**Elements of the Self Study Design**

**March 2023 (*Presentations to UFS, UBSS, & SGA*)**

***Catherine Andersen – Accreditation Liaison Officer and Special Assistant to the President for Strategic Planning***

Every other month the MSCHE Steering Committee will report to governance bodies.

In addition, after each of the three drafts of the final Self- Study in fall 2024 and Spring of 2025, Town Halls will be held to solicit feedback. Finally, we have developed a webpage ([msche@ubalt.edu](mailto:msche@ubalt.edu)) for all relevant MSCHE materials including email contact for questions and feedback.

**OUTCOMES OF THE SELF STUDY**

Using our Self-Study and subsequent recommendations will serve as an important blueprint in UBalt’s continued growth and progress. When faced with budgetary challenges, lower than desired graduation and retention rates, and stagnant and declining enrollments, it is critical that we regularly assess effectiveness of our teaching and learning activities, develop an unshakable focus on student success, identify ways to strategically grow enrollments, and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the academic support and administrative aspects of the University. Ongoing assessment of student learning and success and of institutional effectiveness will be an important component of our study process.

Specifically, the goals of the Self Study are to:

1. Achieve reaffirmation of our MSCHE accreditation.
2. Address mission-oriented and strategically oriented issues especially identity and our focus on the adult learner.
3. Engage members of the university community in the use of data for improving institutional effectiveness.
4. Provide an honest, fair, and forward-looking assessment of the University and foster widespread understanding of the institution’s current circumstances and challenges – taking a look forward.
5. Enhance trust and confidence in institutional processes and strengthen transparency.
6. Produce a document that serves as a concise and useful tool for institutional planning and change that is evidence based and supports the development of the next University of Baltimore Strategic Plan.

The Self-Study will play a significant role in helping our university community identify and better understand our strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement. Findings will serve as foundation for building an evidence-based plan for strengthening the University of Baltimore and enhancing our ability to achieve our stated goals and objectives.

**EVALUATION TEAM PROFILE**

The University of Baltimore respectfully recommends that the Chair of the Evaluation Team be a President/Chancellor or Provost of an urban comprehensive university, and preferably from a state institution, non-residential campus, that is also a member of a larger university system. We also request that one member of the Evaluation Team serve as the Chief Planning Officer of a public, comprehensive university that is a member of a university system. We also respectfully request that one member of the Evaluation Team be affiliated with a university that has a law school.

**SELF STUDY APPROACH**

The University of Baltimore will use a Standards-Based Approach Self-Study model. This approach would be most helpful in addressing current mission-oriented needs and identifying strategic priorities. The Self-Study will be linked to multiple goals of Strategic Plan and outcomes, and our 2020 Board of Regents Task Force Report. In addition, the Self-Study will report on progress on the 2017 MSCHE recommendations.

**SELF-STUDY TIMELINE**

The Steering Committee will meet monthly fall 2023 and throughout the 2024-25 academic year, Working Groups meet every one to two weeks as needed. Steering Committee meetings will be used for review and feedback on the evolving reports from each Working Group. Co-liaisons will provide substantive feedback at several points during the year. During fall 2024, the Steering Committee will hold an open-community session to share draft findings and recommendations. Feedback will be solicited and included in the report, as appropriate. Working Groups will conclude their work in May 2025. A Self-Study website has been created, as well as a Teams site, to house relevant MSCHE documents. These will be used to provide information and to communicate with the broader University community.

During the spring and summer of 2025, the co-chairs will revise and integrate the Working Group reports, and then draft the Self-Study document which will be sent to the Steering Committee, President, and Provost for input. Once this level of revision is completed, the report will be presented to the President and executive leadership to ensure that (1) it represents a consensus about the current state and future prospects of the institution, (2) all relevant perspectives have been considered, and (3) the institution is accurately portrayed through the institutional “voice” of the report. The document will then be shared with the full University community, including faculty, staff, and the Student Government. The final report will be forwarded to the Chancellor and Board of Regents for approval.

The following guidelines apply to all Working Group reports that are submitted to the Steering Committee. Although Working Group reports should include relevant descriptions, the bulk of reports should focus on evaluation, assessment and recommendations/strategies for improvement. It is important to note that although a significant amount of information from Working Group reports will be included in the final MSCHE Self-Study report, the Steering Committee has ultimate editorial control of the final Self-Study report

**IDENTIFIED INSTIUTIONAL PRIORITES**

**The Steering Committee developed four institutional priorities**

The University of Baltimore has selected four Institutional Priorities to be addressed in the MSCHE Self-Study:

1. **Innovation:** Innovation can be reflected in programs, student support, space, and delivery formats. At UBalt academic programs and certificates meet the current and emerging wide-ranging demands of a working adult student population, a rapidly advancing technological landscape and the shifting Baltimore area workforce needs. Strengthening UBalt’s academic expertise and intellectual capital and deploying those through innovative delivery options is a formula for success and will enhance the student experience at UBalt. Additionally, UBalt leverages focused co-curricular learning opportunities to meet the changing demographic or its adult working age students.
2. **Enrollment (Recruitment and Retention):**  UBalt will recruit and retain a diverse population of Students with the goal of a 60/40 graduate-professional/undergraduate mix. UBalt will facilitate equitable student access through robust enrollment management planning, with strong collaborations with academic affairs and external partners supported by accurate and clear communications about its programs, admissions processes, and financing to prospective and current students. We will work together to provide effective curricular and co-curricular support services as well as flexible programs and schedules to enhance student recruitment and timely degree completion.
3. **Financial Stability**: In ensuring financial stability, the University is committed to maximizing instructional capabilities, building efficiencies, growing revenue, and increasing the University's endowment to support outstanding education and student support as part of its primary organizational and financial strategy.
4. **Engagement**: If UBalt is identified as an urban engaged institution, it will benefit both recruitment and retention thus providing the needed revenue for financial stability. UBalt has always prided itself as The University *for* Baltimore with most of our students coming from and staying in the region after graduation. If we succeed, Baltimore succeeds. In a recent UBalt brand survey, results indicated a strong student, faculty, staff, and alumni interest and identity in community engagement. In addition to aligning with our Strategic Plan it also supports our academic planning, aligning our programs more closely with local, regional, national, and global workforce needs and provides more high impact practices to enhance our students' skillsets and connections to off-campus opportunities.

**MSCHE LEADERSHIP/ AND STEERING COMMITTEE AND LINES OF INQUIRY**

Along with individuals listed below, co-chairs of each standard are members of the Steering Committee.

**Steering Committee:**

**Chair** – Special Assistant to the President for Strategic Planning and Accreditation, and Accreditation Liaison Officer, Dr. Catherine Andersen Ph.D.

**Co-Chair** - Professor, Merrick School of Business – *Dr. Dan Gerlowski, Ph.D.*

Student Member Student (MBA) Merrick School of Business - *Tiahna Pantovich*

*Title 1X Coordinator and Director of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI)* - *Tiwana Barnes, JD.*

Representative, University of Baltimore Foundation or Alumni Board

Representative, University System of Maryland Board of Regents

**Standard I: Mission and Goals**

**Co-Chairs:**

Dean and Professor, College of Public Affairs – *Dr. Roger Hartley, Ph.D.*

Director, Early College Initiatives - *John Brenner*

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| **Standard II: Ethics and Integrity**  **Co-Chairs:**  Associate Vice President of Student Success & Dean of Students – *Dr. Llatetra Esters, Ed.D.*  Executive Director Government Affairs - *Suzanne Tabor, J.D.*  Interim Associate Provost – *Dr. Jeffrey Elwell,* *Ph.D.*  **Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**  **Co-Chairs**:  Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences – *Dr. Ron Castanzo, Ph.D.*  Director of Teaching and Learning Excellence – *Dr. Jessica Stansbury, Ed.D.*  **Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience**  **Co-Chairs:**  Vice President – Student Support and Success Services & Chief Student Affairs Office - *Nicole Marano*  Director of Academic & Faculty Support; Executive Director – CELTT; Director of Success Programs - *John Chapin* |
| |  | | --- | | **Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment**  **Co-Chairs:**  Associate Provost – *Dr. Aaron Wachhaus, Ph.D.*  Assessment Coordinator - *Alicia Campbell*  **Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**  **Co-Chairs:**  Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Business Affairs - *Barbara Aughenbaugh*  Assistant Professor, College of Public Affairs - *Dr. Al Gourrier, Ph.D.* | |

**CHARGE FOR THE SELF-STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE**

* Develop a comprehensive understanding of the Middle States Commission on the Higher Education Self-Study accreditation process and requirements, particularly with the standards described in *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Requirements of Affiliation and Standards for Accreditation Version 14.*
* In addition to the documents provided in this Self-Study design, develop and collect additional support documents for use by the Steering Committees and Working Groups.
* Work collaboratively with Standards Working Groups to refine Self-Study research questions as we move forward in the data gathering and analysis process.
* Coordinate communication pertaining to the MSCHE Self-Study process to internal, as well as appropriate external, constituencies.
* Provide leadership to, and coordinate responsibilities/deliverables of, the Working Groups.
* Read and provide timely feedback on Working Group reports.
* Assist Working Groups with acquiring access to needed information and resources.
* In an ongoing and iterative process, integrate Working Group reports in a coherent and comprehensive Self-Study document.
* Take on editorial responsibility for the final Self-Study report.
* Engage in a thorough assessment of the final Self-Study report to ensure all MSCHE requirements, with respect to areas to be covered and evidence related to each, are achieved.

**CHARGE FOR THE SELF-STUDY STANDARD WORKING GROUPS**

* Develop a comprehensive understanding of the Middle States Commission on the Higher Education Self-Study accreditation process and requirements, particularly with the Seven standards described in *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Requirements of Affiliation and Standards for Accreditation Version 14.*
* Evaluate evidence, through the use of rUBaltrics and report templates, to demonstrate the relationship between the standard, the relevant institutional priorities from our Strategic Plan, and the College’s mission.
* Upload relevant data, processes, and procedures to an evidence inventory in SharePoint.
* Use templates provided guidance to the Working Group on responding to the standard and possible sources evidence to address the assessment criterion embedded within each standard.
* Meet regularly to address any questions or debate on the quality and/or relevancy of a piece of evidence or taxonomy. Throughout this process of information gathering and analysis, the Working Group shall collaborate with the Steering Committee, college liaisons, and the College community as appropriate, to fulfill needs for documentation and/or discussion as relevant to the criteria of the standard and corresponding requirements of affiliation.
* Submit a final report, in outline form, summarizing their findings.
* Collect and examine evidence that pertains to each standard for which the Working Group is responsible to assess how effective the University is in meeting compliance requirements.
* Draft report of findings of review and recommendations for moving forward.

Working Groups are listed below as well as the lines of inquiry developed by each of the workgroups and reviewed by the Steering Committee for relevance, overlap and gaps. In addition to the lines of inquiry, there was a consistent theme of looking at culture and communication. In fact, as part of the University System of Maryland, all institutions are required to participate in a risk management assessment; and communication, internal and external has been identified as a risk.

**Standard I: Mission and Goals**

**The institution’s mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.**

**Co-Chairs:**

Dean and Professor, College of Public Affairs – *Dr. Roger Hartley, Ph.D.*

Director, Early College Initiatives - *John Brenner*

**Members:**

Director, Meditation Clinic, Gilbert A. Holmes Professor of Clinical Theory and Practice – *Rob Rubinson, J.D.*

Assistant Vice President, Alumni Relations and Donor Services – *Kate Crimmins*

Professor of Entrepreneurship – *Dr. David Lingelbach, Ph.D.*

Assistant Director, Rosenberg Center for Student Engagement and Inclusion – *Elizabeth Purswani*

Parsons Professor, IDIA/UX Programs Interim Director, Center for Digital Communication, Commerce, and Culture, College of Arts and Sciences – *Dr. Greg Walsh, Ph.D.*

Associate Dean and Associate Professor, College of Public Affairs – *Dr. Sascha Sheehan, Ph.D.*

**Lines of Inquiry**

1. How has UBalt's mission and goals been assessed since the 2020 Board of Regents report and the COVID-19 Pandemic? What was the process, and what is the result?
2. Does UBalt have a well-articulated process through which its mission and goals are periodically evaluated, and how does the evidence demonstrate that this process is inclusive and effective?
3. How do UBalt’s mission and goals inform/align the four University priorities of enrollment/retention, financial stability, engagement, and academic innovation?

**Standard II: Ethics and Integrity**

**Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.**

**Co-Chairs:**

Associate Vice President of Student Success & Dean of Students – *Dr. Llatetra Esters, Ed.D*Executive Director Government Affairs - *Suzanne Tabor, J.D*

Interim Associate Provost – *Dr. Jeffrey Elwell, Ph.D.*

**Members:** Lead Employee Relations Specialist, Office of Human Resources – *David Elliott*

Associate Dean of Administration, School of Law – *Joy Gaslevic, J.D.*

Director of Enrollment Mgmt. Systems & Compliance – *Thomas Healy*

Assistant Dean for Enrollment, Academic Affairs, and Student Services – Merrick School of Business – *Kathea Smith*

**Lines of Inquiry.**

1. To what extent do UBalt policies and procedures align with university mission, promote integrity, and reinforce ethical behavior and compliance?
2. To what extent do UBalt policies and procedures provide accessibility for our diverse populations and ensure institutional effectiveness?
3. How does UBalt ensure continuous improvement through processes designed to consistently review, assess, update, and communicate policies and procedures related to rights, responsibilities, grievances, and freedoms?

**Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**

**An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all programs, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/ schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.**

**Co-Chairs**:

Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences – *Dr. Ron Castanzo, Ph.D.*

Director of Teaching and Learning Excellence – *Dr. Jessica Stansbury, Ed.D.*

**Members:**

Director of Online Learning, CELTT - *Dr. Constance Harris, Ph.D.*

Professor, College of Public Affairs - *Dr. Alan Lyles, Ph.D.*

Professor, Merrick School of Business - *Dr. Dan Gerlowski, Ph.D.*

Program Director, Certificate in Digital Communication and Master of Arts Program in Integrated Design - *Dr. Jacob DeGeal, Ph.D.*

Professor of Law - *Elizabeth Keyes, J.D.*

**Lines of Inquiry**

1. How do UBalt’s educational programs align with UBalt’s mission of community engagement and social responsibility while strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion across instructional modalities?
2. How does student preference inform course scheduling, instructional modality, and program design, pre and post pandemic, and do their preferences lead to student success? How does the university's support for these preferences contribute to student success?
3. How can UBalt preserve and strengthen currency, applicability, and innovation of its general education program, while enriching the diverse learning experiences of students?
4. How can UBalt support professional development of faculty, using a teaching quality framework, to provide a holistic and transparent student learning experience that promotes student retention and success?

**Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience**

**Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience.**

**Co-Chairs:**

Vice President – Student Support and Success Services & Chief Student Affairs Office - *Nicole Marano*

Director of Academic & Faculty Support; Executive Director – CELTT; Director of Success Programs - *John Chapin*

**Members:**

Assistant Dean for Advising, Enrollment, and Student Success – *Megan Manly, M.Ed*.

Associate Vice President, Enrollment Management – *Mark Jacque, M. Ed.*

Director, Career & Internship Center – *Lakeisha Mathews, Ed.D.*

Assistant Dean of Students – *Paul Manrique, Esq.*

Deputy Chief Information Office – *Dave Riggin*

Assistant Professor, College of Public Administration – *Dr. Dawnsha Mushonga, Ph.D.*

Sophomore, Digital Communications Student – *Aria Baker*

Division Operations Specialist, Student Support and Success Services – *Dagemawit Kebede*

**Lines of Inquiry**

1. How does the university follow through with support for borderline admissions decisions for students who might be an exception to standards (undergrad) or conditionally admitted (grad)? How does the university convey its ethical standards related to admissions decisions in its internal and public-facing policies?
2. How does the university support student on-campus employment to leverage the well-established benefits to students professionally, academically, and personally in creating a sense of belonging that extends outside of the classroom? What policies and resources does the university deploy to create and sustain the sense of belonging.
3. With several initiatives intended to address declining enrollment since the last accreditation, how has the university assessed performance of these initiatives and used that data to inform new ones?
4. How do we identify our students’ barriers for success and how do we ensure that we provide the framework and support to allow that success to happen?

**Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

**Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution’s students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution’s mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.**

**Co-Chairs:**

Associate Provost – *Dr. Aaron Wachhaus, Ph.D.*

Assessment Coordinator - *Alicia Campbell*

**Members:**

Assistant Director for Research, Schaefer Center for Public Policy - *Sarah Ficenec, Ph.D.*

Associate Professor, College of Arts & Sciences - *Courtney Gasser, Ph.D*.

Assistant Provost for Financial Affairs, Office of the Provost - *Karen Karmiol*

Interim Dean, Robert L. Bogomolny Library - *Michael Shochet, MLS*

Assistant Professor, College of Arts and Sciences – *Dr. Megan Rhee, Ph.D.*

Archivist, Robert L. Bogomolny Library – *Fatemeh Rezaei, MLS*

**Lines of Inquiry**

1. How are student learning outcomes assessed and to what extent are the assessment results used to further the University’s mission? Also, how are we using assessment to identify and address areas where student learning objectives are not being met?
2. To what extent are assessment processes and efforts evaluated to promote inclusion and engagement?
3. How can assessment methods and results be used to promote effective practices, engage in reflection, and promote collaboration across the university?

**Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

**The institution’s planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.**

**Co-Chairs:**

Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Business Affairs - *Barbara Aughenbaugh*

Assistant Professor, College of Public Affairs - Dr. Al Gourrier, Ph.D.

**Members:**

Associate Professor – Dept. of Mgmt. & International Business, MSB Faculty – *Dr. William Carter*

Senior Business Manager, School of Law – *Brian O’Connell*

Manager - University Budget & Financial Operations – *Ifeyinka “Ifey” David*

Student Representative - *TBD*

**Lines of Inquiry**

1. To what extent is the UBalt’s financial spending and budget process assessed, guided by strategy, goals, and clearly communicated to the UBalt constituents?
2. How has UBalt evaluated administrative programs and services to address the institutional needs pre and post pandemic?
3. To what extent do non-academic units meet the current operational, co-curricular, and functional (facilities, infrastructure, and technology) needs of the institution?
4. Analyze institutional efforts to successfully recruit, develop and retain the personnel needed to support our operations?

**Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration.**

**The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with a related entity, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.**

**Co-chairs:**

**I**nterim Director of Reference and Instruction – RLB Library, Faculty Secretary UFS - *Mike Kiel*

Director of Student Support - *Pavan Purswani*

**Members:**

Director, Rosenberg Center for Student Engagement and Inclusion – *Anthony Butler*

Associate Dean, Merrick School of Business – *M. Kate Demarest, MBA*

Executive Director, School of Health and Human Services and Program Director, Masters in Health Administration, School of Health and Human Services – *Tina DiFranco, J.D.*

Director of the Office of Disability and Access Services – *Dr. Karyn Schulz, Ed.D.*

**V. Lines of Inquiry**

1. How do the USM Board of Regents and governance at UBALT intersect? How does communication between the system and campus community occur?
2. Does UBalt have an appropriate and transparent evaluation methodology for the executive leadership team and administrative leadership?
3. Does the shared governance structure foster the appropriate inclusion of faculty, staff, and students to create engaged, transparent decision making?