultural Enrichment	1) College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Departments a) Music and Theatre Departments offer dozens of performances per year. These departments have worked with Allegany Arts Council and Maryland Council for the Arts to create outreach programs and host special events on campus. Visual Arts hosts several gallery exhibitions each year. b) Several departments host guest lecturers in science, political science, and philosophy throughout the year. The Center for Creative Writing moved into a new facility in downtown Frostburg, offering a number of public events.	44
	2) Cultural Events Series Presents an array of national and international performing artists in music, theatre, and dance. Educational outreach programs for local youth also take place. Regular collaborators include the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (Arts for Adjudicated Youth program) and the 21st Century Afterschool Program for low-income children from four Cumberland elementary schools to attend monthly arts programs. Total programs average 73 per year.	45
IX. FSU Instructional Programs at Off-Site Locations	1) University System of Maryland at Hagerstown a) An average of 78 course sections per semester were offered at USMH from fall 2006 to fall 2010, taught by approximately five full-time faculty based in Hagerstown, 20 local part-time adjuncts, and 15 full-time faculty based in Frostburg. b) College of Education continues to offer M.Ed. Program with various concentrations, an MAT program in Elementary or Secondary Education, and an undergraduate Early Childhood/Elementary Education major. An Ed.D. program in collaboration with University of Maryland, College Park is also under development. The College of Education is partnering with Washington County public schools under the Professional Development Schools program as well.	46

Content Area	Challenges and Opportunities	Page Reference
	c) The College of Business continues to offer its MBA and B.S. in Business Administration programs at USMH. An undergraduate concentration Small Business/Entrepreneurship was added at USMH in fall 2009. d) The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences began offering its B.S. program in psychology at USM in fall 2010. B.S. programs in sociology and liberal studies are also offered there. 2) Anne Arundel Community College at Arundel Mills Regional Higher Education Center a) FSU began offering its B.S. in engineering (electrical engineering concentration) at Arundel Mills in fall 2010, in collaboration with Anne Arundel Community College.	47 47
X. University Endowment	The University has continued its $15 million campaign, which exceeded expectations and passed its goal in January 2011. The campaign continues to generate funds to support faculty development and other University initiatives. The FSU Foundation Board has identified a need for merit-based scholarships and will raise $2.5 million for the Presidential Merit Scholarship program.	47

CHAPTER FOUR: ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION - TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Content Area	Overview of Activities	Page Reference
I. Five-Year University Enrollment Trends	* Overall headcount has increased by 11.4 percent in the past five years. * Fall 2010 headcount represented the largest overall enrollment in the University's history. **Undergraduate Enrollment** * Undergraduate enrollment has increased 14.4 percent since fall 2006, with the University experiencing its largest freshman class in its history in fall 2007. * A dual admission agreement with Frederick Community College was signed in April 2009, with this partnership designed to increase this likelihood that these students will transfer to FSU. * Overall undergraduate minority student enrollments increased from 20.6 percent to 28.9 percent between fall 2006 and fall 2010. * African-American undergraduate student enrollments increased from 16.6 percent to 23.2 percent between fall 2006 and fall 2010. **Retention and Graduation Rates** * The second-year retention rate of all first-time, full-time undergraduates increased from 67 percent for the fall 2006 cohort to 74 percent for the fall 2009 cohort. * The six-year graduation rate for all first-time, full-time undergraduates remained consistent at approximately 48 percent. * The second-year retention rate of all first-time, full-time minority students increased slightly from 71 percent for the 2006 cohort group to 72 percent for the 2009 cohort group. * The graduation rate of first-time, full-time minority students decreased from 45 percent for the 2000 cohort group to 41 percent for the 2004 cohort group. **Graduate Enrollment** * Graduate enrollment decreased 8.2 percent from fall 2006 to fall 2010. * Full-time graduate headcount increased over the last five years, while part-time headcount has declined. * New graduate programs under development are expected to result in growth in graduate enrollment.	48 48 49 50 50
II. Five-Year Financial Trends	* From FY 2008 to 2012, total revenues increased 12.7 percent. Unrestricted revenues increased by 8.5 percent over this period. Tuition revenue has remained fairly consistent because of Maryland's restricted tuition increase, but overall revenues grew due to increased enrollment. Restricted funds have increased 59.9 percent, resulting largely from federal and state grants and contracts and from matching funds. * State appropriations, as a percent of total revenue, has declined since 1991 and represents 33.2 percent of FSU's revenues in FY 2011. Since FY 2009, the University's state appropriation has been reduced from its budgeted appropriations by $2.5 million for cost containment measures. FSU's fund balance was reduced by $5.5 million beginning in FY 2009. Over $1.6 million in reductions for furlough and salary reduction days came from both fund balance and operating cuts.	51 52

Content Area	Overview of Activities	Page Reference
	* Trends in expenditures reflect the priorities of the past five years. Salaries and wages have increased due to the rising cost of insurance and retirement plans. Technical and special fees include an increase in adjunct faculty stipends but overall experienced a net decrease due to the intentional conversion of contractual employees into fully benefited positions. Over the five-year period, 39 employees were converted to positions with full benefits. Position realignment allowed the University to convert 39 employees while the total position count only increased by 14 for this period.	53
	* Since 2006, FSU has allocated an additional $1.1 million toward need-based scholarship awards. The percentage of institutional aid allocated to need-based aid increased from 33 percent in FY 2006 to 51 percent in FY 2010.	54
	* FSU has consistently met with the Board of Regents' directive to invest 2 percent of the replacement value of its buildings annually into facilities renewal. In FY 2012, the projected amount designated for facilities renewal was reduced to meet cost containment reductions imposed by the State, but the University intends to replenish these funds if excess attainment is gained.	54
III. Five-Year Projections of Enrollment and Finance	**Enrollment** * FSU is projecting an increase of 2.5 percent in headcount from fall 2010 to fall 2020. Student FTE is expected to increase 2.9 percent from FY 2011 to FY 2021.	55
	Financial Projections - Revenues * Projected increases in tuition and fee revenues is based on an assumed 0.1 percent annual growth in headcount and a 4 percent annual increase in tuition. * State appropriations are expected to increase by 3 percent each year. * Projected revenue growth in auxiliary services is based on annual increases in residence hall room and board rates. * Restricted revenue is projected to increase 1 percent annually for the next five years.	57
	Financial Projections - Expenditures * Expenditures for salaries and fringe benefits combined are expected to increase at least 4 percent annually over the next five years due to COLA, merit pay raises, rising health insurance, and the need for new benefited positions. * Technical and Special Fees expenditures are projected to increase 2 percent annually due to higher fringe costs, health insurance increases for full-time non tenure-track faculty, and potential minimum wage increases. * Expenditures for Travel, Fuel/Utilities, and Motor Vehicle Operations are projected to increase due to the rising cost of fuel, utilities, and vehicles predicted for the next five years. Supplies and Equipment costs, as well as Fixed Charges, will also likely increase due to inflation. * Grants, Subsidies, and Contributions will result from the need for additional scholarship money as tuition increases.	57

Content Area	Overview of Activities	Page Reference
	* The University will try to restore facility funding over the next five years. The FY 2012 budget was reduced due to cost containment.	
	State-Funded Capital Projects	58
	* The University will construct a new Center for Communications and Instructional Technology (CCIT) building once Tawes Hall is demolished. The building will house the departments of Mass Communication, Computer Science, and Mathematics, as well as the Graphic Design program of the Visual Arts Department. The building will also house FSU-TV, WFWM Radio, a multi-media classroom facility that will include a new Planetarium, Academic Computing lab and support offices, and the Center for Instructional Technologies.	
	* FSU is proposing construction of an Education and Health Sciences Building to house most of the College of Education's programs, the R.N. to B.S.N. program, and the proposed M.S. in Nursing and Ed.D. in Educational Policy and Leadership programs.	

CHAPTER FIVE: ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content Area	Overview of Activities	Page Reference
I. Assessment of Institutional Priorities and Goals	Conducted through the work of the President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness and the University's implementation of the Maryland Higher Education Commission's "Managing for Results" guidelines. **1) President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE)** PACIE was formed in August 2010 as a consultative body to the president's Executive Committee and to the University's Strategic Planning Committee. The council will assist in future development of the University's strategic plan and will monitor its implementation and progress based on Middle States' standards and measure of effectiveness. The group reviewed the *Draft Outline: USM in 2020 Strategic Plan* and the *Draft FSU Mission and Goals* to isolate key issues for discussion during this academic year. Thirteen issues were identified. A report on the strengths, challenges, and recommendations for each issue will be presented to Dr. Gibralter in June 2011. **2) Performance Accountability Report/Managing for Results (PAR/MFR) Guidelines** In fall 2010 and based on the new University Mission Statement and strategic plan, the University submitted and revised PAR/MFR goals for review by the University System of Maryland and appropriate state agencies. The six new MFR goals are: a) Serve as a catalyst for economic development in Western Maryland and in the region. b) Meet critical workforce needs in the region and the state. c) Provide access to higher education for residents of Maryland and the region. d) Continue efforts to create an environment that prepares students to live and work in a diverse society. e) Increase recognition for the University's academic programs through national accreditations of teacher education, business, and other selected programs. f) Promote outreach programs that benefit the campus and broader community. Progress toward achievement of these goals will be reviewed by PACIE. These assessments will help to guide the work of the Strategic Planning Committee and the allocation of University resources.	59 60
II. Assessment of Academic Programming	**1) Assessment of Learning Communities** The learning community program for first-year students is evaluated annually through the use of the Student Experience Survey. Feedback from students and instructors indicate that the program's outcomes and expectations have drifted from the original vision for the program. PACIE and the Achievement Gap Task Force will be reviewing the program and making recommendations to the president and provost regarding needed changes. **2) Assessment of Online Education** A formal assessment of faculty teaching performance for online courses is conducted through the University's standard faculty evaluation process. The Distance Education Advisory Group also monitors and evaluates the academic and technical experiences of students enrolled in online courses. The University assesses student experiences as online learners through the Student Online Learning Survey. Results are provided to instructors and their department chairs, with aggregate data reviewed by the Distance Education Advisory Group, provost, and deans.	62 62

Content Area	Overview of Activities	Page Reference
	3) Periodic Program Review USM requires that academic programs be evaluated once every five years, with cost and productivity to be included in the reviews. Academic programs must also assess the learning outcomes of their students and evaluate the relationship between their programs and the University mission. Halfway through the cycle, an interim report reflecting the status of program assessment activities is submitted. This provides an opportunity for programs to design, implement, and evaluate assessments and use the assessment results for continuous improvement. **4) External Program Accreditation** A number of FSU programs are accredited by external agencies. These agencies conduct an extensive review of curriculum, faculty, budget, facilities, library, and student learning outcomes. Accredited programs include: College of Business programs; undergraduate programs in Athletic Training, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Recreation and Parks Management, and Social Work; Teacher Education programs; M.S. in Counseling Psychology.	64 65
III. Assessment of Student Services Programming	**1) Developmental Mathematics Program** Two major changes were made in the Developmental Math Program based on program assessment data: a) Major redesign effort funded by the Lumina Foundation began, with a pilot section offered in spring 2011. b) Instructional Coordinator for Developmental Mathematics position created to help implement course redesign. **2) SES Program Review Task Group** Created by the vice president in fall 2009. The group is charged with developing a framework for periodic departmental self-study and program review involving annual assessment of goals and outcomes. The group will assist departments in developing their own plans and connecting them to the University strategic planning. A template, guide, checklist, and program review timetable were developed. An initial group of 10 programs is scheduled to complete their program reviews in spring 2011.	65 66
IV. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment of student learning outcomes is primarily conducted by individual colleges, with the exception of assessment within the General Education Program (see Chapter 2). The expected learning outcomes identified by each of the colleges are, in part, based on the University's Undergraduate Institutional Learning Goals. **1) College of Education** a) The Professional Education Unit of the College has a comprehensive assessment system in place to document candidates' successful completion of program outcomes. b) The Unit's *Conceptual Framework* provides goals for all programs in the Unit and is consistently used by faculty as a guide for redesigning programs, syllabi, assessments, and early field and intern evaluation forms. c) All programs in the Unit have learning goals that relate to student learning outcomes according to the *Conceptual Framework*, General Education Competency Areas, professional standards, and state content standards. d) Assessments used by programs to measure outcomes include: standardized tests, comprehensive exams, internship evaluations, entrance/exit interviews, service learning projects, developmental and showcase portfolios. e) All course syllabi follow a common format.	67 67 68

Content Area	Overview of Activities	Page Reference
	f) Program committees/advisory councils meet at least once each semester to review data and make recommendations for improvement. Recommendations are presented to Unit faculty for discussion and action plans are submitted.	69
	h) Instructors administer and score candidate standards-based assessments, discussing the candidate's performance with him/her.	
	i) For initial certification programs, candidates are assessed before entering a Professional Development School for internship and are assessed throughout their internship. Data is shared through three-way conferences with candidate, university supervisor, and mentor teacher. For those not performing at an acceptable level, Individual Development Plans are developed and candidates must correct deficiencies.	
	j) Instructors use assessment data to review and modify course assessments and scoring tools as needed. Rubrics are revised each year based on candidate performance and feedback. Specific program data is given to the coordinators to meet with their advisory committees and recommend changes. Faculty receive course evaluation data and are expected to use this to review content and delivery.	70
	2) College of Business	70
	a) Maintains a comprehensive assessment program that links the mission of the college to the University mission.	
	b) An Assurance of Learning Committee is in place as part of the college governance structure.	
	c) The College is guided by two documents: Assurance of Learning Plan and Assurance of Learning Management System.	
	d) The Assurance of Learning Committee evaluates student achievement relative to learning goals using both direct and indirect methods. Most assessment is done via course-embedded assessment and testing. Members of the College Advisory Board participate directly in assessment of student work.	
	e) Faculty attend assessment of learning workshops and conferences hosted by AACSB. Several faculty created and refined the Professional Development II course (BUAD 400) in which critical assessment activities occur.	
	f) Future goals include involving nearly all faculty with the assessment effort; identifying ways to help students to perform better in important areas including writing, analysis/computation, and business knowledge; continue to improve the testing program.	
	3) College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	72
	a) Each academic program within CLAS has developed learning goals tied to the institution's learning goals. These are posted on the CLAS website.	
	b) Each department has designed and begun to implement student learning assessment plans within their academic programs.	
	c) Assessment plans are linked to institutional learning goals and the College and institutional vision and mission statements.	
	d) The CLAS Assessment Council is working with departments to craft departmental plans and implement mechanisms to enhance the assessment of student learning. An aggressive, multi-year schedule of measurement is being put into place. The issue of resources to support assessment efforts needs to be addressed.	

CHAPTER SIX: STRATEGIC PLANNING AT FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Content Area	Overview of Activities	Page Reference
I. Background	1) Strategic Planning Team created in fall 2007 to develop a new planning process. The team included a cross-section of representatives from throughout the University community. 2) New vision and mission statements, core values, master goals, and 17 strategic directions drafted. 3) Feedback from University community solicited. 4) Plan published in fall 2009. 5) Based on difficulties with implementation, plan streamlined and the planning process revised in summer 2010. An external consultant conducted a planning workshop with the goal of developing a more manageable strategic plan. As a result of workshop discussions, and informed by survey and student focus group results collected by the PRR Drafting Group, a new mission statement and strategic plan were developed for review and discussion by the University community. The planning process now involves a number of important university-wide groups. With the help of the President's Advisory Council on Institutional Effectiveness (PACIE), the Strategic Planning Committee formulates and reviews the strategic plan and sets budget priorities that support its implementation. The plan is reviewed by Faculty Senate and its appropriate committees, and the Student Government Association. Final approval of the plan rests with the president of the University. The Office of Assessment and Institutional Planning, along with PACIE, monitors the implementation of the strategic plan to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.	73
II. FSU's New Strategic Plan	**Strategic Priorities** 1) Make more intentional the University's focus on providing experiential and applied learning opportunities for students both inside and outside the classroom. 2) Improve facilities so that students live and learn in a modern and technologically sophisticated environment. 3) Increase student quality and improve student persistence to graduation. **Goals** *1) Develop and support academic programs and student services that prepare a changing student population for an era of complexity and globalization.* Strategies include: (1) increasing focus on providing experiential and applied learning opportunities, (2) encouraging interdisciplinary thinking by students, (3) developing academic programs that address regional workforce needs, and (4) attracting international students and promoting study abroad opportunities. *2) Enhance facilities and the campus environment in order to support and reinforce student learning.* Strategies include: (1) plans to build or renovate major campus facilities consistent with the latest standards, (2) steadily improving building and classroom environments to encourage learning, promoting sustainability and wellness, and (3) implementing the Climate Action Plan. *3) Increase student quality and institutional retention and graduation rates while encouraging baccalaureate students to graduate within a four-year time frame.* Strategies include: (1) revising admission standards to ensure better preparation of incoming students, (2) upgrading advising and student support services designed to enhance retention and graduation rates.	75 75 76

Content Area	Overview of Activities	Page Reference
	4) Recruit and retain diverse and talented faculty and staff committed to student learning and University goals. Strategies include: (1) enhancing faculty/staff development opportunities; emphasizing diversity in all searches, (2) rewarding programs that incorporate service learning and experiential education, (3) celebrating faculty/staff excellence and achievement. *5) Promote activities that demonstrate the University's educational distinction.* Strategies include: (1) encouraging external fundraising, (2) reviewing and revising marketing strategies, and (3) encouraging faculty/staff activities that reflect positively on the University. *6) Promote economic development in Western Maryland and in the region.* Strategies include: (1) working with government agencies and corporations to attract new tenants to the ABC@FSU, (2) establishing the Sustainable Energy Research Facility, and (3) encouraging collaboration between ABC@FSU partners and academic departments.	76 77
III. Strategic Plan and Allocating Institutional Resources	The University is committed to allocating resources based on its mission, institutional priorities and goals. Examples of activities demonstrating direct linkages include: 1) Allocating $900,000 to construct Sustainable Energy Research Facility in support of environmental sustainability and economic development. 2) Using auxiliary funds to expand and renovate Lane Center, in support of improving academic and student facilities on campus. 3) Identifying $35,000 for the new President's Experiential Learning Fund, furthering the institution's focus on experiential and applied learning. 4) Committing grant matching funds to support the Course Redesign program, in support of improving student learning and advancing improved retention and graduation rates. 5) Expending grant matching funds to promote workforce development in the region, including support of the fully online R.N. to B.S. in nursing program.	77
IV. Future Funding of Strategic Plan	FSU requested FY 2012 enhancement funding from USM to begin implementation of its contributions to the USM Strategic Plan through the following actions linked to the University's own strategic plan: 1) Expansion of academic programs on the main campus and at off-site locations. 2) Advancement of new academic programs in STEM, nursing, and teacher preparation. 3) Addition of new faculty and staff resources needed to support the University's course redesign program and faculty curricular innovations. 4) Continued full implementation of the University's Learning Green, Living Green sustainability program. 5) Expansion of experiential learning for students and the renovation of educational facilities.	78

Addendum

ADDENDUM

Statement on the Transfer of Credit to Frostburg State University

Frostburg State University's policies and procedures governing the transfer of undergraduate credit are clearly stated in the University's 2009-2011 Undergraduate Catalog. The Maryland Higher Education Commission has set policies for students transferring within the public higher education system in Maryland (details can be found in Title 13B of the COMAR policies, available at http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/). These policies allow students to easily transfer general education credit from one public institution to another and to make uninterrupted progress toward finishing their programs of study. For students transferring from private institutions in Maryland or from non-Maryland institutions, general education credit is evaluated on a course equivalency basis. Transfer credit outside of general education may be awarded for successful completion of coursework compatible with the Frostburg State University curriculum, as documented by official transcripts forwarded directly by the sending institution to the University's Office of Admissions. Such credit normally will be transferred only from regionally accredited institutions and there is an established process for reviewing transfer credit from other institutions.