MISSION

The University of Baltimore (UB) offers career-focused education for aspiring and current professionals, providing the region with highly educated leaders who make distinctive contributions to the broader community.

We have a long history of providing quality, professional undergraduate and graduate education for working adults who aspire to advance in their careers. We strive to build upon this legacy and leverage our strengths to forge a bold future.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

UB's strategic plan supports our mission to become the regional leader in educating students who seek undergraduate, graduate and professional programs that advance careers, provide opportunities in applied research and experiential learning, and prepare people to be leaders in their chosen fields and communities. Six strategic priorities guide our direction. The University of Baltimore has a strong evidentiary assessment approach that supports university wide initiatives. Our goals, which are aligned with both the state's and USM plans, are:

Goal 1: Position UB as the region's premier professional, career-focused university
Goal 2: Strengthen student success
Goal 3: Solidify UB's commitment to community engagement and service
Goal 4: Organize for long-term financial stability
Goal 5: Achieve excellence in research, scholarship and creative activity
Goal 6: Strengthen UB's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

The University of Baltimore (UB) continues to strengthen how it evaluates and improves institutional activities, planning, resource allocation and student learning. We assess the impact of all that we do and restructure and align resources, and revise strategies as appropriate.

UB's mission and implementation of the strategic plan is consistent with the 2017-2021 State Plan for Postsecondary Education: Student Success with Less Debt, and the goals are listed below. Specifically, Goals 2, 4 and 5 of UB's Strategic Plan align with the Maryland State Plan.

State Plan	UB Strategic Plan (SP) – Initiatives Aligned with State Plan
Access: Ensure equitable access to affordable and quality postsecondary education for all Maryland residents.	**Goal 2:** Enhance affordability and student financial literacy.
	Goal 2: Evaluate the tuition structure for all programs to ensure market competitiveness.
	Goal 2: Increase need-based financial aid.
	Goal 2: Revise financial aid processes to ensure clarity, consistency, and ease for students.
	Goal 2: Enhance strategic use of funds for improving student outcomes and

State Plan	UB Strategic Plan (SP) – Initiatives Aligned with State Plan
	reducing negative financial impacts on students and the institution. **Goal 3**: Expand engagement with public-school systems to ensure more students are prepared for college (e.g., dual enrollments, community college pipelines).
Success: Promote and implement practices and policies that will ensure student success.	**Goal 2:** Increase degree completion rates and shorten time to degree. **Goal 2:** Mine academic performance data to identify and support student success. **Goal 2:** Close gap in educational achievement among all undergraduates. **Goal 2:** Maximize flexible course delivery, enhance winter and summer offerings, and develop multi-semester course schedules. **Goal 2:** Enhance opportunities for awarding credit via transfer institutions, early college admittance, dual enrollment and military credit; create a campus-wide structure and institute policies and procedures for awarding Prior Learning credit. **Goal 2:** Develop a strong and proactive approach to academic advising that focuses on academic pathways and timely student completion. **Goal 2:** Develop a University-wide initiative to assist students in making prudent financial decisions.
Innovation: Foster innovation in all aspects of Maryland higher education to improve access and student success.	**Goal 2**: Strengthen excellence in teaching and learning. **Goal 2**: Grow student participation in high-impact practices. **Goal 4**: Reorganize academic structures to better support academic excellence and student success. **Goal 5:** Expand RSCA partnerships and sponsored research with industry, government and community organizations, and other academic institutions.

Performance Accountability Metrics Supporting Access, Success, Innovation, Financial Resources, and Institutional Capabilities

After enhancement of many initiatives and the implementation of several new initiatives, the following metrics monitor our annual progress, which for the most part demonstrate positive momentum.

- FTFT (first-time full-time students) retention has increased from 68.1% to 76.6%.
- FTFT (first-time full-time students) retention for African-American students has increased from 66.7% to 76.9%.
- The six-year graduation rate for African-American students has increased by 13.5 percentage points in one year and is the highest recorded since the lower division was reinstated in 2007.
- The six-year graduation rate for African American Students of 38.8% now exceeds that of all students at 37.2%.
- We have increased the percentage of students earning credits outside of the traditional classroom from 55.67% to 62.8%.
- Law graduates who pass the Bar exam on first attempt is relatively stable though slightly down from 67% to 65.8%.
- Percentage of African-American undergraduates has increased from 45.95% to 46.85%

- Percentage of economically disadvantaged students has declined slightly though still high from 87.9% to 73.9%.
- Entrepreneurial revenues have decline slightly from $269,273 to $255,362.
- Federal grants awarded have decreased from 8 to 7, yet the percentage of research dollars from federal sources has increased from 47.8% to 56.0%.

Supporting Access

Affordability: Almost 74% (73.9%) of UB students are economically disadvantaged. There is a growing priority in securing need-based support for a diverse student body. We continue to revise financial aid processes to support recruitment and retention, and ensure clarity, consistency and ease for students. New strategies support more first-time, full-time freshmen with higher academic credentials (3.0 GPA or higher) than prior years. Also, UB is developing a new, need-based aid strategy to support recruitment and retention efforts for undergraduate students. These include merit-based Transfer Scholarships for both full- and part-time students. Students with the required cumulative GPAs and a minimum 30 transferable credits are awarded scholarships. Students who have completed an associate's degree are eligible for an additional scholarship. Merit scholarships are incremental to need-based aid. In addition, UB continues to offer a Near Completers Grant: Micro-grants awarded to undergraduates within 30 credits of graduation whose ability to graduate is affected by either no remaining financial aid or hardship.

Financial Literacy: In addition**,** UB has developed a new and revised strategy for financial literacy and payment planning and has provided a financial literacy tool to help students understand the best ways to cover expenses and remain in control of their financial health. Financial Literacy: TV [https://ubalt.financialaidtv.com] is an online library of video clips, which address popular financial aid questions. We have also established a Financial Clearance Initiative to ensure students can cover their tuition (via direct payment, financial aid, or third-party support) each semester. The goal is to encourage students to plan how to cover the cost of education.

Dual Enrollment and the USM B (Baltimore)-Power effort: B-Power is an initiative to work with Baltimore City-serving organizations to increase education and career opportunities for the city's students. In its commitment to this goal, the USM Chancellor's Office invested $233,000 in UB's Early College Initiatives for fiscal years 2017 through 2018. UB used this investment to grow its college readiness and dual enrollment programs for Baltimore City Public Schools students, form new partnerships with non-profits to support students, and fund a full-time Academic Program Specialist to enable operation on a larger scale. As a result, dual enrollment headcount at UB has grown twentyfold since 2016, and partner high schools and community-based partners have increased tenfold. Growth has also included first time participation of middle school students in the College Readiness Academy. As a result of this growth, we are now on the cusp of reaching nearly every eligible public high school in Baltimore with B-Power dual enrollment.

The program continues to grow. In the 2017-18 academic year, UB partnered with 14 high schools and 3 middle schools, with 228 students in 3-credit dual enrollment courses. For the 2018-19 academic year, we partnered with 20 high schools and 4 middle schools, with 239 students in 3-credit dual enrollment. For our dual enrollment students who were in the Baltimore City Public Schools high school graduating class of 2017, 65% were enrolled in college in fall

2017 (compared to 43% of all BCPS graduates in 2017); for the BCPS graduating class of 2018, 68% of UB B-Power students were enrolled in college in fall 2018.

Supporting Student Success

Enhanced and new initiatives are part of the university's **Academic Momentum Campaign**, developed to help more students persist, graduate faster, and with less debt. Specifically, our 15 to Finish Campaign **(Step it UP Campaign)**, launched in fall 2019, is designed to educate undergraduate students about the strong and positive correlation between full-time attendance and retention/on-time graduation. Advisors encourage students, who are able to do so, to enroll full-time (30 credits per year); part-time students will be encouraged to complete a minimum of 15 credit hours each year. In support of this effort, we continue to review programs, structures and courses, streamlining offerings, developing optimal course sequencing, and assessing the number of credits needed for degrees to ensure both rigor and student success. In the past year, two programs have reduced credits for graduation with two more programs in process. Colleges are providing two-year schedules for all undergraduate programs to enhance the students' ability to plan coursework and stay on track.

Expanded of Mandatory Milestone Advising Initiative: Students are required to see an advisor at distinct times in their academic careers. Specific advising syllabi are used at each touch point and include topics as academic progression, support services, career and internship opportunities, financial aid, and graduate school preparation. What began in 2017 with only new students, now extends to freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. Seniors will be added next year.

Developed a Math Support Center: In the summer of 2019, math support services were combined into a single Math Support Center within the RLB Library, providing drop-in math tutoring for all quantitative courses. The expansion of services at the new center was a response to increased demand. Peer tutors are trained and certified to provide support for General Education math and challenging upper-division quantitative literacy courses.

Contracted with the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) to adopt The Accelerated Mathematics Program (AMP) Method for Foundational Math. This model was adopted to increase the success of students placed in developmental mathematics courses. This model allows students to complete a developmental and credit English course within one semester. Preliminary results based on midterm grades are positive.

Expanded Embedded Peer-Support Programs: Peer-based embedded programs provide scalable support from a staff of trained peer tutors, coaches, and writing consultants entering classes and bringing support to individual sections of challenging courses. Embedded programs include:

a. Supplemental instruction-style review sessions for challenging courses, like statistics and accounting, available in person and recorded for online access.
b. Coaching in the First-Year Seminar.
c. Writing Fellows in writing-intensive courses.

Expanded Writing Center Outreach and the Writing Fellows Program: Writing Fellows continue to be embedded in undergraduate courses in all three colleges. Early focus on writing support improves outcomes immediately and reduces writing-related barriers to graduation in future semesters. Data from the first full-year Writing Fellows faculty cohort demonstrated remarkable faculty and student satisfaction and student success. Currently, a new partnership between the

Writing Center and Writing Faculty increases collaboration in the upper division writing placement that allows for better support of students preparing for the placement process.

Initiated Late Admit Outreach: The Academic Success Program teamed with advising to identify students admitted the week prior to the start of the semester through the first week of classes for targeted outreach that provide information about campus resources and other key information that these students missed at orientation. Current focus is on referrals from the Expanded Early Alert, described below, rather than a more generic outreach.

Expanded Early Alert: Early Alert has been in place at the freshmen level (i.e., in 100-level courses and in learning communities) for some time, was successfully scaled last year into 200-level courses and now in 300 level courses. Faculty use Early Alert to report attendance and alert advisors about absences, late or missed assignments, poor performance or other difficulties. An additional initiative for fall 2019 is the opportunity for faculty to recognize and report out on student successes; this part of the platform is being piloted in 100-level courses.

Launch of a new Student Assistance Program (SAP): This new program provides students with an easily accessible, safe and confidential means to assist with issues that may interfere with school, work or family responsibilities 24/7, 365 days a year. UB's Clinical Case Manager provides on-campus threat monitoring, assessment and response when needed, and serves as the on-campus triage resource.

Launch of a new Student Mentoring Program: In fall 2019, UB launched a mentoring program – UB Connects – focused on lower-division transfer students. A pilot group of 40 mentees were assigned a mentor who will meet with them throughout the academic year to complement intrusive academic advising and that ensure students are on track for timely degree completion.

Increased Admissions Standards: After reviewing data on student entering data and graduation rates, recommendations were made to increase SAT scores. A sub-score of 400 on the SAT was determined to be the cutoff for admission. As a result, the University experienced an unprecedented increase in the average freshmen SAT, 1064, with a 985 – 1115 mid-50 percentile score range. This will most likely raise the academic ranking of UB within USM institutions. This is also the highest freshmen academic profile since inception of the freshmen program in 2007. In addition, UB successfully reduced its SAT interquartile range from an average of about 200 [197.5] over the last eight (8) years (the highest in USM), to 145 in fall 2019 (the USM median). While this year's entering class is smaller, the positive impact on student retention and graduation should be significant.

Supporting Innovation
We continue to revitalize the Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Technology (CELTT) including expanding Online Learning and the development of innovative programming and curriculum. Examples include:

Freshmen Pathways Program: UB has adopted a Pathways Program for freshmen. Based on UB's Signature Undergraduate Programs of Excellence, five new Professional Pathways were developed in career clusters designed to help students explore majors and careers throughout the first year and to keep students on track to graduate in four years. The Professional Pathways feature curricular programming, advising, and co-curricular integration of High Impact Practices

including First-Year Learning Communities, First-Year Seminars, career coaching, and collaborative learning in General Education courses.

High Impact Practices: Participation in high impact practices lead by the University System of Maryland and initiatives such as Open Educational Resources (OER), and the First in the World grant to address completion rates in foundational math are but a few of our strategies to support student learning through innovation. With support from CELTT, the Library led a faculty cohort to redesign curriculum incorporating Open Education Resources – free online textbooks. Starting in fall 2018 with six high-enrolled multi-section General Education courses, the project incorporated workshops on best practices to support customization, including augmented course content to design signature assignments. In fall 2019 UB expanded OER to Cybersecurity, Gaming and Technology in Freshmen Pathways courses.

Supporting Financial Resources and Institutional Capabilities
UB is maximizing its institutional capabilities, building efficiencies, strategizing ways to grow revenue and increasing the University's endowment. We have expanded our Research Scholarship and Creative Activity (RSCA) partnerships and sponsored research with industry, government and community organizations, and other academic institutions. UB's entrepreneurial revenue decreased slightly from $269.273 in 2018 to $255,362 as did the number of federal awards from 8 to 7. However, the percentage of research dollars from federal sources increased by 8.3 % in the same time frame as current grants are of higher value.

UB continues to evaluate opportunities to improve efficiencies and support student achievement. We have continued to implement a shared services model for business practices and aligned our first-year academic structures around pathways to provide students with focused, early course work and streamlined General Education while providing targeted support for student success.

Required Response to Commission

"Commission Assessment: The Commission continues to focus its attention on equity gaps in college outcomes among minority college students and their white peers. A central topic of the 2019 Completion Summit MHEC held in April was on college completion and equity. One of the speakers, Dr. Nikki Edgecombe of the Community College Research Center (CCRC), discussed ways institutions can create more equitable and inclusive pathways for students to achieve their educational goals.

The principles she posited include: 1) knowing your students, 2) understanding the obstacles to their success, 3) adopting and adapting responsive policies and practices, and 4) scaling and institutionalizing continuous improvement. In reference to this, she stated "*Targeted interventions are probably one of the more powerful vehicles we have for addressing gaps in attainment. They are not always popular, but universal interventions often times may lift all boats but maintain gaps...*"

For your institution, please describe: 1) one or more targeted interventions and the population(s) served, 2) the identified obstacles the students might face, 3) the metrics used to evaluate the intervention(s) and 4) the evidence used to assess and adapt the intervention(s) to ensure its intended effects."

University of Baltimore Response

Targeted Population Served

The University of Baltimore is unique given our almost equal split of African and non-African American students. In addition, we have a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students (73.9%). Goal 2 of our Strategic plan reads "Close the gap in educational achievement among *all* undergraduates." We give every admitted student optimal opportunities to be successful in completing a UB degree. Our approach to closing the achievement gap is to provide best practices for all of students given their collective high financial and academic needs.

Currently, 46.8% of our undergraduate students are African-America, up 0.9% from the previous year. Our research has shown that all of our students with multiple academic risk factors (i.e., very low SAT Math and SAT Reading scores, Pell eligibility, does not have at least one parent who has attended college) present significant remediation challenges and are at risk for leaving prior to graduation. This is demonstrated in the higher failure rates in remediation coursework, and consequently, lower retention rates as early as the second year. We acknowledge that these risk factors are more often associated with our students in the minority student achievement gap groups.

Targeted Interventions

All of our targeted interventions were described earlier in this document. Those with specific focus on initiatives that mitigate student risk factors, particularly Math, Reading and Pell Eligibility are:

- Addressing student finances to attempt to keep all students on track for graduation
- Continue to move towards admitting students with a reasonable chance of success and providing the support to do so. This may mean reduction in admissions for some high-risk applicants to the University of Baltimore, but we believe that such an adjustment will provide for better and fairer academic opportunities for all students
- Redesigned foundational math, the largest barrier to student progress
- Course-embedded peer support and mentoring.

Metrics

The University of Baltimore is pleased to report that we have met both Objective 1.4 and Objective 1.6. FTFT (first-time full-time students) retention has increased from 68.1% to 76.6% in 2017 for all students and 76.9% for African-American students. The six-year graduation rate for African-American students has increased by 13.5 percentage points in one year and is the highest recorded since the lower division was reinstated in 2007. The six-year graduation rate for African American Students of 38.8% now exceeds that of all students at 37.2%.