



Using Accreditation as a Planning Tool: Presentation to the Faculty Senate

Bob Carpenter
Department of Economics
Provost's Special Assistant for Institutional Effectiveness
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What's the purpose of accreditation?

- Ensure that we're achieving our mission
- Promote improvement through reflection and peer review.
 - Identify what we're doing well, and what we need to work on
- Accreditation is vital to the survival of institutions...which can't receive federal grants and student loans without it

High level timeline

- Middle States conducts a review every ten years
- The major steps in the process are
 - Design a self study and have it approved by Middle States (**Completed December 2014**)
 - Study Groups research their standards and write draft reports (**Completed Summer 2014**)
 - **Write and submit the self study to Middle States (Spring 2016)**
 - Host a site visit by a team of external reviewers comprised of university faculty and administrators (Fall 2016)
 - Receive a report from the review team
 - Respond to recommendations or suggestions (example: the construction Blue Ribbon Library Committee)

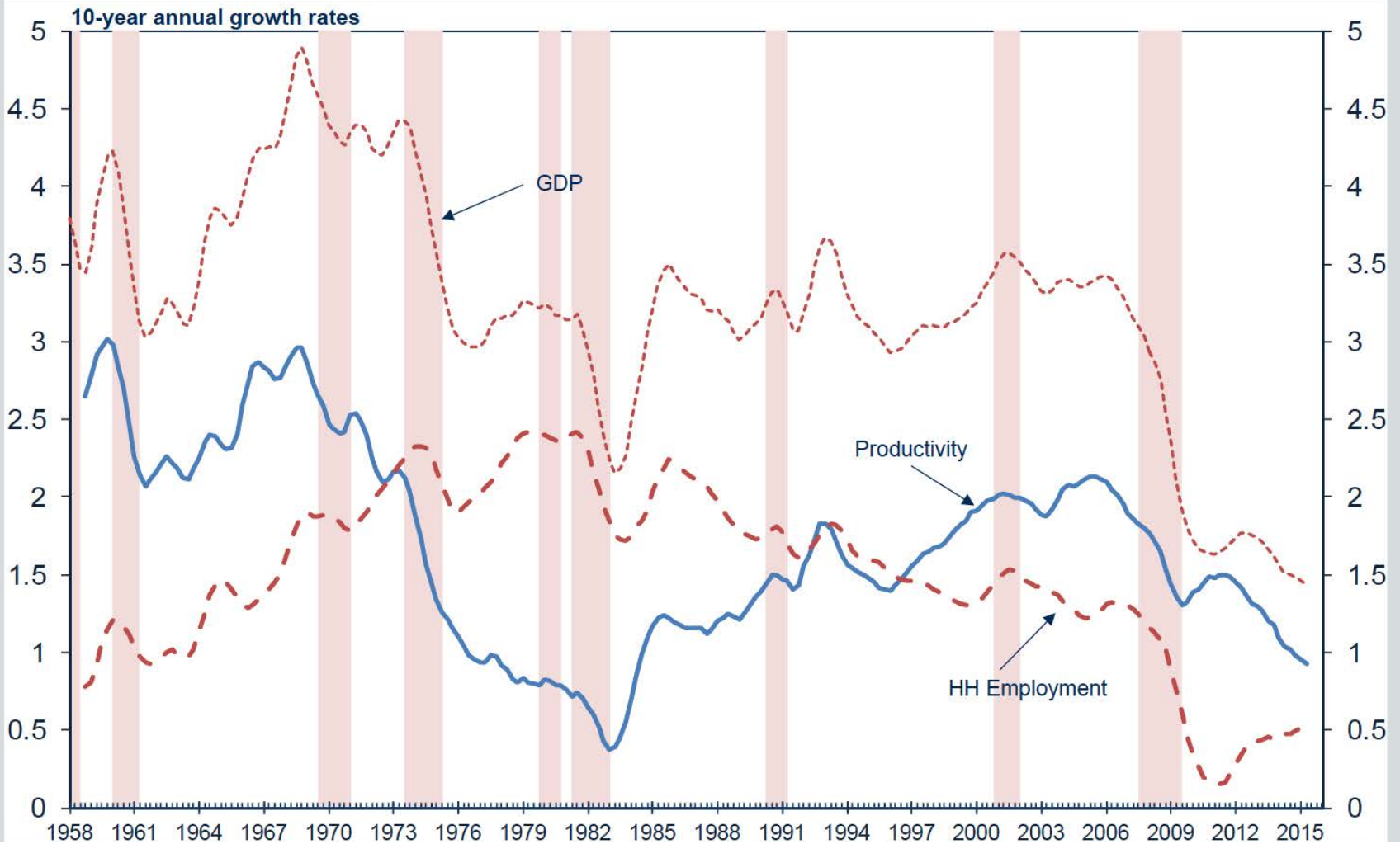
Our self study

- Will be a “selected topics” design, focusing most intently on a subset of the 14 Middle States standards
 - Mission and Goals
 - Planning, Budgeting, and Institutional Resources
 - Institutional Assessment
 - Assessment of Student Learning
- Address the remainder the remainder through documentation
- While we have to show that we are meeting standards, we want the document to be useful in supporting our planning efforts

Why is this work important?

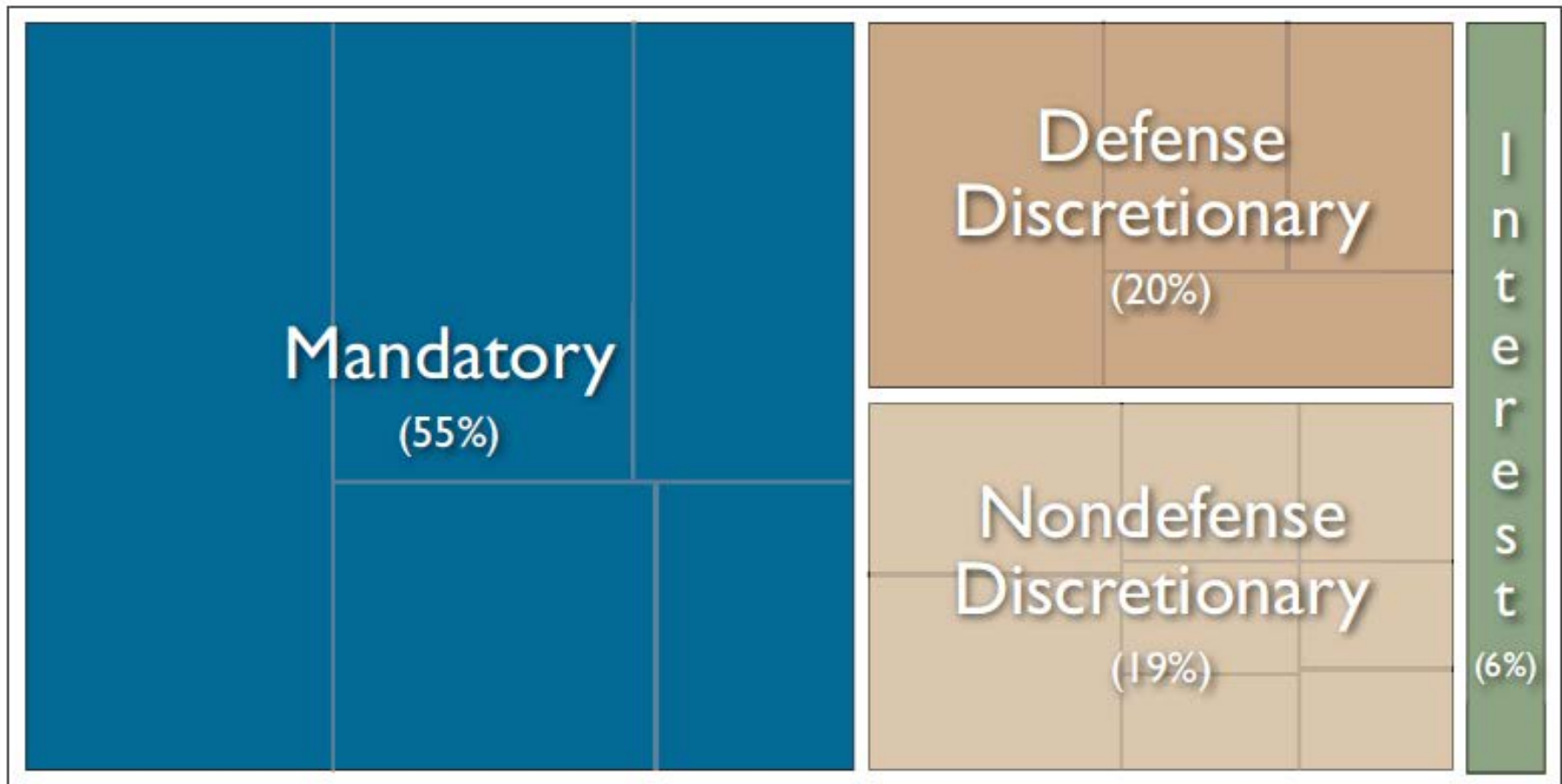
- Economic fundamentals that effect higher education are troubled
 - Declining state and federal support
 - Slow economic growth
 - Age-based entitlement spending is rising (Social Security and Medicare). So is health care
 - Interest payments on the national debt (are going to more than triple over the decade...to about \$800B, 3% of GDP)
 - Underfunded public sector pensions
 - These fundamentals have lead to:
 - Higher costs for students
 - Rising levels of student debt

Slow growth



Mandatory spending is going to squeeze everything else

Breakdown of Federal Spending in 2010

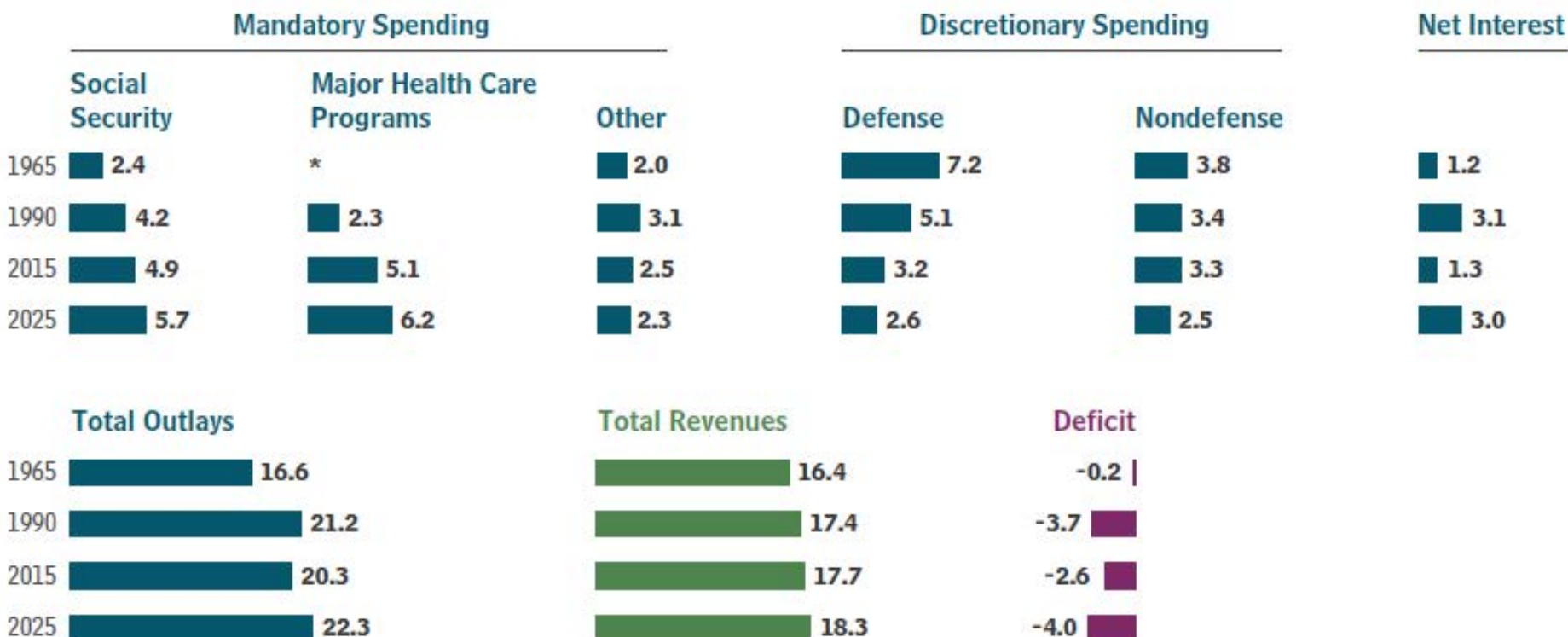


Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Age based entitlements / health care

Spending and Revenues Projected in CBO's Baseline, Compared With Levels in 1965 and 1990

Percentage of Gross Domestic Product



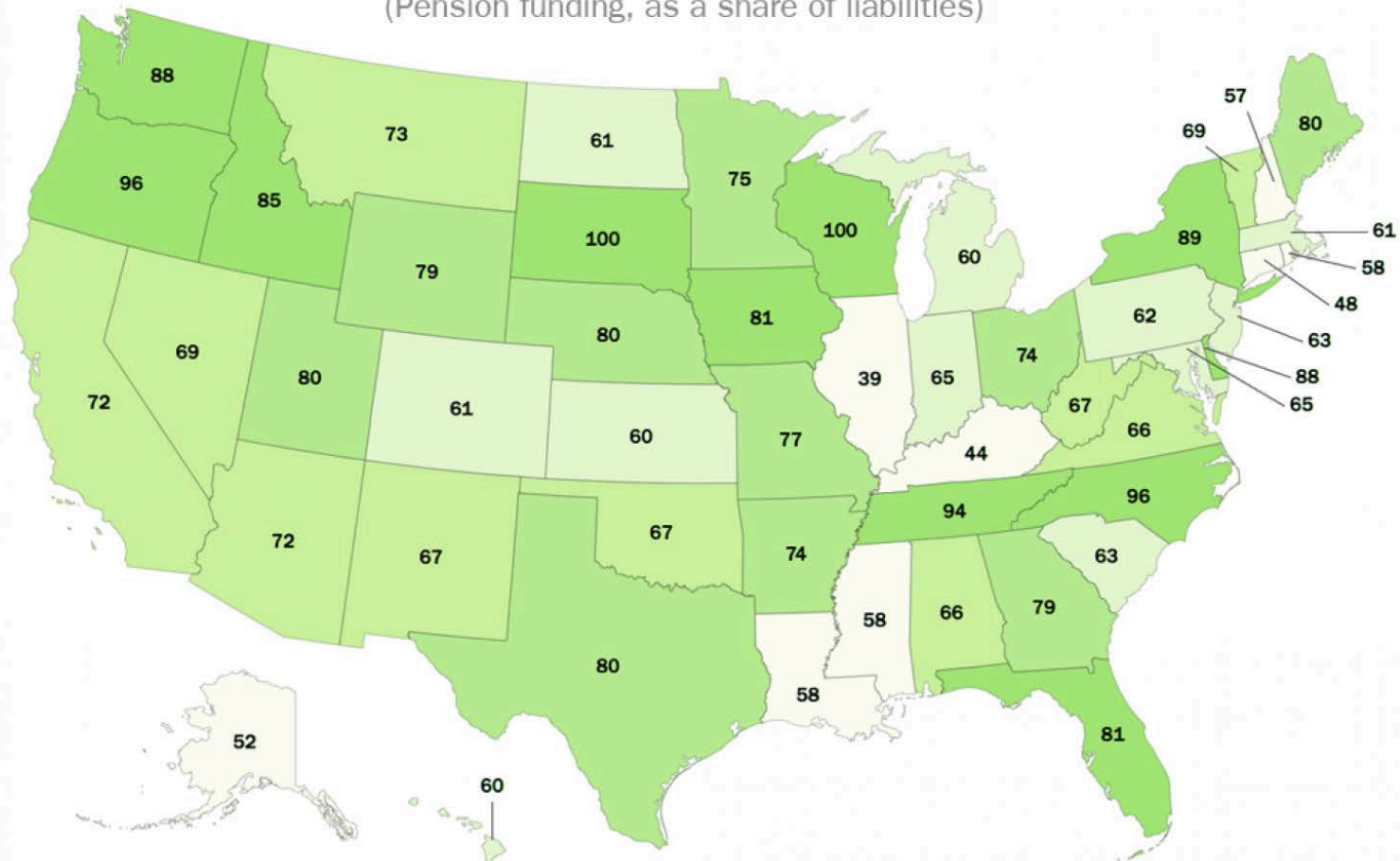
Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: Major health care programs consist of Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and subsidies for health insurance purchased through exchanges and related spending. (Medicare spending is net of premiums paid by beneficiaries and other offsetting receipts.)

We need to pay attention to pension finance!

How well-funded are state pensions (%)

(Pension funding, as a share of liabilities)



HIGHER SHARE →

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In Maryland...

- We have about 65 cents for every dollar in pension commitments
- We are putting away about 77 cents for every dollar we need to meet commitments and close the gap
- Which means you will see things like:
 - *Surge in tax collections, spending cuts give Maryland \$295 million budget surplus: Baltimore Sun 9/3/2015*
 - The extra money should be used to "further stabilize the state's finances, address our pension obligations or be put back into the pockets of taxpayers." Governor Hogan
 - The surplus "must be saved and not spent" Comptroller Franchot
 - The bottom line: competition for funds will continue to be intense even as the state economy improves

These forces will be transformative for higher education:

- How are we going to get out in front of them?
 - A strong planning process helps focus resources on institutional priorities, mission, and goals
 - Better use of data and analysis helps monitor progress
 - Combined with rigorous assessment of our academics and operations that helps us make changes when needed
- Good planning and improving our effectiveness means
 - Improving the student experience
 - Improvements in pedagogy to improve learning and shorten time to degree
 - Improves the efficiency of our academic enterprise
- Universities are a critical rung of the economic ladder
 - It's vital that ladder not be pulled up behind us. We need to find ways to maintain access and affordability

How do the processes inform each other?



What's the larger vision for the process?

- Successful accreditation outcome
- Support the strategic plan
 - Improve our analysis and assessment of results for
 - Decision making
 - Resource allocation
 - Student learning outcomes
 - Student success
 - Improve communication by building an institutional effectiveness repository
- Use the information we gather to benchmark and measure progress toward the new plan's goals

A sample of exhibits from the 2015 retreat

■ Growing our research

RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP & CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Analysis of Sponsored Research Strengths

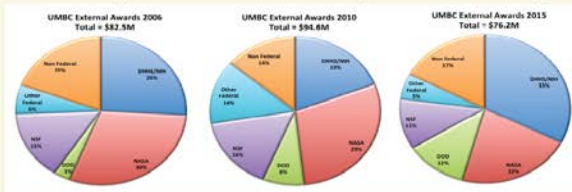
Strategy to Strengthen UMBC's Research Competitiveness

- Raise Research Profile through Research Positioning Initiative
 - Enhance Internal and External Visibility
 - Growth based on Areas of Strategic Strength and National Priorities
- Create an Ecosystem that fosters Excellence
 - Support Interdisciplinary Collaborations
 - Establish *Communities of Excellence*
 - Recognize Faculty Achievements
- Secure Access to Resources
 - Enhance Research Infrastructure
 - Support Seed Grants and Core Centers
- Develop Sustainable Partnerships
 - Academic Partners (national and global)
 - Federal and State Agencies
 - Private Sector

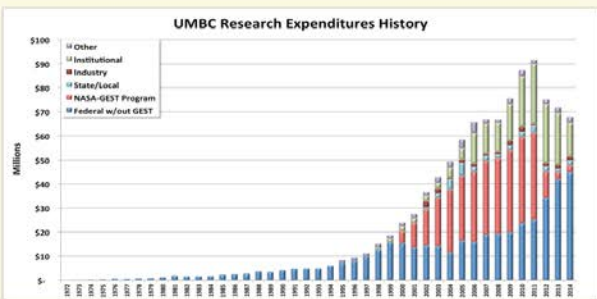
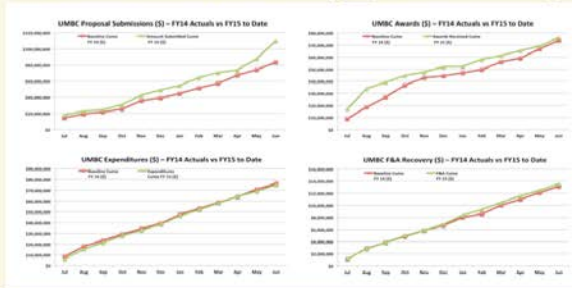
Enhanced Research Infrastructure

- Training on Grants Development, Research Policies and Procedures
- Research Office Restructuring and Expansion
- Research Leadership in Colleges and across Campuses
- Core Instrumentation Facilities
- Shared Services Centers

UMBC's funding portfolio is diversified and well aligned with federal funding sources



UMBC's Research Dashboard indicates monthly progress toward institutional goals



UMBC's externally-funded research initiatives have grown dramatically over the past 15 years. Drop in 2012 is due to discontinuation of major GEST award from NASA.

Key Analytics Questions

- How do we measure research output and impact?
- What essential metrics, other than extramural grants and contracts, should we employ to measure and celebrate our research and creative activity?
- How can Digital Measures provide key parameters?
- How do we continue to build the infrastructure to pursue major strategic opportunities for UMBC?
- How do we increase graduate student population in both quantity and quality?
- How do we know that we have been successful?



STUDENT LEARNING & SUCCESS

How and What UMBC Assesses, What We've Found, and How We Use What We Find to Improve Student Learning

The Development of UMBC's Assessment Process

UMBC's assessment plan reflects its evolution from implicit learning assessment to an explicit and intentional process, which focuses on direct measures; stresses closing-the-loop and evidence-based changes; and encourages further assessment of those changes. As the examples below show, this plan operates at institutional, college, and program levels.

Institutional Level:

- In 2014-15, the UMBC Assessment Committee focused on integrating our institutional learning outcomes across our general education courses and program outcomes.
- The integration of UMBC's learning assessment process with APR processes allows for continuous assessment and improvement of the learning assessment process itself. The 2014-15 APR cycle clarified learning assessment reporting elements and saw external reviewers asked to review assessment and provide feedback on it.

College Level:

CNMS established a college-wide Student Learning Assessment Advisory Committee (SLAAC) to help all programs in the college implement effective measures and common reporting templates.

Program Level:

- PHIL revised its 2009 learning assessment plan in 2013 in response to APR feedback and assessment data- it clarified program-level student learning outcomes and enhanced the use of direct measures.
- Curriculum mapping and data-based curriculum revision have been employed by a variety of departments: Philosophy, MCS, ELI, CMSC, GWST, CBEE.

Measuring Student Learning Outcomes

Assessment through Multiple Measures

UMBC uses multiple measures to assess student learning. Most undergraduate UMBC academic programs now use some direct measures: all CNMS departments and the Erickson School, 90% of CAHSS departments, and 75% of COEIT departments.

The National Institute on Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) reports that 47% of US public universities use capstones and 66% use rubrics to measure learning; at UMBC, 75% of departments use capstone or rubric assessments in their degree programs.

Assessment Across Multiple Levels

US institutions report that 42% of their programs have student learning outcomes that are aligned with institutional outcomes; at UMBC approximately 90% of programs have aligned their learning outcomes with UMBC's functional competencies.

STUDENT LEARNING & SUCCESS

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Assessing the Acquisition of the Functional Competencies

UMBC's five functional competencies are UMBC's institutional student learning outcomes, and crucial to measuring its success.

Functional Competency 1- Oral and Written Communication

- When NSSE data from 2001-2005 showed that UMBC students wrote less than comparable peers, UMBC created The Writing Board. The gap between the writing rates of UMBC students and their peers has since narrowed.
- Several departments (PHIL, MCS) created writing-intensive classes when direct measures indicated room for improvement.
- CMSC assesses student learning in written and oral communication through rubrics applied to writing assignments.

Functional Competency 2- Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning

- NSSE data suggest that UMBC students' general quantitative reasoning skills match those of comparable peers, and UMBC students score better than the national average on American Chemical Society exams.
- SOCY required a math course prior to SOCY 301: Analysis of Sociological Data and instituted Teaching Assistant Study Sessions for struggling students. Retake rates have fallen, and pre- to post-test scores have doubled.

Functional Competency 3- Critical Analysis and Reasoning

- The Erickson School's "Critical Thinking Rubric" has been used to assess student learning in AGNG 100: So You Say You Want a Revolution? and AGNG 200: Aging People, Management and Policy. The assessment process identified weaknesses in students' reasoning and led to a course revision.
- To help history students develop critical thinking skills which direct assessment suggested they lacked, the gateway class HIST 201: Introduction to the Study of History, was changed from an 80-student TA-supported lecture course into a 30-seat class taught by a faculty member.

Functional Competency 4- Technological Competence

- CMSC uses rubrics, surveys, and an Industrial Visiting Committee's review to assess its students' acquisition of technological competence.
- Faculty outside the STEM disciplines, especially in Research Methods classes, often contribute to students' technological abilities. An Economics professor will deploy a rubric to assess how effectively students use software tools to solve problems in the discipline. MCS 101: Media Literacy has students use, and reflect on their use of social media, and then use multimedia tools to produce a final video project.

Functional Competency 5- Information Literacy

- The Albin O. Kuhn Library has a learning assessment plan which provides opportunities for students to acquire information literacy. In 2013-2014 its 47 assignment subject guides garnered 118,086 total views. In 2014 it integrated information literacy learning opportunities into 45 courses, impacting 3,633 students. Nine information literacy workshops were attended by 55 students. Reference desk librarians responded to 9,237 general student queries, and provided research consultations to 3,004 students.
- According to the Association of College and Research Libraries' "Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills," UMBC students perform better than comparable students in three of four assessed standards, and about the same in the fourth.
- After assessment in 2012 and 2014 showed that the information literacy skills of English students could be improved, the Department added required early-career research methodology courses and reinforced research methodologies in all English courses.

The Functional Competencies in Action

A wide variety of outcomes suggests UMBC students can apply their functional competencies to real world issues.

Research Experiences

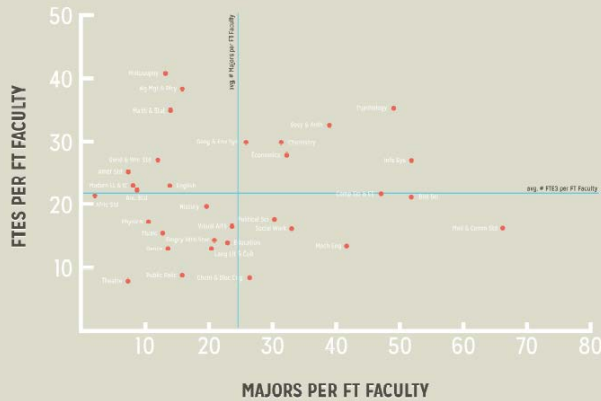
- While UMBC faculty and administrators are both confident that URCAD (Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement Day) and the URA (Undergraduate Research Award) program enhance student research, writing and presentation skills, until recently only indirect measures have been used to measure student learning. In 2015, UMBC will implement a survey instrument modeled after SUNY Buffalo's, which will provide both indirect and direct measures of student learning (the latter accomplished through mentor evaluation of student learning). The survey questions are aligned with UMBC's functional competencies.
- CNMS coordinates SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fest) which provides a variety of student researchers a venue to present and discuss their research.

Problem-focused Learning and Cultivating Social Responsibility

- Students in CMSC's BA program participate in an industrial internship through the Shriver Center, with supervisors evaluating their performance.
- Starting in Fall 2015, a Hrabowski Innovation Fund-supported project will develop instruments to measure affective functional competencies in students who undertake Applied Learning Experiences.
- The School of Social Work received a Hrabowski Innovation Fund grant to teach financial self-efficacy to its students, to strengthen their abilities to improve the financial well-being of their future clients. Validated instruments confirmed statistically significant improvements in students' financial knowledge, self-efficacy and behavior after the intervention.

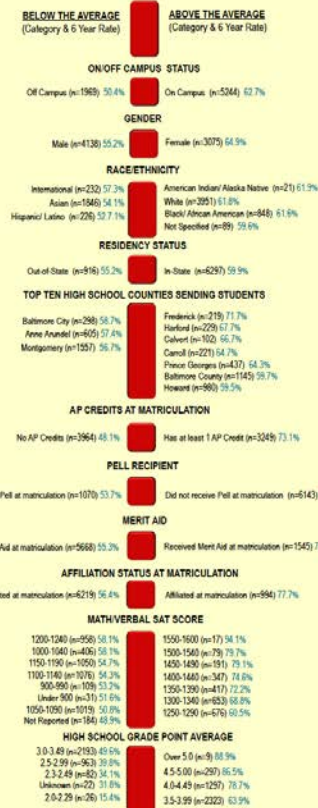
Being effective

FTEs PER FT FACULTY BY MAJORS PER FT FACULTY - FALL 2012



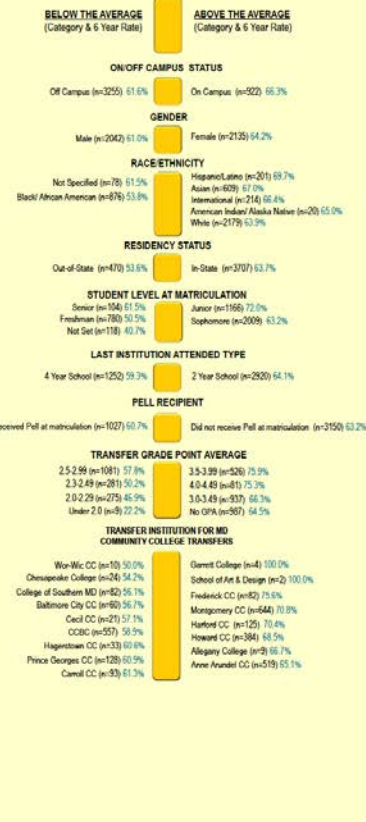
Undergraduate Student Progress at UMBC

Average 6 Year Graduation Rate of 2004-2008 Fall Cohorts of Full-Time Degree-Seeking New Freshmen: **59.4% (n=7,213)**



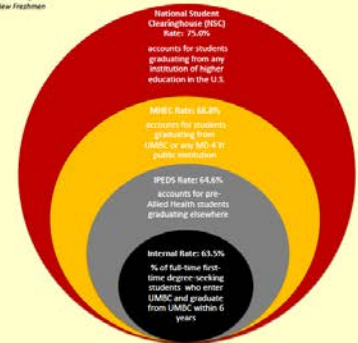
UMBC Office of Institutional Research, Analysis & Decision Support

Average 6 Year Graduation Rate of 2004-2008 Fall Cohorts of Full-Time Degree-Seeking New Transfers: **62.6% (n=4,177)**

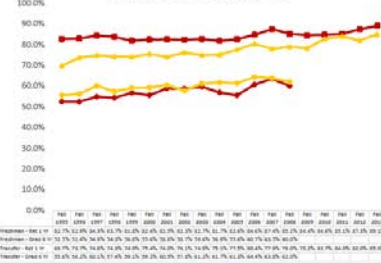


DIFFERENT WAYS WE MEASURE SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATES*

*Notes presented are for the 2007 Cohort of Full-Time Full-Time Degree Seeking New Freshmen



Retention and Graduation Rates of FT New Freshmen and New Transfers to UMBC

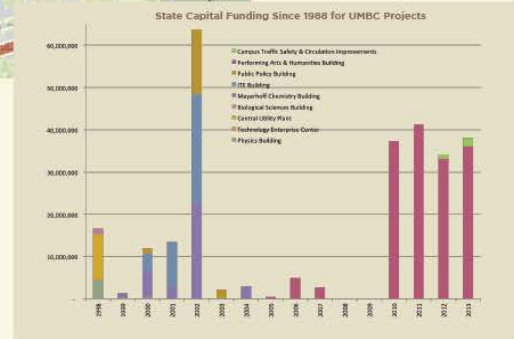


PLANNING & BUDGET

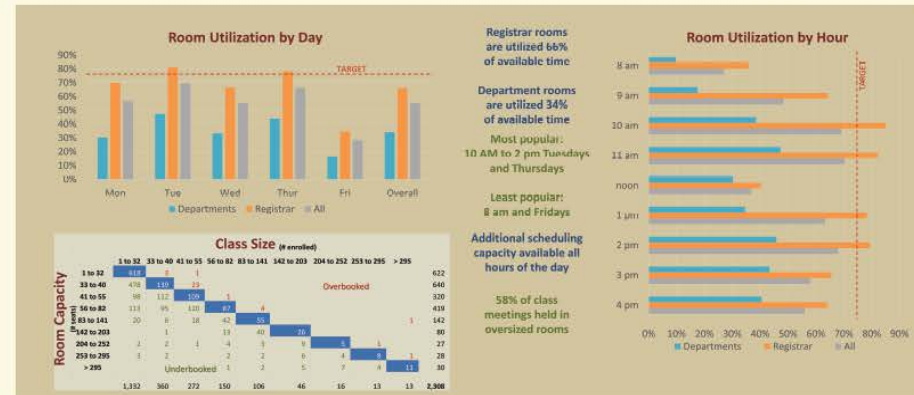


Implementing a Comprehensive Campus Master Plan

Budget Process Connected to Strategic Priorities



Identifying Strategies to Maximize Classroom Utilization



What we need from you...

- **Support** for our work (especially for the members of the committees taking this on as an additional service commitment)
- **Constructive comments** on the self study process and the draft documents
- **To be engaged** in the process so that the final product represents the campus and we get the benefit of your knowledge and experience
- **To be available** to meet with Middle States representatives and the external evaluation team when they visit campus

**Thanks to the people doing the
heavy lifting**

The Steering Committee

- Ultimately responsible for the self study and the entire process

Dorothy Caplan

Scott Casper

David Kinkopf

Bill LaCourse

Diane Lee

Joshua Lubben

Pat McDermott

Daniel Miller

Yvette Mozie-Ross

Ganesh Mysore

Judah Ronch

Julie Ross

Janet Rutledge

Lynne Schaefer

Sara Shin

Greg Simmons

Karl Steiner

Jack Suess

Bruce Walz

Nancy Young

The Operating Committee

- Coordinates the work, vets the draft and final report

Michael Dillon

Delana Gregg

Lee Hawthorne

Kathleen Hoffman

Ben Lowenthal

Tony Moriera

Connie Pierson

The study group chairs

- Coordinate their group's work, coordinate the writing of the draft reports

Diane Lee

Connie Pierson

Lynne Schaefer

Simon Stacey

Jack Suess

Nico Washington

The study group members

Kent Malwitz

Jim Milani

Rachel Brewster

Linda Hodges

John Stolle-Mcallister

Karen Mattingly

Amanda Knapp

Joyce Tenney

Linda Baker

Caroline Baker

Jennifer Harrison

Jill Randles

Bridget Stone

Chris Steele

Ken Baron

John Fritz

Dan Ritschel

Sayre Posey

Joel DeWyer

Delana Gregg and Lee Hawthorne

- Through whose hands pass every piece of the project, and who keep the operation running