TOPIC: Institutional Reports on Progress in Closing the Achievement Gap.

COMMITTEE: Education Policy

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING: June 6, 2012

SUMMARY: On December 7, 2001 the Board of Regents approved the System-wide Plan for Minority Achievement, 2001-2010, and directed the presidents to prepare institutional minority achievement plans. Those plans were developed and received by the Board on July 10, 2002. Between June 2004 and May 2005, institutional reports were compiled and submitted as the USM's response to the Maryland Higher Education Commission's (MHEC) request for institutional minority achievement initiatives to be included in the Maryland OCR Partnership Agreement Report for 2005. The June 5, 2007 report to the Board encompassed summary information on the status of institutional plans and actions for academic years 2003-2004 through 2005-2006.

In November 2007, the USM hosted a statewide conference of political, community, business, and education leaders to set a course for Maryland to cut in half the achievement gap by 2015 and eliminate it by 2020. As a follow-up to the conference, Chancellor William Kirwan asked the USM's 10 undergraduate-degree-granting institutions to develop achievement gap strategies that include institutional data analysis and needs assessments, along with specific goals and timelines to reduce the gap between low-income and high-income students, under-represented minority students and majority students, and African-American males and white males. Each institution was provided with data on 1) USM retention and graduation rates and 2) institution-specific retention and graduation rates to develop their plans. Thus, in 2008-2009, each institution began work planning and implementing an Achievement Gap Strategy. During 2009-2010, each submitted its first annual report on USM institutional progress during the past year on closing the achievement gap. Each report defined the achievement gap at that institution and provided a description of institutional initiatives to close the achievement gap.

This report is a summary of those initial institutional reports. The Committee will receive annual updates on progress in addressing the achievement gap through the target date of 2020. Copies of the complete institutional reports are available to the Regents upon request.

ALTERNATIVE(S): This is an information item only.

FISCAL IMPACT: This is an information item only.

CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION: This is an information item only.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Received as information. DATE: June 6, 2012

BOARD ACTION: DATE:

SUBMITTED BY: Irwin L. Goldstein (301) 445-1992 irv@usmd.edu

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2012 Summary
of
Institutional Achievement Gap Reports

Submitted to the
Committee on Education Policy
University System of Maryland Board of Regents

June 6, 2012

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2012 Summary of Institutional Achievement Gap Reports

INTRODUCTION

The University System of Maryland Closing the Achievement Gap Initiative addresses the threat posed by the state's widening college retention and degree-completion gap for lower-income and underrepresented (primarily African American and Hispanic) students and the need to ensure that all Marylanders have the opportunity for educational attainment that leads to success. This effort is significant to the USM's important role in helping the state realize its goal of having 55 percent of its population—25 years old and older—have a college degree. This initiative also is critical to developing a viable workforce to support and sustain Maryland's economic development.

In November 2007, the USM hosted a statewide conference of political, community, business, and education leaders to set a course for Maryland to cut The Gap in half by 2015 and eliminate it by 2020. Resulting from conference discussions, USM Chancellor William Kirwan asked the USM's 10 undergraduate degree-granting institutions to develop achievement gap strategies that include institutional data analysis and needs assessments, along with specific goals and timelines to reduce The Gap between low-income students and those who are not low-income, underrepresented minority students and majority students, and African-American males and white males. Each institution was provided with data on USM retention and graduation rates and institution-specific retention and graduation rates on which to base its plan.

In 2008-2009, each institution began work planning and implementing an achievement gap strategy. During 2009-2010, each submitted its first annual report on USM institutional progress during the past year on closing the achievement gap. The reports detailed initiatives to close the achievement gap and included institution-specific achievement gap definitions and activities implemented to help close the gaps.

The initiatives, definitions, and implemented activities vary considerably from one institution to another based on mission, student demographics, resources, and programs. There is, however, significant overlap and redundancy since all institutions are dealing with similar achievement gap issues, though with different student subgroups.

Most of the approaches fall under the following five broad categories:

- *Establishing early warning systems* using interventions and longitudinal assessments;
- *Implementing course redesign and improved assessments for base level courses in mathematics and English* based on identified remedial needs and assessments of incoming students;
- *Providing educational support systems for at-risk students* through bridge programs between high school and college; student preparedness assessments; creation of small group courses; and providing financial aid, housing support, and stipends for pre-admission programs;
- *Creating vibrant learning communities* that provide group housing to support pre-admits, establish mentoring opportunities with other students, and offer hands-on support to students throughout their education; and
- *Increasing financial support* through needs-based scholarships; financial aid to bridge The Gap between community colleges and USM institutions; and ongoing career development assistance through mentoring, internships, and networking.

The comprehensive status report developed by each institution is available for review in the USM Office of Academic Affairs.

This report, titled "2012 Summary of USM Institutional Achievement Gap Reports," is a précis of the individual institutional efforts that defines The Gap and lists specific initiatives used to address it.

Although advancements in student retention and graduation continue to present challenges, in general, USM institutions have made commendable and noteworthy progress in implementing initiatives through exceptional resourcefulness. Institutions continue to apply for grants to obtain more resources to help with these efforts.

Also, as institutional efforts in these areas evolve, a more systematic approach to reporting these efforts is also emerging. Based on ongoing collaborations with the Education Trust and the U.S/ Education Delivery Institute (USEDI), institutions are developing a process to:

- indicate an institutional achievement gap trend data trajectory,
- set interim goals to track year-to-year progress,
- report student program participation data, and
- conduct annual assessments of the impact of initiatives and programs on closing The Gap.

PROCESS, DEFINITIONS, TRENDS

University System of Maryland institutions launched activities to close the student achievement gaps in fall 2008. The initiative called for campuses to identify campus-specific graduation gaps and create campus specific plans to close gaps. In some cases, USM institutions created plans to bring the entire institutional graduation rate up to the system-wide average, while in other cases, institutions are focusing on transfer students or specific programs.

Each institution staffs an achievement gap team to coordinate and monitor efforts in collecting, interpreting, analyzing, and assessing related data. These teams comprise representatives from academic affairs, faculty, student affairs, and institutional research. They work in close coordination with USM representatives from academic affairs and institutional research to prepare the respective institutional reports.

Freshmen that began in fall 2008 and transfers that began in FY 2009 were the first groups of new students that benefited from any campus programs designed and implemented during that time. Earlier cohorts of students were already in the junior and senior years, if retained, and may not have benefited from the impact of campus initiatives that began fall 2008 since most attrition occurs in the first two years.

It should be noted that this report updates the graduation rates and gap-narrowing progress of the most recent freshmen cohort, fall 2005, that graduated by spring 2011 (New Freshmen graduation rates are measured in a six-year window). The fall 2005 cohort began their senior year in fall 2008.

Specifically for the new freshmen cohorts, the fall 2008 freshmen graduation rates will be reported after spring 2014 (FY 2014), and the fall 2009 freshmen will be reported after spring 2015 (FY 2015). The fall 2009 freshmen, currently in their junior year, are the cohort of students for which graduation rate gaps should be cut in half with student achievement expected to increase for all student groups compared to the graduation rates reported in FY 2009. According to USM's "Retention and Graduation Rates of First-Time Degree Seeking Undergraduates," the fall 2009 cohort's second-year and third-year retention rates are higher than the fall 2008 rates, and this trend is noted for the subgroups of African-American, Hispanic, and Low-income students. Therefore, there has been retention progress narrowed achievement gaps are anticipated for the fall 2009 cohort.

Finally, goals for closing the achievement gap were based on what was reported in FY 2008-09, the benchmark year. For example, the 2002 freshmen cohort six-year graduation window ended in FY 2008 and reported in FY 2009. The individual campuses' goals were to improve underachieving subgroups and increase graduation rates to the campus or system averages as reported in FY 2008.

The following institutional summaries compare the most recent graduation rates and gap-narrowing progress of the fall 2005 cohorts to the fall 2002 new freshmen and transfer rates compared to what was reported in fall 2008.

<u>**Institutional Subgroups**</u>

BSU…………...African-American first-time, full-time degree-seeking freshmen
CSU…………...African American first-time, full-time degree-seeking freshmen; African-American
                males, and African-American transfers with less than 29 credit hour
FSU…………...Males
SU……………African-American, Hispanic, and Low-income[1] first-time, full-time degree seeking
                Freshmen ([1]*Low-income cohort size is representative of full-time, first-time, degree seeking students that received a Pell grant during their first year at SU.*)

TU……………First-generation and Low-income[2] first-time, full-time degree seeking freshmen ([2]*At or below 150% of Federal Poverty level)*

UB…………….African-American transfer students

UMB………….African-American and minority students in the School of Nursing only

UMBC………..African-American full-time fall transfer, African-American male full-time fall transfer

UMCP………...African-American male first-time, full-time freshmen; Low Financial Resources[3] first-time, full-time freshmen; and minority first-time, full-time students ([3]*Low Financial Resources students are a subset of all new freshmen students and are defined as having completed the FAFSA and had a parental contribution of less than $8000.00.)*

UMES………...African-American first-time full-time freshmen, African-American male first-time, full-time freshmen

UMUC………..African-American first-time or part-time transfer students, Hispanic first-time or part-time transfer students, and Male first-time or part-time transfer students

These institutional classification summary statements are based on graduation rate changes compared to the 2008 cohorts—the first year of the Closing the Achievement Gap Initiative. Because each institution may have more than one student subgroup for which its efforts are directed, it may appear in more than one of the following two groups: gap narrowing or stable and gap widening.

Institutional Graduation Gap Narrowing or Stable (4-year trend)

Bowie State University
> The goal is to graduate 51% of new freshmen in 2015 and graduate 62% by 2020 (the 2008 system average for new freshmen). Bowie's African-American New Freshmen increased their graduation rate to 40% in 2011 after slipping last year. Since their efforts began, the graduations rates remained stable, as does the graduation gap.

Salisbury University
> The goal for the Low-income New Freshmen at Salisbury is to graduate 61% by 2015 and 69% by 2020 (Salisbury's 2008 new freshmen graduation average). As of the fall 2011, the Low-Income New Freshmen were graduating at 62%.

> The goal for the African-American New Freshmen at Salisbury is to graduate 63% by 2015 and close the gap in 2020 with 69% graduation rate. As of fall 2011, Salisbury has made progress with a graduation rate of 60%.

> While the Low-income and African-American New Freshmen cohorts increased their graduation rate and narrowed the gap, the overall student population decreased. Compared to the 2008 graduation rate, all student groups need to continue to improve.

Towson University
> The goal for the First-Generation New Freshmen is to graduate at the campus average of 66% by 2020. The most recent graduation rates show that the graduation rate remained unchanged compared to 2008. There were two years (2009 and 2010) in which the graduation rates made progress. The graduation gap was stable.

University of Baltimore
> UB focused on the transfer graduation gaps between the overall population and the African-American students. The goal was to graduate African-American Transfer students at the campus rates of 63% by 2020. Graduation rates for African-American Transfers increased over the past few years and the gap has narrowed.

University of Maryland, College Park
> UMCP has three new freshmen student cohorts with graduation rates below the 2008 institutional average and 2020 goal of 82%--Low Financial Resource students, Minority Students, Male Students, and African-American Male students. Compared to fall 2008, all groups have made progress towards narrowing the graduation rate gap.

Institutional Graduation Gap Widening (4-year trend)

Coppin State University
> The goal for Coppin was to graduate at the 2008 USM African-American rate of 37% by 2020 with a mid-term goal of 27% by 2015. Over the past four years, Coppin has not improved graduation rates. Therefore, the gap is widening.

Frostburg State University
> Frostburg focused its gap efforts on the differences between male and female new freshmen students. By 2020, the goal for male freshmen is to graduate at 55% and 50% by 2015. As of fall 2011, the male new freshmen reversed the recent improving graduations rates. At the same time, the female students decreased. Therefore both groups need to make progress.

Salisbury University
> The goal for the Hispanic New Freshmen is to prevent a graduation gap. In 2008, the Hispanic New Freshmen graduated above the campus average at 74%. However, as of fall 2011, the graduation rate is below the campus average at 60%. (Note: With small numbers of Hispanic students, one student can cause significant change in the graduation rates.)

Towson University
> The goals for the Low-Income and Low-Income First-Generation New Freshmen are to graduate at the campus average of 66% by 2020. The most recent graduation rates show that the gap widened significantly as both subgroups of new freshmen graduated below their 2008 rates.

> Towson implemented strategies to increase access for low-income and first-generation students. The populations grew by more than 30 and 20 percent respectively in this year and the severity of risk factors in the population contributed to the decline in graduation rates.

University of Maryland, Baltimore
> UMB graduated white BSN students at the 95% rate. By 2020, the goal is to have African-American BSN students and Minority students maintain the same level of success. The fall 2005 cohorts met or exceeded that level. However, all cohorts have significantly decreased their rates of success with Minority and African-American graduations rates falling faster their White counterparts. The most recent graduation rate gaps (fall 2008 cohorts) have widened compared to the fall 2005 cohorts.

> The impacts of a strengthened admissions process and targeted interventions through the Student Success Center will not be realized until the fall 2009 and later cohorts are assessed, which is currently beyond the scope of the 2012 report.

University of Maryland, Baltimore County
> UMBC's goal is to close the gap between White and African-American transfers to have all groups graduate at 61% by 2020. As of 2011, the most recent graduation rates for the fall 2005 cohorts

have decreased for African-American students. Meanwhile, the graduation rates for the white student comparator cohorts have increased. Therefore, the gap has widened.

University of Maryland Eastern Shore
UMES campus graduation rates fall below USM averages. The goal for UMES is to graduate 63% of all students by 2020 and with 2015 mid-term goals of 40% for African-American students and 39% for African-American males. As of 2011, the graduation rates of both groups have decreased and no progress has been made toward closing the achievement gaps.

This 2012 summary report contains each institution's definition of the achievement gap, trend data[1] regarding that definition, a list of the initiatives institutions use to address their achievement gap, and progress trajectories to achieve the 2015 goal.   The 28 progress trajectories vary according to each institution's definition of their student achievement gaps. They are listed in the Appendix to this report. Complete institutional reports are available in the Office of Academic Affairs in the University System of Maryland.

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[1]*For brevity, this 2012 summary has only graduation trend data. Retention data are found in each institutional report.*

SUMMARIES OF REPORTS FROM INSTITUTIONS

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Definition of Gap

Bowie State University (BSU) defines the achievement gap as the difference in six-year graduation rates between African-American students at BSU and all students in the University System of Maryland (USM) (Table 1).

Trend Data **Table 1 Bowie State University**
Six-year Graduation Rates[1]: African American vs. All USM Degree Seeking Students

Entering	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of Fall 2005	As of Fall 2006	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: ALL USM FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME, DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS							
Cohort Size	10,521	10,766	11,796	11,421	11,518	11,736	12,379
6-yr Grad Rate	61%	60%	61%	62%	62%	62%	59%
BSU African-American First-time Full-time, Degree seeking Students							
Cohort Size	302	337	560	517	711	577	858
6-yr Grad Rate	39%	36%	38%	41%	40%	37%	40%
The Gap	**22%**	**24%**	**25%**	**21%**	**22%**	**25%**	**19%**

[1]*Graduation Rates are for institution of first-time entry.*

The goal is to graduate 51% of their new freshmen in 2015 and graduate 62% by 2020 (the 2008 system average for new freshmen).   Bowie's African-American New Freshmen increased their graduation rate to 40% in 2011 after slipping last year. Since their efforts began, the graduations rates remained stable, as does the graduation gap.

BSU: Initiatives to Address the Gap

BSU's achievement gap initiatives include:
- offering a revamped summer bridge program (Bulldog Academy),
- piloting an early alert tracking system (Starfish) in 22 high-enrollment courses,
- implementing KEEP program to assist freshmen and transfer student on academic warning,
- increasing funding for need-based and academic scholarship by five percent,
- providing through the Center for Teaching and Learning faculty development workshops and training, that included approximately 81 adjunct faculty,
- applying $400,000 to upgrade tutoring and student computer labs and new computers to two new mathematics labs, and
- implementing online tutoring through SMARTHINKING to serve more than 1600 students.

COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY

Definition of Gap
Coppin State University (CSU) defines the achievement gap using four major comparison groups:

Group I - The differences in graduation rates between African American first-time, full- time (FTFT) degree-seeking freshmen at CSU and African Americans at other University System of Maryland (USM) institutions.

Group II - The differences in retention and graduation rates between CSU African American males and CSU African American females.

Group III - The differences in retention and graduation rates between CSU first-time, full-time freshmen and CSU freshmen transfers with less than 29 credits hours. (Table 2)

Trend Data   **Table 2 Coppin State University**
Six-year Graduation Rates: CSU African-American Students[1] vs. USM African American Students[2]

Entering	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of Fall 2005	As of Fall 2006	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011
Target Group I CSU FTFT African American [1] vs. COMPARATOR STUDENTS: USM AFRICAN AMERICAN							
CSU African-American Cohort Size	424	396	516	561	557	567	633
USM African-American Rates[2]	46%	42%	40%	37%	39%	40%	41%
CSU African-American Rates	19%	18%	19%	16%	13%	15%	15%
The Gap[3]	**27%**	**24%**	**21%**	**21%**	**26%**	**25%**	**26%**
Target Group II CSU African-American Males[1] vs. COMPARATOR STUDENTS: CSU AFRICAN-AMERICAN FEMALES							
CSU African-American Male Cohort Size	127	119	146	141	131	130	145
CSU African-American Female Rates[2]	22%	22%	21%	18%	13%	16%	16%
CSU African-American Male Rates	14%	8%	10%	11%	14%	12%	12%
The Gap[3]	**8%**	**14%**	**11%**	**7%**	**-1%**	**4%**	**4%**
Target Group III CSU Freshmen Students[1] vs. COMPARATOR STUDENTS: CSU TRANSFER STUDENTS							
CSU Freshmen Cohort Size	441	417	540	578	571	588	661
CSU Freshmen Transfer Students Rates[2]	29%	36%	34%	20%	20%	33%	44%
CSU Freshmen Students Rates	20%	18%	18%	16%	13%	15%	15%
The Gap[3]	**9%**	**18%**	**16%**	**4%**	**7%**	**18%**	**29%**

[1]*Target Group*
[2]*Comparison Group*
[3]*The Gap = difference between graduation rate of comparison group and target group.*

The goal for Coppin was to graduate at the 2008 USM African-American rate of 37% by 2020 with a mid-term goal of 27% by 2015. Over the past four years, Coppin has not improved graduation rates. Therefore, the gap is widening.

CSU: Initiatives to Address the Gap

CSU's achievement gap initiatives include:
- enhancing the Summer Academic Success Academy (SASA),
- enhancing and expanding first-year experience program,
- continuing the Freshmen Male Initiative (FMI) as result of higher grade point average performance by participants as compared to non-participants,

- providing continuous academic support, and creating a welcoming an attractive environment for success.

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Definition of Gap
Frostburg State University (FSU) defines the achievement gap as the differences in retention and graduation rates between FSU male and female students (Table 3).

Trend Data

Table 3 Frostburg State University
Six-year Graduation Rates: Female vs. Male

Entering	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of Fall 2005	As of Fall 2006	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: FSU FEMALE STUDENTS							
Cohort Size	512	500	474	494	452	427	447
6-yr Grad Rate	54%	56%	56%	57%	56%	54%	54%
FSU Male Students							
Cohort Size	427	531	453	507	538	528	480
6-yr Grad Rate	39%	39%	46%	39%	43%	42%	39%
The Gap	**15%**	**17%**	**10%**	**18%**	**13%**	**12%**	**15%**

Frostburg focused their gap efforts on the differences between male and female new freshmen students. By 2020, the goal for male freshmen is to graduate at 55% and 50% by 2015. As of fall 2011, the male new freshmen reversed the recent improving graduations rates. At the same time, the number of female students decreased. Therefore both groups need to make progress.

FSU: Initiatives to Address the Gap

Frostburg's achievement gap initiatives include:
- hiring an Assistant Provost for Student Success and Retention to focus on achievement gap efforts,
- expanding learning communities to include all freshmen based on 89% supportive response rate from prior year participants,
- improving effectiveness and efficiency for PSYCH 150 as a result of implementing course redesign,
- providing supplemental instruction in General Psychology that has led to increased student connection to the course and improved grades,
- offering extensive TRIO student support and tutoring services to achieve an 80% retention rate (86% female and 73% male) for Fall 2010 first-time student cohort, and
- increasing need-based financial aid that resulted in a retention rate increase of 76% for fall first-time male student cohort as opposed to 66% for those receiving no institutional need-based aid.

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

Definition of Gap
Salisbury University (SU) defines the achievement gap as the differences in graduation rates between African-American and all SU students; Hispanic and all SU students, and low-income and all SU students. (Table 4).

Trend Data **Table 4 Salisbury University**
Six-Year Graduation Rates: Low-Income[1], African-American, and Hispanic vs. All SU Students

Entering	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of Fall 2005	As of Fall 2006	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: ALL SU STUDENTS							
Cohort Size				900	947	981	952
6-Yr Grad Rate				69%	66%	70%	66%
SU Low Income							
Cohort Size	n/a	n/a	n/a	134	129	110	112
6-Yr Grad Rate	n/a	n/a	n/a	54%	59%	63%	62%
The Gap	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**15**	**7**	**7**	**4**
SU African American							
Cohort Size				84	79	75	94
6-Yr Grad Rate				57%	62%	53%	60%
The Gap				**12**	**4**	**17**	**6**
SU Hispanic							
Cohort Size	n/a	n/a	n/a	23	33	23	25
6-Yr Grad Rate	n/a	n/a	n/a	74%	64%	70%	60%
The Gap	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**-5**	**2**	**0**	**6**

[1] *Low-income cohort size is representative of full-time, first-time, degree seeking students that received a Pell grant during their first year at SU.*

The goal for the Low-Income New Freshmen at Salisbury is to graduate 61% by 2015 and 69% by 2020 (Salisbury's 2008 new freshmen graduation average). As of the fall 2011, the Low-Income New Freshmen were graduating at 62%.

The goal for the African-American New Freshmen at Salisbury is to graduate 63% by 2015 and close the gap in 2020 with 69% graduation rate. As of fall 2011, Salisbury has made progress with a graduation rate of 60%.

While the Low-Income and African-American New Freshmen cohorts increased their graduation rate and narrowed the gap, the overall student population decreased. Compared to 2008 graduation rate, all student groups need to continue to improve.

The goal for the Hispanic New Freshmen is to prevent a graduation gap. In 2008, the Hispanic New Freshmen graduated above the campus average at 74%. However, as of fall 2011, the graduation rate is below the campus average at 60%. (Note: With small numbers of Hispanic students, one student can cause significant change in the graduation rates.)

SU: Initiatives to Address the Gap

Salisbury's achievement gap initiatives include:
- providing mid-semester reporting on student performance and advising such that students attending the Center for Student Achievement were retained into their second year at higher rates (78%) than those who did not use the center (70%),
- offering freshmen seminars yielding a 107% increase in student participation over previous year,
- expanding the offering of living-learning communities (LLCs) to accommodate 28% more students including 15% participation by first-time minority students and achieving a 90% participant second-year retention rate versus 81% for non-participants, and
- expanding the offering of supplemental instruction such that participants in five or more sessions had higher first-year grades (3.15 vs. 2.90) than those who attended less than five sessions.

TOWSON UNIVERSITY

Definition of Gap
Towson University defines its achievement gap as the differences between graduation rates of first-generation and low-income students (FGLI) and those who are neither low-income nor first-generation students (Table 5).

Trend Data   **Table 5 Towson University**
Six-Year Graduation Rates: First-Generation and Low-Income First-time, Full-time Students

Entering	Fall 1999[1]	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of Fall 2005	As of Fall 2006	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: ALL OTHER TU FTFT STUDENTS							
Cohort Size	2101	1859	1797	2053	1668	1915	2097
6-Year Graduation Rate	57.6%	63.6%	66.6%	66.4%	73.30%	68.6%	65.1%
TU Low-Income FTFT Students							
Cohort Size	145	122	113	145	85	168	221
6-Year Graduation Rate	44.8%	61.5%	58.4%	59.3%	63.5%	63.7%	48.0%
Gap Between TU Low-Income Students and All Others	**12.8%**	**2.1%**	**8.2%**	**7.1%**	**9.8%**	**4.9%**	**17.1%**
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: ALL OTHER TU FTFT STUDENTS							
Cohort Size		1626	1566	1776	1415	1712	1860
6-Year Graduation Rate	58%	64.0%	66.3%	66.9%	72.5%	68.60%	63.9%
TU First-Generation FTFT Students							
Cohort Size	404	355	344	422	338	371	458
6-Year Graduation Rate	51%	61.4%	65.1%	61.8%	74.0%	66.0%	61.6%
Gap Between TU First-Generation Students and All Others	**7%**	**2.6%**	**1.2%**	**5.1%**	**-1.5%**	**2.6%**	**2.3%**
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: TU ALL OTHER FTFT STUDENTS							
Cohort Size		1938	1862	2138	1719	2014	2224
6-Year Graduation Rate	57.2%	63.7%	66.2%	66.2%	72.9%	68.2%	64.1%
TU First-Generation and Low-Income (FGLI) FTFT Students							
Cohort Size	51	43	48	60	34	69	94
6-Year Graduation Rate	39.2%	53.5%	64.6%	56.7%	64.7%	66.7%	48.9%
The Gap	**18%**	**10.2%**	**1.6%**	**9.5%**	**8.2%**	**1.5%**	**15.2%**

[1]*Comparison is calculated between the overall Towson graduation rate for the fall 1999 cohort.*
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The goal for the First-Generation New Freshmen is to graduate at the campus average of 66% by 2020. The most recent graduation rates show that the graduation rate remained unchanged compared to 2008. There were two years (2009 and 2010) in which the graduation rates made progress. During the period from fall 2008 to fall 2011, the graduation gap was stable.

The goals for the Low-Income and Low-Income First-Generation New Freshmen are to graduate at the campus average of 66% by 2020. The most recent graduation rates show that the gap widened significantly as both subgroups of new freshmen graduated below their 2008 rates.

TU: Initiatives to Address the Gap

Towson's achievement gap initiatives include:
- implementing Strategies for Student Success Program (S3), which enabled second-year retention rate to improve from 77.5% (fall 2007 cohort) to 91.3% (fall 2010 cohort),
- offering First-Year Experience (FYE) Program and designating a full-time advisor to coordinate services for FGLI students and transfer students,
- implementing Students Achieve Goals through Education (SAGE) Program,
- implementing a Community Enrichment and Enhancement Partnership (CEEP) in which 80% meet the minimum grade point average for continuation of the $2,000 to $3,000 award, and
- increasing need-based financial aid from $11.7 million to $12.7 million.

UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE

Definition of Gap
University of Baltimore (UB) defines the achievement gap as the difference in graduation rate between African-American transfer students at UB and non-minority transfer students; in fall-to-fall retention rates between African-American first-time, full-time freshmen (FT-FTF) and non-minority FT-FTF; and in retention rates of African-American FT-FTF females and non-minority FT-FTF females at UB (Table 6).

Trend Data
Table 6 University of Baltimore
Six-year Graduation Rates: New Transfers
Graduation Rate Gap between African-American Students and Non-Minority Students

Entering	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of Fall 2006	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: UB NEW TRANSFERS NON-MINORITY						
Cohort Size				257	261	254
5-Yr Grad Rate[1]				63.0%	56.0%	74.7%
UB New Transfer African American						
Cohort Size				143	183	188
5-Yr Grad Rate				50%	45%	56%
The Gap				13%	11%	18%

[1]*Five-year rate is based on transfer students.*

UB focused on the transfer graduation gaps between the overall population and the African-American students. The goal was to graduate African-American Transfer students at the campus rates of 63% by 2020. Graduation rates for African-American Transfers increased over the past few years and the gap has narrowed.

UB: Initiatives to Address the Gap

The University of Baltimore (UB) is only in its second year of lower-division students (freshmen and sophomores) so initiatives to address the gaps identified are still being developed.

UB's achievement gap initiatives include:
- adding all 100- and 200- level course to Early Alert System,
- placing a hold on transfer student registration until completion of developmental placement tests or a transcript showing acceptable credit for passing writing and mathematics,
- offering educational and advisement support for students entering UB with fewer than 21 credits,
- redesigning IDIS 101 to apply values-based approach to development of effective student dispositions for learning,
- restructuring developmental math courses to implement portfolio assessment, and
- improving course completion through course redesign and faculty professional development.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE

Definition of Gap[1]
The University of Maryland, Baltimore defines the achievement gap as the difference in graduation rates in the School of Nursing's BSN program (which students enter in their junior year) between minority and white students and between African American and white students (Table 7).

Trend Data   **Table 7 University of Maryland, Baltimore**
Three-Year Graduation Rates:
African-American Traditional BSN Students vs. White Traditional BSN Students
Minority Traditional BSN Students vs. White Traditional BSN Students

Entering	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: UMB WHITE TRADITIONAL BSN STUDENTS								
Cohort Size	75	91	90	98	76	85	59	71
3-Year Grad Rate	96%	92%	94%	98%	95%	87%	92%	90%
UMB African-American Traditional BSN Students								
Cohort Size	35	64	40	34	30	31	33	32
3-year Grad Rate	83%	72%	88%	88%	97%	87%	88%	82%
The Gap	**13%**	**20%**	**7%**	**10%**	**-2%**	**0%**	**4%**	**8%**
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: UMB WHITE TRADITIONAL BSN STUDENTS								
Cohort Size	75	91	90	98	76	85	59	71
3-Year Grad Rate	96%	92%	94%	98%	95%	87%	92%	90%
UMB Minority Traditional BSN Students								
Cohort Size	50	93	65	66	58	52	70	49
3-Year Grad Rate	84%	80%	92%	89%	95%	90%	89%	86%
The Gap	**12%**	**13%**	**2%**	**9%**	**0%**	**-3%**	**3%**	**4%**

[1] *UMB is primarily a graduate and professional campus. In fall 2009 UMB enrolled 6,382 students of which 844 were undergraduate students; the majority (697) was enrolled in the School of Nursing BSN program.*

UMB graduated white BSN students at 95% rate. By 2020, the goal is to have African-American BSN students and Minority students maintain the same level of success. The fall 2005 cohorts met or exceeded that level. However, all cohorts have significantly decreased their rates of success with Minority and African-American graduations rates falling faster than their White counterparts. The most recent graduation rate gaps (fall 2008 cohorts) have widened compared to the fall 2005 cohorts.

The impacts of a strengthened admissions process and targeted interventions through the Student Success Center will not be realized until the fall 2009 and later cohorts are assessed, which is currently beyond the scope of the 2012 report.

UMB: Initiatives to Address the Gap

UMB's achievement gap initiatives include:
- offering Guided Study Sessions (GSS) for Pathopharmacology, Adult Health Nursing, Introduction to Professional Nursing Practice, Health Assessment, and Science and Research for Nursing Practice courses,
- providing private tutoring for most entry-into-practice courses and workshops of skills necessary for success, and
- promoting Student Success Center services to new and current students, so as to increase participation in and early utilization of Center.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY

Definition of Gap

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) defines it achievement gap as the differences in six-year graduation rates for African American full-time fall transfer students compared to White full-time fall transfer students; and between African American male full-time fall transfer students and White male full-time fall transfer students (Table 8).

Trend Data Table 8 University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Six-Year Graduation Rates: African-American Transfer Students[1] vs. White Transfer Students[2]

Entering	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of Fall 2005	As of Fall 2006	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: UMBC WHITE FULL-TIME, FALL TRANSFER STUDENTS							
Cohort Size	422	452	419	429	423	490	399
Six-Year Graduation Rate	60.0%	56.9%	63.0%	60.6%	63.4%	61.6%	64.9%
UMBC African-American Full-time, Fall Transfer Students							
Cohort Size	152	163	168	176	157	167	163
Six-Year Graduation Rate	44.1%	50.9%	54.2%	48.3%	47.8%	55.1%	43.6%
The Gap[3]	**15.9%**	**5.9%**	**8.8%**	**12.3%**	**15.6%**	**6.5%**	**21.3%**
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: UMBC WHITE MALE FULL-TIME, FALL TRANSFER STUDENTS							
Cohort Size	190	220	204	206	228	232	215
Six-Year Graduation Rate	61.1%	53.2%	61.8%	60.7%	58.8%	62.9%	61.4%
UMBC African-American Male Full-time Fall Transfer Students							
Cohort Size	48	58	63	54	63	67	53
Six-Year Graduation Rate	33.3%	44.8%	49.2%	44.4%	42.9%	52.2%	41.5%
The Gap[3]	**27.7%**	**8.4%**	**12.6%**	**16.2%**	**15.9%**	**10.7%**	**19.9%**

[1] Students identified by UMBC as having an achievement Gap

[2] Students used as the comparison group

[3]The Gap = difference between graduation rate of comparison group and graduation rate of gap students presented in percentage points difference

UMBC's goal is to close the gap between White and African-American transfers to have all groups graduate at 61% by 2020. As of 2011, the most recent graduation rates for the fall 2005 cohorts have decreased for African-American students. Meanwhile, the graduation rates for the white student comparator cohorts have increased. Therefore, the gap has widened.

UMBC: Initiatives to address the Gap:

UMBC's achievement gap initiatives include:
- modifying Introduction to an Honors University (IHU) seminar for transfer students (TRS 201) and hiring coordinator to focus on this work,
- adding Supplemental Instruction (SI) for courses which historically have been difficult for transfer students,
- extending First-Year Intervention (FYI) to include first-year transfer students in more than 800 course sections,
- strengthening Transfer Student Alliance (TSA) to achieve total participation of 134 students,
- improving orientation and advising,
- expanding LRC 101A to include students in academic probation/jeopardy as well as those in

suspension/dismissal, and

- receiving a planning grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in July 2011 to support the exploration of a broad and encompassing program of support to transfer students.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

Definition of Gap

University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) defines the achievement gap as the gap that exists between students with low financial resources[1] and all students; between minorities and all students; and between African American males and all males (Table 9).

Trend Data   **Table 9 University of Maryland, College Park**
Six-Year Graduation Rates: Students with Low Financial Resources and Minorities, vs.
All Students and African-American Males vs. All Students

Entering	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of 2005	As of 2006	As of 2007	As of 2008	As of 2009	As of 2010	As of 2011
ALL UMCP STUDENTS							
6-Year Grad Rate					81.7%	81.5%	81.8%
UMCP Students with Low Financial Resource							
Cohort Size					1010	974	856
6-Year Grad Rate					73.1%	74.3%	76.1%
The Gap					**8.6%**	**7.2%**	**5.7%**
UMCP Minority Students							
Cohort Size	743	673	743	669	773	744	825
6-Year Grad Rate	66.8%	72.7%	69.6%	70.3%	70.9%	71.1%	73.1%
The Gap	**9.7%**	**6.8%**	**10.3%**	**11.5%**	**10.8%**	**10.4%**	**8.7%**
UMCP African American Males							
Cohort Size	229	198	209	183	203	217	226
6-Year Grad Rate	59.8%	60.6%	61.2%	61.2%	64..0%	63.6%	64.6%
The Gap	**13.6%**	**14.9%**	**16.1%**	**19.2%**	**16.1%**	**14.7%**	**14.1%**

[1]*Low resources students are a subset of all new freshmen students and are defined as having completed the FAFSA and had a parental contribution of less than $8,000.*

UMCP has three new freshmen student cohorts with graduation rates below the 2008 institutional average and 2020 goal of 82%--Low Financial Resource students, Minority Students, Male Students, and African-American Male students. Compared to fall 2008, all groups have made progress towards narrowing the graduation rate gap.

UMCP: Initiatives to Address the Gap

UMCP's achievement gap initiatives include**:**
- providing intensive supplemental instruction and tutoring through Mandatory Participation Academic Achievement Programs,
- offering University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program (UMIAP) to 17 high school graduates in Baltimore City and Prince George's County to remove financial barriers,
- providing academic and social support for low-income and or first-generation high school students through the Student Support Services (TRIO) program,
- establishing brotherhood, scholarship, and retention of Black males through The Black Male Initiative,
- recruiting, retaining, graduating students through the Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering (CMSE),

- supporting, tracking, and retaining students from summer through each academic year to graduation though bridge programs such as the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP),
- preparing primarily low-income, first-generation, and minority students to pursue doctoral studies through The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, and
- assisting Maryland resident poverty-level students to attend college debt free through the Maryland Pathways Work Grant program.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE

Definition of Gap

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) defines the achievement gap as the differences in six-year graduation rates between UMES African-American students and white students in the USM and between UMES African American males and white males in the USM (Table 10).

Trend Data   **Table 10 University of Maryland Eastern Shore**
Six-year Graduation Rates: African-American Students[1] vs. All USM Students[2]

Entering	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005
	As of Fall 2005	As of Fall 2006	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: ALL USM STUDENTS							
6-yr Grad Rate	61%	60%	61%	62%	62%	62%	59%
UMES African-American Students							
Cohort Size	465	670	883	734	794	753	867
6-yr Grad Rate	43%	34%	37%	39%	32%	30%	31%
The Gap[3]	**18**	**26**	**24**	**23**	**30**	**30**	**28%**
COMPARATOR STUDENTS: ALL USM STUDENTS							
6-yr Grad Rate	61%	60%	61%	62%	62%	62%	59%
Other Gap Students[4]: UMES African- American Males							
Cohort Size	192	236	329	281	315	307	314
6-yr Grad Rate	38%	28%	33%	36%	28%	28%	24%
The Gap	**23**	**32**	**28**	**26**	**34**	**34**	**35**

[1]*African-American students graduating from UMES*
[2]*All USM students graduating from the institution of first-time entry*
[3]*The Gap= difference between the graduation rate of African-American students graduating from UMES and all USM students graduating from the institution of first-time entry*
[4]*The Gap= difference between the graduation rate of African-American male students graduating from UMES and all USM students graduating from the institution of first-time entry*

UMES campus graduation rates fall below USM averages. The goal for UMES is to graduate 63% of all students by 2020 and with 2015 mid-term goals of 40% for African-American students and 39% for African-American males. As of 2011, the graduation rates of both groups have decreased and no progress has been made toward closing the achievement gaps.

UMES Initiatives to Address the Gap

UMES' achievement gap initiatives include:
- enhancing centralized process for identifying, monitoring, tracking, and providing academic/counseling support for students on probation,
- providing 24/7 online tutorial service through SMARTHINKING,
- implementing an academic advising plan that includes electronic degree audit,
- offering a Summer Enrichment Academy to 59 African American students with a success rate of 86% in developmental math and a 98% success rate in English 101,
- improving through the Center for Access and Success Center the spring-to-fall persistence rate of first-time, full-time African American students to 86% from 68%,
- reducing through the Center for Access and Success Center the number of African American males on academic probation each year, and

- establishing a leaning community for in-coming high-risk first-time full-time students.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Definition of Gap

Given the mixed nature of University of Maryland University College's (UMUC) overall student population, we sought to define a starting cohort that would be marked by a level of homogeneity that would allow us to compare directly success rates of different target groups. Thus, for purposes of Achievement Gap tracking, UMUC defined its starting cohort as comprising all students who meet the following parameters:

- Students who enroll in UMUC as stateside (not overseas) students for the first time in a given fall term as degree-seeking students pursuing their first bachelor's degree; and
- Who re-enroll in the spring following first enrollment (to filter out those exploring online education or simply taking courses while waiting to enroll in traditional institutions); and
- Who transfer more than 60 credit hours from previous institutions attended (to account for the nature of our student body and our mission-driven emphasis on community college transfers).

This definition of the starting cohort is purposely designed to exclude students who enroll in UMUC on a transitory basis with no intention of completing a UMUC degree. Although serving these adult students is part of UMUC's mission, their transitory status is not consistent with the framework and intention of Achievement Gap reporting.

The defined starting cohort will provide the baseline for comparison with the following groups for measuring the Achievement Gap in retention and graduation rates:

- African-American students;
- Latino/Hispanic students;
- Male students;
- Female students (Table 10).

Table 10 University of Maryland University College
Graduation Rates: Four Years or Less[1]
African Americans, Hispanics, and Males vs. Comparator Student Groups

Entering	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
UMUC COMPARATOR STUDENTS					
Cohort Size	1637	1509	1525	1611	1788
Graduation Rate as of Fall 2011	44%	40%	31%	15%	2%
UMUC African-American Students					
Cohort Size	454	390	440	459	275
Graduation Rate as of Fall 2011	37%	35%	25%	11%	2%
The UMUC African-American Gap	**7%**	**5%**	**6%**	**4%**	**0%**
UMUC Hispanic Students					
Cohort Size	75	75	81	112	109
Graduation Rate as of Fall 2011	39%	36%	33%	11%	0%
The UMUC Hispanic Gap	**5%**	**4%**	**2%**	**4%**	**2%**
UMUC COMPARATOR FEMALE STUDENTS					
UMUC Comparator Female Students Cohort Size	979	868	883	890	940
UMUC Comparator Female Students Graduation Rate as of Fall 2011	44%	40%	31%	16%	2%
UMUC Male Cohort Size	623	606	612	697	815
UMUC Male Students Graduation Rate as of Fall 2011	45%	39%	31%	15%	1%
The UMUC Male Female Gap	**1% favoring Males**	**1% favoring Females**	**0%**	**1% favoring Females**	**1% favoring Females**

[1]*Graduation rates shown represent all students who have graduated in five years or less: for the Fall 2006 cohort: five years of less; for Fall 2007 cohort, four years or less; for the Fall 2008 cohort, three-years or less; for the Fall 2009 cohort, two years or less for the fall 2010 cohort, one year or less. The end parameter will be ten-year retention rates, but the actual rates will not be available until 2016; therefore projected rates are provided in the interim.*

UMUC's data suggest declines in gaps. However, the UMUC's graduation indicator (10 versus 6 years) is different from other traditional institutions in the USM.

UMUC: Initiatives to Address the Gap

UMUC's achievement gap initiatives include:
- offering UMUC 411 Test-Drive an Online Learning Class (simulated online classroom),
- offering EDCP 100 Principles & Strategies of Successful Learning course for first-in-family and returning adult students,
- modifying Academic Advising (to focus on improving retention and graduation),
- implementing The Allies Mentoring Program (helps students with transitioning to UMUC), and
- offering more scholarships (15 different scholarships targeted to students in the defined cohort).

Conclusion

This 2012 Summary of Institutional Achievement Gap Report includes both good and not-so-good news. The good news is that full-time new freshmen who entered USM institutions in fall 2009 have slightly higher retention rates than those who entered in fall 2008. Also, at five institutions—Bowie; Salisbury; Towson; University of Baltimore; University of Maryland, College Park—the institutional graduation gaps are narrowing or stable.

In addition, the closing the achievement gap initiative has led to productive collaboration and coordination system-wide involving student recruitment and enrollment, academic preparation, college readiness activities, persistence and retention, and financial resources. Institutions are encouraged to share best practices and to be entrepreneurial in finding the support needed to launch and sustain their efforts. For example, several institutions have been able to garner resources to hire additional staff to work on these efforts and to increase need-based financial aid, even in the difficult economy.

While some institutions have made progress in narrowing student achievement gaps and increasing graduation rates, there is still much work to be done to achieve the USM goals of cutting the gaps in half by 2015 and eliminating them by 2020. These goals have focused the institutions on careful analysis of what programs, services, and other activities are having significant impact on closing the existing gaps. Based on this report, much of the institutional work focuses on summer bridge programs and activities designed to increase first- and second-year retention rates. Institutions will modify existing initiatives, eliminate those that are not working, and develop new activities as appropriate, as new findings and results dictate.

USM staff members from Academic Affairs and Institutional Research continue to meet with institutional teams to provide guidance in the development of trajectories, interim goals, and assessment. Institutional reports and the annual summary report to the Board of Regents will continue to provide data-driven information that is descriptive and analytical, with stated intermediate goals related to the overarching goal, and a summary assessment of the impact of each initiative on the retention and graduation of targeted student subgroups.

Finally, USM may want to consider convening a second statewide conference to assess progress to date, and facilitate another frank discussion of the shared closing-the-achievement goals and what we need in terms of strategies, tactics, and financial resources to achieve those goals.