



Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal

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Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress Toward the 55% Completion Goal

Executive Summary

The 2023 Joint Chairmen's Report issued a charge to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to report on the State's progress toward its goal to have at least 55% of Maryland residents ages 25 to 64 holding at least an associate's degree by 2025. This report, the 2023 Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal, provides an update on progress toward the established degree targets, as well as a compilation of institutional submissions on reports of best practices.

Increasing the percentage of Marylanders with at least an associate's degree is affected not just by our colleges and universities, but also by such things as in-migration, out-migration, employment opportunities, and other dynamics that are tied to educating, attracting, and maintaining a talented workforce.

In the 2023 reporting year, Maryland's institutions, for the first time since the model's inception, had annual outcomes close the targets set in 2010 (the annual goal was 49,215 and actual counts were 49,628). Despite this finding for the 2023 report, the overall, cumulative degree production by Maryland institutions shows a sustained trend of exceeding the targets of the model.

For 2023, the degree attainment rate for Maryland is an estimated 51.2%.¹ Based on Census data from the American Community Survey, over the course of the model, the average annual degree attainment rate of change per year in Maryland has been 0.5%. Therefore, if Maryland were to maintain that trend, by 2025 the degree attainment rate would be 52.2%, which is below the goal set.

The state continues to see persistent gaps in degree attainment by race and ethnicity. Institutions should continue their diversity, equity and inclusion efforts to try to shrink completion equity gaps over the coming years.

¹ These calculations use U.S. Census Bureau data between 2010 and 2021 using the American Community Survey, One-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), and One- and Five-Year Estimates Detailed Tables.

Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress Toward the 55% Completion Goal

Introduction

The April 2023 Joint Chairmen’s Report issued the following charge to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC):

The committees understand that in order to meet the State’s goal to have at least 55% of Maryland’s residents age 25 to 64 holding at least one degree credential by 2025, accurate and timely information on degree progression and best practices is needed to ensure that the State is on track to meet the goal. The committees request that the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) annually collect and analyze student- and transcript-level data on progression, graduation, and other relevant metrics from each public institution of higher education, including community colleges and regional higher education centers. MHEC should submit a report by December 15 each year that analyzes the data and shows each institution’s progress toward the State and institutional goals in 2025. The report should also include a summary of best practices and findings on the effectiveness of institutions’ programs as well as any concerns regarding lack of progress or best practices that are not being implemented by institutions. (pages 195-196)

In light of this mandate, this report aims to do the followingⁱ:

- Report progress towards the established targets leading to achievement of the 55% goal;
- Provide an overview of the degree attainment model developed to set degree targets for reaching the 55% goal, as well a review of the model;
- Discuss student progression and graduation in the state; and
- Provide institutional reports on best practices implemented by Maryland’s public institutions.

This report summarizes retention data from Fall 2022 and graduation outcomes for those who completed in the 2022 academic year. The degree counts that inform the model are taken from the 2023 Degree Information Systems (DIS) fileⁱⁱ. The data provided in this report, as well as the submissions on best practices supplied by institutions, reveal that institutions continue to contribute to the statewide goal.

State and Institutional Goals and Targets

What is degree or educational attainment?

Degree or educational attainment refers to the highest level of education an individual has completed. Degree attainment data, collected by the Census, reflect the educational attainment levels of the adult population. Many states, including Maryland, have established degree attainment goals with the aim of ensuring more and more of its citizens obtain a post-secondary degree or other high-quality credential. Research shows that those with a post-secondary credential have higher lifetime earnings, lower odds of unemployment and better health outcomes.ⁱⁱⁱ Maryland law established a goal in which “...at least 55% of Maryland’s adults age 25 to 64 will hold at least an associate’s degree by the year 2025.”^{iv} This goal relies on 1)

ensuring students who enroll in Maryland higher education institutions complete an associate's degree or higher, 2) ensuring educated Maryland residents continue to live and work Maryland, and 3) attracting educated residents from other states to live and work in Maryland.

How are Maryland's colleges and universities contributing to the State's degree attainment goals?

The State's 55% degree attainment goal relies primarily on Maryland colleges and universities, and progress has been buoyed by years of steady and increasing degree production (see Figures 1 and 2, next page and Table 1, page 5). Historically, Maryland's institutions have exceeded the degree goals set in the model. In the 2023 reporting year, Maryland's institutions, for the first time since the model's inception, had annual outcomes close the targets set in 2010 (the annual goal was 49,215 and actual counts were 49,628). As demonstrated by Figure 1, trend data shows that the "surplus" of degrees (actual degree production that exceeded the model's targets in previous years) is shrinking. Yet, the overall, cumulative degree production (Figure 2) shows a sustained trend of exceeding the targets of the model. See Table 1 for additional data.

Despite the slowing of degree production, the State's institutions are on track, as a whole, to meet the goals set in the model. The original model posits that the Maryland colleges and universities must generate at least 718,809 degrees from 2010 to the end of 2025. At this point, the institutions have awarded 677,569 degrees, leaving a little over 40,000 degrees' gap. Therefore, over the next two years, the institutions only need to produce on average a little over 20,000 degrees per year to make that goal. To give context, the public institutions alone awarded over 44,000 associate's or bachelor's degrees in 2022-2023, which indicates that institutions overall will more than meet their degree goals as established in the original model.

Figure 1: Trends in Annual Actual and Target Undergraduate Degree Production among Maryland Colleges and Universities

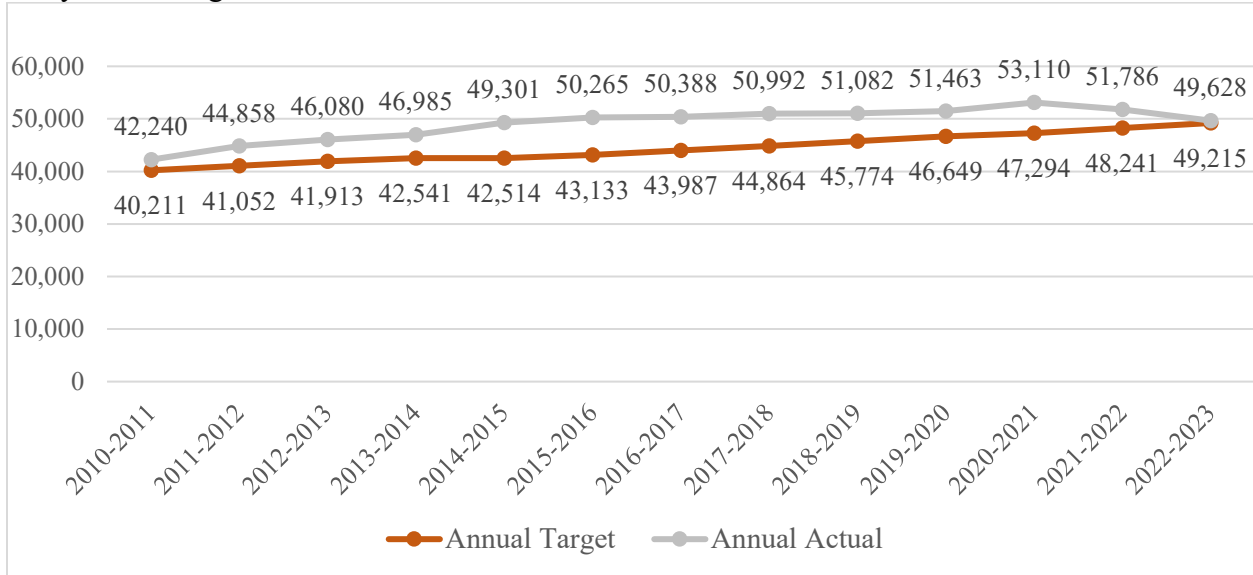
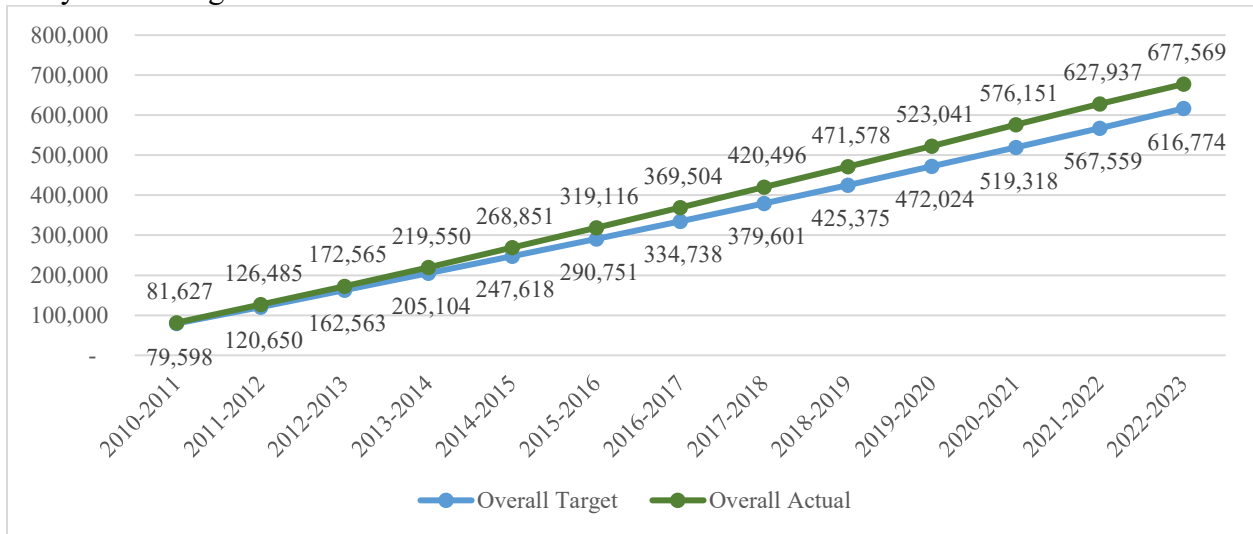


Figure 2: Trends in Overall Actual and Overall Target Undergraduate Degree Production among Maryland Colleges and Universities



Tables 2, 3 and 4 at the end of this report provide detailed information for each public community college and four-year institution as well as well as targets for the entire period. Table 5, at the end of this report, shows targets and actuals for all sectors of higher education in the State. These tables are updated annually and reflect the institutions' contributions to the 55% goal.

Table 1: Target and actual undergraduate degrees awarded, 2009-2010 through 2022-2023

Institutional Sector		2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
		(base-line)													
Community Colleges	Target		11,386	11,614	11,846	12,083	12,325	12,571	12,823	13,079	13,341	13,608	13,880	14,157	14,441
	Actual	11,163	12,637	13,852	14,269	14,541	15,133	15,138	14,919	14,932	14,897	14,472	15,053	14,239	13,543
	+/-		1,251	2,238	2,423	2,458	2,808	2,567	2,096	1,853	1,556	864	1,173	82	-898
Four-Year Institutions	Target		21,876	22,301	22,736	23,179	23,630	24,091	24,561	25,040	25,529	26,028	26,374	26,891	27,418
	Actual	21,458	22,735	24,331	25,136	25,606	27,365	28,569	29,194	29,921	30,241	31,263	32,334	31,914	30,509
	+/-		859	2,030	2,400	2,427	3,735	4,478	4,633	4,881	4,712	5,235	5,960	5,023	3,091
Independent Institutions	Target		6,281	6,469	6,663	6,863	6,225	6,136	6,269	6,410	6,570	6,680	6,706	6,859	7,022
	Actual	6,098	6,174	6,303	6,442	6,395	6,572	6,327	5,991	5,915	5,644	5,576	5,581	5,474	5,410
	+/-		-107	-166	-221	-468	347	191	-278	-495	-926	-1,104	-1,125	-1,385	-1,612
Other Private Institutions	Target		668	668	668	416	334	334	334	334	334	334	334	334	334
	Actual	668	694	372	233	443	231	231	284	224	300	152	143	162	166
	+/-		26	-296	-435	27	-103	-103	-50	-110	-34	-182	-191	-172	-168
<i>Annual Total</i>	<i>Target</i>		<i>40,211</i>	<i>41,052</i>	<i>41,913</i>	<i>42,541</i>	<i>42,514</i>	<i>43,133</i>	<i>43,987</i>	<i>44,864</i>	<i>45,774</i>	<i>46,649</i>	<i>47,294</i>	<i>48,241</i>	<i>49,215</i>
	<i>Actual</i>	<i>39,387</i>	<i>42,240</i>	<i>44,858</i>	<i>46,080</i>	<i>46,985</i>	<i>49,301</i>	<i>50,265</i>	<i>50,388</i>	<i>50,992</i>	<i>51,082</i>	<i>51,463</i>	<i>53,111</i>	<i>51,789</i>	<i>49,628</i>
	<i>+/-</i>		<i>2,029</i>	<i>3,806</i>	<i>4,167</i>	<i>4,444</i>	<i>6,787</i>	<i>7,132</i>	<i>6,401</i>	<i>6,128</i>	<i>5,308</i>	<i>4,814</i>	<i>5,817</i>	<i>3,548</i>	<i>413</i>
Cumulative Total	Target		79,598	120,650	162,563	205,104	247,618	290,751	334,738	379,601	425,375	472,024	519,318	567,559	616,774
	Actual	39,387	81,627	126,485	172,565	219,550	268,851	319,116	369,504	420,496	471,578	523,041	576,152	627,941	677,569
	+/-		2,029	5,835	10,002	14,446	21,233	28,365	34,766	40,895	46,203	51,017	56,834	60,382	60,795

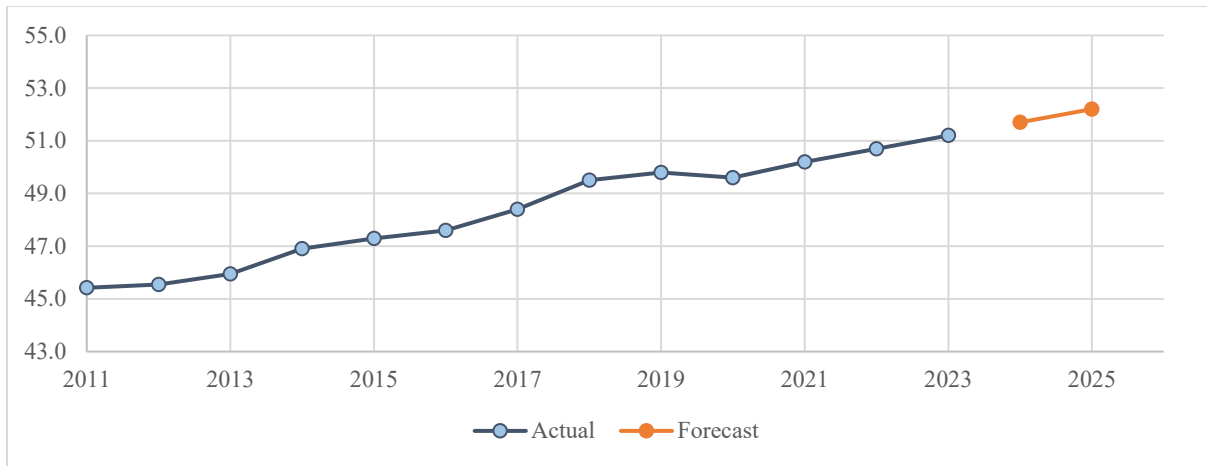
Is the State on track to meet the 55% goal?

For the 2023 report, the degree attainment rate for Maryland is 51.2%.^v Based on Census data from the American Community Survey, over the course of the model, the average annual degree attainment rate-of-change per year has been 0.5%.² Therefore, if Maryland were to maintain that trend, by 2025, the degree attainment rate would be 52.2%, which is below the goal set (see Figure 3 for a representation of this trend).

Even though, overall, Maryland’s colleges and universities are exceeding their mark overall, as exhibited in Figures 1 and 2 and Table 1, degree production by institutions is not the sole contributor to overall degree attainment rates in the state (see Figure 5 for model components). Having a population that has a degree attainment level of an associate’s degree or higher is also affected by such factors as in-migration, out-migration, employment opportunities, and other dynamics that are tied to educating, attracting, and maintaining a talented workforce.

Factors that could have a positive effect on the trend and result in higher year-to-year rates might include increases in undergraduate enrollments and policies and practices at the institutions that would ensure undergraduate retention and timely completion. In addition, such factors as employment opportunities, strong K-12 education, and affordable housing can maintain both current populations and attract new members to Maryland’s educated workforce.

Figure 3: Actuals and Forecast of Annual Statewide Progression toward 55% Goal



Notes: Forecast assumes a standard .5% increase each year; this is based on the average, annual increase in the attainment rate for Maryland since 2011 (ACS Community Survey, Census data). The 2023 data, while reported as an actual, is calculated using the most recent five-year estimate figure (2017-2021 5 Year ACS Survey data from Census).

As the model demonstrates, it relies on: 1) a stable and educated Maryland population, 2)

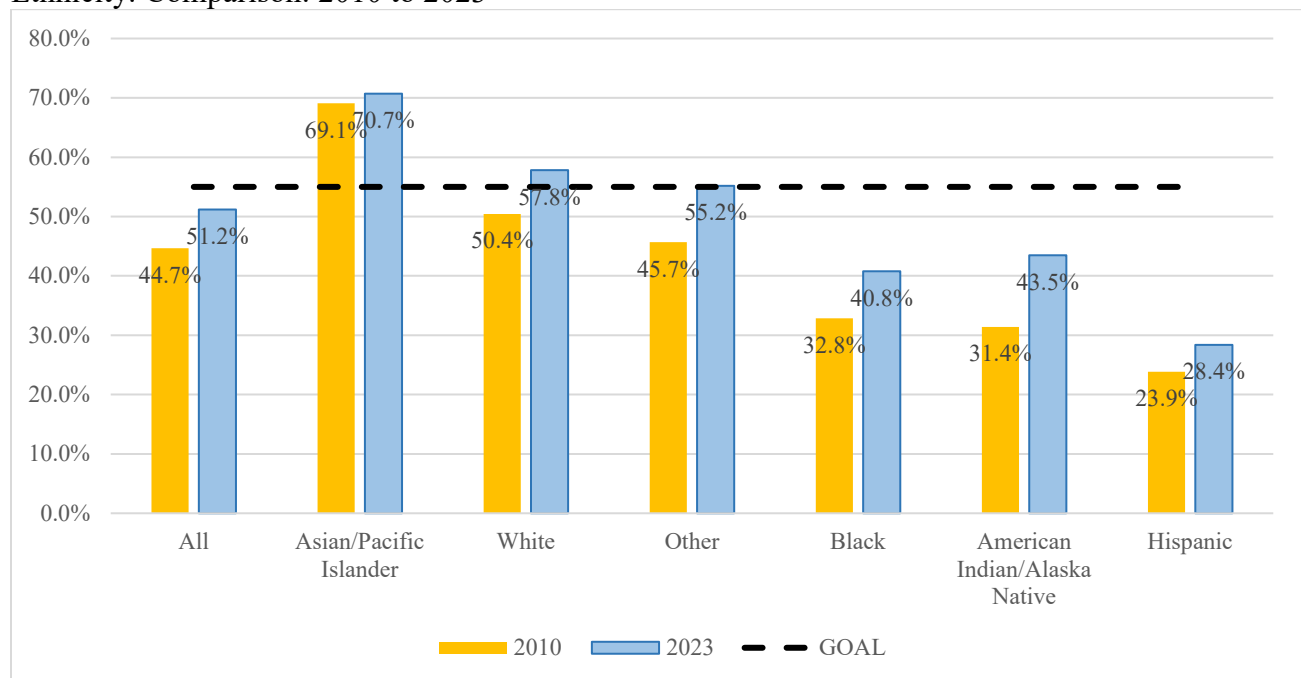
² Degree attainment calculations rely on population data and educational attainment data from the US Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) which relies on a sample of respondents and calculations to provide estimates. Degree attainment data from the US Census for Maryland is calculated by dividing the number of those who have earned an associate’s degree or higher (ages 25 to 64) by the overall state population of those ages 25 to 64. The rate change of .5% for Maryland over time reflects changes to these two populations and therefore changes to the rates.

attracting additional people to move to the State who hold an associate’s degree or higher, 3) Maryland institutions graduating students who earn an associate’s degree or higher and 4) in-migration, especially of educated people, that exceeds out-migration. It is possible that such factors as the economy, housing costs, and other significant, and highly variable elements are contributing to the model in ways that are affecting the overall population of working-age adults holding at least an undergraduate degree in the state.

Are there equity gaps regarding degree attainment in Maryland?

Maryland continues to face challenges in ensuring equitable racial and ethnic outcomes for its diverse citizenry (see Figure 4). In this context, equity would be visualized by each racial and ethnic groups having at least a 55% degree attainment rate within that specific population. Figure 4 highlights the racial and ethnic disparities in obtaining 55% degree attainment within a specific population. As the state approaches 2025, equitable degree attainment will prove challenging and institutions should continue to address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion and the State should ensure it is advancing equitable opportunities for education and employment for all.

Figure 4: Degree Attainment Rates among Maryland Adults Ages 25 to 64 by Race and Ethnicity: Comparison: 2010 to 2023



Source: Lumina Foundation Stronger Nation (<https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation/report/#/progress/state/MD>)

Note: The aggregation of degree attainment data by race and ethnicity is obtained from the Lumina Foundation’s Stronger Nation report. The Stronger Nation report relies on Census data, among other sources, to report on attainment levels across several factors.

Are there avenues for Maryland to explore to achieve its degree attainment goals?

Many states have established attainment goals that include additional high-quality credentials

like lower division certificates. These are seen by national organizations like the Lumina Foundation and the National Skills Coalition as valuable contributors to establishing and growing an educated workforce. Lumina estimates that if Maryland included these high-quality credentials in the Progress to 55% goals, the state would have reached an attainment rate of 55.9% in 2019.^{vi} Recent reports from the Maryland Longitudinal Data Systems Center (MLDSC) and the Center for Workforce Development (Georgetown) discuss the positive educational and workforce outcomes tied to high-quality credentials like certificates.^{vii}

Maryland's 55% Degree Attainment Model

In response to the Joint Chairmen's original charge, in 2012, MHEC developed a model that set initial state and institutional degree targets to help reach the goal of 55% of adults ages 25 to 64 holding degrees by 2025. At the time of the original 2012 model, the State's higher education degree attainment rate was 44.7%.^{viii} MHEC estimated that in 2025, 903,511 people aged 25 to 49 who held associate's degrees in 2010 would have aged 15 years but would remain in the target group (between the ages of 25 and 64)^{ix}. Therefore, at the start of the model there was an assumption that 903,511 Marylanders would already have an associate's degree or higher. The sources of the remaining degree holders would come from Maryland colleges and universities and positive net migration of those educated outside of Maryland.

Historically, the model has been examined every few years to identify significant changes in the data that inform the model (e.g. population projections, migration data). MHEC performed revisions to the model in 2014^x and 2017^{xi} based on updated Census data findings. For the 2023 report, MHEC performed an analysis of the existing data and obtained updated data from the Maryland department of Planning as well as the US Census Bureau.³ It was found that the Maryland Department of Planning's most recent population projections estimate that there will be 3,179,039 Maryland residents between the ages of 25 to 64 in 2025. This population estimate forms the denominator of the 55% calculation.⁴

Based on this new figure, to meet the 55% attainment goal in 2025, Maryland will need 1,748,471 individuals (55% of the 3,179,039 projected Marylanders between the ages of 25 and 64) to hold at least an associate's degree.

The sources of those educated individuals are:

- *Public institutions:* The total degree production from the community colleges is projected to be 208,070, and the contribution from Maryland's public four-year

³ MHEC revisited the model in 2022 and found that several key data sources needed to perform an examination (e.g., population projects based on the 2020 Census, American Community Survey estimates) were missing or delayed for release due to complications with the 2020 Census. In the 2022 report, MHEC indicated it would revisit the model again in 2023.

⁴ See "Projections to 2045 revised December 2020: Total Population Projections by Age, Sex and Race" at https://planning.maryland.gov/MSDC/Pages/s3_projection.aspx This population estimate is currently the most recent population projections issued by the Maryland Department of Planning and was issued in 2020. which was calculated in 2020 is smaller than the original population estimate of 3,324,400 which was obtained from the MD Dept of Planning in 2010.

institutions is estimated to be 397,572⁵, for a total of 605,642 undergraduate degree holders.

- *Independent and other private institutions:* The total degree production from the independent and other private sectors for the whole period is projected to be 112,567.
- *Migration from other states and nations:*^{xiii} For 2023, the estimated net positive migration of additional degree holders is projected to be 266,750^{xiii} over the course of the model.⁶

Finally, the model also considers mortality. In updating the model's figures for the 2023 report, the mortality rate is estimated to remove 64,668 degree holders from the state total during the period of the model.^{xiv, xv}

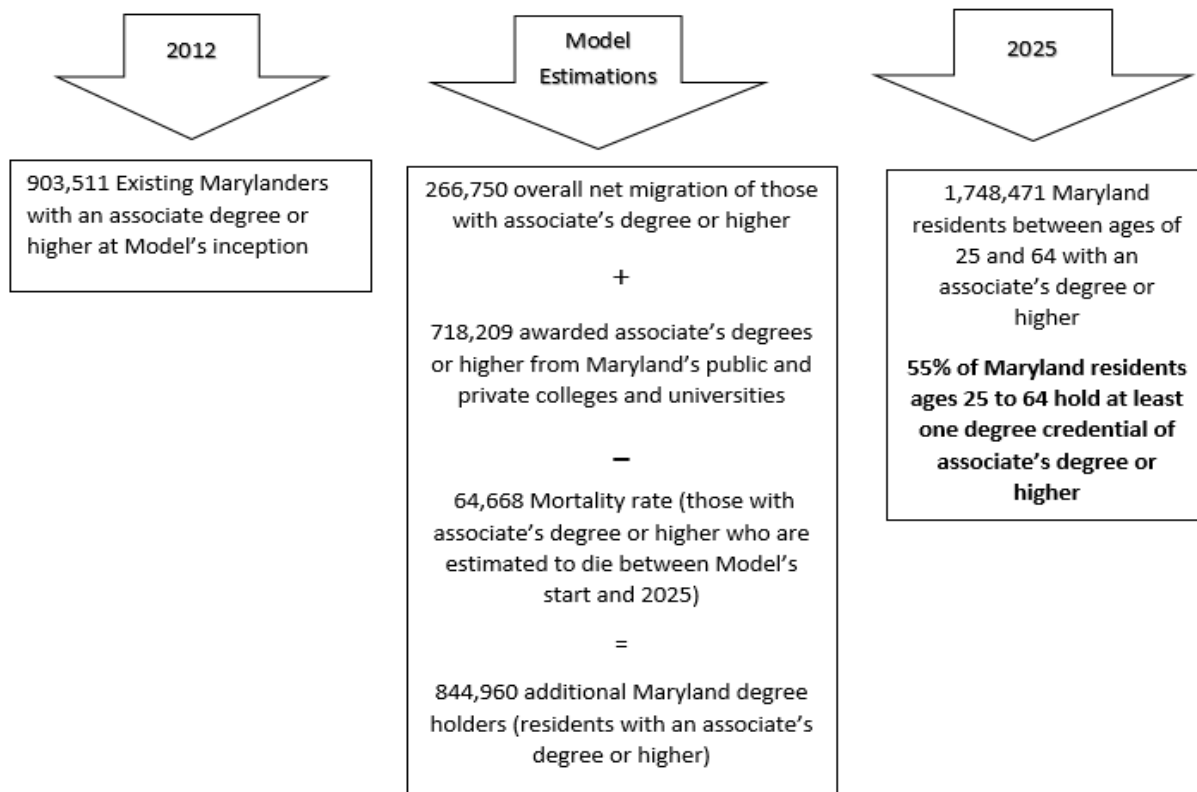
Taken together, the contributions from migration to Maryland, public, independent, and other private institutions minus estimated mortality will provide 844,960 of the degree holders needed.

Figure 3 outlines the main components of the model. Table 2, on page 13 shows a matrix with annual targets for each public institution. The data included in this report provide a blueprint based on conservative estimates to enable the State to achieve the 55% degree attainment goal. These figures can also be used to gauge progress toward that goal.

⁵ This figure was revised in 2021 due to St. Mary's College of Maryland's request to decrease their degree targets within the model. This revision reduces the overall target by 826 degrees.

⁶ Calculated using U.S. Census Bureau. "Geographical Mobility in the Past Year by Educational Attainment for Current Residence in the United States." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B07009, 2021, and U.S. Census Bureau. "Geographical Mobility in the Past Year by Educational Attainment for Residence 1 Year Ago in the United States." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B07409, 2021. The calculation of net migration includes only the data for those with at least a bachelor's degree, as the associate's degree level is not a measure provided by the Census for these tables (associate is combined with "some college").

Figure 3: Progress toward 55% Completion Goal Model



Data on Enrollment, Progression, and Graduation

Statewide undergraduate and graduate student enrollment data decreased 1.8% from Fall 2021 to Fall 2022.^{xvi} Encouragingly, snapshot data from MHEC's Opening Fall Enrollment report shows an overall increase of 2.8% in undergraduate and graduate student enrollment from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023. This includes a 4.1% increase in undergraduate student enrollment from last fall.^{xvii}

The first-to-second year retention rate for the 2021 cohort of first-time, full-time students re-enrolling in Fall 2022 at the state's public four-year institutions was 80.4%, and the state-aided independent institutions' retention rate was 80.8%. Both are consistent with a 10-year stable trend.^{xviii} The six-year graduation rate for the 2016 cohort of first-time full-time undergraduate students at the public four-year institutions was 67.9%, and it was 71.3% for state-aided independent institutions, both of which are consistent with long-term trends.^{xix}

A community college metric for success is the four-year graduation and transfer rates for first-time, full-time undergraduate students. For the 2018 cohort, the most recent entering cohort, the graduation and transfer rate was 39.9%.^{xx}

Community colleges also rely on another means of measuring student success; the Degree

Progress Analysis measure. While the calculation of graduation and transfer rates, noted above, establishes a cohort based upon full-time students, this cohort-based Degree Progress Analysis tool aids in accounting for the large number of part-time students at community colleges. The strength of this is that it identifies the predominant community college student – those who enroll part time, who are not captured in metrics that focus solely on full-time students.^{xxi}

Among those students included in the most recent Degree Progress Analysis cohort, the Fall 2017 cohort, 53.8% had graduated or transferred within four years; this is a notable rate and one of the highest on record. However, this overall statewide rate masks differential achievement rates across developmental groups - those students who entered the community college “college ready” and those students who were assessed to need remediation and completed the necessary courses. Both student groups graduated or transferred at higher rates than the statewide rate: 69.4% for college ready students and 54.4% for those who completed their developmental coursework. In contrast, those students identified as needing remedial courses and who did not complete them, have a much lower rate (23.7%).^{xxii}

Best Practices

Since the inception of the 55% completion goal, institutions can report annually to MHEC on the programs and initiatives aimed at student success and completion. These best practices are included as comprehensive compilation in appendices to the 2012 and 2014 reports.^{xxiii} These supplements encompass a number of topics, and the thematic index provided can assist institutions and other interested readers in discovering which institutions are using practices effectively in each area. Institutional practices presented in these reports focus on efforts to support degree completion.

As a complement to the comprehensive reports collected in earlier years, MHEC required for the 2022 reporting cycle, institutions to submit reports indicating their 1) three most effective initiatives tied to student success, sharing the evidence of effectiveness and 2) two initiatives that were implemented in the past five years that, upon measuring effectiveness, showed little to no impact. Sixteen institutions submitted reports, which are included in the Appendix of this report.

Institutional submissions reflect some common themes. Successful and effective initiatives reported include: revisions to developmental and remedial education, intrusive advising, targeted financial aid, tutoring and mentoring, and mental health supports. There are fewer common themes among initiatives that institutions found less effective, and responses reflect the diverse challenges institutions face in helping support, retain and graduate students successfully.

Conclusion

The Commission will continue to report annually on the progress toward the degree attainment targets. The Commission will also continue to coordinate and support efforts to promote degree completion, in concert with colleges and universities and other stakeholders, in pursuit of the State’s educational goal.

- ⁱ The 2023 Joint Chairmen’s Report requests information on the contributions of regional higher education centers (RHECs) to progression and completion. Although these entities serve their local communities by hosting classes offered by multiple institutions of higher education, these entities do not report directly to MHEC. Instead, the institutions operating at the RHECs include their data together with that of students on the main campus.
- ⁱⁱ Degree Information System collection reflects degrees and awards in credit bearing programs and reflect a July 1 to June 30 reporting cycle.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Bachelor’s Degree Attainment in the United States: 2005 to 2019 American Community Survey Briefs. February 2021. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2021/acs/acsbr-009.pdf>
- ^{iv} Maryland Education Article [§10–205](#)
- ^v Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. <https://data.census.gov/table?q=%22SEX+BY+AGE+BY+EDUCATIONAL+ATTAINMENT+FOR+THE+POPULATION+18+YEARS+AND+OVER+%22&g=040XX00US24&tid=ACSDT5Y2021.B15001>. MHEC applied the annual growth rate of .05 to the value from the 2017-2021 ACS (50.2%) for 2022 and 2023 to obtain the 51.2% reported.
- ^{vi} States differ in how they define high-value certificates and some states have no definition. Data on certificate completion are limited, as the primary source for attainment data (the American Community Survey of the US Census) does not include certificates in its traditional measure of educational attainment... The Lumina Foundation has estimated certificate attainment, counting only certificates whose holders are employed in the field in which they received their credential to ensure that their attainment rates only count credentials that have economic value (based on Stronger Nation analysis <https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation/report/#/progress/state/MD>)
- ^{vii} See Exploring Postsecondary Certificates and Their Relationship to Earnings: High School Graduates at Age 25, Supplement to More Jobs for Marylanders Report, 2017 <https://mldscenter.maryland.gov/MJFMCerts.html>, Career Preparation Expansion Act Reports <https://mldscenter.maryland.gov/CenterReports.html>, and The Overlooked Value of Certificates and Associate Degrees <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/subba/> for more information.
- ^{viii} Using U.S. Census Bureau data from the American Community Survey, One-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), and the average growth rate per year has been .5%. According to the Census, Maryland’s degree attainment rate was 49.6% in 2020, and using an average rate increase of .5%, the estimated degree attainment rate for 2021 was 50.1%.; Census has not released 2020 ACS data as of the production time for this report (December 2022); therefore data from 2020 onward are estimates using the .5% average rate of change.
- ^{ix} This number is an estimate based on the percentage of Marylanders ages 25-49 within the 25-64 age group (65%), and that percentage multiplied by the number of Marylanders ages 25-64 with a degree. This model assumes a flat rate of degree attainment across age brackets and recognizes that this number is only an estimate.
- ^x Maryland Higher Education Commission, December 2014, “Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress Toward the 55% Completion Goal.” <https://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Documents/Research/AnnualReports/2014BestPracProgressCompletionGoal020615.pdf> the model was revised to reflect additional input from Maryland colleges and universities as well as additional information on migration patterns within the State and increased degree output at independent colleges and universities in Maryland.
- ^{xi} This assessment included an analysis of the trends in actual degree awards and the data that inform the model. MHEC also sought input from Maryland colleges and universities regarding the model’s institutional targets. Additional details about the initial and revised models are provided in the 2012, 2014, and 2017 Best Practices reports. Maryland Higher Education Commission, December 2017, “Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress Toward the 55% Completion Goal.” <https://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Documents/Research/AnnualReports/2017BestPractices.pdf>
- ^{xii} Net migration figures were recalculated for the 2014 and 2017 reports, which can be found on the MHEC Office of Research and Policy Analysis website (<https://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Pages/research/index.aspx> under Student Outcomes).
- ^{xiii} This is an alteration from the 2017 revision, which projected net positive migration of 275,088.
- ^{xiv} The 2023 analysis shows an alteration of the mortality rate to 0.4%; this rate is higher than the mortality rate used in earlier reports’ calculations (past rate was 0.2%).
- ^{xv} This value was calculated by taking the average mortality rate of Maryland residents in 2012 between the ages of 25-64 (0.2%) and then multiplying this by the estimated total number of Maryland residents with degrees in this same age range in 2025 (1,828,420).
- ^{xvi} See enrollment data from Fall 2021 at MHEC’s website here: <https://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Pages/research/index.aspx> see Enrollment Reports

^{xvii} See Opening Fall Enrollment Dashboard:

<https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiNGRhZmFlZGltZDMxYi00OWM2LThlYjgtNzBhNWE1MGIwM2ZkliwidCI6IjYwYWZlOWUyLTQ5Y2QtNDliMS04ODUxLTY0ZGYwMjc2YTJlOCJ9>

^{xviii} The retention rate reflects first time, full time cohorts of students who enroll in a given year and return to the same Maryland four-year institution they enrolled in the prior year; the graduation rate reflects these cohorts' graduation from any Maryland four-year institution.

^{xix} Additional data and analyses, including institutional tables, can be found in the dashboard "Retention and Graduation Rates at Maryland Four-Year Institutions" published on the Commission website. NEW URL at <https://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Pages/research/index.aspx>

^{xx} Additional data and analyses can be found in the dashboard "Retention, Graduation, and Transfer Rates at Maryland Community Colleges" published on the Commission website at <https://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Pages/research/index.aspx>

^{xxi} The Degree Progress Analysis examines students who complete at least 18 credit hours within their first two years of enrollment and identifies students as successful if they have graduated, transferred to a four-year institution, or are still enrolled with a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better.

^{xxii} See Degree Progress Analysis dashboard at MHEC Office of Research and Policy Analysis website

<https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiNzFhNGI3ZDEtNjcwZi00ZGYyLWEwM2UtNWU0MWJiODJlMzc2IiwidCI6IjYwYWZlOWUyLTQ5Y2QtNDliMS04ODUxLTY0ZGYwMjc2YTJlOCJ9>

^{xxiii} Maryland Higher Education Commission, December 2014, "Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress Toward the 55% Completion Goal – Appendix."

http://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Documents/Research/2014Studies/2014_Best_Practices_Appendix.pdf

and Maryland Higher Education Commission, December 2012, "Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal – Appendix".

<https://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Documents/Research/2012Studies/2012BestPracticesAppendix.pdf>

Table 2. Degree targets for public institutions, by institution (2.0% annual growth*)

Institution	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total
COMMUNITY COLLEGES																	
Allegany College of Maryland	572	583	595	607	619	632	644	657	670	684	697	711	725	740	755	770	10,662
Anne Arundel Community College	1,336	1,363	1,390	1,418	1,446	1,475	1,505	1,535	1,565	1,597	1,629	1,661	1,694	1,728	1,763	1,798	24,902
Baltimore City Community College	411	419	428	436	445	454	463	472	482	491	501	511	521	532	542	553	7,661
Carroll Community College	466	475	485	495	504	515	525	535	546	557	568	579	591	603	615	627	8,686
Cecil College	190	194	198	202	206	210	214	218	223	227	232	236	241	246	251	256	3,541
Chesapeake College	230	235	239	244	249	254	259	264	269	275	280	286	292	298	303	310	4,287
College of Southern Maryland	822	838	855	872	890	908	926	944	963	982	1,002	1,022	1,042	1,063	1,085	1,106	15,321
Community College of Baltimore County	1,703	1,737	1,772	1,807	1,843	1,880	1,918	1,956	1,995	2,035	2,076	2,117	2,160	2,203	2,247	2,292	31,743
Frederick Community College	682	696	710	724	738	753	768	783	799	815	831	848	865	882	900	918	12,712
Garrett College	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110	112	115	117	119	122	124	127	129	1,789
Hagerstown Community College	442	451	460	469	478	488	498	508	518	528	539	550	561	572	583	595	8,239
Harford Community College	611	623	636	648	661	675	688	702	716	730	745	760	775	790	806	822	11,389
Howard Community College	675	689	702	716	731	745	760	775	791	807	823	839	856	873	891	908	12,582
Montgomery College	1,919	1,957	1,997	2,036	2,077	2,119	2,161	2,204	2,248	2,293	2,339	2,386	2,434	2,482	2,532	2,583	35,769
Prince George's Community College	690	704	718	732	747	762	777	793	808	825	841	858	875	893	910	929	12,861
Wor-Wic Community College	318	324	331	337	344	351	358	365	373	380	388	395	403	411	420	428	5,927
Sub-Total	11,163	11,386	11,614	11,846	12,083	12,325	12,571	12,823	13,079	13,341	13,608	13,880	14,157	14,441	14,729	15,024	208,070
FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS																	
Bowie State University	606	618	630	643	656	669	682	696	710	724	739	753	769	784	800	816	11,295
Coppin State University	378	386	393	401	409	417	426	434	443	452	461	470	479	489	499	509	7,046
Frostburg State University	768	783	799	815	831	848	865	882	900	918	936	955	974	993	1,013	1,034	14,315
Salisbury University	1,661	1,694	1,728	1,763	1,798	1,834	1,871	1,908	1,946	1,985	2,025	2,065	2,107	2,149	2,192	2,235	30,960
Towson University	3,625	3,698	3,771	3,847	3,924	4,002	4,082	4,164	4,247	4,332	4,419	4,507	4,597	4,689	4,783	4,879	67,567
University of Baltimore	516	526	537	548	559	570	581	593	605	617	629	642	654	668	681	694	9,618
University of Maryland, Baltimore	379	379	380	380	381	381	381	382	382	382	383	383	384	384	384	385	6,110
University of Maryland, Baltimore County	1,915	1,953	1,992	2,032	2,073	2,114	2,157	2,200	2,244	2,289	2,334	2,381	2,429	2,477	2,527	2,577	35,694
University of Maryland, College Park	6,569	6,700	6,834	6,971	7,110	7,253	7,398	7,546	7,697	7,851	8,008	8,168	8,331	8,498	8,668	8,841	122,441
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	463	472	482	491	501	511	521	532	542	553	564	576	587	599	611	623	8,630
University of Maryland Global Campus	3,365	3,432	3,501	3,571	3,642	3,715	3,790	3,865	3,943	4,021	4,102	4,184	4,268	4,353	4,440	4,529	62,721
Morgan State University	772	787	803	819	836	852	869	887	905	923	941	960	979	999	1,019	1,039	14,390
St. Mary's College of Maryland	441	445	450	454	459	463	468	473	478	482	487	330	333	337	340	343	6,784
Sub-Total	21,458	21,876	22,301	22,736	23,179	23,630	24,091	24,561	25,040	25,529	26,028	26,374	26,891	27,418	27,956	28,504	397,572
Statewide Total	32,621	33,262	33,915	34,582	35,262	35,955	36,663	37,384	38,120	38,870	39,635	40,254	41,048	41,859	42,685	43,528	605,642

Table 3. Target and actual undergraduate degrees awarded, community colleges.

Institution		2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total
Allegany College of Maryland	Target		583	595	607	619	632	644	657	670	684	697	711	725	740	755	770	10,662
	Actual +/-	572	603	562	588	576	532	517	524	506	489	431	519	468	497			
Anne Arundel Community College	Target		1,363	1,390	1,418	1,446	1,475	1,505	1,535	1,565	1,597	1,629	1,661	1,694	1,728	1,763	1,798	24,902
	Actual +/-	1,336	1,505	1,567	1,581	1,800	1,852	1,778	1,705	1,622	1,785	1,749	1,791	1,570	1,401			
Baltimore City Community College	Target		419	428	436	445	454	463	472	482	491	501	511	521	532	542	553	7,661
	Actual +/-	411	470	540	446	385	405	425	380	443	431	384	426	383	362			
Carroll Community College	Target		475	485	495	504	515	525	535	546	557	568	579	591	603	615	627	8,686
	Actual +/-	466	534	557	658	656	622	614	582	507	502	492	541	476	471			
Cecil College	Target		194	198	202	206	210	214	218	223	227	232	236	241	246	251	256	3,541
	Actual +/-	190	235	244	219	290	319	341	291	266	243	398	278	355	315			
Chesapeake College	Target		235	239	244	249	254	259	264	269	275	280	286	292	298	303	310	4,287
	Actual +/-	230	251	272	308	282	272	237	250	266	243	243	239	910	229			
College of Southern Maryland	Target		838	855	872	890	908	926	944	963	982	1,002	1,022	1,042	1,063	1,085	1,106	15,321
	Actual +/-	822	821	990	1,082	1,215	1,193	1,123	1,272	1,262	1,116	926	968	910	869			
Community College of Baltimore County	Target		1,737	1,772	1,807	1,843	1,880	1,918	1,956	1,995	2,035	2,076	2,117	2,160	2,203	2,247	2,292	31,743
	Actual +/-	1,703	1,854	2,132	2,086	2,020	2,200	2,174	2,133	2,131	2,168	1,925	2,007	1,813	1,718			
Frederick Community College	Target		696	710	724	738	753	768	783	799	815	831	848	865	882	900	918	12,712
	Actual +/-	682	778	846	883	847	897	981	877	882	855	862	911	806	847			
Garrett College	Target		98	100	102	104	106	108	110	112	115	117	119	122	124	127	129	1,789
	Actual +/-	96	98	133	105	108	107	149	111	107	102	94	108	104	97			
Hagerstown Community College	Target		451	460	469	478	488	498	508	518	528	539	550	561	572	583	595	8,239
	Actual +/-	442	490	551	573	601	634	661	622	568	570	592	599	578	543			
Harford Community College	Target		623	636	648	661	675	688	702	716	730	745	760	775	790	806	822	11,389
	Actual +/-	611	772	834	923	903	997	1,088	1,067	883	905	812	872	870	854			
Howard Community College	Target		689	702	716	731	745	760	775	791	807	823	839	856	873	891	908	12,582
	Actual +/-	675	872	955	1,066	1,113	1,165	1,168	1,241	1,290	1,331	1,355	1,341	1,271	1,147			
Montgomery College	Target		1,957	1,997	2,036	2,077	2,119	2,161	2,204	2,248	2,293	2,339	2,386	2,434	2,482	2,532	2,583	35,769
	Actual +/-	1,919	2,183	2,383	2,318	2,374	2,662	2,553	2,611	2,577	2,754	2,798	2,913	2,778	2,594			
Prince George's Community College	Target		704	718	732	747	762	777	793	808	825	841	858	875	893	910	929	12,861
	Actual +/-	690	800	904	963	948	908	925	856	1,057	972	1,093	1,213	1,354	1,258			
Wor-Wic Community College	Target		324	331	337	344	351	358	365	373	380	388	395	403	411	420	428	5,927
	Actual +/-	318	371	382	470	423	368	404	397	363	319	318	327	291	341			
Sub-Total	Target		11,386	11,614	11,846	12,083	12,325	12,571	12,823	13,079	13,341	13,608	13,880	14,157	14,441	14,729	15,024	208,070
	Actual	11,163	12,637	13,852	14,269	14,541	15,133	15,138	14,919	14,932	14,897	14,472	15,053	14,937	13,543			
	+/-		1,251	2,238	2,423	2,458	2,808	2,567	2,096	1,853	1,556	864	1,173	780	-898			

Table 4. Target and actual undergraduate degrees awarded, four-year colleges and universities.

Institution		2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total
Bowie State University	Target		618	630	643	656	669	682	696	710	724	739	753	769	784	800	816	11,295
	Actual	606	683	688	739	741	801	832	713	781	826	870	881	850	855			
	+/-		65	58	96	85	132	150	17	71	102	131	128	81	71			
Coppin State University	Target		386	393	401	409	417	426	434	443	452	461	470	479	489	499	509	7,046
	Actual	378	379	460	409	478	416	464	421	399	378	335	332	329	322			
	+/-		-7	67	8	69	-1	38	-13	-44	-74	-126	-138	-150	-167			
Frostburg State University	Target		783	799	815	831	848	865	882	900	918	936	955	974	993	1,013	1,034	14,315
	Actual	768	850	892	969	1,012	1,032	964	1,060	1,027	1,078	967	1,023	928	728			
	+/-		67	93	154	181	184	99	178	127	160	31	68	-46	-265			
Salisbury University	Target		1,694	1,728	1,763	1,798	1,834	1,871	1,908	1,946	1,985	2,025	2,065	2,107	2,149	2,192	2,235	30,960
	Actual	1,661	1,709	1,787	1,872	1,899	1,935	1,967	2,026	1,873	1,805	1,907	1,842	1,664	1,605			
	+/-		15	59	109	101	101	101	96	118	-73	-180	-118	-223	-443	-544		
Towson University	Target		3,698	3,771	3,847	3,924	4,002	4,082	4,164	4,247	4,332	4,419	4,507	4,597	4,689	4,783	4,879	67,567
	Actual	3,625	3,948	4,103	4,147	4,291	4,422	4,428	4,628	4,609	4,619	4,701	4,628	4,529	4,064			
	+/-		251	332	300	367	420	346	464	362	287	282	121	-68	-625			
University of Baltimore	Target		526	537	548	559	570	581	593	605	617	629	642	654	668	681	694	9,618
	Actual	516	631	625	670	665	694	721	755	711	615	521	468	391	373			
	+/-		105	88	122	106	124	140	162	106	-2	-108	-174	-263	-295			
University of Maryland, Baltimore	Target		379	380	380	381	381	381	382	382	382	383	383	384	384	384	385	6,110
	Actual	379	359	340	337	337	333	399	416	433	438	420	415	410	429			
	+/-		-20	-40	-43	-44	-48	18	34	51	56	37	32	26	45			
University of Maryland, Baltimore County	Target		1,953	1,992	2,032	2,073	2,114	2,157	2,200	2,244	2,289	2,334	2,381	2,429	2,477	2,527	2,577	35,694
	Actual	1,915	1,905	2,140	2,230	2,250	2,432	2,521	2,572	2,578	2,658	2,632	2,643	2,674	2,419			
	+/-		-48	148	198	177	318	364	372	334	369	298	262	245	-58			
University of Maryland, College Park	Target		6,700	6,834	6,971	7,110	7,253	7,398	7,546	7,697	7,851	8,008	8,168	8,331	8,498	8,668	8,841	122,441
	Actual	6,569	6,987	7,043	7,192	7,279	7,166	7,253	7,292	7,559	7,768	8,295	8,100	8,420	8,028			
	+/-		287	209	221	169	-87	-145	-254	-138	-83	287	-68	89	-470			
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	Target		472	482	491	501	511	521	532	542	553	564	576	587	599	611	623	8,630
	Actual	463	506	627	514	585	577	574	514	482	508	516	384	300	304			
	+/-		34	145	23	84	66	53	-18	-60	-45	-48	-192	-287	-295			
University of Maryland Global Campus	Target		3,432	3,501	3,571	3,642	3,715	3,790	3,865	3,943	4,021	4,102	4,184	4,268	4,353	4,440	4,529	62,721
	Actual	3,365	3,555	4,280	4,631	4,715	6,197	7,112	7,413	7,971	8,065	8,661	10,150	10,098	10,127			
	+/-		123	779	1,060	1,073	2,482	3,322	3,548	4,028	4,044	4,559	5,966	5,830	5,774			
Morgan State University	Target		787	803	819	836	852	869	887	905	923	941	960	979	999	1,019	1,039	14,390
	Actual	772	813	902	976	922	933	902	970	1,153	1,091	1,102	1,138	964	964			
	+/-		26	99	157	86	81	33	83	248	168	161	178	-15	-35			
St. Mary's College of Maryland	Target		445	450	454	459	463	468	473	478	482	487	492	497	502	507	512	6,784
	Actual	441	410	444	450	432	427	432	414	345	392	336	330	357	291	340	343	
	+/-		-35	-6	-4	-27	-36	-36	-59	-133	-90	-151	0	24	-46			
Sub-Total	Target		21,876	22,301	22,736	23,179	23,630	24,091	24,561	25,040	25,529	26,028	26,374	26,891	27,418	27,956	28,504	397,572
	Actual	21,458	22,735	24,331	25,136	25,606	27,365	28,569	29,194	29,921	30,241	31,263	32,334	31,914	30,509			
	+/-		859	2,030	2,400	2,427	3,735	4,478	4,633	4,881	4,712	5,235	5,960	5,023	3,091			

Totals for University of Maryland Global Campus include both associate and baccalaureate degrees and consist of stateside and overseas figures.

At the request of St. Mary's College of Maryland, MHEC has reset their target degree value to their actual value for 2020-2021 and reset the multiplier for the years thereafter.

Table 5. Cumulative targets and actual degree awards for all sectors.

Institutional Sector		2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total
Community Colleges	Target		11,386	11,614	11,846	12,083	12,325	12,571	12,823	13,079	13,341	13,608	13,880	14,157	14,441	14,729	15,024	208,070
	Actual	11,163	12,637	13,852	14,269	14,541	15,133	15,138	14,919	14,932	14,897	14,472	15,053	14,239	13,543			
	+/-		1,251	2,238	2,423	2,458	2,808	2,567	2,096	1,853	1,556	864	1,173	82	-898			
Four-Year Institutions	Target		21,876	22,301	22,736	23,179	23,630	24,091	24,561	25,040	25,529	26,028	26,374	26,891	27,418	27,956	28,504	397,572
	Actual	21,458	22,735	24,331	25,136	25,606	27,365	28,569	29,194	29,921	30,241	31,263	32,334	31,914	30,509			
	+/-		859	2,030	2,400	2,427	3,735	4,478	4,633	4,881	4,712	5,235	5,960	5,023	3,091			
Independent Institutions	Target		6,281	6,469	6,663	6,863	6,225	6,136	6,269	6,410	6,570	6,680	6,706	6,859	7,022	7,189	7,365	105,805
	Actual	6,098	6,174	6,303	6,442	6,395	6,572	6,327	5,991	5,915	5,644	5,576	5,581	5,474	5,410			
	+/-		-107	-166	-221	-468	347	191	-278	-495	-926	-1,104	-1,125	-1,385	-1,612			
Other Private Institutions	Target		668	668	668	416	334	334	334	334	334	334	334	334	334	334	334	6,762
	Actual	668	694	372	233	443	231	231	284	224	300	152	143	162	166			
	+/-		26	-296	-435	27	-103	-103	-50	-110	-34	-182	-191	-172	-168			
Annual Total	Target		40,211	41,052	41,913	42,541	42,514	43,133	43,987	44,864	45,774	46,649	47,294	48,241	49,215			718,209
	Actual	39,387	42,240	44,858	46,080	46,985	49,301	50,265	50,388	50,992	51,082	51,463	53,111	51,789	49,628			
	+/-		2,029	3,806	4,167	4,444	6,787	7,132	6,401	6,128	5,308	4,814	5,817	3,548	413			
Cumulative Total	Target		79,598	120,650	162,563	205,104	247,618	290,751	334,738	379,601	425,375	472,024	519,318	567,559	616,774			718,209
	Actual	39,387	81,627	126,485	172,565	219,550	268,851	319,116	369,504	420,496	471,578	523,041	576,152	627,941	677,569			
	+/-		2,029	5,835	10,002	14,446	21,233	28,365	34,766	40,895	46,203	51,017	56,834	60,382	60,795			

College of Southern Maryland

2023 Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal

The College of Southern Maryland (CSM) works diligently to provide equitable academic experiences for all students. Over the last five years, CSM faced challenges, celebrated accomplishments, and reimagined student services to better serve students. The three most effective initiatives tied to student success directly align with the first goal of the strategic plan which is to “improve student progress and completion.”

Strategies to achieve Goal #1:

1.1 Clarify the paths: ensure students have the information and resources they need to achieve their academic and career goals

A CSM workgroup assigned to this strategy identified a cohort of 80 students to test a new guided pathway model. Students in this pilot group were provided laptops, books, paid tuition, and assigned to a Pathway Advisor. The workgroup learned that concise communication and relationships with advisors are critical for the progression of students.

Hawk Hubs were designed and introduced on all three campuses to support new and incoming students, as well as provide a central location for students to receive support and referrals. Hawk Hubs have replaced the former “Welcome Centers” to provide immediate assistance to students for general college navigation and to triage students requesting to meet with Academic Advisors. About 55% of calls are handled directly at the Hawk Hub without needing to be passed off to advisors.

To further “Clarify the Path” for students, Pathway 101 sessions were created and offered to provide them with a better understanding of the CSM Pathways, registration tips, and transfer information to assist with spring registration.

1.2 Systemize the supports: each student will have appropriate and timely support to achieve their educational goals

The workgroup assigned to this strategy designed, developed, implemented, and evaluated a NEOED Learn training for staff on the use of Starfish Kudos. Kudos allow staff to congratulate students on their academic success during the semester. Over 2600 Kudos were raised during Fall 2021, as opposed to just 232 Kudos in Fall 2020. Also, all Dean’s List students received a Kudo. This workgroup also provided support for the Gateway Courses Community of Practice including training faculty members, streamlining first-year gateway courses, and evaluating feedback from coordinators and instructors on the implementation of Hawk: Go! materials and TEA-1200.

While the overall fall-to-spring retention rate decreased from 71.9% for fall 2020 - spring 2021 to 64.3% for fall 2021 - spring 2022, the fall-to-spring retention rate of students taking at least one gateway course in fall 2021 was higher than that of students who did not take a gateway course in fall 2021, 65.9% compared to 62.5%.

1.3 Demystify the finances: ensure students fully understand the cost of attending college and payment/financial aid options available to them

Workgroup members of this strategy streamlined and tailored the CSM financial aid forms to reduce the time and stress for students to complete. They also enhanced the website to include financial literacy information on the Financial Aid webpage, the Student Life webpage, and Scholarship Finder webpage. CSM also instituted a chatbot (Ocelot) to communicate with students, providing additional access to information outside normal business hours. This workgroup also worked to increase the use of text messages to communicate with students with actionable steps, instead of sending long emails.

The Financial Assistance Department designed a series of programs and services in the month of February entitled “FAFSA February” to build interest among students and families regarding the March 1st priority deadline for FAFSA completion.

CSM also expanded messaging regarding Scholarship Finder and other ways for students to apply for institutional funding. Data shows that the Scholarship Finder conditional application submission rate increased 5% year-over-year and completed FAFSA applications increased by 5%. The work to support these three strategies has been weaved into the everyday work and activities at CSM.

January 2021, CSM required students to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, except for individuals with approved exemptions or waivers. In order to keep a record of vaccination status for students CSM used a software named Castle Branch. Unfortunately, several students had issues uploading their proof of vaccination. Oftentimes, students created an account but needed to send the card to CSM’s vaccination email account for the Registrar’s office to upload. The Registrar’s office received many phone calls during the year from students who had trouble uploading their cards or exemption paperwork. Fall 2022, the CSM Board of Trustees lifted the COVID-19 vaccination requirement. Currently, students are returning to campus and registering in both 7 and 15-week semester courses.

Another challenge we faced was helping students transition from CSM to a four-year institution. COVID-19 created barriers for students interested in transferring. This caused many students to unnecessarily delay their enrollment at CSM and four-year institutions because of Covid and other personal concerns.

CSM continues to find creative ways to assist new and returning students with success strategies for enrollment, retention, completion, and graduation. Effective initiatives begin with the end in mind. CSM supports all students with identifying their academic pathway and appropriate supports to encourage semester-to-semester success.

Hagerstown Community College
Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal
2023

Most effective initiatives

Over the years, HCC has developed and invested in several initiatives that have been effective in impacting student success. These strategies and best practices have assisted in driving progress toward the State's 2025 degree completion goal. Three of these initiatives are highlighted below. This report also includes two initiatives that have been a challenge for the institution.

Removing Barriers to Enrollment

In recent years, community colleges in Maryland, as well as other parts of the country, have been facing a decline in enrollment as evidenced by the Fall 2020 enrollment and FY21 FTE numbers. These declines may be related to the enduring impact of the pandemic, demographic shifts, changing workforce needs, and fluctuations in the economy. HCC is situated in an area of the state with an increasing number of distribution centers and other industries with relatively high-paying entry-level jobs that do not require a postsecondary degree. The drops in credit enrollment may indicate a shift from credit programs into non-credit, short-term workforce training programs to support these industries. Potential students may be struggling to see the value of a degree when there are available entry-level jobs that pay well. Despite these challenges, HCC recorded an increase in FTE for FY22. The College also anticipates significant enrollment gains for Fall 2023 as the dual enrollment program expands and more high school students are able to take college courses.

HCC's strategic plan begins with a commitment to enrollment. The College strives to anticipate and adapt to the needs of the community and region in order to best serve the needs of potential students and employers. Partnerships are also a key commitment in HCC's most recent strategic plan. HCC works to stay current with the needs of the region through industry partnerships and the development or modification of program offerings. The Recruitment team regularly visits employers that participate in employee assistance programs to share information regarding available programs and tuition support. Recent examples of expanding partnerships include Amazon, Fed-Ex, McDonald's, Meritus Health, and more. Additionally, we have increased marketing and direct visits to these employers and have made efforts to improve awareness of our employer assistance programs so that it is easier for students to determine whether their employer will provide tuition support. HCC also launched a targeted outreach plan in conjunction with Edamerica to communicate with non-returning students.

New credit programs include Medical Laboratory Technician and Commercial Music. We anticipate additional new or modified programs in high-need areas such as Sonography being

added to our offerings in the next one to two years. Recently, several programs have shifted from credit to non-credit in order to provide a shorter pathway to an industry credential, such as CNA certification. More articulation pathways between credit and non-credit have been defined. HCC has also expanded articulation agreements with many four-year institutions and is actively developing more opportunities for such partnerships. The College's partnership with Washington County Public Schools, as well as local private schools, is long-standing and will continue to develop with the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and the subsequent significant enrollment increase of dual-enrolled students.

HCC recognizes the importance of making admissions and enrollment a relatively simple process for students to positively increase registrations. In recent years, HCC has improved the application software and process to make it more efficient and easier to navigate on a phone or computer. Additionally, applicants who begin but do not finish an application receive reminders to do so and offers for assistance.

Developmental Education Reform

HCC has made changes to improve developmental student registration, retention, and completion. The College recognized that historically, the need to take a placement test prior to registration was a barrier to enrollment for some students. To address this, the College modified the requirements for placement testing and now allows any student who meets exemption requirements (such as a 3.0 or higher high school GPA) to register for college-level courses without taking a placement test. This makes the enrollment process simpler and quicker for a large portion of new students.

All developmental levels across English, English as a Second Language (ESL), and math have been standardized. Furthermore, mentors are assigned to all adjunct developmental studies instructors to provide advice and instructional support, which ultimately benefits students. In January 2019, a new minimum placement score (below which score students will not be admitted to developmental programs) went into effect; students who test below this score can register instead for adult education classes. In addition, if students have a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher (within the last five years), they do not need to take developmental coursework, but may directly enter college-level math and/or English. All math and English developmental courses were also restructured. For example, Developmental English now consists of one level rather than three. English as a Second Language courses offered through HCC's adult literacy services also serve as a bridge from non-credit to credit English courses once successfully completed. These modifications were made in acknowledgment of the ongoing challenge posed by developmental coursework for students pursuing degree or certificate programs. The aim is to assist students in advancing quickly and successfully to credit-level courses. Developmental completion percentages after four years for the fall 2017 cohort

remained fairly flat at 54.2 percent when compared to the fall 2016 cohort (55.0%). HCC continues to monitor the success of these initiatives.

Intrusive Advising

Advising is another important college initiative. HCC has recently adopted a new faculty advising model. Additionally, students in a number of specific cohort groups receive proactive advising. These groups include but are not limited to students with disabilities, athletes, Early College Degree Program students, CCAMPIS/CCCPDF students, and veterans. These students are identified and tracked according to cohort membership. The effectiveness of advising is determined through multiple approaches. The College recently adopted new software that allows for a more streamlined student experience, provides usage statistics, and a post-advising feedback survey. The advising office can regularly review how many students are utilizing the appointment times and the topic of the appointment as well as student satisfaction. The data is then used for continuous improvement in staffing and service. Additionally, other campus-wide survey administrations solicit feedback on the advising process. Effective advising is easy for the student to access and understand, efficient for student and staff, and produces results for the students (such as correct registrations or academic planning).

Less Successful Initiatives

Student Success Software

The urgency of retaining students and ensuring their academic success is paramount, yet the search for suitable software to assist in the efforts has been a struggle at HCC. HCC has grappled with the challenge of finding tools that not only align with retention goals but also offer scalability, user-friendliness, and data-driven insights. This is intensified as we strive to strike a balance between affordability and effectiveness. The journey has been complicated by the diverse needs of students and the ever-evolving landscape of higher education, making it a daunting task to select software that can cater to the varying demands of both educators and learners.

The abundance of options available in the software market has been overwhelming to HCC decision-makers. While seeking new software as part of the development of a Title III grant proposal, HCC explored options that would align with its current student information systems (SIS) and learning management systems (LMS) to address retention issues while also being affordable and offering specialized analytics tools to identify at-risk students and implement timely interventions. The pursuit of suitable software for retention needs thus becomes a multifaceted challenge, demanding careful evaluation, extensive research, and a commitment to ongoing refinement to ensure that the chosen solutions genuinely support the overarching goal of nurturing student success in higher education. HCC is currently utilizing a variety of tools and working to develop processes for their use that make sense to the institution.

Academic Programs

Low-enrolled academic programs within higher education institutions pose a unique set of challenges and opportunities. These programs often face questions about their sustainability and relevance. Institutions must carefully consider whether to continue offering these programs or allocate resources elsewhere. Low enrollment can be attributed to various factors, including shifts in student demand, evolving career trends, or inadequate marketing and outreach. It's crucial to recognize that these programs can still hold significant value for a niche group of students or contribute to the institution's broader academic mission. Decisions regarding low-enrolled programs are not solely driven by enrollment numbers but involve a comprehensive assessment of their educational quality, alignment with institutional mission and goals, as well as potential for growth or adaptation. Academic programs that are either currently low enrolled or have been recently discontinued at HCC at least partially due to low enrollment include Geothermal Energy Installation and Services, Unmanned Aerial Systems Technician, Entrepreneurship, Computer Support Specialist, and Technical Studies.

Montgomery College: Contributing to Maryland's 55% Goal

Since 2015, Montgomery College has engaged in a number of strategies and practices that impact the State's 55% Completion Goal. Increasing retention, graduation and transfer rates were some of the pillars of the College's Strategic Plan MC2020, the Academic Master Plan 2016-2021, and the Student Affairs Master Plan, which reflect that many initiatives were implemented at the same time in order to increase retention and improve graduation and transfer numbers, as well as address the achievement gap for students of color compared with white students. Montgomery College has met the goal given in the State's 55% Completion Goal, and has increased the number of graduates and transfers over the years. Completion is central to the College's new strategic plan as well as our transformational aspirations. With the help of initiatives such as those listed below, the College anticipates continuing to excel in this area.

Examples of Successful Initiatives:

Embedding Experiential Learning Opportunities and Identifying Employability Skills

Community college students have many challenges outside of coursework, including employment, family responsibilities, transportation issues, food insecurity, and more. While Montgomery College has long offered programs that include experiential learning opportunities outside of the classroom, these are not accessible to many students based on their lives outside of the College. With completion and post-completion success on our minds, each program introduced experiential learning into the classroom. The College selected key courses within programs to embed experiential learning opportunities which included innovative opportunities such as building an eportfolio, working with digital storytelling, and conducting mock trials. This initiative has been very successful in its first year, and will be evaluated as this initiative continues in FY24. Tying in with this initiative, we have identified employability skills for the top two courses in each program based on industry standards, giving students skills they can include on their resume.

Using grants to support outreach to under-engaged communities for STEM

Montgomery College has been actively seeking grants to support outreach to under-engaged communities for STEM. Under-engaged communities tend to also be low-income communities; therefore, our efforts have included a focus on seeking opportunities to financially support students as well as building a professional network with industry to prepare them for careers with family-sustaining wages. Data for low-income (defined as eligibility for federal Pell grants) students show gaps that underscore the need for these supports. Specifically, graduation rates for low-income potential scholars are lower compared to those for the total student populations. The funds students receive from these grants help them gain rigorous professional experience and credits toward their degree debt-free, and facilitate transfer to a baccalaureate program.

While we have been recommended for funding for two NSF grants, one S-STEM and one for ExLENT in FY24, we have implemented two grants that have already been funded through proposals submitted these last two years:

- NIST-PREP (Professional Research Experience Program), April 1, 2023-March 31, 2028: up to 250 placements at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) annually and designed to provide valuable laboratory experience and financial assistance to undergraduates, graduate students, postdocs, and faculty. The program is intended to assure continued growth and progress of a highly skilled science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) workforce in the United States.
- ATE (Advanced Technological Education)- Title: Improving Biopharmaceutical Technician Education with Cell and Gene Therapy Credentials, July 1, 2022-June 30, 2025: creation of cell and gene therapy course and certificate and two micro-credentials; increase number of work-ready biotechnicians

These grants also enable us to achieve a deeper understanding of the role that community colleges play in helping under-engaged communities gain STEM degrees. We expect that through the financial support combined with the academic and career supports these grants provide, we will see greater participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in STEM programs, which in turn will show how to increase the diversity and competitiveness of the STEM workforce, both in Maryland and nationally. Additionally, we are able to build and reinforce connections between the credit and non-credit sides of the College and with employer and industry partners in the community. For example, we are collaborating with WDCE to have credit students in our technology programs prepare for IT industry certification through the TechMap grant program. Participation and certifications will be free to the students. Career navigation and career coaching will be available as well. Two navigator positions have now been created to assist with this. In addition, credit students can participate in one-week or two-week test prep bootcamps throughout the semester during times that are convenient for the students. Students will have access to virtual labs, practice tests and instructor support. Grants are also enabling students to earn industry credentials such as Networking+, Security+, CCNA, and AWS.

Expanding dual enrollment opportunities and degree program options

Jumpstart to College has increased from 1,001 students to 1,076 students and 2,203 courses to 2,381 between FY22 and FY23. At the same time, the Middle College (housed at three high schools in Montgomery County) growth from FY22 to FY23 has seen course registrations increase from 2,141 to 2,386, meaning that students are taking more courses this year than last year. For the first time, we added a Virtual Middle College option open to high school students who meet academic requirements across the county whereby students are registered for standard college courses taught online by Montgomery College professors and will earn their associate degree through one of MC's online degree programs. The first two years of the program, students take their high school loads, but attend workshops that prepare them to take college-level courses beginning in their junior year, completely online. For FY23, we admitted 140 students - both freshmen (who will take a full course load next fall) and sophomores (who will take a full course-load this fall). We have also received applications for 158 freshmen entering high school this fall who will take a full course load at MC in fall 2025. This exciting program allows the college to expand its reach and provide

access to any of our online degree programs (we currently offer 16 fully online degree programs).

The third leg of our Dual Enrollment Program is the Early College Program, which provides degree opportunities to rising high school juniors, in person at one of our three campuses. This program continues to generate interest among high school students and their families with 375 Early College students enrolled in FY22 and 398 students enrolled for fall 2023. Early College added Behavior Health and Cloud Computing degree programs for FY23, and has added Chemistry/Biochemistry, and Data Science in FY24 to expand to 18 degree programs. Early College graduated 155 students in FY23 with an associate's degree, followed by the students receiving their Montgomery County Public School high school diploma a month later. All three dual enrollment programs combined resulted in 235 students graduating in May 2023.

Montgomery College's Social Resource Program (SRP)

The SRP serves as a one-stop and single point of contact assisting traditionally underrepresented students by attending to their basic needs. The program increases access to public benefits for food, childcare subsidies, housing assistance, transportation assistance, and community resources for health and mental health services. Program components expand programming from the College Student Health and Wellness (SHaW) Center for Success providing one-on-one coaching to help students access social support and resources, strengthen cross-agency coordination and community engagement, collaborate with community partners to schedule on-campus events, information sessions, and service delivery (i.e., food distribution, biometric screening), and increase outreach efforts and marketing to underserved populations to encourage their use of the SRP and community resources. During its inaugural year (2022-2023), SRP reached several key milestones:

- Created a seamless referral process
- Actively engaged with more than 15 community agencies that support students' basic needs
- Engaged 350 students in SRP services with an 86% fall to spring persistence rate for all degree seeking participants

Reducing Number of Course Cancellations

During the 2022/2023 academic year, the scheduling committee, which includes faculty, staff, and administrators from Academic and Student Affairs, and is led by the chief data officer, the associate senior vice president for Academic Affairs, and the Collegewide scheduling coordinator, implemented several Scheduling for Student Success strategies. The first goal was to develop a full-year schedule of classes so that students could see a full year of their program courses and plan their schedules. This goal involved re-designing timelines and adjusting the schedule production, and the full AY 2023/2024 schedule was published in May 2023. A second goal was to develop a process for making changes to the schedule more efficiently than through email messages, which can be missed. The committee developed a form for deans to use to request changes, which resulted in more timely changes to provide

new sections as enrollment progressed. Finally, the committee used a “lean scheduling” approach and schedule analytics to restrict adding sections to the base schedule unless student demand demonstrated the need, with the goal of reducing course cancellations that will disrupt student schedules. The cancellation rate dropped from 12% in 2021/2022 to 7% in 2022/2023.

Examples of Less Successful Initiatives:

Assigning Proficiency Credit in Career and Technical Education Courses

2022/2023 began with a plan to establish clear procedures for assigning proficiency credit in career and technical education courses at MCPS; to create a website with clear instructions for credit-by-exam in MC courses; and to expand the opportunities for prior learning assessment credit for military certifications.

It was an ambitious list, and the work continues to progress slowly. The assessment of student learning must be led by faculty, and many faculty were reluctant to take on the task of assessing MCPS student work. We had one success with a graphic design course, where the faculty member worked closely with the MCPS teacher to assist the student in developing a portfolio to demonstrate the course objectives. The student earned an A in the MC course. We are continuing to work with a more focused list of courses this year. Also, we plan to bring together a team to work on the military certifications, using MC’s articulation with UMGC as a guide to the appropriate MC courses.

**Prince George’s Community College
2023 Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress
toward the 55% Completion Goal**

Prince George’s Community College (PGCC) is engaged in a number of strategic projects that are aimed at enhancing student success and moving the College closer to the State’s degree completion goal. PGCC has made significant strides in increasing degree completion through effective initiatives such as enhanced communication, auto-awarding certificates, increased Open Education Resources (OER) offerings, and increased accelerated course offerings. However, challenges remain in addressing the effectiveness of English and math pre-requisite models and improving the success rate in the First-Year Experience course. The College's proactive approach to adapting and refining these initiatives demonstrates its commitment to advancing student success and degree completion.

Successes and Challenges in increasing degree completion

Effective initiatives tied to student success (including evidence of effectiveness)

1. Increased communication to students and awarding more certificates increased PGCC’s graduation rate from 13% in AY21-22 to 17% in AY22-23. This cohort includes first-time students who started during the Fall 2019 term and completed before or during AY-22-23.

The increase is partially due to scaled-up communication efforts through student emails and usage of the Navigate platform to inform students about the graduation application process and approaching deadlines. This additionally resulted in an increase of students applying for graduation in 2022 over previous years. The College has also added many more embedded credit certificate programs, and has piloted a procedure this year to auto-award our Health Sciences Certificate to all health sciences and nursing graduates. This was accomplished by implementing a new software application called AutoGrad, which identifies students who do not have a certificate program listed as their program of study, but are eligible for the certificate due to the completion of all certificate courses as part of their degree programs. The College is working to expand the use of the software application and criteria, and anticipates that the auto-awarding of more certificates will continue to raise the graduation rate.

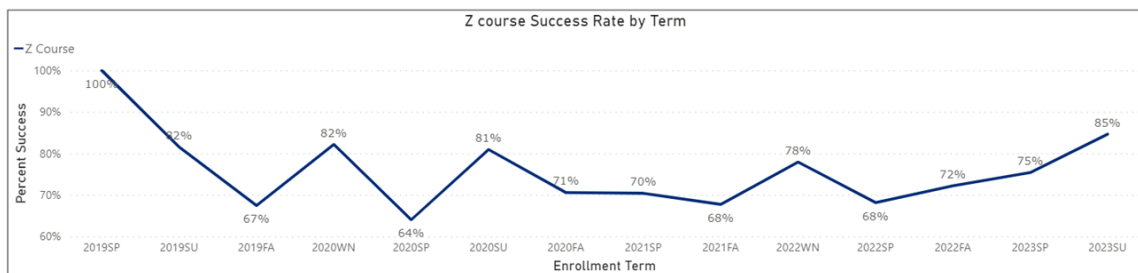
2. Over the past five years, PGCC has offered 3,566 Open Educational Resources (OER, also known as “Z” courses for zero cost) course sections and students have saved approximately \$5,509,040 in textbook costs. Student success rates in OER courses have risen over the last year.

Fiscal Year	Number of OER Course Sections	Unduplicated Number of Students	\$ Cost Savings
2023	1,354	10,077	\$1,766,160

2022	928	8,482	\$1,205,200
2021	737	10,330	\$1,443,920
2020	526	7,830	\$1,070,640
2019	21	287	\$23,120

The number of unduplicated students who enrolled in OER course sections has increased from 8,482 students in FY22 to 10,077 students in FY23. The number of OER course sections offered at PGCC has increased every fiscal year, allowing students to enroll in more courses with OER course sections. The running total of unduplicated students who have taken courses with OER sections to date is 37,006.

Success rates rose for nearly all course subjects between FY2022 and 2023.



Student success is measured by percent of students who earned a letter grade of ‘A’, ‘B’, or ‘C’ in the course. Student success rates in Z (OER) course sections took the lowest dive in Spring 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic to 64%. Since Fall 2020, the student success rate has leveled with slight decreases to 68% in Spring 2022. In the Summer 2023 term, student success rates in Z (OER) course sections increased to 85%, and have been rising consistently since Spring 2022.

- An increase in accelerated course section offerings between 2017 and 2022 increased success rates.

2017 - 2022	Accelerated	Aggregate	Non-Accelerated
Success Rates	76%	73%	67.60%
Withdrawal Rates	6.50%	8.8%	14.40%

Data show that accelerated sections have both higher success rates and lower withdrawal rates. Offering more accelerated courses allows students to complete classes sooner and contributes to increasing the overall completion rate. Offering popular courses in both traditional and accelerated formats allows students increased options to meet their schedules.

Less Successful Initiatives (implemented within the last five years that, upon measuring effectiveness, showed little or no impact)

1. English and Math Pre-requisite Models

Prior to the pandemic, the English department streamlined the developmental sequence of reading and writing courses and created Integrated reading and writing courses. While this effort did achieve the initial goal of reducing the number of developmental English courses offered, it did not result in increased success rates for the students. Additionally, during the pandemic the English department added a self- directed placement option for students. This model allowed for students to work with advisors to choose a specific English course. This model did not prove to increase student success. Consequently, the department has eliminated this placement option for students.

Enrollment Terms	Course	Success Rate	Withdrawal Rate
2018 – 2023	EGL-0080	56.3%	11.3%
2018 – 2023	EGL-0090	68.4%	9.9%
College Average		75%	9%

Beginning Spring 2024, all developmental English courses will be eliminated. They will be replaced with a new co-requisite support course. This course will serve as a support course to the English Composition I (EGL-1010) course. Students who score below the reading readiness score on Accuplacer will enroll in the co-requisite course. Students will receive assistance with tutoring and writing, and additional non-academic support resources.

The developmental mathematics course sequence has been modified several times with the goal of increasing student success. The emporium model was introduced in 2015, and was built on the premise that students would work at their own pace to complete the mathematics course and would receive in-time assistance/tutoring based on need. The overall success of the emporium model resulted in few students being successful in the developmental mathematics sequence. In 2017, the developmental mathematics sequence was changed to the traditional model of instruction, using a variety of pedagogical approaches to teaching. In addition to the traditional approach, corequisite courses were introduced for some first-level credit bearing courses, i.e., MAT-1130 (Mathematical Ideas), MAT-1140 (Introduction to Statistics), and MAT-1250 (Applied College Algebra). Although the corequisite model allowed students to enroll in the credit-bearing courses while receiving instructional supports, student success numbers and retention rates did not result in ideal success rates.

Enrollment Terms	Developmental Math Course	Success Rate	Withdrawal Rate
2018 – 2023	DLS-0061	62.3%	10.5%

2018 – 2023	MAT-0071	58.1%	14.1%
2018 – 2023	MAT-0092	54.6%	13.2%
2018 – 2023	MAT-0104	54.1%	22.4%
College Average		75%	9%

Beginning Fall 2024, developmental mathematics courses will become part of a corequisite model that supports students enrolling in a first-tier credit math course with academic supports, related time management, test-taking, test anxiety, and goal-setting within the corequisite course. Additionally, the College’s math success cohort program will continue to be utilized to support students who have to repeat any math course.

2. First-year Experience course (PAS-1000)

Over the last five years, the College's First-Year Experience Seminar course (PAS-1000) saw an average success rate of 66.4% and an average withdrawal rate of 4.7%. In comparison, the broader average course success rate at the College is 75% and the broader withdrawal rate is 9%.

Enrollment Terms	Success Rate	Withdrawal Rate
2018 – 2023	66.4%	4.7%
College Average	75%	9%

Given that PAS-1000 is the first course that students take in their program sequence, it is somewhat understandable that PAS-1000 garners lower success rates than courses students typically take later in their course sequences. However, the College is in the process of addressing issues with the delivery of the course, in the hopes of improving the success rate in PAS-1000. One of the issues with the course delivery has been in securing enough regular and trained faculty to teach the nearly 100 sections of PAS-1000 that run each Fall and Spring semester. As part of the College's current strategic plan, PGCC has initiated a six-week online training with a teaching demonstration requirement to prepare all new PAS-1000 instructors to teach the course. Moreover, PGCC is moving towards incorporating more academic advisors and other Student Affairs staff members who are engaged in the College's overall student onboarding efforts into the primary pool of instructors who teach PAS-1000. Finally, the College has recently engaged the assistance of an instructional design consultant to help redesign the learning management system (Canvas) master course classroom shell that all PAS-1000 instructors will use to teach their individual course sections. Improving and standardizing the online Canvas classrooms for PAS-1000 should help students see improved rates of success in the course.

Frostburg State University
Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward
Achieving the 55% Completion Goal
September 2023

The following is a summary of Frostburg State University's (FSU) best practices that address the following MHEC-identified goals:

- Increasing the number of enrolling students
- Increasing the proportion of enrolled students who persist to the second year
- Increasing the proportion of enrolled students who earn degrees
- Reducing the achievement gap

The three most effective initiatives tied to student success at Frostburg are discussed below as well as evidence of their effectiveness relating to each of the four goals above. The last section of the report summarizes programs that were discontinued over the reporting period.

1. **The TRIO program:** TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) is an academic support program focused on the retention and graduation of disadvantaged students. Of the 275 students the program serves annually, at least 67% must be both first-generation and low-income. All participants must demonstrate academic need according to at least one indicator, including high school GPA, placement test results, or college GPA. They are also required to meet with SSS staff members several times throughout each semester to engage in services such as academic advising, financial aid guidance, study skills assistance, tutoring, career counseling, and graduate school preparation. Once a student joins SSS, they remain part of the program until they graduate. The program's staff members closely monitor and track the academic and financial status of each participant.

Data and Interpretation: The following data relating to the TRIO SSS program are from the 2021-2022 academic year: the program served 275 undergraduate students. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the participants persisted to the 2022-2023 academic year, 93% were in good academic standing, and the six-year graduation rate was 71 percent. These rates are well above the rates that would be typical of disadvantaged students without this type of support.

2. **Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan.** Throughout the spring 2022 semester, Frostburg's President met with each academic department chair (along with the Provost, Academic Affairs staff, deans, and Admissions and Marketing staff) to discuss academic program enrollment trends and to learn more about departmental initiatives. Insights from these meetings were submitted to the University System of Maryland Board of Regents as part of Frostburg's Strategic Enrollment Management Plan in April 2022. During the fall of 2022, the President and Provost met with the college deans and the department chairs regarding the realignment of the university's three colleges. As a result of these meetings, the President and Provost have developed and presented a plan for college realignment to the campus community to better serve FSU's students and mission.

Data and Interpretation: The Strategic Enrollment Management Plan includes several initiatives established to make retention processes more effective. These initiatives and related data and interpretation are listed below.

- a. *Dual Advising Model:* As part of the dual advising model, student transition from orientation instructor as first faculty mentor to a faculty mentor in the student's major department has been improved. Orientation instructors and university advisors assess student commitment to their declared major (if any). The Center for Academic Advising and Retention (CAAR) notifies department chairs and program coordinators in January with lists of students ready to be assigned faculty mentors. CAAR conducted outreach to departments and colleges about the transition process, and any issues related to the transition were confronted (e.g., students moving from ORIE faculty mentors to departmental faculty mentors but not hearing from the department or new faculty mentor).
- b. *Advising and Retention Surveys:* CAAR revised and expanded the incoming first-year student survey (n= 517) to include questions to collection gauge students' perceptions of their potential to be successful in college and to gauge their concerns. A follow-up survey was administered mid-fall semester, re-asking questions (n=359). A large portion (28.13%) of the respondents noted they were Very or Extremely Concerned about their mental health. The intention was to compare perceptions with actual performance and experience within the first year.
- c. *Advising Students on Academic Probation:* New intensive advising programs for exploratory students was launched in the fall of 2022. In spring 2022, CAAR piloted the Academic Pathways Program for first-year students in academic probation and conducted a second iteration of the program spring 2023. The program consists of a "required" overview meeting, completion of a detailed academic recovery plan, bi-weekly one on one meetings with assigned University Advisor, and academic alert/midterm warning interventions. In spring 2023, CAAR implemented a new process for auditing credit accumulation and course progression. CAAR advisors communicated individualized course repeat and Satisfactory Academic Progress recommendations.
- d. *EAB Navigate:* In fall 2022, the EAB Navigate platform replaced the Beacon early alert system. As part of the transition, CAAR developed a new protocol for academic alerts and cases. The purpose of an academic alert is to prompt students to take action to improve academic performance in a course or courses. Faculty submitted alerts at the earliest indication of an academic challenge (ideally between weeks three and eight). All students with an alert receive an email with call-to-action encouragement to seek campus support resources. Some alerts, given a more serious nature, rise to the level of a case. Opened cases are assigned to faculty mentors and university advisors and include excessive absences and classroom behavioral concerns.

- e. *Tutoring Center*: Increased staffing in Tutoring Center: The director employed a graduate assistant in the Tutoring Center for the spring and fall 2022 semesters. Also in spring 2022, the Tutoring Center piloted supplemental instruction with physics courses, because traditional supplemental instruction was not cost effective. Instead, physics faculty adopted a model that implemented tutoring as part of the student participation grade in several courses and were pleased with the results of the pilot. A total of 15 students logged 30 hours of tutoring during spring 2022, the majority were enrolled in PHYS 261. Students enrolled in this course who attended tutoring passed at a rate of 83.3% compared to those who did not attend tutoring at 63.6%. The model has been continued with physics and the hope is that it will be a foundation to encourage other departments to adopt similar strategies.
3. **The ACHIEVE program**: Students are assigned a mathematics level (ML) according to the high school transcript data or an ALEKS placement exam. The lowest placement is ML0, and without the ACHIEVE program, all ML0 students would immediately enroll in Pre-Algebra Mathematics (DVMT 095) before being able to take a credit-bearing mathematics class. In the fall of 2022, Frostburg enrolled 24 ML0 students into a special section of Introduction to Mathematical Problem Solving (MATH 104).

Similarly, ML1 students whose majors required College Algebra (MATH 119) or Applied Mathematic for Business (MATH 118) were placed into special ACHIEVE sections of that course. In the fall of 2022, FSU enrolled 14 ML1 students into a special section of MATH 119. Also, in the spring of 2023, FSU enrolled 25 ML1 students into a special section of MATH 119 and 10 ML1 students into a special section of MATH 118.

Data and Interpretation: For fall 2022, 14 out of 24 ACHIEVE students passed MATH 104. For students with the same instructor, same grading scheme, and who started at a higher mathematics level, 16 out of 16 non-ACHIEVE students passed MATH 104. The Non-ACHIEVE students passed at a much higher rate than ACHIEVE students, 100% versus 58%. Additionally, 8 out of 14 ACHIEVE students passed MATH 119. While 17 out of 34 non-ACHIEVE students passed MATH 119. There was no significant difference in the pass rates between the two groups of students in MATH 119 for fall 2022.

For spring 2023, 5 out of 10 ACHIEVE students and 20 out of 23 non-ACHIEVE students passed MATH 118. The difference in pass rates were significant at the 0.05 level and an odds ratio of 0.15. Additionally, 16 out of 25 ACHIEVE students and 16 out of 20 non-ACHIEVE students passed MATH 119. There was no significant difference in pass rates for ACHIEVE versus Non-ACHIEVE students in MATH 119.

While the data analysis suggests that non-ACHIEVE students are more likely to pass than ACHIEVE students, the overall pass rates for ACHIEVE students is still around 60 percent. As such the majority of ACHIEVE students save time to graduation by eliminating a DVMT prerequisite. Success in ACHIEVE also presumably saves students money and improves morale.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Department of Mathematics is moving to a cohort model for ACHIEVE starting fall 2023 and is currently revising its placement criteria. There is great hope that such changes will result in more consistent positive outcomes for the ACHIEVE program as a whole.

Two initiatives that were implemented in the past five years that, upon measuring effectiveness, showed little to no impact.

- 1) Over the past several years, Frostburg has engaged in a partnership with Re-up, a company who assists in re-recruiting students that left the university. Now that FSU has more online program options, as well as many advancements and improvements to the customer relationship management system, the University has ended this partnership to bring this recruitment in-house. In the future, this will provide a cost-savings to the University by ending revenue sharing with an external partner and will provide additional opportunities to blend retention and enrollment strategies. A robust communication campaign is currently in development and will be finalized at the start of the academic year. This will impact Spring 2024 enrollment and forward. It is important to note that even if enrollment does not substantially increase, we can experience positive results by eliminating revenue sharing.
- 2) The EAB Navigate platform replaced the Beacon early alert system in fall 2022 and enabled streamlined alerts and referrals, integrated appointment scheduling and tracking, micro-messaging campaigns, and other case management tools.

Salisbury University

2023 Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress Toward the 55% Completion Goal

September 20, 2023

I. Most Effective Initiatives Tied to Student Success at Salisbury University

1) Back to Flying Scholarship

Debuting in the spring 2023 semester, Salisbury University launched the Back to Flying Scholarship. This initiative encouraged students who were placed on academic probation to rebound the following semester, helping students persist. Students placed on academic probation and achieved Dean's List status in the following semester would receive the one-time scholarship. This initiative was publicized in the initial probation notification, at the start of the following semester, prior to mid-semester grades, and in the final weeks leading up to finals. Funding for the initiative came from institutional aid.

At the conclusion of the spring 2023 semester, 17 students met the criteria and were awarded the Back to Flying Scholarship for the 2023/2024 award year. The 17 students represented 4.096% of the total number of students on probation. This is up considerably from the spring 2021 cohort where 7 students (1.707%) would have qualified had the program existed at that point, or 4 students (2.312%) in the fall 2022 term.

Also, the program aims to encourage persistence regardless of a student achieving Dean's List. In the spring 2022 semester, there were 148 students on probation for the first time. Of that group, 97 students returned for classes in the fall 2022 semester, representing a 65% persistence rate. One year later for the spring 2023 semester, there were 154 students placed on probation for the first time. Of that cohort, 111 students returned for the fall 2023 semester, representing a 72.1% persistence rate, well above the 5% increased persistence goal that was listed in the program proposal.

SU estimates that this program helped save approximately \$126,000 in revenue.

2) Financial Aid Targeting

For the 2022/2023 academic year, Salisbury University injected new funding by creating the Maryland Success Grant. Based primarily on financial need, the

\$1,000 award helped Maryland students who made satisfactory academic progress and had an expected family contribution under \$10,000 based on the 2022/2023 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Using these criteria and a goal of assisting students in persisting towards a degree, SU awarded \$1,610,801 in Maryland Success Grant to 1,819 students. Of those awarded the grant, 90.3% of students either continued into the fall 2023 semester or graduated at the end of the spring 2023 semester.

During the same period, Salisbury University injected \$474,522 in SU Financial Assistance to 467 students who had outstanding balances. We targeted students who had a manageable outstanding balance on their account and would otherwise be eligible to register for a future term or graduate. Of the students who were given the SU Financial Assistance, 95.3% of students either continued into the fall 2023 semester or graduated at the end of the spring 2023 semester.

3) Roster Verification

Salisbury University re-vamped its roster verification process. In addition to ensuring 100% compliance from faculty, a new workflow was created to intervene as early and as effectively as possible. Different communication plans were developed for each type of student who was noted as not attending a class. If a student was missing one class only, they were contacted directly, and guidance was provided. If they were reported as missing all but one class, the faculty leading the outlier class was contacted to ensure that the original coding was correct. If they were missing all classes, they were contacted in several ways. In addition, the IT Department created a “Signs of Life” dashboard that showed whether a student has engaged with campus at all. Engagement includes card swiping, door access, parking, online activity, and LMS log-in, among others. Together, this gives a better sense of whether the student plans to attend and what kind of assistance they may need to get them on track.

The benefits to this new process are numerous, including being a more efficient and effective way to verify enrollment. We can confidently drop the students we know are not attending, which means fewer issues with late withdrawals, fewer people being sent to collections for non-payment, and more available class sections for the students who are attending. It means more accurate retention data because we start with an accurate number of enrolled students. It also provides an opportunity to work directly with the students who have missed class. Because it happens early in the semester, we

can make schedule changes, provide guidance, or connect them with campus resources right away.

II. Initiatives Showing Little to No Impact

1) Group Advising

The Perdue School of Business has offered group advising sessions for first-year students for over ten years utilizing the Perdue Business Leaders. Sessions cover the Academic Requirements Report, the four-year Curriculum Guide, and the requirements for admittance into the Perdue School of Business professional program. During the session, Perdue students must submit a Program Planning form indicating the courses they wish to take in the next semester. After the sessions, the Perdue School of Business advisor reviews the form to make sure the courses are appropriate and will either activate the student's account for registration or schedule a time to meet with the student to discuss a plan further.

This past year, the Academic Advising Center attempted to replicate Perdue's success by piloting group advising for all low-risk first-year students. The goal was to provide academic advisors more time to focus on students within higher risk groups. All low-risk first-year students were invited to attend a group advising session via email.

The Fulton School of Liberal Arts and College of Health and Human Services offered virtual sessions only. The Henson School of Science and Technology had in-person sessions in a non-computer lab and virtual sessions. Both space and technology issues were problematic. Without a computer lab, students were forced to bring their own computers; many did not bring one and then failed to follow up with their Program Planning forms. Advisors had to reach out to remind students to send their course choices to be activated for registration or include them in their one-on-one appointment campaigns. In many cases, students who attended group advising still needed to schedule follow-up appointments due to the complexity of their academic goals. It was found that "low risk" did not necessarily mean that a student did not need a higher level of advising support. This created additional work for both the advisor and the students, as the latter had to attend two advising sessions instead of one. We still believe that this is a promising practice and plan to take what was learned and offer the option again this year.

2) Academic Advising Programming with Career Services

An Explorers Workshop was created in partnership between Academic Advising and Career Services to support Exploratory Studies students on their path to finding a major at Salisbury University.

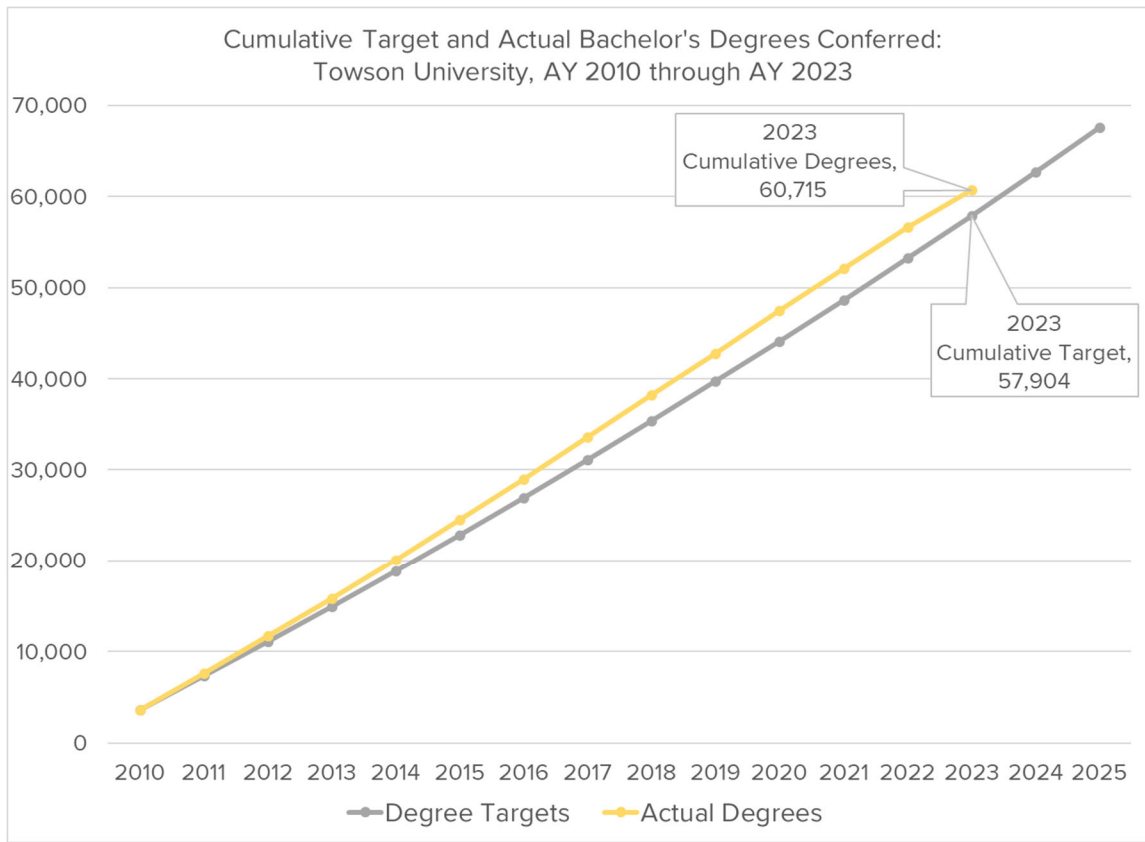
Career Services offered two workshops before Exploratory Studies students met with their academic advisor for spring 2023 Program Planning. The workshop included a brief presentation about Career Services, information about “Career Assessments” and “Interest Inventories,” the opportunity to complete an assessment, and assistance in scheduling an appointment to discuss the inventory further. This would provide students with different career and/or major options to explore and could lead to more intentional course selection when working with their academic advisor.

The event was advertised on social media and through printed posters hung around campus. All Exploratory Studies students were invited to attend on February 28 or March 1 via email from the Academic Advising Center. Students were asked to reserve their seats by clicking on a link via email. Only one student registered for the event, and they did not attend.

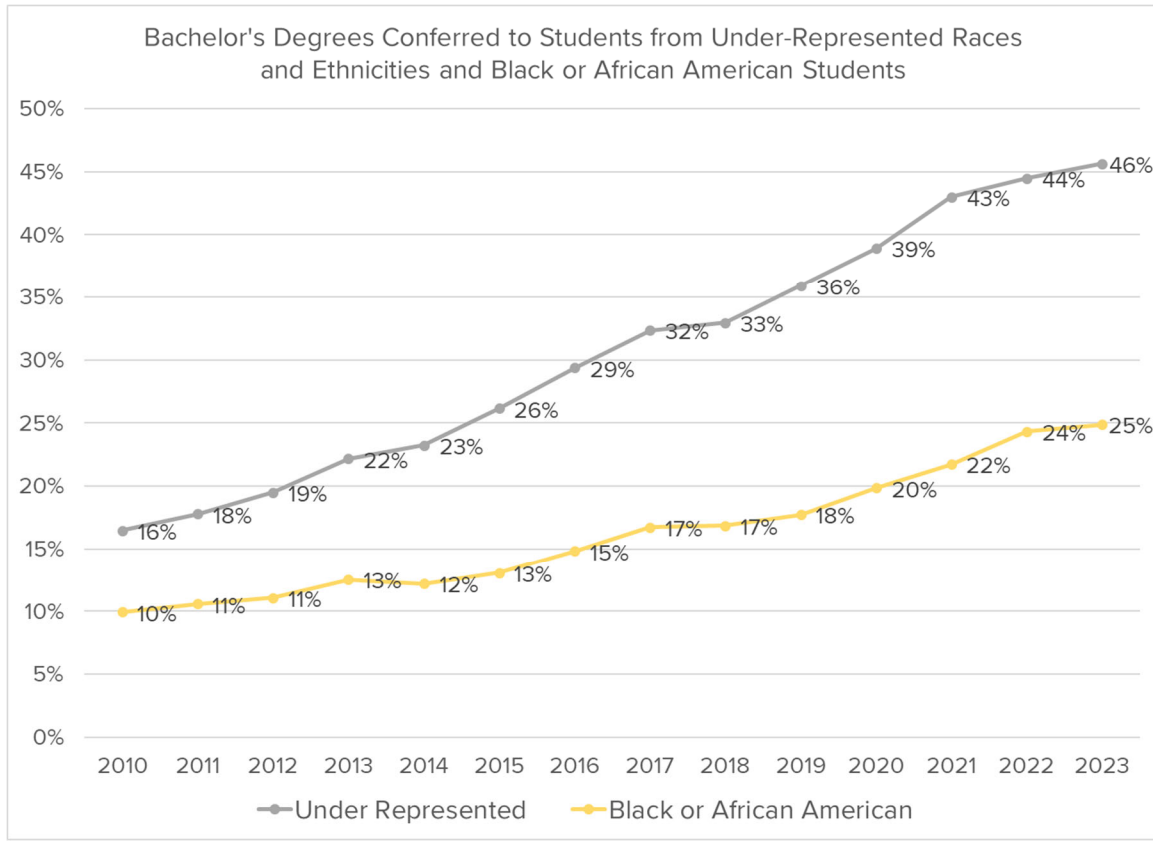
Towson University Progress Toward the State's 2025 Completion Goal September 2023

Towson University (TU) is pleased to report on our progress and initiatives supporting the state's 55% completion goal. To

TU has conferred 60,715 bachelor's degrees since the baseline academic year, outpacing the interim benchmark of 57,904 degrees by 4.9% or 2,811 degrees. TU remains on pace to meet or exceed the target of 67,567 bachelor's degrees by academic year 2025.



Furthermore, TU's degree recipients increasingly represent a more diverse portion of the state's population. Since the baseline year, the share of TU degrees conferred to students from historically underserved minority groups has increased by almost 30 percentage points, from 16% in AY 2010 to 46% in AY 2023. Correspondingly, the share of TU degrees conferred to Black or African American students has increased by 15 percentage points, from 10% in AY 2010 to 25% in AY 2023.



Institutional Responses to MHEC’s Prompts

The Maryland Higher Education Commission asked institutions to report on, “1) three most effective initiatives tied to student success, sharing the evidence of effectiveness and 2) two initiatives that were implemented in the past five years that, upon measuring effectiveness, showed little to no impact.”

Most Effective Initiatives

Early Intervention Efforts: During the spring 2023 semester, TU enhanced our early intervention efforts by requesting academic progress reports for students who:

- were below good standing (GPA < 2.0),
- first-semester transfer students, or
- first-year, first-time students.

These reports were sent to TU faculty after the first four weeks of the semester. The purpose was to identify students who have failed tests, quizzes, or assignments or who have a poor record of class attendance. Approximately 24,400 progress report requests were sent to faculty with 16,957 responses, for a 69% response rate. Out of those responses, 4,386 students (18%) were identified being “at risk.” This information made it possible for academic advisors and other campus support services to contact students and discuss issues and options. The results were that 70% of students identified to be at risk during spring 2023 continued their enrollment for fall 2023. There were 38 students in this group who graduated. This effort will continue for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Tutoring and Learning Center Supplement Instruction: With the support of grant funding, the Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC) was able to expand supplemental instruction (SI) leaders from 7 in 2021-2022 to 17 in 2022-2023 for classes with high D/F/W rates. Supplemental Instruction was offered for:

- Biology I: Introduction to Cellular Biology and Genetics,
- Introductory Biology for Health Professions,
- Human Anatomy and Physiology,
- Introduction to Microeconomics, and
- Statistics for Business and Economics.

Between 25-30% of students enrolled in SI classes participated in 1 or more SI sessions for a total of 287 students. Students who availed themselves to SI sessions were 15% less likely to earn a D or F or withdraw from the class. Overall, students who participated in SI had higher grades than students who did not participate. For example, 33% of SI students in Anatomy and Physiology earned Bs while only 9% of students who did not attend SI sessions earned Bs. The results were similar in all classes providing supplemental instruction.

Math Bootcamp: The main goals of the Math Bootcamp, which started with the freshmen class entering in fall 2021, are to reinforce students' grasp of prerequisite knowledge, help students adjust to the expectations of college level math courses, boost students' mathematical confidence, and to provide students with a support network of other incoming students. The first cohort of students consisted of STEM majors who placed into either Pre-Calculus or Calculus I based on their math placement test score. For STEM majors, passing MATH 119 or MATH 273 in their first semester is necessary to graduate on time. The bootcamp takes place the week before the fall semester begins. Activities include practice problem sessions, study skills sessions on topics like the differences between high school and college and challenge problem sessions with more difficult problems meant to encourage students to think more independently and creatively about mathematical topics. For the incoming class starting in fall 2022, all students taking MATH 119 or MATH 273 (not just those majoring in STEM) were included. Ultimately, the hope is to include other introductory math courses (though there will need to be a significant increase in funding to achieve). The results of the first cohort who completed bootcamp prior to taking MATH 273 had both higher mean course grades and a lower DFW rate than their first-year peers in MATH 273 who did not attend the Bootcamp. On a survey of the students who attended bootcamp, 31 of 38 responding students indicated that bootcamp helped them feel more prepared for their first semester at TU. The evaluation of the first bootcamp concluded that "Bootcamp contributed to students' perceived mathematics confidence. While this might not be directly correlated with student success it has been shown to increase students' persistence pursuing STEM degrees."

Initiatives with Minimal or Unknown Impact

EduLab Early Intervention Initiative: EduLab uses cutting-edge technology, including artificial intelligence, to identify students who have not engaged with TU's online academic services. Students who meet the criteria will be sent a one-time text message. How students respond will determine what personal outreach students need to provide support they may be lacking. The same system will also identify students who have not enrolled in the following semester after the registration period has ended. Outreach efforts can be made to those students for any assistance they may need to facilitate their re-enrollment.

Ad Hoc Referrals Pilot: Beginning in Fall 2023, all TU Faculty or Staff will be able to make ad-hoc referrals for students who may benefit from certain support services. The referrals will be sent to one of TU's student support centers (e.g., Library, Tutoring and Learning Center, etc.). Because students often have difficulty in advocating for themselves, they will be included in the communications during the referral process. The ad-hoc referral program's intentions are to provide students with accompaniment, rather than coddling them or abandoning them to figure out their own needs. As this is a new initiative, we are unsure of the volume of requests to expect in the inaugural semester, and our Academic Advising, Retention & Completion will be closely monitoring the referrals within our SSC software.

University of Baltimore

Fall 2023 Update to the Maryland Higher Education Commission
Best Practices and Annual Progress Toward the 55% Completion Goal
September 20, 2023

Guided by our strategic plan and aligned with university and college retention and student success plans, the University of Baltimore (UBalt) continues to make strides in student success and degree completion. We carefully track retention, graduation, attrition, and student success rates. We use evidence to guide our initiatives and direct and indirect measures to chart our progress. Over the past several years, UBalt has implemented many new initiatives while enhancing others in order to strengthen our focus on student success and the student experience. Presented below are: 1) three most effective student success initiatives; 2) two initiatives that have been implemented but need more assessment; and 3) new/enhanced student success initiatives.

Three Most Effective Student Success Initiatives:

1. **Expanded Embedded Peer-Support Programs:** An additional \$40K funding from the Department of Education PBI program has supported an increase in embedded tutoring services, UBalt's context-appropriate supplemental-instruction model of tutoring for traditionally challenging courses. Embedded programs include:
 - a. Embedded tutoring with regular review sessions in quantitative courses including accounting, psychology research methods, and operations research
 - b. Coaching in the First-Year Seminar
 - c. Writing Fellows in writing-intensive courses
2. **Enhanced Mental Health and Wellness Resources:** Our Student Assistance Program (SAP) is designed to provide students with an easily accessible, safe and confidential means to assist with issues that may interfere with school, work or family responsibilities 24/7 365 days a year. UBalt's Clinical Case Manager provides on-campus threat monitoring, assessment and response when needed and serves as the on-campus triage resource. Due to an increase in referrals and usage, in spring of 2023 the University approved an additional full-time Case Manager for Student Health position who focuses on supporting case management services as well as developing a more robust set of health-related programming and initiatives. The institution continued with its implementation of Mental Health First Aid. During AY22-23, the Office of Student Support partnered with the Office of Human Resources and the Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Technology to offer up to 60 staff and faculty the training annually in addition to the student focused trainings that had already been implemented. Lastly, additional focus has been placed on ensuring community members are aware of the mental health resources including an embedded link in the campus LMS, visible signage at all major entry points on campus and making the SAP promotional image the background on all campus computers.
3. **Expanded Mandatory Milestone Advising Initiative to Graduate Students:** This initiative requires students to see an advisor at distinct and critical times in their academic careers (45, 60, and 90 credits). Specific advising syllabi are used at each touch point and include topics such as academic progression, support services, career and internship opportunities, financial aid and graduate school preparation. In fall 2022, this initiative expanded from all undergraduates to include graduate students in specific programs.

Two Student Success Initiatives That Have Been Implemented But Need More Assessment:

4. **Continued Assessing Student Course and Service Modality Preference:** The University continued to assess student preference as it relates to course and service modality. Based on the data, courses continue to be offered in a variety of modalities to meet the needs of our different student populations. Student services are offered in a hybrid format which provide our primarily older working-adult student population the flexibility they need to interact with services, supports, and programs. While ongoing assessment continues, additional analysis is needed as it relates to student preference versus academic success by course modality.
5. **Increased Focus on Financial Literacy:** UBalt implemented a new strategy for financial literacy and payment planning by providing a financial literacy tool to help students understand the best ways to cover expenses and remain in control of their financial health. Financial Literacy: TV [<https://ubalt.financialaidtv.com>] is an online library of video clips, which address popular financial aid questions. UBalt established a Financial Clearance Initiative: An initiative to ensure students can cover their tuition (via direct payment, financial aid or third-party support) each semester. The goal is to encourage students to plan how to cover the cost of education. While programming continues, more intentional assessment of these efforts needs to be completed.

New or Expanded Student Success Initiatives:

6. **Expanded Use of Open Educational Resources (OER):** In 2023, The University received a \$10,000 Hewlett Foundation grant through The Driving OER Sustainability for Student Success (DOERS3) Collaborative that focuses on supporting student success by promoting free, and customizable OER. The grant focuses on implementing OER to achieve equity and student success. Additionally, the university continues to utilize funds provided by the Predominately Black Institution (PBI) grant to decrease textbook costs for students by increasing the number of courses with free or low-cost text options. Although an area of potential stre
7. **Continued to Implement the Grant for Primarily Black Institutions (PBI) and Student Success:** Secured \$250,000 per year for five years to support undergraduate student success. Two positions were hired: one to recruit students and another to support them once on campus. In addition, grant dollars are also funding Open Educational Resources (OER), embedded tutors, and software to support students learning in the field of accounting. Implemented a series of transfer student success seminars and student gatherings to create a sense of belonging at the University.
8. **Charged the Task Force to Advance University Engagement to Impact Student Success:** In Fall 2022, the President charged the Task Force to Advance University Engagement, a standing committee focused on the coordination and promotion of UBalt's engagement work to improve student success, degree completion, and job attainment. UBalt will provide students with more engagement opportunities to enhance their job-readiness skills as well as their connection to the University and community.
9. **Enhanced Credit for Prior Learning Processes:** A course was developed to allow students to build a portfolio of work products and documented experiences to be reviewed by faculty to earn credit with the goal being to shorten the degree completion time (course proposal to be submitted in fall 2023 but groundwork completed last academic year).

10. **Shortened Credits to Degree Completion:** Several programs have shortened the number of credits to degree while still maintaining excellence in the curriculum and meeting accreditation standards. Health Systems Managements and the MBA are developing 4 by 1 programs to accelerate programs to the master's degree and incentivizing students to complete the B.A.
11. **Planned Expansion of Salesforce Advisor Link (SAL) and the Student Success Hub:** In spring 2021, UBalt implemented SAL, a software platform that focuses on advisor and student success engagement. Students can interact with their academic advisors to make advising appointments, review and handle academic to-do items, and learn more about their Student Success Team. This is UBalt's primary student communication platform and system of engagement. Planning for other offices to be incorporated into the platform to improve engagement and communication has begun. Records, Bursar, Financial Aid, and Career and Internship Offices will be incorporated into the platform in AY23-24.
12. **Developed Additional Student Online Learning Preparedness Resources:** UBalt Ready was launched in August 2023 to replace the pandemic-generated Student Quickstart tool. UBalt Ready consists of modules including student preparedness for all modes of learning, information focused on first-gen student success such as Growth Mindset and the 'hidden curriculum,' educational technology and campus resources, and engagement and belonging modules to integrate freshmen and transfer populations to UBalt campus culture.
13. **Engaged a Task Force to Assess Challenging Courses:** A new taskforce convened in 2023 with renewed focus on developing multi-year data analysis of D/F/W (C/F/W for grad courses). Longitudinal data pre- and post-pandemic with a focus on modality provides insight into changes in previously established patterns with grade distribution and what constitutes a challenging course. Task force goals include identifying appropriate interventions at the course and program level, whether through curriculum redesign, changes to pedagogy, faculty development, or increased academic support.
14. **Enhanced Curriculum Support in Challenging Topics:** Academic support units developed instructional offerings to address changes in course requirements. As several programs have adopted Python programming language requirements in courses, students have struggled to master this new material which has not traditionally been part of academic support. Workshop development and updating for Python, Excel stats, statistics (Lumen), SPSS, and other quantitative tools/platforms are all part of an ongoing effort to increase student success by monitoring student workload requirements, particularly in quantitative courses which introduce regularly new learning platforms.
15. **Developed New and Revised Strategies for Financial Aid:** UBalt completed its first year of a revised scholarship model to better support recruitment. This strategy supports more first-time, full-time freshmen with higher academic credentials (3.0 GPA or higher) than prior years. UBalt continues to refine a new, need-based aid strategy to support recruitment and retention efforts for undergraduate students. These include merit-based Transfer Scholarships for both full- and part-time students. Students with the required cumulative GPAs and a minimum 30 transferable credits are awarded scholarships. Students who have completed an associate's degree are eligible for an additional scholarship. Merit scholarships are incremental to need-based aid. In addition, UBalt continues to offer a Near Completers Grant. Finally, UBalt rolled out a new veteran's scholarship, which together with VA benefits, allows veteran students to receive refunds in order to help with the total cost of education.

16. **Continued with the Implementation of the LiveChat feature in the Office of Student Support (OSS):** Beginning in Spring 2022, the Office of Student Support (OSS) implemented LiveChat allowing students a nearly real-time opportunity to ask questions, connect with resources, and express concerns. OSS team members staff the LiveChat by responding to questions and concerns as soon as they are received. Students simply go to the OSS website and click on the LiveChat icon to engage with a staff member who can assist them. As this feature is offered during the admission cycle it represents an opportunity for this type of outreach and support to continue throughout the student's academic life cycle.
17. **Enhanced Messaging Regarding the Basic Needs Virtual Resource Center:** The focus of the Basic Needs Virtual Resource Center is to provide students a one-stop virtual support stop for basic and emergency needs. Important resources such as the Campus Pantry, Career Closet, Student Emergency Assistance Fund, and the Student Assistance Program are featured. Additionally, a Basic Needs Advisory Council has been established to ensure greater communication and research sharing amongst the individual offices that play a role in supporting students basic needs. Amongst the topics currently being discussed by this group are cross training and a more streamlined intake process to better connect students with the web of resources available to them.
18. **Continued Integration Between the UBalt CARE Team and Early Alert:** The CARE Team is UBalt's cross-divisional team that focuses on students of concern. The important and sensitive work of this group has been aligned to the University's Early Alert system which is now part of all undergraduate courses. This integration allows for a more holistic approach to working with students who find themselves in difficult personal and academic situations. This collaboration has continued with the leadership of the two areas meeting periodically throughout the semester to discuss if there are students who would benefit from additional outreach and collaborating on trainings for the campus community about referrals.
19. **Implemented the Hub and Spoke Initiative for Veteran and Military-Affiliated Students:** Bob Parsons Veteran Center staff direct students to the experts in all areas of the institution and ensure that they receive timely support. Hub and spoke is a way of linking internal and external partners (i.e., "spokes") to offices of student services (i.e., "hub") to increase communication with students and ensure an equitable level of service across the institution and with community partners.
20. **Enhanced Students' Exposure to External Experts:** The University increased opportunities for our students to engage with a number of known external experts in the fields of law, public service, and business. The Voices of Public Service series as well as the Merrick School of Business expert series provided students with the opportunity to engage real-time with experts in various fields.
21. **Enhanced Opportunities for Students to Engage in Paid Internships:** New and/or enhanced programs provided by the Schaefer Center for Public Policy, the University's Career and Internship Center, and individual Schools/Colleges afforded more students the opportunity to engage in paid internships. These programs are expected to grow over the next year.

University of Maryland Global Campus

UMGC's contribution to the *2023 Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal* includes the following initiatives developed and partially or completely implemented since UMGC's last submission in 2022. These initiatives show evidence of increasing student success and/or appear to have significant potential for increasing student success in the future.

1. Adaptive Learning Tools

As of Fall 2022, all students at UMGC who take College Algebra and Introduction to Statistics are enrolled in adaptive learning tools. ALEKS is used for students in College Algebra and MyLab is used for student taking Introduction to Statistics. These tools allow students to practice and improve their skills at the level and progression that is appropriate for them.

As a result of the implementation of these adaptive tools, success rates in College Algebra have increased 12.2%. Although the success rate for students taking Introduction to Statistics has not increased significantly, the post implementation groups for both courses earned significantly higher grades and student withdrawal rates decreased overall. Additionally, the post implementation groups for both courses gave higher ratings in all course evaluation categories.

Both College Algebra and Introduction to Statistics can be used to satisfy the college-level math requirement at UMGC so these courses are popular with students. The adaptive learning tools have replaced the need for placement tests and "developmental" courses, thus saving students time and money while building self-efficacy to support future academic success.

2. Virtual Orientation

The UMGC Admissions office partnered with the Office of Student Success and First Term Experience staff to create a new virtual orientation which launched in June 2023 for all new MBA students and for all new stateside students starting classes in August 2023. The purpose of the orientation is to increase a sense of belonging at UMGC and an understanding of the variety of academic and support services offered at UMGC.

In the first Fall 2023 session at UMGC, 50.27% (2,640) of new students completed this virtual orientation. In the first Fall 2022 session, only 22.3% (1,000) of new students completed a previous version of an orientation that was available at that time. An upgraded version of the new virtual orientation is targeted to launch in late September 2023 and will feature single service sign-on, more customized UMGC content and videos, and a PeopleSoft checklist item created for all new stateside students to better track completion and related course success.

3. Worldwide Re-Engagement Student Communication

UMGC's Student Communications team is partnering with all UMGC campuses (stateside, Europe, and Asia) to re-engage students who have not registered for classes for at least three semesters ("out 3+ populations"). Students who have shown interest in re-enrolling by

responding to a UMGC communication are partnered with a Success Coach, Military Education Coordinator, or Overseas Advisor.

The stateside campaign drove UMGC's highest volume reply to text messaging ever. Overseas relocation survey response rates were 13.6% for Europe and 12.9% for Asia – an exceptional engagement rate for out 3+ populations. Over 1,200 updated phone numbers were provided by students, greatly increasing the chance of connecting with those students by phone outreach.

University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Three most effective initiatives tied to student success:

Initiative 1 – Provide supplemental support for English & Math courses

Use of a Composition Coordinator to Improve Performance in English Courses

Over the past several years the pass rates for English 102 (Principles of Composition II) and English 310 (Advanced Composition) have been low. Realizing student performance in these courses could be attributed to the pandemic and its effects on formal education, the University developed an initiative to address this matter. During the 2022-23 academic year, a Composition Coordinator was hired to increase the number of students who successfully complete these courses. The coordinator was skilled in composition pedagogy and was able to coordinate over twenty instructors teaching over seventy sections of composition, speech and advanced writing courses. This brought consistency to the delivery of these specific courses and others. A comparison of student performance during the Fall 2021 semester and the Fall 2022 semester noted an improvement in the percentage of students who passed these courses. There was a 16.4% and 21.9% increase in the percentage of students who passed English 102 and English 310 respectively.

Initiative 2 – Use of Supplemental Instruction to Improve Student Performance in Math Courses

At the beginning of the Fall 2022 semester, the Department of Mathematics began a Supplemental Instruction Initiative to address the pass rate in Math 102 (Applications of College Math) and Math 109 (College Algebra). A tutor was assigned to attend the lectures for each of the sections of Math 102 and 109. This allowed the tutors to form relationships with a smaller set of students, offer tutoring during the lecture, and to create their own mini tutoring sessions with the students in their assigned sections. In addition to the Supplemental Instruction Initiative, the Department of Mathematics also implemented a Learning Pods Initiative, which pairs a tutor with a small group of two to three students. As a result of the Supplemental Instruction Initiative in conjunction with the other efforts of the Mathematics Department, an increase in the number of students who successfully completed these courses was noted in a comparison analysis. There was a 14 % and 23.3% increase in the percentage of students who passed Math 102 and Math 109 respectively compared to Fall 2021.

Initiative 3 – Engage Stop-outs

UMES has partnered with ReUp Education as a method to re-engage our near-completers and/or students who previously dropped out of UMES. Since launching the program in 2018 our results show the following (83 students have re-enrolled, 7 have graduated, 15 are currently enrolled, and recovered revenue of tuition in the amount of \$623,000). As we re-engage with our students, we strive to obtain information surrounding the barriers that impacted their education while working towards establishing avenues for re-enrollment. The top 2 reasons self-reported by learners for stopping out are: Finances (24%) and Life Balance (23%). ReUp coaches are responsive to nuances students express about these two concerns and actively help them discover solutions and a path forward towards degree completion.



PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHED DEC 2018

Cumulative Results



83
Students enrolled



151
In pipeline*



32k
Activities with students



7
Students graduated

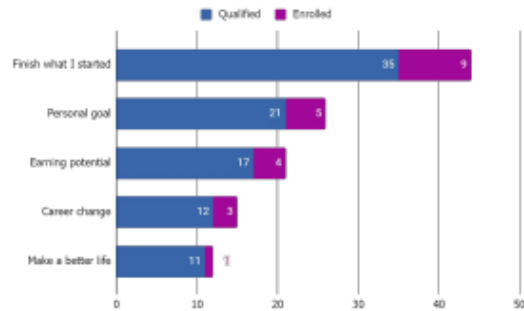


\$623k
Recovered tuition**

Spring '23 Enrollment 15 Active



Motivation to Return



Updates to the MHEC "Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal" Report Morgan State University

Morgan State University has increased its six-year graduation rate from 29% (2005 cohort) to 41% (2018 cohort). The University experienced its highest graduation rate on record at 46.3% for the 2014 cohort. Morgan has also now had 5 straight years above a 40% graduation rate, which has only happened one other time in our recorded data. Beginning with the fall 2010 cohort, Morgan has achieved a historic institutional record of having retention rates above 70% for twelve consecutive years

Morgan has a well-established approach to enhancing student success, including: a six-week summer bridge program for students with demonstrated potential but whose SAT scores and/or GPA do not meet the University's criteria for admission (CASA Academy); a Tutoring Center that offers free one-on-one online and in-person peer tutoring; a mandatory four day summer freshman orientation experience (Access Orientation); and an Advising Hotline, a resource to help students resolve academic advising concerns or request additional assistance for academic advising matters.

One of our most effective initiatives to promote student success has been the Starfish Early Alert and Response system, implemented in spring 2014. Students can schedule appointments with their advisor and access a record of their faculty, mentors, and advisors' outreach efforts and recommendations. Faculty, with little change to their current workload, are able to trigger early alerts for students in their courses with just one screenshot per class, and are able to see who on campus has followed-up on their early alert(s). Advisors can set up office hours, manage assigned advising cases, document advising appointments. Our past research has shown that in classes where the instructor uses Starfish, over 50% of students with mid-term grades of D raise their final grades to C and a third of students with mid-term grades of F raise their final grades to C.

Another of our most effective initiatives has been implementing Degree Works, a comprehensive degree planning and auditing system that was fully implemented in fall 2016. Degree Works gives students and advisors accurate, 24-7 access to a student's progress through their degree program and they can use the "what-if" feature to assess the impact on their degree progress if they change their major.

One of the most critical student success initiatives has been the "50 by 25" Initiative: Getting More Students Across the Finish Line," a campaign to increase Morgan's graduation rate to 50% by the year 2025. This University-wide initiative focuses on three central themes: 1) Advising and Degree Planning; 2) Faculty Development and Course Redesign; and 3) Beyond Financial Aid (BFA). The "50 by 25" Campaign started with an all-day deep dive in spring 2016 and has continued with 2-4 hour long check-in meetings once per semester for the cabinet, deans, chairs, and senior administrators to review the most recent student success data and to report-out on select student success initiatives across the university.

In terms of initiatives that showed little to no impact, this is difficult to determine. We have implemented so many initiatives over the past 12 years that it is hard to ascertain the impact of any one of them, except in cases like Starfish, noted above, where there are system reports that can be analyzed. We are in the process of hiring two data positions that should be able to help us both better operationalize the data that we have and better assess the impact of particular initiatives.

AY 23 Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal

Goucher College is committed to student success, and to this end, the college has implemented initiatives aimed at improving the completion rate of undergraduate students. Described below are updates on programs implemented in the past five years and a summary of new initiatives designed to improve the success of our students.

Success Advising Model

As part of The Goucher Edge, our distinctive approach to undergraduate education, every student at Goucher is assigned a success team that includes a success advisor, a career advisor, a first-year mentor, and beginning sophomore year, a global education advisor and a faculty advisor within the major. We are beginning our third year using this advising model. This year our success teams are fully staffed, with the addition of two new success advisors, a new assistant director of accessibility services who will assist students with accommodations, and a library advisor. In addition, an Assistant Director of Fellowship and Success Advising was added to the Success Team. The Assistant Director of Fellowship and Success Advising will recruit students who may be interested in prestigious national fellowships and will advise them throughout the process. The new Fellowship Advisor will also coordinate teams of faculty and staff who will provide feedback on materials and conduct mock interviews with students. With this new role, we hope to increase student awareness of these opportunities, particularly among students who may be first generation and unfamiliar with fellowship opportunities and how to apply for them.

Revision of Letters of Academic Standing

An audit of the academic standing policy and procedures revealed that our academic standing procedures were out of alignment with our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. The procedures did not outline a clear process to an attainable path to success. Students and parents often did not understand the academic standing categories and the impact of academic standing on student success. As a result of the audit, the academic policies committee revised letters informing students of their academic standing. The intention of these letters is to warn students if their GPAs fall below a 2.0 and to provide support. However, many students perceived the letters as punitive.

Our new psychologically attuned letters are written in a manner intended to reduce feelings of shame and embarrassment. The letters frame probation as a process of learning and growth, not as a punishment. They are intended to convey that students belong in our institution and that they are not alone. The letter acknowledges the many reasons students might struggle and includes testimonials from students who have gone through the probationary process and have become academically successful. The goal of these letters is to warn students, but also to outline a clear and attainable path for academic success.

The Launch Network

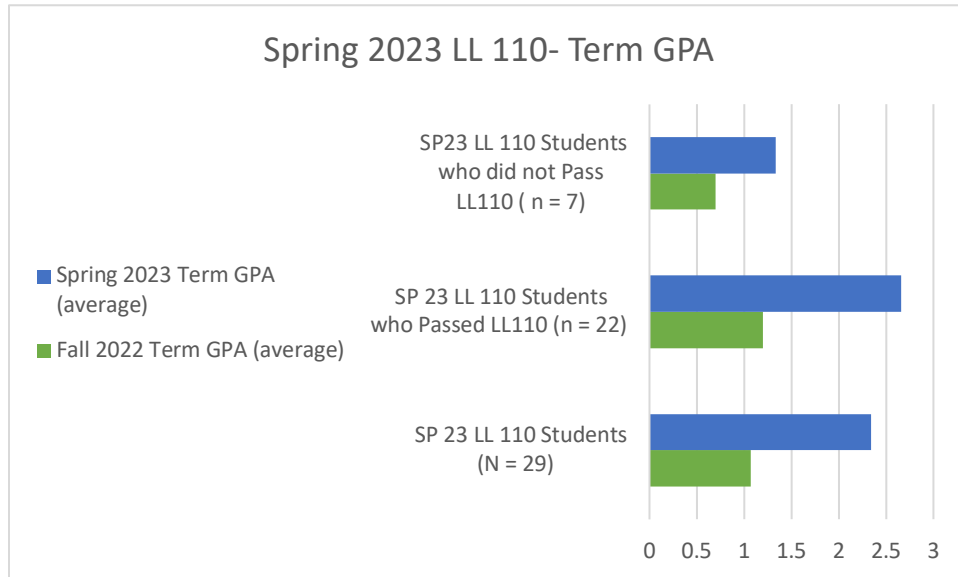
The Launch Network, a four-year cohort-based program for first generation and Pell eligible students, has begun its third year. This past January, a **Sophomore Retreat** was held for second-year LAUNCH students focused on re-engaging them with key resources as they begin considering/making important decisions (i.e., major selection and career path) and planning for those transformative experiences (e.g., internships and study abroad) associated in year two. The sophomore retreat consisted of workshops (1) highlighting challenges experienced in the sophomore year (i.e., sophomore slump); (2) CEO-led discussions of internship resources; (3) global education conversations about study abroad planning and available program options; (4) visioning and goal setting exercises; (5) a panel discussion with Goucher faculty members; and (6) cohort teambuilding activities at an off-site location. An assessment of the retreat is underway.

Incoming LAUNCH students had an opportunity to connect with members of the newly formed Black and African American Alumni of Goucher College (BAAAGC) group over dinner sponsored by the alumni association governing council.

We have collected data on the cohort of LAUNCH students who entered Goucher in the fall of 2021. As of spring 23, we had retained 84% of this cohort. This compares to a retention rate of 63.5% of the peer group of first-generation and Pell eligible students who entered in fall 2021.

Learning-to-Learn Course for Students Experiencing Academic Difficulties

Students who are struggling academically, i.e., grade point averages below 2.0, are enrolled in a two-credit Learning-to-Learn course taught by learning specialists in our academic center for excellence. In the course, students practice cognitive-based study strategies and informed decision making to support their academic success and personal growth. Students learn essential skills for success in college and apply what they learn to their other classes. As part of the course, students are asked to craft a “statement of learning philosophy” that will serve as a compass for their future academic work. Preliminary data, reported in AY22, indicated the course had a positive impact on the grade point average for students who successfully completed the course. Further AY23 assessment of student outcomes support preliminary findings: the grade point average of students enrolled in the course improved after completing the course. Even among students who did not pass the course, there was a marginal improvement in their grade point average.



This year we are inviting students whose GPAs may be above the 2.0 threshold but who want to improve their academic performance to enroll in the course.

Academic Outreach

As part of our student success platform, academic progress reports (APRs) are issued for students during week 5 and week 9. The success advisor or a member of the Academic Center of Excellence reaches out to students who have received APRs of Concern. Students with two or more APRs are encouraged to schedule a meeting with their advisor who assesses the situation and provides information about resources on campus, both academic and nonacademic. The Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies also runs weekly reports of students who have received multiple ad-hoc APRs of Concern. Similar outreach is done with these students.

The college also has a Care Team, co-led by the Associate Vice President for Student Success, the Dean of Students, and the Director of Academic Advising and Support, that meets regularly to review students of concern. This team looks at students who have received more serious APRs from their instructors, including those which indicate a consistent pattern of attendance problems and those who are likely to fail a course. Also, success advisors are able to elevate cases (within our student success platform) to the Care Team if they have continued concerns and/or students are non-responsive. The leaders of the Care Team assign follow-up to each case, often involving key stakeholders in the life of a student, such as their athletic coach, the international advisor, or the director of the LAUNCH network. The Care Team leaders involve parents, as appropriate, and take steps to engage students of concern in the process of determining next steps to remain at Goucher.

Goucher Prison Education Partnership (GPEP)

Incarcerated students, who enroll in the GPEP program part-time, encounter many obstacles to completing degrees within six years. In July 2023, Goucher faculty taught the first summer semester program inside the prisons, and in January 2024, GPEP will offer the first winter semester inside the prisons. These initiatives bring the average time to graduation from 8 plus years to around six years.

Registration Follow-up

The Office of Retention & Student Success has a process in place for following up with all students who are eligible to register but do not complete this process during the designated registration period. This process involves success advisors (who are professional staff) as well as faculty advisors, email reminders, and special “alerts” set up within our student success software. The Office of Retention & Student Success problem solves for various “holds” that might be on a student’s record – particularly for billing holds. As part of our process, the Retention & Student Success Team meets with key personnel in Student Financial Services and reviews those students with billing holds. This past semester, in the period between May 1 and August 1, an additional 62 students registered, representing 24% of those who had not originally registered. Members of the Retention & Student Success team meet with personnel in Student Financial Services on a periodic basis to review a list of students with billing holds. In the spring, the Office of Retention & Student Success also led an effort to provide students with easily accessible, real-time information about any holds on their record that keep them from registering, including who to contact with questions about holds.

Limited Success for Winter and Summer Sessions for near completers

Goucher was fully online during AY21; our graduation rate continues to be negatively impacted by the number of students who opted to take a leave of absence instead of enrolling in online courses during the pandemic. To provide expanded opportunities for students to stay on track for graduation, the college increased course options during January and summer sessions and partnered with Acadeum to offer a wider range of courses online. It does not appear these options have had a measurable impact on our graduation rates.

Goucher will continue to assess these initiatives and make adjustments to ensure the success of our students.

HOOD COLLEGE BEST PRACTICES AND ANNUAL PROGRESS TOWARD THE 55% COMPLETION GOAL

2023 Report to the Maryland Higher Education Commission

September 20, 2023

Hood College supports the State of Maryland's completion goal and presents in this report our institution's most recent and effective strategies for supporting this statewide effort. Initiatives that have not effectively supported this goal are also presented.

Most Effective Strategies Tied to Student Success

Purposeful integration of student success strategies in all first-year seminar (FYS) courses – First-year seminar is a high-impact practice and cornerstone of the College's core curriculum required for all undergraduate degree recipients. FYS faculty may target any theme or discipline in their course. Depending upon enrollment approximately 20 FYS options may be available for students to choose from based upon their interests. Despite their distinct theme, each FYS course must achieve a consistent set of learning outcomes across all sections. And, beginning in the fall of 2022, each FYS course is required to embed and reinforce specific academic skills within their curriculum. These skills include: time management, study skills, note taking, academic integrity/avoiding plagiarism, reading for understanding, critical thinking, growth mindset, mental health/wellness, etc. We chose these skills because institutional data confirm that students on academic probation, particularly first-year students, report these among the most significant factors contributing to their academic struggle. Giving students the tools to address these challenges as they begin their academic journey at Hood and providing a structured framework to implement these skills in FYS have contributed to the success of this initiative. FYS faculty, as a cohort, engage in ongoing professional development and training, and are provided a wealth of instructional resources to reinforce the implementation and assessment of the FYS curriculum.

Having all first-year seminar instructors serve as academic advisors for their students – At Hood College, academic advising is a faculty-led effort. Students are assigned an advisor in their chosen field of study to support their planning and progression in the major. First-year students, however, may not have selected a major and/or they may wish to change that major for a variety of reasons. To that end, and to support first-year student academic exploration and purposeful academic planning (which is an essential part of successful degree completion), Hood requires all first-year seminar instructors to serve as academic advisors for the students enrolled in their class. This equates to an additional advising load of approximately 15 students per FYS faculty member. Advisor training and support is provided to the FYS faculty cohort through the Student Success Center, in partnership with the Director of First Year Seminar. And, due to the bi-weekly meeting schedule of the FYS class, advisor and students are meeting together on a regular basis.

Counseling services – Hood College enjoys a thriving partnership with the Frederick Health System, which is responsible for providing health services to our students at an urgent care clinic neighboring the campus. Counseling services were an initial part of the College's partnership agreement with Frederick Health with counseling services offered at the off-campus

HOOD COLLEGE BEST PRACTICES AND ANNUAL PROGRESS TOWARD THE 55% COMPLETION GOAL

clinic. However, based on student feedback, the College transitioned counseling services back to campus from the off-campus site in order to provide more immediate and direct services to students in need of mental health support. Since that move was made, we have witnessed a 66% increase in utilization of counseling services by students. Additionally, our data show that 22% of those students served in counseling services are first-year students. Collectively, these metrics confirm that we are now better able to connect students to mental health care, which is essential for student success and progression.

These and other initiatives the College has deployed have yielded an 80% first-year student retention rate this year, which is a 7% increase over our five-year historical average of 73%. And, successful progression past the first year will support degree completion.

Strategies with Little to No Impact

Peer mentors for all new first-year students – Several years ago, the College attempted a comprehensive peer mentor program where all first-year students were assigned a peer mentor. The mentor's role was to serve as an informational go-to person, as well as provide an important social connection for new students. We discovered, however, that such a comprehensive approach was neither effective nor sustainable. Peer mentors struggled to meet the full scope for first-year student needs, and first-year students responded via survey that the experience had little to no impact on their success or progression. Thus, the program has been discontinued.

Group counseling sessions for students – Recognizing the positive impact of relocating counseling services back to campus (discussed above), the Counseling Center launched a new group counseling program specifically targeting one of the primary mental health challenges our students face; anxiety. Unfortunately, this group counseling approach did not appeal to our students. Students preferred private counseling sessions. This program is being reimaged.

Best Practices Report
Dr. Boyd Creasman, Provost
Mount St. Mary's University

As a private institution of higher education in the state of Maryland, Mount St. Mary's University seeks to contribute to the state's 55% completion goal. The best practices described below are probably best suited for four-year institutions, but some of the practices can be helpful to all Maryland institutions of higher learning.

Best Practice 1—Leverage summer school to keep students on the path to graduation.

Rather than dismiss students who fall out of good standing at the end of the spring semester, Mount St. Mary's created a summer dismissal alert program, which provides qualified students with the opportunity to retake classes during summer to increase credit hours and improve grade point averages. Since this practice was instituted in 2018, over 80% of students who successfully complete summer courses have returned for the fall semester. Some students have even graduated earlier than expected.

As a result of this initiative, The Mount has discounted summer school to be more in line with that of public institutions. By envisioning summer school as a retention strategy, the Mount reached a four-year graduation rate of 62% in 2022. Summer school enrollment has increased for both traditional and adult undergraduate students.

Best Practice 2—Provide more academic “guard rails” for students in introductory courses with high DFW rates.

Given a perceived decline in college readiness due to the disruption of the pandemic, it is crucial that institutions provide additional academic support for their students. For years at Mount St. Mary's CHEM 101 was one of the most highly challenging courses. In 2022, the Mount began requiring one-hour recitation sessions of all CHEM 101 students. In these sessions, students review key concepts, prepare for upcoming exams, and ask questions of the recitation instructor. While all of the results of this effort are not yet known, there was a six-year high in the average exam scores in this challenging course in Fall 2022.

The Mount has also enrolled students with below a 3.0 high school GPA in Summit Scholars courses designed to develop key academic skills, such as critical thinking, writing, and reading comprehension. The program provides students with a second advisor to enhance student success. First-year retention reached 70% with the Fall 2018 cohort, around five points higher than expected for students with high school GPA's in this range.

Best Practice 3—Set students up for success with strategic course scheduling.

Starting in Fall 2022, Mount St. Mary's incoming first-year students with below a 3.0 high school GPA have been given a less challenging schedule during their first semester than students were in previous years. Two examples will illustrate this strategy. Business majors in this category enroll in Economics or Accounting, but not both courses during their first semester. Science majors are scheduled for Biology or Chemistry, but not both. Instead, most of these students take Summit Scholar courses (mentioned above) to ensure their college readiness. The Mount saw a 3% increase in the first-year retention rate over the previous year in the Fall 2022 cohort. During their first semester, it is imperative to schedule potentially at-risk students into courses in which they are more likely to succeed.

Two Strategies That Did Not Work as Well

Students Studying Remotely

During the 2020-21 academic year, the Mount generously approved students to study from home. While this approach was necessary for financial and personal reasons, the retention rate was 10% lower among students who studied remotely. At the time, there were many studies that reported that college students were often placed into caregiving roles when studying remotely. The Mount's retention rates for African-American women during this time dropped by nearly 10 points.

Intermittent Financial Support

Mount students in financial distress benefit from a Good Samaritan fund that can help with financial emergencies, textbook purchases, and various essential expenditures. While these funds assist students with short-term financial needs, one-time financial support is often not enough. They are a short-term fix for what is often a long-term problem. Affordability is often the largest factor in attrition in exit surveys. Students are much more likely to persist when they benefit from programs like the state's Guaranteed Access Grant.



NOTRE DAME
OF MARYLAND
UNIVERSITY

Report on Best Practices and Annual Progress toward the 55% Completion Goal

Notre Dame of Maryland University's ("NDMU" or the "University") mission is to "educate leaders to transform the world." As a part of that mission, the University's student success initiatives focused on the retention and graduation of students.

NDMU's Trailblazers Program provides ongoing, essential support to help first-generation traditional undergraduate students be prepared for success in a college environment and earn their degrees. The Trailblazers program is focused on data supported retention and academic success initiatives, including programs on FAFSA completion and financial aid, financial planning, time management, academic planning, career services, etc. Year-after-year, Trailblazer participants demonstrate positive impacts from their participation in the program and these positive outcomes are seen in higher retention and higher graduation rates when compared to other first-generation students who do not opt into the program. For example, for the 2016 cohort, participating first-generation students retained at 92% compared to 75% for non-participants; and graduated in four-years at 53% compared to 47%. Similarly, for the 2017 cohort, participating first-generation students retained at 69% compared to 68% for non-participants and graduated in four-years at 46% compared to 44%. Participating students also have similar 1st YR and cumulative graduation GPA rates.

NDMU received a Title III Strengthening Institutions Program Grant via the U.S. Department of Education beginning October 1, 2019. NDMU has utilized the funds with a focus on student retention and completion. As a part of the grant, NDMU has developed and enhanced our internal data systems and reporting capacity, as well as implemented a student retention and engagement system, Navigate. The system provides students, advisors, and other offices a single portal and interface for student engagement, academic supports, advisement, retention related analytics, and more. This includes Early Alerts, Predictive Analytics, and flagging at risk students for interventions by student retention staff and other University offices. This effort is supported by the University's new Case Management team which was established in Fall 2022 to review student cases that primarily involve non-emergency concerns (e.g. class attendance, financial and belonging concerns, etc.) related to students' overall well-being and academic success.

As a part of the Title III grant, in Fall 2021, the University opened a new Student Success center on campus to serve as a centralized location for student academic support. In addition to serving as a physical location for students to study individually or in small groups, the Student Success center provides peer tutoring and writing support on a variety of subjects. Student Success Center staff also host several face-to-face and online academic support workshops throughout the year on topics such as study skills, time management, overcoming procrastination, etc. Beginning in Fall 2023, the Student Success Center will add loaner laptops and textbooks for students to use in the Center to reduce barriers to academic support and achievement. NDMU is also introducing a new online tutoring resource, BrainFuse, to provide students with 24-hour

resources and support. The University is tracking student engagement with the Student Success Center to identify the impacts of the program.

In Fall 2023, NDMU launched a new first-year-experience (FYE) in order to introduce incoming first year and transfer students to the campus and its resources in order to increase student engagement before coming to campus. The program included team building activities, signing up for campus services (such as Navigate), and getting introduced to our Learning Management System. 100% of the incoming first-year class signed up to use Navigate. Additionally, in Fall 2023, NDMU will open a new Student Testing Center on campus to further support students with disabilities. The Testing Center will serve as a physical space and resource for students with academic accommodations to ensure they are provided an equitable opportunity to fulfill their academic requirements while also reducing the burden on individual faculty members.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Greg FitzGerald, Chief of Staff, at (410) 532-5109 or gfitzgerald@ndm.edu, or Dr. Martha Walker, Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs, at (410) 532-5321 or mwalker12@ndm.edu.

2023 Report to the Maryland Higher Education Commission — September 20, 2023

Stevenson shares the State's goal of expanding educational access and attainment for all Marylanders and supports and contributes to Maryland's 2025 completion goal. Stevenson's 2023 report reviews three of our most effective initiatives and two initiatives that showed little impact in supporting student success and degree completion.

Effective Student Success Initiatives

1. **Academic Coaching and Mentoring Program:** In Spring 2023, Stevenson piloted a new Academic Coaching and Mentoring (ACM) program for student-athletes who were placed on academic warning. The program included a standardized assessment to learn more about the specific difficulties that students were having so that they could be referred to the appropriate resources on campus. This initial intake was followed by weekly or biweekly individual appointments where students were coached on academic habits such as time management, proactive communication with faculty, making a study plan, and overcoming procrastination. Sessions were highly individualized based on the needs of each student.

The pilot program served 17 student-athletes who were all placed on academic warning, meaning that their cumulative GPA had fallen below a 2.0. Student participation and engagement in the program was tracked and 12 of the 17 were classified as engaged participants, meaning that they attended at least half of the sessions and completed the main activities such as goal setting, the master syllabus, and mid-term progress report. The remaining 5 students attended some sessions, but did not regularly attend the required meetings or complete one or more of the activities. Of the 12 students who engaged in the program, the average semester GPA was a 2.39 and 10 of the 12 (83%) earned a semester GPA above a 2.0 and 8 of the 12 (67%) were able to get back into good academic standing by raising their cumulative GPA to above a 2.0.

Given the promising results of this pilot, the ACM Program is being expanded to all students in Academic Year 2023-2024.

2. **Student Registration and Retention Operations Team:** In August of 2022, Stevenson established a cross-divisional operations team led by the Vice Provost for Student Success to work collaboratively to enhance student success and retention. The team meets biweekly and includes representatives from Admissions, Athletics, Faculty Governance, Financial Aid, President's Office, Registrar's Office, Residence Life, Student Accounts, and Student Affairs. Throughout the past year, the team has reviewed processes and procedures that impact student registration with the intention of removing barriers, centralizing and streamlining workflows, and ensuring that our practices are truly student-centered.

This work led to reimagining our Summer Orientation program, enhancing our onboarding process for new transfer students, revising our support of students on financial aid probation, and adjusting the timelines of several of our processes. The collaborative work of this team yielded an improvement in student retention and a reduction in summer melt.

3. **Resource Central:** The Center for Student Success created *Resource Central*, an online SharePoint site for students that contains internal and external resources to support their academic and personal success. The resources include:

- An overview of the Center for Student Success, academic advising, academic support, and accessibility and disability services.
- Links to Stevenson’s tutoring, writing, and testing centers for students to schedule appointments and learn more information.
- Resources on time management, planning and organization, study skills, and overcoming procrastination.
- Wellness resources on self-care, stress management, mental health, and the importance of nutrition, exercise, and sleep.
- Information for student-athletes including tips for balancing roles, mental toughness, injury recovery, and sports nutrition.
- Links to services on campus such as Financial Aid, Student Accounts, Residence Life, and other frequently utilized departments.

Since its launch in Spring 2023, there have been over 2,700 visits to the site and 452 unique users. The most commonly visited pages are Academic Support, the Academic Link Learning Center, and the Student-Athlete page. In the coming year, the Center for Student Success will continue to expand the content of *Resource Central* and promote student use of the site and its resources.

Less Effective Student Success Initiatives

1. **1-Credit Course: Strategies for Academic Success.** Stevenson University piloted a one-credit Strategies for Academic Success course that was offered to students who were on academic warning and probation. The content of the course included modules on understanding academic requirements, time management, study skills, and establishing good academic habits. This group format was not as effective as individualized coaching and mentoring both in terms of engagement and outcomes. The course is being reimaged with a completely revised syllabus and more opportunities for individualized support.
2. **Live n’ Link: Tutoring in the First-Year Residence Halls.** The Academic Link Learning Center piloted a program to offer tutoring in the first-year residence halls with the goal of increasing utilization of learning support services. The program was not embraced by our students and the utilization rates were quite low with only 13 students utilizing the program in the Fall 2022 semester. Some adjustments were made for spring so that sessions were offered only during mid-terms and finals week, and only 4 students utilized the program. As a result, this initiative has been discontinued.

Stevenson University is committed to meeting all students where they are and supporting them in their efforts to earn a degree. Stevenson’s career-focused academic programs yield graduates well-prepared to enter Maryland’s workforce and contribute to advancing and enriching the community.