



**TOPIC:** 55% Completion Goal: Best Practices in Student Services

**COMMITTEE:** Education Policy and Student Life

**DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING:** January 16, 2013

**SUMMARY:** As this Regents' Committee broadens its scope to focus on Student Life issues that go beyond academic programming to include more direct student support issues, it has already started discussing the critical role that financial aid plays in student degree completion. At the MHEC Completion Summit on January 8, 2013, three USM institutions presented programs that represent best practice innovations to increase retention leading to higher completion rates.

- Bowie State University has hired Retention Coordinators in three of the four schools to assist students in transitioning into their majors. This advising within the school is a new and more direct approach for student support in upper division.
- UMCP has established links at [www.4yearplans.umd.edu](http://www.4yearplans.umd.edu) to assist students in every major to create clear pathways to graduation in the most efficient manner. These materials include specification of benchmark courses to be completed in order to move on to higher level classes. If students go beyond 130 credits without a degree, they are required to have advising before their next registration.
- Towson University has put new emphasis on the advising of transfer students by formalizing Orientation and Transfer Programs I (academic) and II (student life skills) to assist students in moving from community college environment to their 4-year campus. These students will gain information that will directly support their path to graduation.

Along with the many other programs on our campuses, these programs show new focus on the specific student needs by recognizing specific barriers and challenges that may be addressed in innovative ways unique to each campus. The reports required for Closing the Achievement Gap and 55% Completion Goal have allowed USM to recognize and highlight these programs.

**ALTERNATIVE(S):** This is an Information item.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** N/A

**CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION:** This is an Information item.

---

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

DATE:

---

BOARD ACTION:

DATE:

---

---

SUBMITTED BY: Joann A. Boughman

301-445-1992

[jboughman@usmd.edu](mailto:jboughman@usmd.edu)

---