

UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE
Managing for Results
Academic Year 2019-2020
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.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

UB’s strategic plan supports our mission and six strategic priorities guide our direction.

- 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.

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. UB assess impact and aligns and revises strategies as appropriate.

State Plan	UB Strategic Plan (SP) – Initiatives Aligned with State Plan
<p>Access: Ensure equitable access to affordable and quality postsecondary education for all Maryland residents.</p>	<p>Goal 2: Enhance affordability and student financial literacy.</p> <p>Goal 2: Evaluate the tuition structure for all programs to ensure market competitiveness.</p> <p>Goal 2: Increase need-based financial aid.</p> <p>Goal 2: Revise financial aid processes to ensure clarity, consistency, and ease for students.</p> <p>Goal 2: Enhance strategic use of funds for improving student outcomes and reducing negative financial impacts on students and the institution.</p> <p>Goal 3: Expand engagement with public-school systems to ensure more students are prepared for college (e.g., dual enrollments, community college pipelines).</p>
<p>Success: Promote and implement practices and policies that will ensure student success.</p>	<p>Goal 2: Increase degree completion rates and shorten time to degree.</p> <p>Goal 2: Mine academic performance data to identify and support student success.</p> <p>Goal 2: Close gap in educational achievement among all undergraduates.</p> <p>Goal 2: Maximize flexible course delivery, enhance winter and summer offerings, and develop multi-semester course schedules.</p> <p>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</p>

State Plan	UB Strategic Plan (SP) – Initiatives Aligned with State Plan
	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 implementation of several new initiatives, key metrics monitor our annual progress which demonstrate positive momentum.

- FTFT (first-time full-time students) retention has increased from 76.6% to 86.8%
- FTFT (first-time full-time students) retention for African-American students has increased from 76.9% to 85.0%
- The six-year graduation rate for African-American students has increased by 1.1 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, exceeding that of all students in the prior fall, is now commensurate at 39.9% in comparison to all students at 41.1%
- 100% online due to COVID-19.
- Law graduates who pass the bar exam on first attempt has increased from 65.8% to 73.2%.
- Percentage of African American undergraduates is 46.8% which is the same as last year.
- Percentage of economically disadvantaged students is relatively stable from 73.9 % to 75.0%.
- Entrepreneurial revenues have decline from \$255,362 to \$105,483, largely owing to COVID-19
- Federal grants awarded have decreased from 7 to 6, yet the percentage of research dollars from federal sources has increased from 56.0% to 60.0%.

The University of Baltimore is pleased with these results, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. A primary goal is to keep students on track, on time. Broad strategies included specific curricular programming, enhanced advising, and co-curricular integration of High Impact Practices including First-Year Learning Communities, career coaching, collaborative learning in General Education courses, and support for online learning, and targeted financial aid.

Supporting Access

Affordability: 75.0% of UB students are economically disadvantaged. There is a growing priority in securing need-based assistance for a diverse student body. UB continues 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 in prior years. UB has developed 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. Through The Bob Parsons Scholarship Fund, UB is investing in Pell Grant eligible transfer and military/veteran students. This scholarship covers eligible undergraduate students who maintain full-time enrollment, a 2.0 cumulative GPA, and Pell Grant eligibility, covering remaining tuition and fees after their Pell Grant is applied thus completing their degree debt free. 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. Finally, merit scholarships are incremental to need-based aid

Financial Literacy: UB continues to develop a more purposeful strategy of linking financial aid to student payment of tuition. This occurs through more integrated operations, coordinated student communications and synchronized operating calendars. Financial literacy continues to be a priority to assist students in understanding 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. The Financial Clearance Initiative to ensure students can cover their tuition (via direct payment, financial aid, or third-party support) each semester has led to earlier financial aid communication, processing, and increased awareness of on-time payment of tuition and fees. The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the need for counseling students on how to address emergency needs while staying enrolled and on track for degree completion.

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 \$130,000 in UB's Early College Initiatives for fiscal year 2020. UB used this investment for infrastructure support, including salary for the Director and partial salary for the Program Specialist.

The program continues to grow. In the 2019-2020 academic year, UB partnered with 23 high schools and 1 middle school, with 297 students enrolling in 3-credit dual enrollment courses. 86% of enrolled students earned college credit, and 72% complete a General Education requirement in either Math, Writing, or both. According to the Baltimore Education Research Consortium's "College Fact Book 2020, Baltimore City Schools" the Class of 2018 attended college the fall semester after graduation at a rate of 45%, with 57% attending a 4-year and 43% attending a two-year institution. For comparison, 68% of our dual enrollment students attend college the fall semester after high school graduation, with 65% attending a 4-year and 35% attending a two-year institution.

Supporting Student Success

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. This initiative began in 2017 and now includes all undergraduate students.

Success with refocused Math Support Center: Fall 2019 saw Math Support Center traffic almost double with a 95% increase in usage. Peer tutors provide support for General Education math and challenging upper-division quantitative literacy courses. COVID-19 decreased spring usage but provided opportunity to focus on improving online delivery.

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

success of students in developmental mathematics courses and allows students to complete a developmental and credit course in one semester. Early results based on midterm grades are positive.

Continued 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. COVID-19 decreased spring usage but provided opportunity to focus on improving online delivery.

Expanded Early Alert: Early Alert has been in place at the freshmen level (i.e., in 100-level courses and in learning communities) for many years, and it was successfully scaled to now include all undergraduate courses as of this semester. 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 was 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 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 meets with them throughout the academic year to complement intrusive academic advising and that ensure that students are on track for timely degree completion. The mentors are mostly staff in the Division of Student Success & Support Services as well as deans, staff in Admissions, and the Provost.

Strengthened 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

In spring of 2020 and because of a university reorganization, the Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Technology (CELTT) moved from directly reporting to the Dean of the Library, combining multiple avenues of support. We continue to revitalize (CELTT) including expanding Online Learning and the development of innovative programming with particular focus on the impact of moving all courses to online for the remainder of spring, summer, fall 2020, and now spring 2021.

High Impact Practices (HIP): CELTT and the Library received a new \$20K University System of Maryland Grant to develop Open Educational Resources (OER); in combination with a new Communities of Practice (CoP) model, innovative technologies and practices have a structured path to faculty and the classroom. CoPs includes efforts to explore virtual experiential learning and internships, among other HIPs which have a record of directly improving student success.

Support for Online Teaching and Learning: Investments in technology include new availability of online rubrics in our Learning Management System (LMS) and the selection of a new Online Exam Proctoring solution. CELTT developed solutions to the fast COVID-19 pivot including “boot-camp”-style pedagogy and educational technology training for faculty and students on both synchronous and asynchronous forms of online learning. New hires include a new associate director, two full-time instructional designers, and three part-time student positions for technology and administrative support.

Challenging Courses: Continued focus on courses with high D (C for graduate programs) grades and failure rates. Using six-year course by level data, worked with colleges to develop ways to increase success in targeted courses. The new organizational structure moving CELTT into the library included new opportunity for two-tiered solutions by combining faculty and student support together to address problem courses that persistently challenge instructional and student success.

Worked with deans to develop college specific retention plans: Using five-year longitudinal data to set baselines, each college set goals and developed strategies to increase student success. A renewed focus on retention is now happening at the highest levels to include the President as well as leadership in the Provost Office, Student Support and Support Services, and Enrollment Management.

Expanded Prior Learning Opportunities. Efforts are underway to enhance prior learning opportunities for students, including awarding credit for professional certifications and a portfolio course to help prepare students to create one or more portfolios to demonstrate learning outcomes from work and other relevant experiences.

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 from \$255,362 in 2019 to \$105,483, largely due to COVID-19 effects. Sponsored Research federal awards also decreased from 7 to 6 during the same period. However, the percentage of research dollars from federal sources increased by 4% 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.

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 76.6% to 86.8% in 2017 for all students and 85.0% 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 at among the highest recorded since the lower division was reinstated in 2007.

(submitted 11/4/2020)