

## **Expanding the Shared Vision: The University of Baltimore Strategic Plan 2008-2012**

### **Mission**

The University of Baltimore provides innovative education in law, business and the applied liberal arts to serve the needs of a diverse population. A public university, the University of Baltimore offers excellent teaching and a supportive community for undergraduate, graduate and professional students in an environment distinguished by academic research and public service. The University:

- makes excellence accessible to traditional and nontraditional students motivated by professional advancement and civic awareness;
- establishes a foundation for lifelong learning, personal development and social responsibility;
- combines theory and practice to create meaningful, real-world solutions to 21st-century urban challenges; and
- is an integral partner in the culture, commerce and future of Baltimore and the region.

### **Overview**

Positioning for the Future: Creating a Shared Vision, the University of Baltimore Strategic Plan 2004-2007 helped initiate transformational change at UB. The significant institutional accomplishments of that period provide the UB community with a strong foundation from which to envision the possibilities of the coming five years.

Expanding the Vision: the University of Baltimore Strategic Plan 2008-2012 continues that transformation while remaining rooted in the University's historic educational mission. The updated plan is consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in *The USM in 2010: An Update of the USM Strategic Plan* and with the state plan for higher education.

### **The Environment**

#### *Maryland*

In fall 2007, enrollment in the University System of Maryland reached a record high of 137,412 students, reflecting a 1.5% increase from the previous year. USM Chancellor William E. Kirwan, in projecting a system-wide enrollment increase of 30 percent during the coming decade, stated, "We are literally adding the student population equivalent of a Frostburg, Salisbury, or University of Maryland Eastern Shore – 4,000 or more students – every two years."

State demographic, economic and political factors contributing to the projected increase include a surge in high school graduation levels associated with the "Baby Boom Echo;" the impact of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) program on the state's need for

additional post-secondary, certificate and professional development offerings; and the USM's commitment to closing the Achievement Gap – the disparity between low-income and minority students and other young Americans in terms of college attendance and success rates.

After years of declining and unpredictable public support, the state's elected officials have proposed dedicated and enhanced funding streams for higher education in the state's budget. With the addition of a collaborative effort to fund increasing enrollments, Maryland is poised to reverse recent cycles of declining support and increasing tuitions to meet the needs of a new generation of students.

### *The University of Baltimore*

From 2002 to 2007, UB student enrollment grew by 13 percent. During that period, the University opened its first-ever student center, an award-winning building that serves as the signature structure of a revitalized campus. Six UB faculty members received USM Regents awards. In spring 2007, the University successfully completed its reaccreditation process with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The launching of new academic programs, such as those in Simulation and Digital Entertainment and Real Estate and Economic Development, continued the UB tradition of innovative, timely responses to workforce needs. Another tradition was officially recognized when UB became one of the first universities in the nation to receive the Carnegie Foundation's "community engaged" classification. New efforts in each of the schools contributed to this distinction, including the Schaefer Center's partnership with the Weinberg Fellows Program; the Center for Families, Children and the Courts' Truancy Court program; and the establishment of the Entrepreneurship Opportunity Center.

In fall 2007, UB welcomed its first freshmen class in 32 years, marking the University's return to four-year undergraduate education. The initiative, created in response to increased state demand, was made possible by the collaborative efforts of faculty and staff working in a timeframe seldom realized in higher education.

In 2007, UB achieved the largest percentage enrollment increase in the USM at 9.44 percent, the largest since the University became a state institution. The introduction of the First and Second Year Program accounted for only a portion of this increase: UB's growth without first-year students would still represent the highest percentage increase in the USM.

## **The Overarching Vision**

The updated plan outlines goals, objectives, strategies and success measures in six topic areas, with a focus on enhancing the learning and teaching environment. From these, an overarching and transformational vision emerges of the University of Baltimore in the coming decade.

This vision is comprised of four key elements:

- ⇒ Enhance the learning experience at UB as measured by retention and graduation rates, student satisfaction indicators and job placement data
- ⇒ Grow student headcount to 8,000 to serve state educational and workforce needs
- ⇒ Achieve national ranking and recognition in select academic areas
- ⇒ Secure the necessary resources to fully implement and support the University of Baltimore's overarching vision.

These elements require growth in the institution's existing resource base from multiple sources, including state funds, private giving, corporate and foundation support, the University of Baltimore Foundation and continued entrepreneurial activities. With the necessary base funding, the University of Baltimore can continue its transformational growth into the next decade.

*Enhance the UB Learning Experience*

UB's teaching mission has historically been centered on career-focused education, as stated in the Academic Committee Report of October 2007: "...the education of the student is central to all the activities at UB and the ultimate goal is to provide a supportive learning environment for individuals to advance in their careers and be engaged in their communities."

Career-focused education faces distinct challenges in today's marketplace due to global competition and the rapid pace of change and innovation. Today's graduates must be prepared for more than a career, as skills in communication, problem-solving, collaboration and technical literacy will be required in all professional disciplines. These skills enable more than job entry or career advancement: they are key to a fully-realized life experience.

In addressing these challenges, five-year targets will include the following:

- UB will rank in the top third of USM institutions in retention of first-time freshmen
- UB will rank in the top third of USM institutions in graduation rates for community college transfer students
- UB will rank in the top quarter of USM institutions in alumni satisfaction regarding preparation for work and graduate school
- UB will rank at or above the state average in first-time bar passage rate.

Strategies for strengthening learning and teaching at UB include:

- creating a Center for Teaching and Learning to support faculty in developing pedagogy; assessing student learning; using cutting-edge instructional technology; and in mentoring new colleagues
- developing and implementing a 5-year faculty hiring plan in each school

- continuing review of existing programs to assure currency and relevance to school and institutional goals
- developing and launching new programs in areas of state need that enrich the University's offerings.

<i>Grow enrollment to serve state and regional needs</i>
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The successful development and launch of the First and Second Year Program changed undergraduate education at the University of Baltimore. The initiative presented the UB community with the opportunity and challenge of developing a lower-division curriculum, delivering general education requirements, and examining learning and teaching styles for a new generation of students. The effort resulted in an invigorated campus climate, a reassessment of current practices, and a renewed commitment to UB's historic educational mission.

With full implementation of the 4-year undergraduate program, coupled with its existing graduate and professional programs, UB is positioned to be a growth institution within the USM at a time when post-secondary education is more important than ever before.

In Maryland, as well as regionally and nationally, success in the knowledge-based 21<sup>st</sup> century economy depends on the availability of an educated workforce. The University of Baltimore's practical and professional programs in business, law and the applied liberal arts will be a major asset in advancing the region's competitive advantage in the coming decade.

Equally important is the value that undergraduate and graduate degrees bring to the individual: access to better-paying jobs, increased economic mobility, and greater community engagement and personal fulfillment. During the last century, these values formed the basis of what was called the American Dream. The University of Baltimore and all public institutions must define that dream for the new century; closing the Achievement Gap is a major and critical first step towards that goal.

In addition to meeting state and regional needs, targeted growth can provide UB with:

- efficiencies and economies of scale in the delivery of academic and administrative services
- opportunities for more diverse offerings in programmatic areas consistent with the University's pre-professional, career-oriented focus
- the enrichment and continuing invigoration of the academic environment that results from the addition of a significant number of new faculty members
- increased revenues to support the educational mission, primarily in supporting current faculty and staff and hiring new faculty and staff in areas of need.

Growth strategies include:

- attracting and retaining older, non-traditional first-year undergraduate students
- developing new undergraduate programs that broaden the 4-year curriculum

- developing new graduate programs in response to state and regional needs
- constructing campus housing
- offering cohort graduate programs for local and regional businesses and targeted international populations
- expanding offerings at the Universities at Shady Grove
- providing new methods of program delivery for the adult student, including alternative scheduling, enhanced online programs, and certificate and professional development programs
- leveraging the University's existing focus on the adult learner to meet the emerging needs of career-changers and career-enhancers
- assuming a leadership role in bridging the College Achievement Gap among low income and minority students.

*Achieve and maintain national ranking in select academic areas*

During the next five years, the University of Baltimore will commit to achieving national ranking and recognition in areas of academic excellence while maintaining its core educational mission.

This commitment includes:

- for the School of Law: Achieve and maintain recognition among the top 100 law schools as measured by national rankings
- for the Merrick School of Business: Obtain ranking among Entrepreneurship Programs and other strategic areas of business knowledge
- for the College of Liberal Arts: Enhance nationally and regionally-prominent centers of excellence in public administration, creative writing, simulation and digital entertainment, publications design, and criminal justice.

*Securing the necessary resources*

In order to realize the overarching goals of the updated plan, the University of Baltimore must receive adequate funding to support its distinct mix of pre-professional undergraduate, graduate and professional programs, as well as the resources necessary to implement its enrollment growth initiatives.

UB is committed to working collaboratively with the USM and the Maryland Higher Education Commission to establish a peer model that results in funding appropriate to the institution's structure and mission. In addition, the USM, in collaboration with the Governor's Office and the General Assembly, established the Enrollment Funding Initiative (EFI) to help meet the demands on universities' operating budgets as a result of increasing enrollments. UB's participation in this initiative, as well as the state's commitment to maintaining EFI funding levels, is critical to the University's enrollment plans.

Finally, the University of Baltimore is committed to successfully meeting its capital campaign targets and public/private initiatives. The additional support for scholarships; faculty research and endowed chairs; and infrastructure enhancement will contribute significantly to the University's continued growth and development.

### **Expanding the Vision: Next Steps**

The next section identifies goals, objectives, strategies and success measures that will help UB realize its vision for the future. The list of strategies and success measures will guide actions and can be used to assess progress in each area, but they are not comprehensive: Strategic planning is a dynamic process, and should be informed by ongoing discussion, evaluation and – if necessary – refocusing.

Specific strategies and success measure targets should be set periodically after collaborative discussions among all responsible units. Progress towards these institutional goals should be monitored on a regular basis and be reported annually to the campus community. Existing school, college and unit plans should be reviewed for consistency with the updated institutional plan. Standing shared governance committees, as well as campus-wide work groups in specific areas, will participate in monitoring plan implementation.

Through a culture of self-assessment and continuous improvement, the University of Baltimore can most effectively fulfill its commitment to all stakeholders.

## Strategic Goals

### 1. The University of Baltimore will enhance the quality of learning, teaching and research.

*Objective 1.1:* Increase support for faculty to develop pedagogy; assess student learning; employ cutting-edge instructional technology; and mentor new colleagues.

*Objective 1.2:* Add faculty lines in areas of programmatic growth and need to assure quality of instruction, maintain appropriate teaching loads, and meet accreditation standards where applicable.

*Objective 1.3:* Enhance research and scholarship that contribute to the University's academic mission.

*Objective 1.4:* Support the ongoing assessment of programmatic and student course learning outcomes.

*Objective 1.5:* Strengthen academic support services and co-curricular programming to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

*Objective 1.6:* Achieve national ranking and recognition in select areas of academic excellence.

*Strategies include:*

- Creating a Center for Teaching and Learning
- Developing and implementing a 5-year faculty hiring plan in each school
- Strengthening collaboration among the Office of Technology Services, Langsdale Library, the e-learning Center and all academic units on use of instructional technology
- Expanding school and college collaborations to enhance existing offerings and create innovative new programs
- Enhancing campus libraries and co-curricular support units
- Enhancing existing developmental and honors programs
- Attracting and retaining a prominent and diverse faculty; supporting and retaining junior faculty who exhibit potential to attain national prominence
- Strengthening support for faculty research
- Fully implementing assessment plans in all programs
- Participating in the Voluntary System of Accountability to assess student learning outcomes

*Success measures include:*

- New faculty hiring

- Ratio of credit hours taught by tenure and tenure track faculty; progress towards school/college target goal
- Annual bar passage rate
- Student satisfaction indices
- Student retention and graduation rates
- Faculty satisfaction indices
- Percentage of programs utilizing advanced instructional technology
- Number of faculty publications per capita
- Growth in grant-funded research
- Number of academic advisors
- Number of collaborative programs and academic options
- National rankings in select academic and program areas

**2. The University of Baltimore will increase student enrollment in response to state and regional demand.**

*Objective 2.1:* Increase total student headcount to 8,000.

*Objective 2.2:* Review existing academic programs based on current enrollments; market indicators of future enrollments; degrees granted; cost; dedicated faculty; and contribution to general education requirements; and enhance initiatives that ensure programmatic currency and relevancy.

*Objective 2.3:* Increase the number of four-year undergraduate majors.

*Objective 2.4:* Strengthen and coordinate retention efforts in all program areas.

*Objective 2.5:* Develop and launch programs in areas of documented need based on thorough market analysis; comprehensive business plans; USM and MHEC approvals; and dedicated resources.

*Objective 2.6:* Expand co-curricular offerings to enrich students' educational, cultural and social experiences.

*Strategies include:*

- Developing and implementing strategic enrollment and retention plans
- Setting annual enrollment goals based on data and collaborative decision-making
- Targeting non-traditional first-year students
- Implementing strategies to lower the Achievement Gap
- Leveraging financial aid to maximize yield
- Offering undergraduate minors
- Enhancing communications with current students
- Strengthening fully-online and 'hybrid' class offerings

- Increasing flexibility in the delivery of teaching, learning and student services
- Expanding offerings at the Universities at Shady Grove
- Developing recruitment materials tied to market research and enrollment strategies
- Utilizing partnerships with neighboring cultural and educational institutions to broaden available activities outside the classroom
- Evaluating the feasibility of non-degree, non-credit, certificate and professional development offerings
- Constructing student housing
- Expanding student services, including sports and wellness programs and enhanced food options

*Success measures include:*

- Annual enrollment growth
- Student retention, graduation and job placement rates
- Number of four-year undergraduate majors available
- Resources reallocated for existing and new program growth
- Number of new programs developed in response to state and workforce need
- Number of co-curricular offerings tied to learning outcomes

**3. The University of Baltimore will further develop its role in community engagement and regional stewardship.**

*Objective 3.1:* Increase support for and promotion of the University's centers, institutes, clinics and community-focused initiatives.

*Objective 3.2:* Increase collaborative programs and community-focused education that utilize Baltimore's potential as an educational incubator.

*Objective 3.3:* Strengthen UB's culture of students as community stewards through enhanced service-learning and internship opportunities.

*Objective 3.4:* Increase opportunities for local residents and businesses in UB's hiring, purchasing and other on-going business functions.

*Objective 3.5:* Continue to develop and implement public/private development partnerships that meet university and community needs and contribute to the economic and social vitality of midtown Baltimore.

*Strategies include:*

- Forming multi-disciplinary partnerships that address the needs of the surrounding neighborhood and the city of Baltimore

- Facilitating local, regional and national discussions among higher education, non-profit, and civic and business leaders focused on innovative solutions to urban challenges
- Coordinating campus internship and service learning initiatives
- Ensuring that UB's engagement initiatives are communicated to internal and external constituencies
- Reviewing current practices related to faculty, staff, and student recruitment and retention with respect to community leadership
- Strengthening participation and leadership roles in the Central Baltimore Partnership, the Baltimore Collegetown Network, and other local and regional organizations
- Advancing the campus as a community resource and destination
- Collaborating with MICA, Peabody and the Baltimore arts community to present cultural offerings of interest to the UB and surrounding communities

*Success measures include:*

- Growth in service learning and internship opportunities
- Grants applied for and received related to community service-based initiatives and/or urban issues
- Faculty and staff time dedicated to public service initiatives
- Growth in local hiring and contracting
- Number of local, regional and annual events hosted on urban issues
- Meeting/exceeding state requirements for minority business contracting
- Private investment in joint development projects
- Participation in Community Service Day and other community-focused initiatives

**4. The University of Baltimore will support its educational mission through efficient structures, best practices in customer service, sound fiscal management, and the retention and recruitment of a professional workforce.**

*Objective 4.1:* Increase the annual operating budget to adequately support the University of Baltimore's distinct mix of pre-professional undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs.

*Objective 4.2:* Provide a supportive environment for the ongoing professional development and engagement of all staff.

*Objective 4.3:* Enhance customer service in all public-facing and internal operations.

*Objective 4.4:* Increase the participation of alumni, staff, faculty, students, external stakeholders and the business community in the University's fundraising initiatives.

*Objective 4.5:* Increase financial resources for students to enhance available financial aid, work-study positions, graduate assistantships and stipends.

*Objective 4.6:* Increase alternative revenue streams to support the academic mission through public/private partnerships and expanded auxiliary enterprises.

*Strategies include:*

- Strengthening institutional research to support evidence-based decision making
- Maintaining a transparent, participatory budget process in which resource allocations are clearly linked to strategic priorities
- Enhancing staff training, professional advancement and acknowledgment initiatives
- Participating in campus and USM programs that support the Regents' Effectiveness and Efficiency initiatives
- Revising the Performance Management Process (PMP) process to create clearly-defined job descriptions and performance goals
- Utilizing existing survey results and creating new feedback mechanisms to create a culture of continuous quality improvement in all service areas
- Adding academic advising positions to reduce faculty administrative responsibilities
- Evaluating business processes and administrative structures to eliminate duplication and inefficiencies
- Maintaining the annual campus report card of key performance indicators
- Strengthening the relationship between the University of Baltimore Foundation and UB's academic and administrative units
- Managing available fiscal resources to minimize annual tuition and fee increases while maintaining academic quality and service levels

*Success measures include:*

- Growth in annual operating budget
- Constituent satisfaction indices
- Annual giving totals
- Percentage of capital campaign target met
- Participation in open campus budget processes
- Ranking relative to comparable institutions' funding and staffing

**5. The University of Baltimore will create a welcoming, environmentally sustainable 21<sup>st</sup>-century urban campus.**

*Objective 5.1:* Construct new and renovated classrooms, labs, study areas, offices, academic support facilities, and common spaces necessary to maintain and enhance the learning and teaching environment.

*Objective 5.2:* Enhance the information technology infrastructure to support learning, teaching, student services, and core business functions.

*Objective 5.3:* Increase environmentally-conscious practices in energy consumption, recycling, procurement, transportation and building construction and renovation.

*Objective 5.4:* Enhance campus green space, signage, lighting and other streetscaping elements to create a safe, welcoming and defined urban campus.

*Objective 5.5:* Provide parking facilities and campus residential options that meet the needs of current and future students, faculty and staff.

*Strategies include:*

- Constructing the University's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects within the established timelines (law building and learning center)
- Developing and implementing a Facilities Use Plan with the input of all stakeholders that supports the core academic mission
- Upgrading faculty and staff office space
- Creating an inventory of adaptable, flexible academic space that can accommodate new learning and teaching styles
- Increasing community use of public transportation
- Creating a one-stop shop for student transactional services
- Implementing an energy performance contract to upgrade campus energy efficiency
- Strengthening the campus recycling program
- Managing facility usage to reduce unnecessary energy consumption
- Maintaining an equipment life cycle program

*Success measures include:*

- Square footage of new and renovated classroom and instructional-related space
- Number of students, faculty and staff using public transportation
- Reduction of energy consumption; progress towards campus climate-neutrality
- Campus safety indices
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification obtained for new construction and major renovation projects

**6. The University of Baltimore will foster a diverse, informed and participatory community of students, faculty, staff and alumni as a core institutional strength and value.**

*Objective 6.1:* Increase diversity in faculty and professional staff hiring.

*Objective 6.2:* Support the awareness and inclusion of diversity in academic and co-curricular programming.

*Objective 6.3:* In collaboration with the USM, enhance efforts to close the college achievement gap among current and future student populations.

*Objective 6.4:* Increase participation in and effectiveness of campus shared governance.

*Objective 6.5:* Enhance campus communication, feedback and assessment mechanisms that contribute to the fulfillment of the University's mission.

*Strategies include:*

- Broadening the definition of diversity to include a full range of personal and experiential characteristics
- Implementing effective strategies for recruiting a diverse faculty and professional staff
- Supporting diversity education initiatives and partnerships
- Increasing awareness and support of disability services
- Participating in USM-wide initiatives related to increasing the recruitment, retention and academic success of minority students
- Developing a communication plan that defines the roles and responsibilities of all campus constituents and results in effective, timely campus communication
- Distributing existing survey data and establishing effective new instruments that enhance the campus environment
- Clarifying roles, responsibilities and areas related to shared governance
- Establishing policies and procedures that promote information-sharing and encourage meaningful input among all stakeholders

*Success measures include:*

- Recruitment and retention of minority candidates for faculty and professional staff positions
- Programmatic and recruitment initiatives related to closing the Achievement Gap
- Participation in campus shared governance
- Employee satisfaction indices
- Campus satisfaction indices related to communication