CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Annual Report

March 25, 2013

university of baltimore

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Illustrations

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP REPORT 2012-13

I. Institutional Definition

UB's institutional definition for Closing the Achievement Gap reports, consistent with USM requirements, is first-time, full-time freshman in three groups—African American, Hispanic, and Pell-eligible. As noted in prior reports, UB did not admit freshmen until Fall 2007 and cannot report a six-year graduation rate until the end of the 2013 academic year (2014 CAG Report). Consequently, UB uses an analog for this 2013 report data from its own internal reporting on degree-seeking, full-time transfer students. Fall 2004 is UB's designated base year, consistent with implementation of the University's current student information system. The relative proportions of undergraduate degree-seeking students in each target classification in the initial year of *Closing the Achievement Gap* are as follows[1]:

Target Subgroups Percentages of Various Student Populations

Sub-group/Population	Undergraduate (Fall 2004)	New Transfers (Full-Time) (Fall 2004)	Freshmen (Full-Time) (Fall 2007)
African-American	33%	26%	36%
Hispanic	2%	1%	3%
Pell-eligible	29%	33%	29%

African-American students comprised slightly more than a quarter of transfer students in Fall 2004, a proportion smaller than that of all undergraduates that year (and less than freshman in 2007, the first year in which freshman were admitted to UB). Hispanic enrollment did not comprise a significant portion of the new transfer students in Fall 2004, and numbers are sufficiently small that ratios and statistics show considerable variation. The proportion of Pell-eligible students constitutes the largest of these three target groups, at over one-third of the students. Pell-eligibility is used as a proxy for socio-economic status, and overlap of the three groups is very likely, something UB identified in its earliest Closing the Achievement Gap reports, and something of great relevance to student retention and graduation.

II. Table showing institutional trend data for student subgroups identified as having a gap, arranged by cohort entry year, cohort size, six-year graduation rate, and gap. (See Table I. pg. 8)

Discussion of table: Among transfer students, African American students who entered UB in the two years after 2004 increased their graduation rate over the 2004 cohort from 47% to 52%. This brought the African American graduation rate within 10 percentage points of the fall 2004 all new transfer cohort. The all new transfer graduation rate also increased, and this was due in part to the increased rate of

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[1] Prior to this report, the population group consisted of all new transfer students. Consistent with graduation and retention statistics for freshmen, in this year's report this group has been limited to the degree-seeking, full-time students. In addition to complying with standard governmental reporting practices, it also recognizes that non-degree students and part-time students represent a different population for which the six-year graduation rates are not well suited.

African American students. Since the reference group includes the target group, simultaneity affects efforts to close the achievement gap.

Hispanic new transfer students represented a small cohort at the University of Baltimore in 2004 and after. Population sizes of this small magnitude are susceptible to radical fluctuations based on a variation of a few students. For instance, the 2004 cohort was only three students, all of whom graduated, for a 100% graduation rate while only two of six graduated in the next year's cohort. At the same time, the small number allows for targeting initiatives at an individual level not possible with large groups.

III. Summary of Initiatives

The University remains focused on closing the achievement gap targets set in 2010. As indicated in last year's report, these targets are:

•   Increase 6-year graduation rate among African American transfer students to 47% to support a glide path that will close the gap by 2020 by achieving a rate of 62%.

•   Maintain high retention rate for African American, Hispanic, and low-income freshman as compared to all freshmen in order to establish a target graduation rate in 2013.

To accomplish closing of the achievement gap, the University of Baltimore has engaged in a robust approach to student success, extensively targeted at freshman consistent with USM goals. Many of these initiatives are also extended to all transfer students, while some target transfer students primarily.

Access Initiatives

- Expansion of Summer Conditional Admit Programs;

- Revision to exemptions from placement testing in math and writing and redesign of developmental courses;

- Restructuring the First-Year Program to improve alignment with the General Education Program;

- Implementation of MHEC Sophomore Retention Grant for student advisement, critical reading improvement strategies, and the expansion of the Professional Development Institute (PDI) career counseling and mentoring, especially for sophomore transfers; and,

- Increased efforts to obtain grants and awards in support of the student success needs of at-risk students.

Non-academic Retention Initiatives

- Software modification to UB Early Alert Advising System in 2012 followed by proposed policy revision (Spring 2013) to extend PASS/FAIL and FAILURE TO ATTEND grades to all undergraduate students;

- Development of efforts to recruit Hispanic students – the admissions office has developed strong relationships within the Baltimore City high schools and area community colleges to attract both Latino and Asian applicants, including targeted high school visits, increased participation in recruitment events such as the Hispanic College Fair, and civic events such as early college readiness programs at various Jr. and Sr. high schools;

- Proposal to create a concierge service for transfer and re-entry students, formerly identified as a center for working adult students;

- Development of an enrollment management retention work group to follow up with students who have not registered in a timely fashion; and,

- Addition of a New Student Financial Aid Counselor in the Office of Financial Aid.

IV. Initiatives, Assessments and Actions taken since last report

Access Initiatives, Assessments, and Actions

- Summer Conditional Admit Programs UB offers a summer bridge program for conditionally-admitted UB applicants, students who fall below the admissions profile. Students may be considered for admission to the university pending successful completion of the summer program. The Summer Bridge began in 2012 with 37 students (94.5% were African American or Hispanic students) divided between two 3-week terms. The high school GPA average for these students was 2.24, and their average SAT score was 1162.

Table IV.1 Summer Bridge Student Outcomes

	Session 1	Session 2	Total
Enrolled	23	14	37
Stopped Attending	13%	0%	8%
Unsuccessful completion	17%	50%	30%
Successful completion	70%	50%	62%

In Fall 2012, 21 students from the conditional admit program successfully entered UB as freshmen. Table IV.2 compares student performance among students in the conditional admit program and their non-conditional admit peers:

Table IV.2 Freshmen 1st Semester GPA

1st sem GPA	4.0-3.0	2.99-2.0	<2.0	Satisfactory Progress
Summer Bridge	24%	48%	29%	71%
Freshmen peers	50%	22%	20%	72%

In Fall 2012, these 21 students were roughly 8% of incoming freshmen. For summer 2013, UB expects to serve up to 80 conditionally-admitted students.

- Exemptions to Placement Testing: UB is developing more effective means of placement in order to align testing with student performance in high school courses and with student learning outcomes.

- Restructuring the Freshman Seminar and Learning Communities and building The Sophomore Seminar: Since Summer 2012, UB faculty members have been restructuring the General Education Program. Currently, a proposal for a sophomore seminar is in development which give students transferring to UB a companion experience to the native freshmen and a structured entrée into General Education.

- MHEC Challenge Grant: Awarded in 2011, the grant was designed to improve sophomore persistence and degree completion for UB transfers students. Among the funded activities were course redesign to emphasize critical reading across the curriculum, expansion of the freshman advising models into the sophomore populations, and implementation of the PDI, Professional Development Institute for career and college connection mentoring and early career development. Goals of the grant were to decrease the DFW failure rate by 10%, to address the persistence gap with attention to reflective advising, and to offer a section of Freshman Seminar for sophomore transfer students focused on increased career and college readiness.

- Increased effort to obtain grants in support of at-risk students: UB faculty and staff applied for and were not awarded the One Step Away Grant for college completion and The College and Career Readiness grant that would have created a partnership with Baltimore City Public Schools in designing modules in support of college and career readiness, developed programs that would help parents support their college bound students, and create teaching support and instructional support that would have fed into the summer bridge and conditional admission programs.

Non-Curricular Retention Initiatives:

- Revision to Early Alert Advising System: Beginning in 2012, advisors used social media to contact advisees and expand their abilities to generate reports about student performance. In the spring 2013, a proposal to extend the early alert process to all UB undergraduate students and to require faculty to submit mid-term evaluations as PASS/FAIL and FAILURE TO ATTEND marks was approved. This change enables advisors to reach at-risk students more promptly in the course of the semester and to develop action plans to address risk behaviors.

- UB21 Catalyst Grant to fund Hispanic Student recruitment summit: In the fall 2012, a group of faculty were awarded an internal grant to hold a summit on Hispanic student youth recruitment and transition to college. As a result of the summit, a subgroup that includes staff from the Admissions Office has applied for a second grant to fund a designated graduate student ambassador within the Admissions Office to work with recruiters in coordinating Hispanic student outreach. In addition, there are targeted recruitment efforts at Patterson High School, proximate to UB, for Hispanic student applicants.

- Student Concierge: After lengthy discussion, the Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) determined that at risk students did not need a concierge to help UB respond to their needs.

- New Financial Aid Counselor: EMSA added a new student financial aid counselor to assist current counselors in community outreach regarding how to understand FAFSA, the financial obligations of a college education, and how to make college affordable

V. .Statement of Intermediate Goals and Glide Path

NEW:

1. Implement the Sophomore Seminar within the General Education Program.

2. Review the UB Diversity Plan for action steps relating to Closing the Achievement Gap.

3. Monitor the impact of changes to developmental education policies on all UB students with attention to the needs of African American, Hispanic, and low-income students.

4. Engage in institutional planning to address the needs of Hispanic and low-income students in ways that align with efforts already in place serving the African American students at UB.

5. Support EMSA in determining actions with financial aid, admissions and recruitment that improve the pathways for students in underrepresented groups to persist and graduate from UB.

ON-GOING:

1. Continue to examine causes for interruption in enrollments among African American, Hispanic, and low-income students and the effect on their retention and graduation rates.

2. Expand efforts in the CAS Office of Undergraduate Advising to meet the needs of in-coming transfer and native students with special attention to how family support contributes to student success.

3. Conduct student satisfaction surveys of the quality of educational and advising support services on provisionally admitted, at-risk and transfer African American, Hispanic, and low-income students.

4. Evaluate the impact of the PASS/FAIL and FAILURE TO ATTEND grades on students' persistence towards degree completion.

5. Maintain continuously improved targeted summer bridge programs in Summer 2013.

Conclusion: Despite dealing with a dynamic set of indicators of student success in the form of retention and graduation rates for overlapping target subgroups, UB is making concerted efforts to engage African American, Hispanics, and low-income students in ways that should lead to higher levels of degree completion. Efforts focused on transfer and part-time students build on those that appear to be successful in working with freshmen and full-time students. Assessment of these efforts is on-going and has led to new initiatives which themselves are assessed. We believe our efforts will lead to enhanced completion for all

students even as we close the achievement gap for students in the targeted groups.

Table I

Trend Data Format University of Baltimore
Six year Graduation Rates: New Transfer[2] As of March 2013

Cohort Year of Enrollment	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006
New Transfer African American	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011	As of Fall 2012
Cohort Size				88	89	81
6-yr Grad Count				41	44	42
6-yr Grad Rate				47%	49%	52%
All New Full-time Transfer				343	355	324
6-yr Grad Count				214	225	213
6-yr Grad Rate				62%	63%	66%
The Gap[3]				(16%)	(14%)	(14%)

Cohort Year of Enrollment	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006
New Transfer Hispanic	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011	As of Fall 2012
Cohort Size				3	6	5
6-yr Grad Count				3	2	3
6-yr Grad Rate				100%	33%	60%
All New Full-time Transfer				343	355	324
6-yr Grad Count				214	225	213
6-yr Grad Rate				62%	63%	66%
The Gap[3]				38%	(30%)	(6%)

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[2] First-time, degree-seeking undergraduate transfer students
[3] Gap is rounded to whole number percentage, may showing rounding error.

Cohort Year of Enrollment	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006
New Transfer low-income Students[4]	As of Fall 2007	As of Fall 2008	As of Fall 2009	As of Fall 2010	As of Fall 2011	As of Fall 2012
Cohort Size				113	125	109
6-yr Grad Count				64	65	61
6-yr Grad Rate				57%	52%	56%
All New Transfer				343	355	324
6-yr Grad Count				214	225	213
6-yr Grad Rate				62%	63%	66%
The Gap[3]				(5%)	(11%)	(10%)

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[3] Gap is rounded to whole number percentage, may showing rounding error.
[4] Pell eligibility in first-academic year of enrollment

Figures 1-3: **Proposed Glide Path [2010-11 CAG Report]**

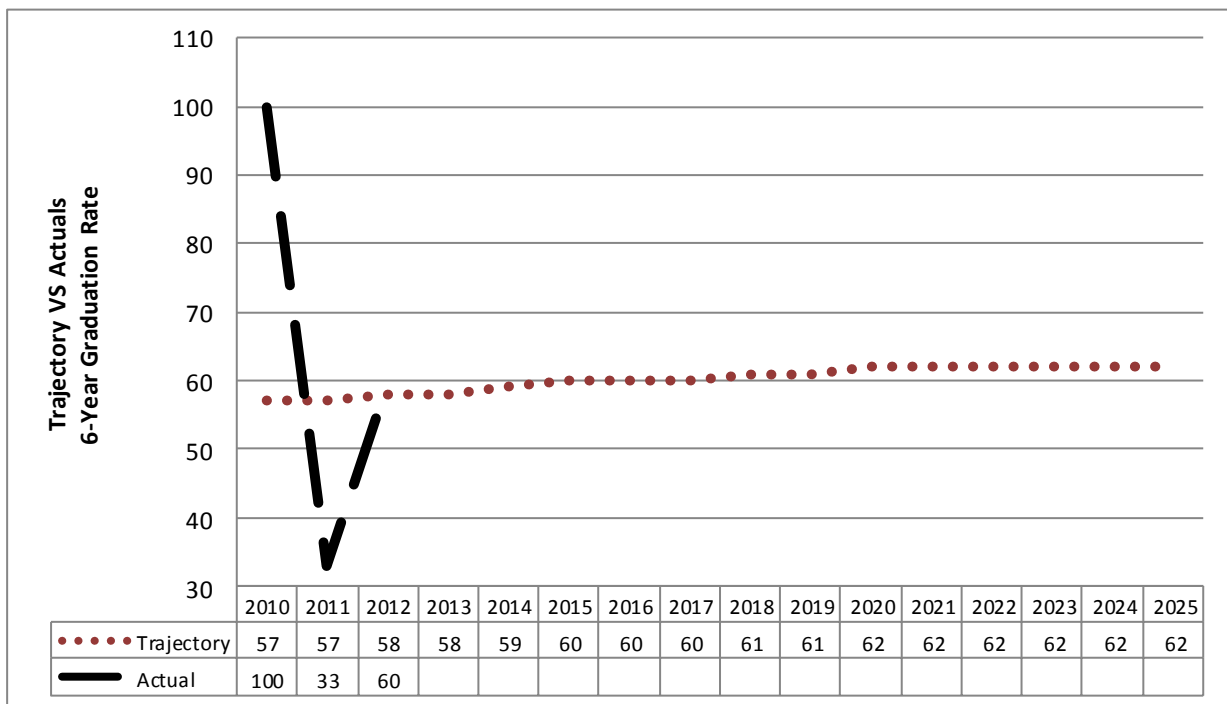**Target 1 Group: African-American**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
····· Trajectory	47	49	50	52	53	54	55	56	58	60	62	62	62	62	62	62
—— Actual	47	49	52													

Target 2 Group: Hispanic

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
····· Trajectory	57	57	58	58	59	60	60	60	61	61	62	62	62	62	62	62
—— Actual	100	33	60													
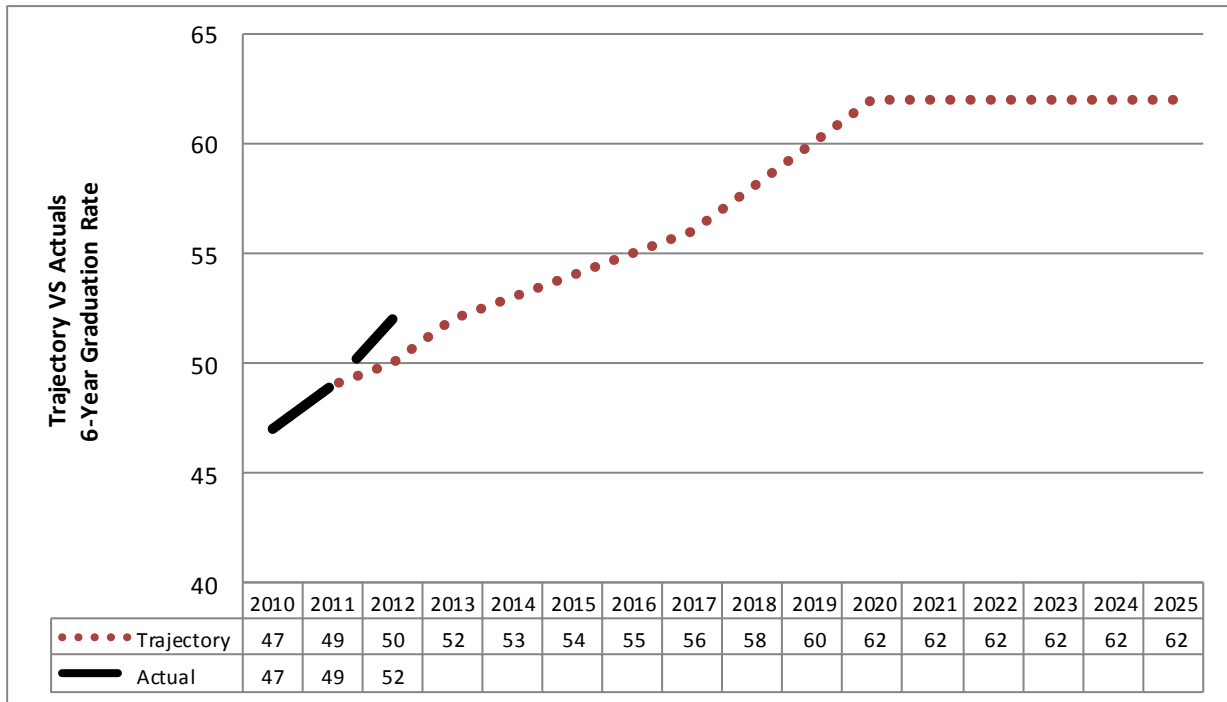
Target 3 Group: Low-income students (Pell eligibilty in first-academic year of enrollment)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
••••• Trajectory	57	57	58	58	59	60	60	60	61	61	62	62	62	62	62	62
—— Actual	57	52	56													