

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

OPEN SESSION REPORT SUMMARY

Date of Meeting: October 14, 2022

Date of Next Meeting: February 4, 2023

Committee Chair: Peter Bruns

Committee Members: Paula Collins, Elizabeth Graves '93, Melanie Hilley '93, Larry Leak '76, William Seale, Tuajuanda Jordan, Susan Dyer

Executive Staff: Katie Gantz

Faculty Liaison: Libby Williams

Staff Liaison:

Dashboard Metrics: N/A

Executive Summary:

Discussion Items

Faculty Senate Report

Dean of Faculty Report

Information Items

Minutes of May 13, 2022

Action Item(s) related to specific strategic goals as appropriate:

III. Endorsement of the 2022 Performance Accountability Report



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF OCTOBER 14, 2022**

**OPEN SESSION
AGENDA**

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. Faculty Senate Report
 - B. Dean of Faculty Report
- III. ACTION ITEM**
 - A. Endorsement of the 2022 Performance Accountability Report
- IV. INFORMATION ITEM**
 - A. Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2022

The committee expects to close a portion of this meeting.

October 5, 2022

Report to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees **Elizabeth Nutt Williams, Faculty Senate President**

The Faculty Senate recently launched a new polling approach (*The Faculty Pulse*) to get a better, more timely sense of the variety of faculty perspectives on important topics. The first poll went out at the end of September, and 81 faculty completed the short survey. There was a mix of tenured (senior) faculty, tenure-track (junior) faculty, visiting faculty, and adjunct faculty who provided feedback. There were some areas of great variability (such as perspectives on the change to the masking policy). Other areas were less varied. I present data below on two of the issues raised in the short survey.

The New Course Matrix

The new course matrix was put in place this fall, resulting in significant changes to class and meeting times. Although faculty are still getting used to the structure, the Faculty Pulse poll shows that 39% of the faculty say they are adjusting well or very well to the matrix, 39% are neutral toward the change (neither adjusting well nor poorly), and 22% of the faculty are adjusting poorly or very poorly to the change. Overall, it appears to be going well, and students report feeling more focused with the shorter class length. Both faculty and students report having the greatest difficulty adjusting to the out-of-class “engaged learning time.” The Faculty Senate plans to administer a more in-depth survey in the spring semester to assess the new matrix and identify where improvements can be made.

Shared Governance

It is clear from the Faculty Pulse poll that shared governance is not operating well from the faculty perspective: 74% of senior faculty and 75% of junior faculty are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the current state of shared governance at SMCM. In addition, 23% of senior and 25% of junior faculty are neutral in their opinion, while 3% of senior and 0% of junior faculty are positive or very positive about the current state of shared governance.

In examining the open-ended responses regarding shared governance, not only do faculty feel that shared governance has gotten notably worse in the past few years, some also fear that it no longer exists at SMCM. It has been suggested, however, that the concerns about shared governance may reflect a misunderstanding of how to work together. As one faculty member said, simply asking for “input is not shared governance and [the input] is often ignored.” Faculty are vested in the success of the College and want to be involved in meaningful ways, even when there is disagreement. Faculty are used to a lengthy critiquing and revision process to improve work (which is the process we go through to have our scholarship published), and by the nature of our work, are used to presenting opposing arguments and examining them before making a

decision or taking a vote. This approach to the practice of shared governance may or may not match your own views. Action is needed to reach a common understanding of shared governance across College constituencies and to define how shared governance looks in practice. Taking action, rather than simply continuing to discuss the issues, will likely ensure a higher level of functioning and a greater sense of morale for all.

I again bring these issues to your attention because a loss of shared governance undermines the long-term stability of the College, which is understandably an area of concern for us all. Faculty, in particular, are concerned about the growing attrition rates among faculty, as this past year was the highest rate observed here in the past decade if not longer (the rates provided were for the past 10 years only). When faculty leave, it can take up to a year for the hiring process to be completed. Once hired, new faculty generally don't serve on committees for several years, they typically don't begin advising or mentoring SMPs (our senior theses) until their second year, and they typically do not take on leadership roles on committees or within management structures until they reach tenure (as they spend the first several years as a faculty member establishing their program of scholarship). Faculty losses (from resignations as well as retirements) place an unseen but significantly heavier burden on remaining senior faculty. But let me be clear - the faculty at this College love what they do – they love teaching our students, they love creating scholarship and artistic works, and they also love serving this institution. However, service demands have increased with the departure of faculty, and that service becomes more difficult if one doesn't feel heard or valued. As both prior administrations of the COACHE survey have shown, faculty have felt unappreciated for some time, and action is needed. Taken with the Faculty Pulse results, addressing shared governance seems to be a way we might address these issues.

The faculty concerns are significant. Faculty are not simply being recalcitrant. The faculty are as committed to the well-being of the institution as ever (look to the strong partnership with the Office of Admission as an example), but we are now seeing levels of disengagement and burnout that we have not seen before at SMC. We would like to be, to paraphrase a faculty colleague, the workplace of choice for faculty and staff as well as the college of choice for students. Shared governance is an important part of making the higher education workplace one that is satisfying and productive. A well-functioning shared governance between the Board, the administration, and the faculty is critical to the well-being of the institution.

I ask you, on behalf of the faculty, to help us as a College refocus our commitment to shared governance, rebuild trust, and focus on positive action. To begin this process and establish a positive path forward, the faculty plan to hold a forum on shared governance this academic year. As we plan this forum, we will seek input and participation from the Board and the administration. We very much hope to work together to successfully repair the strained alliance that faces our constituencies.

Respectfully submitted,

Libby Nutt Williams, Ph.D.
Faculty Senate President

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

REPORT OF THE INTERIM PROVOST

New Program Updates

1. Business Administration major

This fall, the Business Administration (BADM) major has fully taken its place in the program array, presently housed in the “Department of Economics and Business Administration.” Interest in the program continues to grow: 102 students are enrolled in Business Administration courses this fall, and the program already has 17 declared majors (including 4 first year students).

Dr. Silvio Borrero, Inaugural William Seale Professor of Business, has quickly adapted to the College and has undertaken the critical work of assessing next steps for effective program growth. To this end, he has collaborated with the BADM steering committee on two endeavors: first, the program will initiate a second search this fall for an assistant professor of business with expertise in marketing. Second, Dr. Borrero has very quickly formalized the College’s membership in the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). In addition to the prestige and recognition that comes with an AACSB member institution, Dr. Borrero will have much-needed access to a professional network and resources to continue building our program.

2. Marine Science major

Marine Science (MRNE) is outperforming all expectations in its first year as an available major. As of the fifth week of the Fall 2022 semester, MRNE has 29 declared majors, 11 of whom are first year students.

Dr. Elka Porter has joined our faculty as the first member of the MRNE faculty. Presently, a full-time visitor and a number of affiliated faculty including Dr. Cassie Gurbisz, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, contribute to the major through cross-listed classes. In fall 2024, contingent upon her successful tenure evaluation, Dr. Gurbisz will migrate her departmental affiliation and become the second official tenured member of MRNE.

Significant progress has been made on the MRNE teaching lab. Demolition of the interior walls of the old Schaefer Hall stockroom was completed over the summer. Renovation of the

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

space will take place over the course of the 2022-23 academic year, after the Goodpaster Hall lab renovation is completed. Marine science labs during the 2022-23 academic year are being taught in temporary space in Schaefer Hall to ensure that the curriculum can be delivered without interruption.

Following months of research on the purchase and upkeep of research vessels, the contract for the near-shore vessel has been awarded and we are awaiting delivery. The design and RFP are being developed for the larger research vessel.

3. Performing Arts major

Now in its first year, the Performing Arts major is moving from the conceptual curricular work to the logistical processes of coalescing as a newly integrated group of colleagues from Music and Theater. This comes with changes ahead for both staffing and facilities. In Theater, the program will search this year to replace their recently-departed tenure-track scenographer. This position will begin the measured rebuilding essential to stabilize the program; presently, Theater only has one tenured/tenure-track faculty member and otherwise relies on visitors and adjuncts. Music was devastated this summer by the death of composer and full professor David Froom, and likewise will initiate a tenure-track search to fill that vacancy. The program has of course made excellent use of their move to the Dodge Performing Arts Center, and look forward to taking advantage of teaching and performing in those outstanding facilities. The Theater program is benefiting from the added space in Montgomery Hall created by Music's relocation: together with Art, English, and Boyden Gallery, Theater has been able to expand their practice and storage areas in this interstitial period until Montgomery is fully renovated in the next five years.

4. Neuroscience major

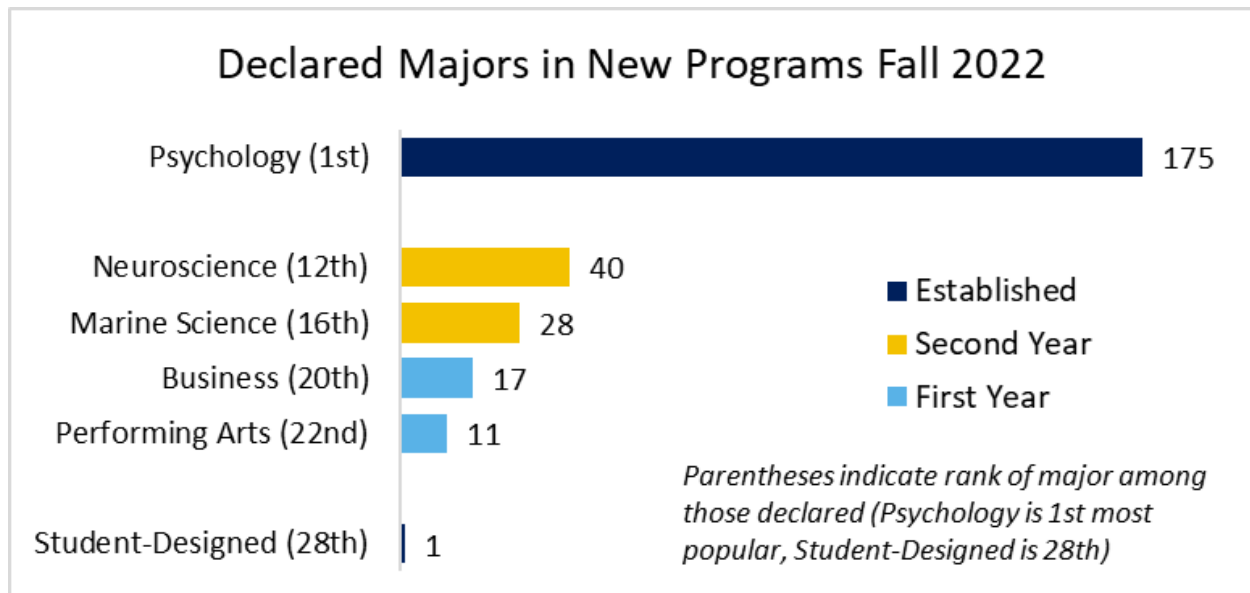
The Neuroscience major continued its strong performance in its second year this fall, given the long-standing presence of a strong minor and frequent self-designed majors. The program graduated its first three majors in Spring 2022, and this fall there are 40 declared majors in neuroscience and 13 minors. Strong research programs engage students with rich opportunities in neuroscience; in 2021-22, the seven affiliated faculty (including three half-time lines devoted to neuroscience) mentored a total of 40 research students. Program faculty also publish with students, with recent peer-reviewed publications appearing in such venues as *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*, *Molecular Ecology*, and *Journal of Experimental Biology*.

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

The following table illustrates the rank of each of these new programs by number of declared majors among the 28 possible majors at the College.



Updates to the LEAD Curriculum implementation: Humanities in the CORE

This past spring, Academic Affairs assembled a workgroup of five humanities faculty and chaired by Associate Dean of Curriculum Christine Wooley to discuss reshaping the Core as an exploration of Humanities approaches. Per their charge, a report was submitted in June on possible models, defining the humanities focus of the course, incorporating the writing instruction protocol, and identifying shared course norms and learning outcomes. The report additionally assesses staffing needs, and proposes an implementation plan. From that report, three central assessments emerged.

Regarding our existing First Year Core Seminars, the workgroup agreed that the (admirable) focus on liberal arts skills -- the “how” of writing, speaking, thinking critically, et cetera -- does not leave sufficient space to discuss the humanistic approaches to finding and making meaning -- the “why” of liberal arts education, of why a course informs our understanding of another, and subsequently builds a cumulative reckoning of lived experience.

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

In the final report of the Humanities in the Core work group they came to the following conclusion:

To these ends, we recommend that the current Core 101 writing pilot initiative be used as a foundation for further revision to the structure of Core Seminars. We call not for replacing “liberal arts” with “humanities” in our conceptualization of the seminar, but for introducing new language, based on a humanistic approach to questions about knowledge—specifically, how it is communicated and who is impacted by it— that clearly articulates for students the purpose of the class and the kind of learning experiences they should expect in the course.

The Academic Affairs team agrees with this suggestion to have a humanities approach to Core 101 without strictly defining Core as a humanities course.

Further, the analysis of staffing Core 101 with only humanities faculty makes the suggestion of “Humanities in the Core” untenable at this point, especially given the decreased number of humanities faculty after prioritization and a general education curriculum that still requires a humanities course. In this year of intensive strategic planning and Middle States preparations, the intensive writing seminars are continuing as planned; there is no intention to deliver a renewed charge to the workgroup at this time.

Pending Faculty Searches

In FY23, Academic Affairs will be overseeing a total of 12 tenure-track searches. The searches result in a net of two new positions. They are as follows:

- Assistant Professor of Biology, *Ross Fellow designation*
- Assistant Professor of Marketing (new line)
- Assistant Professor of Economics
- Assistant Professor of Educational Studies
- 2 positions in Environmental Studies:
 - Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies
 - Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, *Ross Fellow designation*
- Assistant Professor of History, affiliated faculty in Museum Studies, *Ross Fellow designation*
- Assistant Professor of Mathematics
- 2 positions in Performing Arts:

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

- Assistant Professor of Scenography, *Ross Fellow designation*
- Assistant Professor of Music
- Assistant Professor of Political Science
- Assistant Professor of Psychology

Of these 12 searches for FY24, the Marketing position (funded via the bond) and the second Environmental Studies position are non-replacement positions, justified by rapid program growth and insufficient staffing. The third non-replacement line had originally been approved for Marine Science, but has since been reallocated. While it will not require a search, note that arrangements have been made to fill the new position in Marine Science by way of formally shifting Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies Cassie Gurbisz's departmental affiliation to Marine Science, contingent upon her successful tenure and return from sabbatical in fall 2025. To cover the staffing reduction created by Dr. Gurbisz's reassignment, Environmental Studies has been given the line originally allocated to Marine Science.

Data Science: new approaches

As discussed last year, our hiring challenges in computer science broadly persist, which makes meaningful progress toward a viable, successful Data Science program slow going. While we struggle to compete against the salaries offered at PAX Naval Air Station, this problem is not unique to SMC: a dearth of PhDs in computer science/data science means that the very few data scientists that go into higher education are highly sought after. Further, we are quickly getting priced out of hiring computer scientists and data scientists with a Masters degree; this potential pool of instructors is instead going into industry.

We are pleased that an applied data scientist was successfully hired into a tenure-track line for FY23; as I noted in the May Board meeting, the President approved an innovative strategy of attracting computer scientists through a model of "Masters at hire, PhD by tenure." While we cannot compete with industry salaries, this model is attractive for computer scientists invested in higher ed teaching and research, and grants them the title of Assistant Professor at hire (instead of instructor). Through tuition remission, they'll have time to complete the necessary graduate work for their PhD before standing for tenure in six years after hire.

In June, our colleagues in Physics attended the national Data Science Education Community of Practice Workshop in College Park (DSECOP). A focus of the discussion was that, increasingly, the title of "data scientist" is no longer meaningful in higher ed; indeed, all scientists work with

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

data. Instead, what we're describing are STEM scholars who work with Big Data and/or with data modeling within their own domain-specific practice. Most institutions (other than the large R1 and ivy leagues) don't have the funds or facilities to run a competitive, cutting-edge data science program. Instead, what's more effective for smaller institutions is a model of coursework and certification described as "STEM + DS": transdisciplinary training integrating theoretical models, experimental science, computational algorithms, data science applications and domain-specific practice. As a possible route forward for our own curriculum, this might look like a cross-disciplinary study area, featuring data science informing other forms of scientific practice. SMCM already has scholars on campus with DS backgrounds. While the complexities of infrastructure and prohibitive faculty salaries may pose obstacles too significant to overcome, a more effective path might be to offer Biology, Economics, Physics, Math, and Computer Science degrees with Data Science certification.

Update on new Academic Administrative Structure

In June, the President notified the faculty that she had followed through on her promise to the Board to finalize academic administrative restructuring over the summer. Following a robust interviewing process with a large applicant pool, Drs. Gantz and Byrd put forward the names of three candidates to serve as associate deans. After deliberation, the President selected Drs. Kelly Neiles (4A), Sahar Shafqat (4B), and Randy Larsen (4C) as the new Associate Deans to each oversee a subset of academic programs, as well as Dr. Katy Arnett (4D) to be the new Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. Each will train for their roles during this academic year, and fully assume their positions in fall 2023. During this phase of preparation and immersion, "the associates" will attend a three-day deans' conference during the first week of November through the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences that will focus on such topics as mentoring skills for faculty and student success, professional readiness in the curriculum, personnel issues, and working with department chairs. Throughout the fall semester, the associates will meet weekly with the current Academic Affairs staff to begin to understand the working of the office, and be included in discussions of the budgets, schedules, and hiring plans of the programs they will oversee. More actively, the team has begun to undertake case studies and think tank work related to Academic Affairs initiatives. Finally, each of the Associate Deans are serving as the Building Facilities Coordinator for a building that houses the programs they will oversee.

Annual Program Snapshots

Per the Board's request, May was our first effort to devise a mechanism by which programs could take an active role in charting their own program's health in conversation with Academic Affairs through annual "Program Snapshots." Each program was given descriptive program data for each of five years, presented alongside college-wide averages. Broadly speaking, this work serves the purpose of having data prepared and shared annually to assist programs in self-reflection and planning, and to provide a broad overview of academic programs to leadership.

As we studied these snapshots over the summer, it became clear to the Academic Affairs team that the measures included this year limited our ability to offer substantive and productive advice. The metrics we chose to include turned out to be remarkably stable across time, and/or difficult to evaluate in isolation.

To round out the pilot endeavor, we sent each program some general feedback on their data, asking in turn for the program to respond with what they found noteworthy. We asked, too, if there are other metrics that might be useful to the program to allow for more nuanced or strategic use in the service of program needs or growth.

Despite the limitations in the current snapshots, several programs responded with concrete examples of steps they are taking to address patterns they saw in the data (or were already aware of).

- Programs are addressing issues of unequal student representation by planning collaborations with Admission to perform targeted recruitment, by seeking out faculty with experience in DEI scholarship and pedagogy (assisted by the Ross Fellows program), and by implementing peer mentoring programs.
- Faculty are working to increase equitable access and completion of high-impact practices by encouraging completion of St. Mary's Projects even when optional, by developing new capstone courses and community-based learning opportunities, by increasing equitable access to research experiences throughout the curriculum, by partnering with the Center for Career and Professional Development Center to improve access to internships, and by participating in professional development workshops.

Finally, we are planning the following changes for the 2022-23 snapshots.

- We will add metrics on student success and program finances, and will add measures of variability around the means.

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

- We will reconsider each of the metrics included in the current snapshots and include only those that appear to be useful to all stakeholders.
 - In particular, we will re-examine our measures of high-impact practices and cross-disciplinary/cross-listed courses. Based on programs' responses, it has been difficult to fully capture students' experiences and programs' offerings using the current definitions, due in part to the highly cross-disciplinary nature of our curriculum.
- We are considering moving from program-level snapshots (i.e., three different snapshots for the English major, English minor, and Creative Writing minor) to department-level snapshots (i.e., one snapshot for the English department encompassing all its programs). We believe this will better represent the academic programs in context, especially small programs where the data are difficult to understand in isolation.

Middle States Self-Study Institute

This semester the College will begin the preparation for our reaffirmation of accreditation review by the Middle States Commission of Higher Education in spring 2025. Over five days in October a team of seven members of the SMCM community (Drs. Katy Arnett and Anne Marie Brady, Interim Associate Provost Jeff Byrd, Interim Provost Katie Gantz, and Vice Presidents Jerri Howland, Paul Pusecker, and Dereck Rovaris) will attend the MSCHE virtual Self-Study Institute (SSI). Attendance at this SSI is required of institutions coming up for reaffirmation. The goal of this kick-off event is to provide an overview on how to run our self-study, an extensive, all-campus self-assessment, which will take place over the next year and a half.

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING OF OCTOBER 14, 2022

ACTION ITEM III.A.

RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE THE 2022 PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Academic Affairs Committee endorses the Finance, Investment, and Audit Committee's recommendation that the Board of Trustees approve the 2022 Performance Accountability Report for submission to the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

RATIONALE

The Performance Accountability Report (PAR) is a report required by the State of Maryland that assesses the College's progress on a variety of goals and objectives including academics, enrollment, retention and graduation, financial aid, and student outcomes. The report provides data on specific metrics as well as narrative describing strengths and challenges. Maryland law requires institutions to submit their PAR to the Maryland Higher Education Commission for review, and final submission to the Governor and General Assembly.

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND

1. MISSION

St. Mary's College of Maryland is Maryland's honors college, a selective, public liberal arts college—a vibrant community of scholars and learners. We foster a rigorous and innovative curriculum; experiential learning; scholarship and creativity; close mentoring relationships; and a community dedicated to honesty, civility, and integrity. We are committed to diversity, access, and affordability. Our students, faculty and staff serve local, national, and global communities and cultivate and promote social responsibility.

2. INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

A. Analysis of Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Ensure a high quality and rigorous academic program.

Objective 1.1: For two of the past four years, SMCM has met the target of 100% of graduates completing at least two high-impact practices (HIP), and reached 99% and 95% in the other two years. The goal of 80% completing at least three HIPs has been met for three of the past four years. It is likely that the lack of international and experiential opportunities during the pandemic is a major reason for these recent decreases. This year, 97% of students completed at least two HIPs and 76% completed at least three HIPs – small but promising increases from last year. SMCM is actively working to increase HIP opportunities for all students, particularly internships, research experiences, and international experiences as part of the [Honors College Promise](#). We are confident that moving forward, we will resume meeting these goals.

Peer Benchmarks: The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) releases annual benchmarks regarding the completion of HIPs among graduating seniors at institutions participating in the survey. For the Class of 2021, SMCM's rate of 95% of students completing at least two HIPs far exceeds the national average of 84% of students at participating Carnegie Baccalaureate Arts & Sciences institutions. (Source: NSSE)

Objectives 1.2 and 1.3: SMCM is committed to offering a rigorous curriculum taught by qualified faculty. For the past five years, SMCM has met or exceeded the targeted percent of full-time faculty who have terminal degrees. Although the percentage of credit hours taught by full-time faculty has declined slightly over the past two years, full-time faculty still teach the great majority of undergraduate credit hours. Further, the rise of part-time faculty is largely due to SMCM's engagement of expert practitioners in a variety of fields to teach courses in the professional pathways sequence, part of the recently (2020) instituted LEAD curriculum. Students benefit from studying with these professionals while still taking the majority of their traditional coursework with full-time faculty. Finally, the undergraduate student-faculty ratio has been between 9:1 and 10:1 for the past five years, well below (better than) the target of 12:1.

Peer Benchmarks: According to the most recent available data (Fall 2020), SMCM has by

far the lowest student-faculty ratio (9:1) among the traditional four-year public institutions in Maryland, which average 15:1. The SMCM student-faculty ratio is second lowest (after New College of Florida at 6:1) among COPLAC institutions, which average 14:1; and is on par with Maryland private institutions, peer institutions, and aspirant institutions, which range from 7:1 to 15:1 (average = 10:1). (*Source: IPEDS Data Center*)

Goal 2: Recruit, support, and retain a diverse and qualified group of students, faculty and administrative staff.

Objective 2.1: The target for the percentage of incoming students who identify as students of color was reset this year to 33%. In FY22 (Fall 2021), SMCM recruited a first-year class with 31% students of color – just below this new target, but still a substantial improvement from about a decade ago when the percentage averaged only 20% (data not shown). Entering class targets were exceeded for first generation college students (for the fifth consecutive year) and for the out-of-state population. The latter measure has slowly been rising and is expected to hold steady just above the target of 10% for the next few years. High school academic performance of the entering class remains strong; the average GPA of incoming students has steadily improved to its current ten-year high and is projected to improve even more with the next entering class.

Objective 2.2: Both four-year graduation rates (Fall 2018 cohort graduating by Summer 2022) and six-year graduation rates (Fall 2016 cohort graduating by Summer 2022) were below targets for all groups. Note that four-year and/or six-year targets for students of color, African American students, first generation students, and Pell recipients were reset to aspirational levels to reflect SMCM's commitment to narrowing equity gaps in student success. SMCM will focus on providing all students with resources and strategies to support timely graduation, with particular emphasis on students from these historically underrepresented and/or marginalized groups. We know that reaching certain early academic milestones is crucial for students to make timely progress toward their degree, and we will explore additional ways to communicate and support the attainment of these milestones to students, faculty advisors and academic support staff. In addition, we will continue to offer online courses during both Summer and Winter sessions to provide students with a convenient means of earning additional credits in between traditional semesters. We will consider how best to make Winter and Summer session offerings applicable and accessible, particularly to students who may have financial challenges paying for classes during an extra term.

Finally, about 15% of departed first-year students over the past several cohorts have transferred out to two-year institutions, according to data from the National Student Clearinghouse. We are considering how best to reach out to these students regarding the possibility of reverse transfer, encouraging them to return and complete their baccalaureate degree at SMCM. The continued development and implementation of targeted, program-specific articulation agreements with many Maryland community colleges is expected to facilitate such reverse transfer efforts.

Peer Benchmarks: Based on the most recent comparison data available (FY18), SMCM's overall four-year graduation rate (63% for the 2014 entering cohort) exceeded those of other institutions belonging to the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) and other Maryland public four-year institutions, as well as Maryland private institutions and SMCM's peer institutions, many of which are private. The average four-year graduation rate at aspirant institutions (all private) represents a benchmark well above our target. As

shown below, SMCM's four-year graduation rates for African American students, Hispanic students, and all students of color combined were nearly all at or above the corresponding rates at other COPLAC, Maryland public, and Maryland private institutions. Benchmark four-year graduation rates for Pell recipients are not available. (*Source: IPEDS Data Center*)

Four-Year Graduation Rates, FY18 (Fall 2014 cohort)					
Institution(s)	N	Overall	Students of Color	African American	Hispanic
SMCM	1	63%	59%	46%	68%
COPLAC	28	41%	34%	28%	38%
MD Public	11	30%	26%	24%	29%
MD Private	9	57%	49%	51%	48%
Peer	12	66%	63%	62%	63%
Aspirant	6	87%	84%	82%	83%

For six-year graduation rates, the most recent comparison data available (FY20) reveal that SMCM's overall rate (72%, for the 2014 entering cohort) exceeded that of other COPLAC and Maryland public and private institutions, and neared that of (primarily private) peer institutions. SMCM's six-year rate for nearly all demographic groups examined (students of color, Hispanic students, Pell recipients, need-based aid recipients) also exceeded those at other COPLAC, Maryland public, and Maryland private institutions. Notably, the six-year graduation rate for Hispanic students at SMCM was at or well above all other groups except aspirant institutions. (*Source: IPEDS Data Center*)

Six-Year Graduation Rates, FY20 (Fall 2014 cohort)							
Institution(s)	N	Overall	Students of Color	African American	Hispanic	Pell	Need-Based Aid
SMCM	1	72%	67%	51%	74%	62%	68%
COPLAC	28	53%	48%	42%	53%	48%	50%
MD Public	11	51%	48%	49%	48%	46%	47%
MD Private	9	65%	58%	61%	55%	58%	62%
Peer	12	74%	72%	72%	74%	72%	73%
Aspirant	6	91%	89%	87%	88%	89%	91%

Objective 2.3: The second year retention rate continues to fluctuate, rising slightly to 85% in FY22. While still not meeting the target, this year's retention rate still exceeds many benchmarks (see below).

Peer Benchmarks: Based on the most recent data available (FY20), SMCM's first-to-second year retention rate in that year (83%) exceeded those of other public liberal arts colleges (COPLAC institutions, average = 73%), Maryland public four-year institutions (average = 76%), Maryland private institutions (average = 75%), and peer institutions (average = 83%), many of which are private. Retention rates at private aspirant institutions averaged 90% in FY20, matching SMCM's aspirational target and underscoring how

important it is to remain competitive with those institutions. (Source: IPEDS Data Center)

Objective 2.4: SMCM continues to work to maintain a diverse faculty and staff. Gender parity was once again achieved for both faculty and staff in FY22. Racial and ethnic diversity targets were reset to 33% this year to match the goal for diversity of the student body. SMCM has a long way to go to meet this goal in the faculty, but efforts to advance cluster hiring and diversify search processes this year are expected to assist with meeting the target in coming years. The percent of staff who are people of color is on track to meet the target within the next few years.

Objective 2.5: SMCM has met or exceeded the target of an entering class that contains 20% transfer students for the past seven years, but the percentage fell to 17% in FY21 and 18% in FY22. This is likely related to the challenges of recruiting transfer students during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 and 2021. We will continue to focus on recruiting a strong incoming class of transfer students.

Objective 2.6: Among transfer students, both the three-year graduation rate (64%, Fall 2019 entering students graduating by Summer 2022) and four-year graduation rate (74%, Fall 2018 entering students graduating by Summer 2022) well exceeded the targets of 60% and 70%, respectively. Moreover, analysis of current transfer students' degree progress suggests that these graduation rates will remain high over the next two years. Continued development and refinement of articulation agreements with Maryland two-year institutions will facilitate transfer students' timely progress toward the baccalaureate degree.

Peer Benchmarks: Benchmark information for transfer student four-year rates is available from IPEDS, but with quite a delay. The most recently available data is from transfer students who entered during 2012-13 and graduated by 2016. In that year, SMCM's four-year graduation rate for transfer students (73%) was the highest among Maryland public four-year institutions, and exceeded the average for this group (51%) as well as for COPLAC institutions (51%), Maryland private institutions (62%), and peer institutions (69%). Transfer students at aspirant institutions averaged a 90% four-year graduation rate. (Source: IPEDS Data Center)

Goal 3: Ensure access for students with financial need through a strategic combination of federal, state, private, and institutional funds.

Objective 3.1: This objective has consistently been met or exceeded as SMCM has focused on meeting the financial needs of entering first-time students.

Objective 3.2: Both four-year and six-year graduation rates among students receiving need-based aid (Pell grant or Stafford loan) were low this year, similar to other cohort groups as discussed above for Objective 2.2. Given the particularly sensitive financial situation of students receiving need-based aid, this gap warrants increased attention. On the other hand, the leading indicator of retention to the second year was substantially above recent levels at 87% this year, even higher than the all-student level.

Peer Benchmarks: Similar to findings for graduation rates among Pell recipients, SMCM's six-year graduation rate for students receiving need-based aid (68% in FY20, most recent

comparison data available) was well above that of other COPLAC institutions (50%), Maryland public institutions (47%), and Maryland private institutions (62%), and approached the FY20 rate at peer institutions (73%). The six-year graduation rate for recipients of need-based aid at aspirant institutions was 91%, matching their overall six-year graduation rate. (*Source: IPEDS Data Center*)

Goal 4: Increase student contributions to the Maryland community and to the state and national workforce.

Objectives 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4: Community service participation in FY21 did not meet the target for the third time in five years after many years of consistently higher levels, likely due to ongoing effects of the pandemic persisting through 2022. Internship participation rose slightly to just above the target of 45% of graduates, and is expected to grow over the next few years as students move through the professional skills component of the LEAD curriculum. With regard to six-month post-degree outcomes, while the six-month employment rate (61%) was below the target for the Class of 2021, it increased above both Class of 2019 and Class of 2020 levels. In addition, the six-month continuing education rate (35%) continues to be substantially above the target, suggesting that SMCM graduates who are not employed are choosing to continue their education instead. In support of this interpretation, the overall Career Outcomes Rate (rate of graduates with a “positive career outcome”, such as employment, continuing education, fellowship, or service experience) for the SMCM Class of 2021 was an outstanding 97%.

Peer Benchmarks: Benchmarks for the six-month employment and continuing education rate come from the nationally administered First Destination Survey, and are for Carnegie Baccalaureate Arts & Sciences institutions. For the Class of 2020, the most recent data available, SMCM’s employment rate was 53% and the national rate was 65%, while SMCM’s continuing education rate was 34% and the national rate was 21%. The total Career Outcome Rate for SMCM was 91%, matching the national rate. Again, these numbers support the interpretation that SMCM graduates are just as successful as college graduates nationwide, and are more likely than similar college graduates nationwide to choose to continue their education (rather than enter the job market) just after graduation. (*Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) First Destinations for the Class of 2020 Report*)

B. Response to Commission Assessment

What is the biggest challenge your institution faces as it attempts to equitably meet the goals, objectives, and performance measures in the 2017-2021 State Plan for Postsecondary Education?

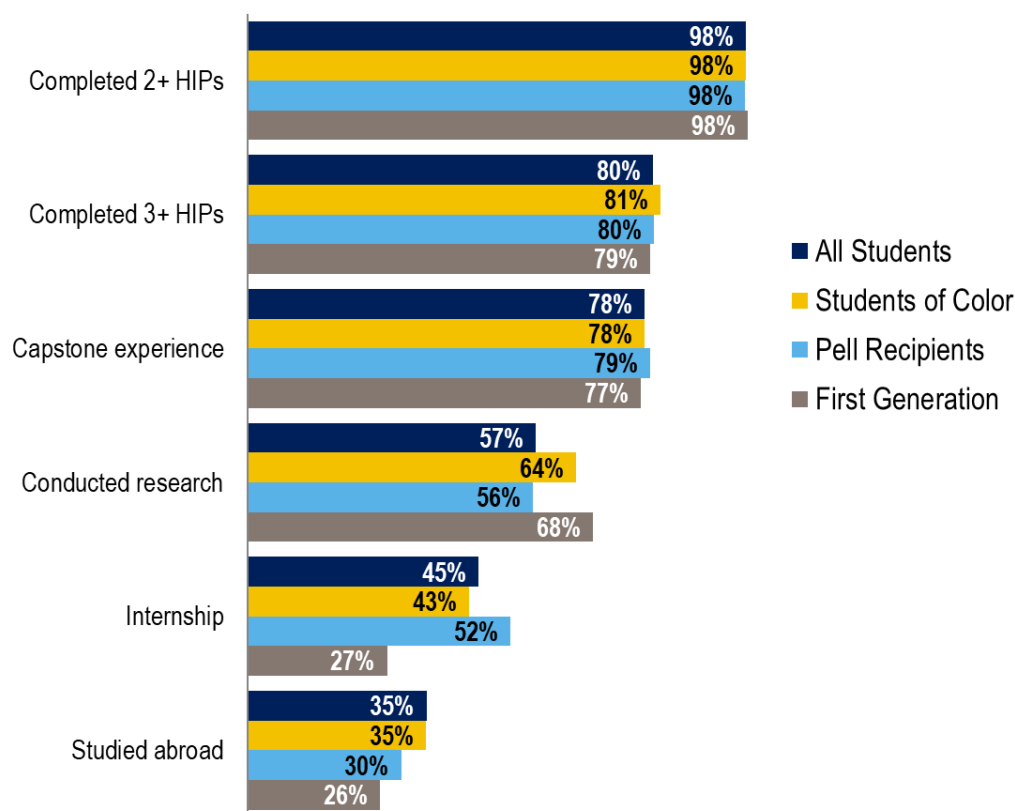
SMCM is committed to supporting the State’s goals of access, success, and innovation, all three of which figure prominently in our mission statement. We are proud to offer a rigorous liberal arts education with a low student-to-faculty ratio at a fraction of the cost of small private liberal arts colleges, our closest programmatic peers. Our identity as the National Public Honors College underscores our commitment to provide access to a quality education. However, our biggest challenge in meeting these goals is resources, both financial and human capital in nature. Attracting and retaining high-quality faculty and staff, particularly employees of color, has been

a growing challenge for us in recent years as we struggle to offer competitive salaries. Our rural location can also be a challenge in recruiting faculty. Further, while our cost is low compared to similar private institutions, tuition is currently higher than other public four-year institutions in Maryland, providing a challenge for equitable access. As a result, we have committed to freezing tuition for the next 10 years. The funding support provided by the State of Maryland has been instrumental in allowing us to implement this long-range strategy to maximize access. As a tuition-driven institution, we will continue to focus on growing enrollment to expand our available resources; the increased incoming class sizes over the last three years suggest that these efforts have been successful thus far.

Has your institution used disaggregated data to identify equity issues in students' educational opportunities and outcomes? If so, how has this disaggregation of data provided insight into your institution's educational equities and inequities? If not, what data has been used to understand student outcomes?

SMCM routinely examines disaggregated data to assess the equity of student success. Recently, we have been pleased to discover that there is widespread equity among the completion of high-impact practices (HIPs) by our graduates. HIPs include first-year seminars, internships, international experiences, learning communities, research with faculty, experiential coursework, and senior capstone experiences. As shown below, students of color, low-income students (Pell recipients), and first generation students are completing many of the same high-impact practices at the same or even higher rates than the general student population. Notable exceptions are seen in the lower rates of internships and international experiences (study abroad) among first generation students. These are more expensive experiences for students, both in terms of actual financial cost and loss of other income opportunities. As a result, we are exploring mechanisms to provide additional funding and access to these experiences, for example by greatly expanding our offerings of on-campus paid internships during the semester and by increasing scholarship opportunities for students who wish to study abroad. These strategies will be particularly important as we have recently implemented the Honors College Promise, which guarantees every student the opportunity for an internship, international experience, or collaborative research or creative experience. The newly expanded Sum Primus ("I am first") program for first generation students, coordinated by the Center for Career and Professional Development, will also be instrumental in encouraging and preparing more first generation students to participate in these high-impact practices before graduation.

Equity in High-Impact Practices (HIPs) at SMCM (4-yr average)



As discussed in the Analysis of Goals and Objectives section above, we have also observed inequities in our four-year and six-year graduation rates. We have implemented multiple programs and initiatives to address these gaps in degree completion. The DeSousa-Brent Scholars Program is a long-running leadership program designed to support and enhance students' experiences from before matriculation (via a Summer Bridge program) through their degree completion. The Landers Scholars Program provides four years of full funding, mentoring, and service opportunities to first generation and other underrepresented students, especially students from the Baltimore area. And as discussed above, the Sum Primus program provides pre-matriculation support for first generation students, as well as continuing social support and networking with other first generation students, faculty and staff (including President Tuajuanda Jordan). Faculty, staff and students are regularly informed and reminded about the importance of meeting first- and second-year academic milestones, as discussed above, which are particularly impactful for students from historically underrepresented and/or marginalized groups. In addition to these student-based programs, recent changes in faculty and staff organizational structures reflect our commitment to addressing equity gaps. The Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (CITL), founded in 2019, supports faculty professional development with a strong focus on inclusive teaching practices. The campus diversity office was reorganized and expanded in 2020 to become the Division of Inclusive Diversity, Equity, Access, and Accountability. An ad hoc committee of the Faculty Senate devoted to Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity was established in May 2021. And finally, a two-year cluster hire initiative, the Ross Fellows program, began in Fall 2021 to actively seek out faculty with scholarly and pedagogical experience centered on diversity and inclusion.

St. Mary's College of Maryland

MISSION

St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM) is Maryland's honors college, a selective, public liberal arts college—a vibrant community of scholars and learners. We foster a rigorous and innovative curriculum; experiential learning; scholarship and creativity; close mentoring relationships; and a community dedicated to honesty, civility, and integrity. We are committed to diversity, access, and affordability. Our students, faculty and staff serve local, national, and global communities and cultivate and promote social responsibility.

VISION

St. Mary's College of Maryland will increasingly serve as the liberal arts college of choice for intellectually ambitious students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds, attracted by a rigorous, innovative, and distinctive curriculum that integrates theory and practice; a talented, professionally engaged, and student-centered faculty and staff; and a strong infrastructure. Students will be part of a collaborative learning community that embraces intellectual curiosity and innovation, the power of diversity, and the College's unique environment. Our graduates will thrive as responsible and thoughtful global citizens and leaders.

KEY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Goal 1. Ensure a high quality and rigorous academic program.

- Obj. 1.1** All graduating students will participate in at least two high-impact practices, and at least 80 percent of the graduating class will participate in at least three high-impact practices. High-impact practices are defined by the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U).
- Obj. 1.2** Maintain a full-time faculty of which 98 percent have terminal degrees. Maintain the proportion of undergraduate credit hours taught by full-time faculty at 88 percent annually.
- Obj. 1.3** Maintain an environment that promotes individual contact between faculty and students by maintaining a student-faculty ratio of no more than 12 to 1.

Performance Measures	2018 Act.	2019 Act.	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Est.	2024 Est.
Percent of the graduating class successfully completing at least two high-impact practices	100%	100%	99%	95%	97%	100%	100%
Percent of the graduating class successfully completing at least three high-impact practices	86%	87%	82%	72%	76%	76%	80%
Percent of all full-time faculty who have terminal degrees	99%	98%	98%	98%	97%	98%	98%
Percent of undergraduate credit hours taught by full-time faculty	89%	88%	87%	82%	80%	82%	85%
Undergraduate student to faculty ratio	10:1	10:1	9:1	9:1	10:1	10:1	10:1

St. Mary's College of Maryland

Goal 2. Recruit, support, and retain a diverse and qualified group of students, faculty and administrative staff who will contribute to and benefit from the enriched academic and cultural environment provided by St. Mary's.

- Obj. 2.1** Recruit a qualified and diverse entering class with the following attributes: Average high school grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.40 (4 point scale), Black, Indigenous, and Person of Color (BIPOC) student enrollment of at least 33 percent, out of state student enrollment of at least 10 percent, students from first generation households enrollment of at least 20 percent, and Pell Grants disbursed during their first semester student enrollment of at least 20 percent.
- Obj. 2.2** Achieve and maintain 4-year graduation rates for all students (70 percent), all BIPOC students (65 percent), African-American students (65 percent), Hispanic students (70 percent), all first generation students (65 percent), and all students with a Pell Grant disbursed during their first semester (65 percent). Achieve and maintain 6-year graduation rates at 80 percent for all students and all student subgroups, including BIPOC students, African-American students, Hispanic students, first-generation students, and students with a Pell Grant disbursed during their first semester.

Performance Measures	2018 Act.	2019 Act.	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Est.	2024 Est.
Average high school GPA	3.33	3.38	3.38	3.44	3.45	3.49	3.49
Percent of entering first year class who identify as BIPOC students	27%	25%	33%	31%	31%	31%	33%
Percent of entering first year class who originate from outside of Maryland	9%	7%	6%	9%	11%	12%	12%
Percent of entering first year class from first generation households	25%	21%	23%	25%	21%	25%	25%
Percent of entering first year class receiving Pell Grants disbursed during their first semester	20%	17%	22%	24%	18%	20%	20%
Four-year graduation rate for all students	63%	64%	60%	58%	60%	59%	65%
Four-year graduation rate for BIPOC students	59%	52%	49%	44%	41%	52%	53%
Four-year graduation rate for African-American students	46%	51%	48%	38%	37%	39%	49%
Four-year graduation rate for Hispanic students	68%	53%	44%	44%	42%	56%	61%
Four-year graduation rate for all first generation students	59%	60%	53%	44%	57%	45%	52%
Four-year graduation rate for students with a Pell Grant disbursed during their first semester	55%	60%	58%	43%	58%	49%	58%
Six-year graduation rate for all students	80%	77%	72%	73%	71%	68%	71%
Six-year graduation rate for BIPOC students	72%	69%	67%	64%	60%	53%	56%
Six-year graduation rate for African-American students	56%	70%	51%	69%	59%	41%	45%
Six-year graduation rate for Hispanic students	81%	70%	74%	58%	50%	52%	63%
Six-year graduation rate for all first generation students	85%	69%	64%	71%	63%	59%	67%
Six-year graduation rate for students with a Pell Grant disbursed during their first semester	84%	69%	62%	76%	65%	49%	67%

St. Mary's College of Maryland

Obj. 2.3 The first to second-year retention rate will be 90 percent.

Obj. 2.4 The College will strive for diversity in the faculty and staff so that the composition reflects the aspired diversity of the student body. The aspirant goals for full-time faculty and staff will be: 33 percent BIPOC and 50 percent women.

Obj. 2.5 Ensure access for transfer students, particularly those from 2-year institutions. Achieve and maintain transfer students at 20 percent of the entering class each fall.

Obj. 2.6 Achieve and maintain degree completion rates for transfer students at 60 percent for three-year graduation rates, and at 70 percent for four-year graduation rates.

Performance Measures	2018 Act.	2019 Act.	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Est.	2024 Est.
First to second-year retention rate	87%	82%	85%	83%	85%	83%	85%
Percent BIPOC of all full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty	17%	16%	14%	15%	18%	20%	22%
Percent women of all full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty	51%	51%	52%	51%	50%	50%	50%
Percent BIPOC of all full-time (non-faculty) staff	27%	29%	27%	27%	30%	31%	32%
Percent women of all full-time (non-faculty) staff	52%	57%	57%	57%	58%	58%	58%
Percentage of entering fall class who are transfer students	20%	22%	21%	17%	18%	17%	17%
3-year graduation rate for all transfer students	56%	62%	69%	68%	64%	62%	71%
4-year graduation rate for all transfer students	71%	74%	69%	74%	74%	73%	67%

Goal 3. Ensure access for students with financial need through a strategic combination of federal, state, private, and institutional funds.

Obj. 3.1 72 percent of entering first-year student need is met by awarding any need-based aid.

Obj. 3.2 Support persistence to graduation of students receiving need-based aid at entry. Achieve and maintain first-to-second year retention rates at 90 percent, four-year graduation rates at 70 percent, and six-year graduation rates at 80 percent for students receiving need-based aid in the first semester.

Performance Measures	2018 Act.	2019 Act.	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Est.	2024 Est.
Average percent of first-time full-time degree-seeking student need met by awarding need-based aid	75%	73%	78%	84%	78%	78%	78%
First-to-second year retention rate for students receiving need-based aid in the first semester	80%	80%	81%	79%	87%	85%	87%
Four-year graduation rate for students receiving need-based aid in the first semester	61%	59%	56%	54%	54%	48%	60%
Six-year graduation rate for students receiving need-based aid in the first semester	81%	78%	68%	69%	64%	64%	64%

St. Mary's College of Maryland

Goal 4. Increase student contributions to the Maryland community and to the state and national workforce.

Obj. 4.1 65 percent of graduating seniors will have performed community service while at SMCM.

Obj. 4.2 45 percent of graduating seniors will have participated in a paid or unpaid internship.

Obj. 4.3 The rate of employment within six months of graduation will be at least 67 percent.

Obj. 4.4 The rate of continuing education (at any level) within six months of graduation will be 25 percent.

Performance Measures	2018 Act.	2019 Act.	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Est.	2024 Est.
Percent of graduating seniors who will have performed community service while at SMCM	71%	69%	63%	50%	39%	45%	55%
Percent of graduating seniors who fulfilled a paid or unpaid internship	41%	40%	45%	44%	47%	48%	50%
Employment rate of graduates within six months of graduation	67%	62%	58%	53%	61%	61%	61%
Percent of graduates continuing their education (at any level) within six months of graduation	23%	28%	30%	34%	35%	35%	35%

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

Date of Meeting: May 13, 2022

Status of Minutes: Approved May 31, 2022

Committee Chair: Peter Bruns

Committee Members: Paula Collins, Susan Dyer, Elizabeth Graves '93, Melanie Hilley '93, Tuajuanda Jordan, Larry Leak '76, William Seale

Executive Staff: Jeff Byrd, Katie Gantz

Faculty Liaison: Libby Williams

Trustees/President: Nick Abrams '99, Joshua Ajanaku '22, Carlos Alcazar, Anirban Basu, John Bell '95, Alice Bonner, Peter Bruns, Donny Bryan '73, Paula Collins, Mike Dougherty, Susan Dyer, Peg Duchesne '77, Judy Fillius '79, Elizabeth Graves '95, Melanie Hilley '92, Sven Holmes, President Jordan, Brayan Ruiz Lopez '24, Doug Mayer '04, William Seale, Danielle Troyan '92, Ray Wernecke, John Wobensmith '93

Non-Trustees: Betsy Barreto, Anne Marie Brady '93, Geoffrey Bowers, Allison Boyle, Kelsey Bush '94, Carolyn Curry, Michael Dunn, Jennifer Falkowski, Jerri Howland, David Hautanen, Paul Pusecker, Dereck Rovaris, Mai Savelle, Shanen Sherrer, Jenny Sivak, Libby Williams, Anna Yates

Executive Summary

Academic Affairs Committee Chair Peter Bruns called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

Faculty Senate Report

Faculty Senate President Libby Williams provided a brief update to her written report with a focus on Academic Restructuring. Faculty still have concerns about the division of departments and its implementation. The concerns stem from certain divisions being larger than others and a lack of equity across divisions. The faculty would like more time to deliberate at the first faculty meeting of Fall 2022. Chair Dyer and other Board members expressed concern about the delay in timeline and inquired about whether there could be forward movement prior to the Fall. Trustee Bruns addressed that if any changes were made to the present plan, it would need to be voted upon again by the Faculty which could delay the implementation process. President Jordan assured the Board that she would work with academic affairs leadership to ensure that the timeline that the restructuring implementation team developed, and the faculty received, remains on schedule. President Jordan thanked the faculty for the amount of time and energy that they

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

have put into this activity over the course of the last year. The goal is to alleviate administrative strain from faculty to allow them to return to the classrooms. Come October, President Jordan will provide an update to the Board on academic administrative restructuring.

Dean of Faculty Report

Interim Dean of Faculty Katie Gantz, and Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs Jeff Byrd, jointly presented their Report to the board. Dr. Gantz shared brief comments, thanked the President, Board, fellow vice presidents, and faculty for their continued support and announced that a more detailed presentation would be provided that afternoon during the Board meeting.

Action Item:

III.A. Recommendation to approve 2022 Candidates for Graduation.

Committee Action Taken/Action in Progress:

The proposed action item was approved by the Academic Affairs Committee at its meeting on May 13, 2022.

Recommendation to the Board:

The Academic Affairs Committee recommended approval of this action item by the Board of Trustees at its meeting on May 13, 2022.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the open session and move into close session. The open session meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.