

Institutional Definition of the Achievement Gap

The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) had previously defined its achievement gap as the difference in graduation rates in the School of Nursing BSN program between minority and white students and between African-American and white students (See reporting years 2010 and 2011).

To comply with the request from the University System of Maryland, UMB now defines the achievement gap as follows:

1. Achievement Gap is difference between retention and thee-year graduation of Black Traditional BSN students versus all traditional BSN students.
2. Achievement Gap is difference between retention and thee-year graduation of Hispanic Traditional BSN students versus all traditional BSN students.
3. Achievement Gap is difference between retention and thee-year graduation of low income traditional BSN students versus all traditional BSN students. (Note: The University of Maryland Baltimore defines low income students as those eligible for federal Pell Grants. For the Fall 2008 and Fall 2009 entering cohorts examined there were only a total of three students who were Pell eligible. All three of these students subsequently graduated within 150% of time to degree. The extremely small number of low income students and the absence of an achievement gap based on income limit the usefulness of including this category in UMB's Achievement Gap Plan.)

Institutional Trend Data Table

As of March 2013
 Achievement Gap Trend Report
 University of Maryland, Baltimore
 Three-year Graduation Rates:
 Black Traditional BSN Students vs. All Traditional BSN Students
 Hispanic Traditional BSN Students vs. All Traditional BSN Students

	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009
Gap Students Identified by Institution	Black Traditional BSN Students								
Cohort Size	39	59	41	32	30	32	32	22	14
3 Year Grad Rate	74%	71%	88%	88%	97%	84%	88%	77%	79%
Comparator Students	All Traditional BSN Students								
Cohort Size	134	186	156	168	144	150	141	132	114
3 Year Grad Rate	86%	86%	93%	94%	94%	88%	89%	<u>81%</u>	84%

The Gap	11%	15%	5%	7%	-2%	4%	2%	4%	6%
Gap Students Identified by Institution	Hispanic Traditional BSN Students								
Cohort Size	6	9	9	7	8	9	7	8	5
3 Year Grad Rate	83%	100%	100%	86%	88%	100%	100%	75%	80%
Comparator Students	All Traditional BSN Students								
Cohort Size	134	186	156	168	144	150	141	132	114
3 Year Grad Rate	86%	86%	93%	94%	94%	88%	89%	81%	84%
The Gap	2%	-14%	-7%	8%	7%	-12%	-11%	6%	4%

Summary of Achievement Gap Initiatives and Assessment

Given the re-classification of the Achievement Gap Initiative definitions for the University of Maryland, Baltimore and subsequent small population numbers in the redefined categories, it would be difficult to effectively evaluate the impact of a targeted initiative to close the achievement gap. As such, the University of Maryland School of Nursing (UMSON) will continue to offer services and evaluate the outcomes of services offered through the Student Success Center (SSC) to all entry-into-practice students enrolled at UMSON. The SSC was established in 2010, as a result of a four year, \$980,937 Who Will Care? grant. The SSC offers a variety of services aimed at enhancing academic performance and increasing retention and graduation rates of pre-licensure students by emphasizing proactive academic planning and strategic learning, enhancing study and test taking skills, and developing writing competency. These services are utilized by entry-into-practice students on a voluntary basis and include:

- A one day, pre-entry Student Success Immersion Program (SSIP).
- Guided Study Sessions (GSS) for Pathopharmacology, Adult Health Nursing, Introduction to Professional Nursing Practice, Health Assessment, and Science and Research for Nursing Practice.
- Individualized Academic coaching for students. Academic coaching is grounded in the LASSI, a learning and study skills inventory that allows the coach to identify a student’s area of academic strength/weakness and suggest improvements to the student’s current study strategies.
- Private one-on-one tutoring.
- Writing assistance for nursing specific papers.
- Workshops on test taking, note taking, time management, and textbook reading.

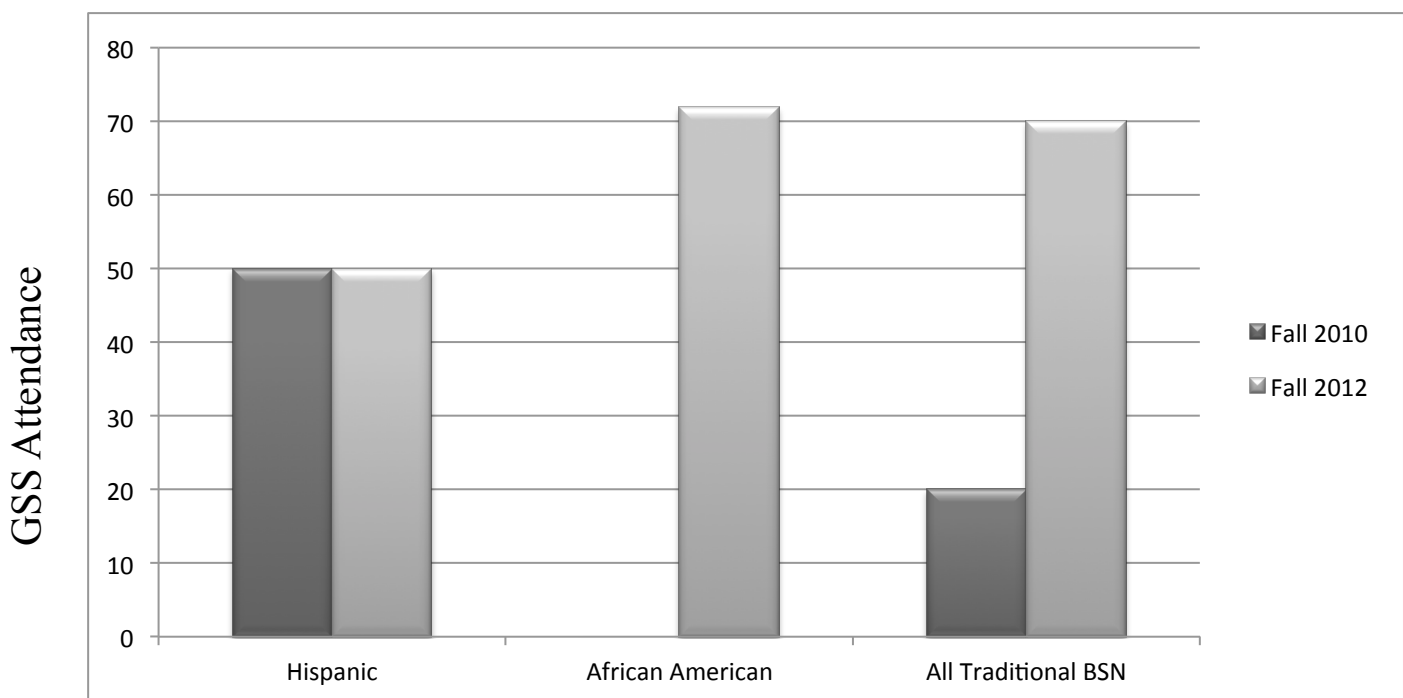
The SSIP is a one day, pre-orientation immersion program modeled on the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s (RWJF) Pre-entry Immersion Program (PIP). PIP is offered to RWJF scholars and emphasizes academic performance, time management, and life balance. SSIP builds on the RWJF PIP foundation by including an Anatomy and Physiology content review and an introduction to medication dosage calculation concepts. The students also take the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) 2nd Edition and learn where their strategic learning

indicators are strong and/or weak. Academic coach’s work individually with students to craft personalized study plans to maximize strategic learning strengths and minimize weaknesses.

GSS at UMSON are an adaptation of Supplemental Instruction (SI) developed at the University of Missouri, Kansas City in the early 1970’s. The SI model has been utilized broadly and researched extensively. Studies indicate that SI is effective at increasing course grades in “at risk” courses. The goal of SI is to shift from an “at risk student” model of tutoring to an “at risk course” model of tutoring. During GSS sessions, a trained peer leader facilitates small group discussions of the content for difficult courses. The role of the leader is to guide collaborative and active group discussion, create opportunities for deeper information processing, teach students to select the pertinent main ideas, and study material effectively. The GSS leader does not regurgitate information to the students or lecture during these sessions. GSS are also offered for Introduction to Professional Nursing Practice, Health Assessment, and Science and Research for Nursing Practice. Since an earlier institutional study indicated that student performance in Pathopharmacology and Adult Health Nursing is predictive of progression and graduation, performance in these courses is used as a data point for student retention and progression.

During the first year of the SSC, attendance at Pathopharmacology GSS was limited. To address this issue, the staff of the SSC developed marketing strategies to increase the exposure of SSC services to the population at large and to communicate that GSS are designed to enhance strategic learning skills and increase academic performance. As a result, utilization of GSS for Pathopharmacology has increased 50% by the overall population and 71% for African Americans (Figure 1). The Hispanic student participation rate has remained stable, but the Hispanic population size is quite small (fall 2009 = 2 Hispanic students; fall 2012 = 6 Hispanic students).

Figure 1: Fall 2010-Fall 2012 Pathopharmacology GSS attendance Comparison by Achievement Gap Classification



Overall, since fall 2010 participants in GSS for Pathopharmacology had overall higher final course averages than students who did not participate in GSS regardless of racial category (Table 2).

Table 2: Pathopharmacology Grade Average Comparison by Achievement Gap Category and GSS Attendance

Achievement Gap Category	Fall 2010		Fall 2011		Fall 2012	
	GSS participant	GSS non-participant	GSS participant	GSS non-participant	GSS participant	GSS non-participant
Hispanic	90.1	78.4	n/a	80.2	83.4	77.3
African American	83.8	n/a	95.5	87.2	79.4	66.5
All other students	84.6	87.1	86.4	83.6	82.2	80.5

Following the cohorts to the second semester course, Adult Health Nursing similar results were evidenced in spring 2012, but varied for spring 2011. Given the small sample size of the Hispanic (n = 2) and African American population (n = 2), it is difficult to ascertain the reliability of these numbers (Table 3).

Table 3: Adult Health Grade Average Comparison by Achievement Gap Category and GSS Attendance

Achievement Gap Category	Spring 2011		Spring 2012	
	GSS participant	GSS non-participant	GSS participant	GSS non-participant
Hispanic	79.7	83.0	78.4	n/a
African American	n/a	82.1	86.8	n/a
All other students	84.5	81.8	84.2	81.5

Intermediate Goals

Given the declining numbers in African American and Hispanic enrollments at UMSON, our intermediate goal will be to determine the factors leading to this decline and develop strategies to

increase recruitment of these students into nursing. We will continue to monitor the relatively small achievement gap in these populations and develop initiatives as needed.

