

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

2006 Institutional Performance Accountability Report to the Maryland Higher Education Commission

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Prepared by the Office of University Analysis, Reporting, & Assessment

Program Description

Salisbury University (SU) serves the State of Maryland by providing undergraduate liberal arts, sciences, pre-professional and professional programs, and select, mostly applied, graduate programs.

MISSION

Salisbury University is a premier comprehensive Maryland public university, offering excellent, affordable education in undergraduate liberal arts, sciences, pre-professional and professional programs, including education, nursing, social work, and business, and a limited number of applied graduate programs. Our highest purpose is to empower our students with the knowledge, skills, and core values that contribute to active citizenship, gainful employment, and life-long learning in a democratic society and interdependent world.

Salisbury University cultivates and sustains a superior learning community where students, faculty, and staff engage one another as teachers, scholars, and learners, and where a commitment to excellence and an openness to a broad array of ideas and perspectives are central to all aspects of University life. Our learning community is student-centered; thus, students and faculty interact in small classroom settings, faculty serve as academic advisors, and virtually every student has an opportunity to undertake research with a faculty mentor. We foster an environment where individuals make choices that lead to a more successful development of social, physical, occupational, emotional, and intellectual well being.

VISION

Salisbury University, a Maryland university of national distinction, will be acknowledged by its peers as a globally oriented, widely recognized comprehensive university for excellence in education both in and out of the classroom and for its commitment to model programs in civic engagement. Undergraduate research, international experiences, and a broad range of internships and community outreach activities will be the hallmark of the institution, enriching the traditional academic curriculum and enabling students to connect research to practice and theory to action. Salisbury University will grow to meet the education and workforce needs of the State by providing nationally distinguished undergraduate programs as well as specialized master and doctoral programs that uniquely serve the region. We will attract superior students who are academically exceptional and who embrace their role as involved citizens. We will empower students for a life of leadership and cultural appreciation through their participation in campus artistic and athletic activities and in campus clubs and organizations. We will graduate students who are recruited by the best employers and graduate schools and who will contribute to the economic and social vitality of the State and the nation.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Overview

In 2005-06, Salisbury University completed a number of significant qualitative initiatives intended to strengthen academic rigor and enhance its development as a Maryland university of national distinction. These included:

- the successful conclusion of the University's decennial self-study and site visit with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education;

- the successful completion of six separate academic program accreditation self-studies and site visits, with all receiving accolades for program quality, student learning, and faculty scholarship;
- a revision in the University’s mission that grants SU the authority to offer its first doctoral programs. The revised mission was approved by both the Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland (December 2005) and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (February, 2006); and,
- the completion of a comprehensive initiative to study, review, and recommend or reject a new course-based (as opposed to credit-based) curricular model that would provide an unparalleled opportunity for the University to transform its curriculum into a more intensive, engaging structure. The proposed model was similar to that used in many elite private institutions and would have enhanced the educational experience for all SU undergraduates. After months of dialogue regarding the pros and cons of the revision, complete with implementation discussions, the SU faculty, in a divided decision, voted 159 to 147 to reject the proposal and retain the current credit-based model. Although the work was extensive and the vote split, many of the University’s departments and schools have used the research and debate as a catalyst to enhance the curriculum within their own units.

Additionally, in response to the USM’s enrollment growth initiatives, Salisbury University was targeted as a growth institution and, with the first-ever commitment to formulaic funding to support enrollment growth, the University resurrected its 2003 enrollment plan that charted a course to grow by 2,000 students over the next decade. The plan and projections were subsequently suspended because of resource limitations brought about by the recession and State budget reversions. Since the plan depended upon the availability and commitment to enhance resources and facilities capacities that paralleled growth, the SU Executive Staff intentionally limited all growth in Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 in order to maintain academic quality during the severe fiscal crisis. As the fiscal crisis abated, tuition revenues increased, and plans for facilities expansions progressed, the University cautiously allowed enrollment to increase in FY 2006. Now, state appropriations have been sought and secured for FY 2007 that fund enrollment growth, enabling the University to expand its resource base, accommodate additional students in accordance with its plan, broaden access, and maintain academic quality. Concurrently, the University is proceeding with plans to expand further its academic facilities in order to accommodate future growth. It has presented Parts 1 and 2 facilities justification documents for a new Perdue School building with the proposed construction to begin immediately after the completion in FY 2009 of the Teacher Education and Technology Center. The Arthur W. Perdue Foundation believed this facility so important to the future growth and success of the University and the business program that it pledged \$8 million toward its construction. Without this facility, the University cannot accommodate the entirety of its planned growth and without successful partnerships between generous philanthropists like the Perdue family, Salisbury University, and the State, quality, access, and efficiency cannot be achieved in equal measure. In these partnerships, the University remains committed to four primary tenets:

- preserve and enhance academic quality;
- maintain and enhance instructional programs;
- make strategic use of resources; and,
- maximize student success.

Academic Quality

Graduation and Retention: In the past 17 years, Salisbury University has advanced its academic standards and reputation, attaining levels of eminence that readily identifies SU as one of the premier public institutions in the Northeast. Achievements include: the 5th highest average 6-year graduation rate among comprehensive public master’s universities nationwide; average 6-yr graduation rates that are higher than the average of our aspirational and performance peers; the highest 4-year graduation rates in the USM for 18 of the last 19 years; and the highest 6-year graduation rates in the USM for 9 of the last 11 years. Since 2004, SU has achieved its goal to maintain a graduation rate of at least 73% annually (Objective 4.4)—a rate dramatically higher than the trends throughout the 1990’s. Perhaps just as important is the non-completion rate that accounts for all SU students who have not completed their degree at any university. This rate can be calculated using the services of the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) which tracks the degree and enrollment of the nation’s postsecondary education students. Using NSC’s data, Salisbury University is able to verify that, although 73% of our freshman cohort graduate from SU or another Maryland public university, an additional 17% transfer to other institutions

both in and out of Maryland. This gives the University a non-completion rate of only 10%.

Additionally, at 66% and 64% in 2006, the University surpassed its 2009 goals relative to African-American (Objective 4.5) and minority (Objective 4.6) student graduation rates, respectively. However, the University is cautious in this early achievement since one year does not constitute a trend and the size of the cohorts are, as yet, too small to predict future completion rates. The University has made specific efforts to improve the graduation rates of minority students by increasing the diversity of the freshman class, developing an emphasis on international education, and creating a dedicated Office of Diversity to complement the Office of Multiethnic Student Services. The Office of Multiethnic Student Services assists in monitoring, among other responsibilities, the progress of any student who may need special assistance in adapting to college life, while the Office of Diversity develops a variety of programs to promote diversity and enhance inclusiveness within the entire SU community. These efforts have had a more immediate impact on the retention of minority and African-American students with the retention rates of both groups progressing toward the established benchmarks. Additionally, with the initial cohorts of minority and African-American students increasing by more than 2.5 times their pre-2001 levels, numerical stability has been brought to both cohorts. In previous years, small freshman minority and African-American cohorts had a significant affect on the variability of graduation rates within these groups and, since graduation rates are lagging indicators, stability and predictability will be realized once the 2001 cohorts begin to graduate next year. Retention goals for both cohort groups have been elevated to levels that are comparable to the entire student body, while graduation rate goals have been established at levels that will be equivalent within 5 to 10 years.

At 87.4% in 2006, the second year retention rate (Objective 4.1) of all SU first-time full-time freshmen leaped beyond the goal of 85.0% by 2009. However, like the previous objective, the University remains cautious about this sudden gain. The retention rate for this cohort has consistently hovered in the mid 80's and the recent hiring of a new Dean of Students and an Associate V.P. of Student Affairs, as well as a strategic reorganization that moved the Enrollment Management Division to Student Affairs, has yet to have any impact. The divisional reassignment is targeted as an initiative to enhance the retention of all populations and to coordinate better enrollment management activities of the Offices of Admission, Registration, and Financial Aid as well as a new position, Director of Retention Initiatives. Additionally, although the University assembled a strategic committee in a year-long effort to study the first-year experience of SU students, its efforts are not yet concluded. The Foundations of Excellence® in the First College Year Task Force convened weekly throughout the 2005-06 academic year, culminating its team activities with an assessment and planning retreat in June 2006. The task force will submit a report, complete with implementation outcomes, to the SU Executive Staff in July 2006. This effort is intended to enhance the academic and social adjustment of all SU first year students thereby enhancing both retention and academic engagement. However, like the strategic realignments, this initiative has yet to present implementation plans that could accomplish the gains mentioned previously.

Moreover, survey research (2004 HERI CIRP Freshman Survey) of our freshmen show that 10% of our entering freshmen arrive with the intention to transfer before graduation—a key informational item indicating that SU serves a vital preparatory role for students who transfer to other in- and out-of-state institutions that offer professional programs, i.e. engineering, that SU does not. Attrition studies have been inconclusive and the University has committed a significant portion of new tuition dollars to need-based financial aid in an attempt to limit the impact of finances as a potential reason for attrition. New initiatives will also begin to consider the SU transfer student whose numbers in any given year are equivalent to those of first-time freshmen but, as a group, transfer students do not perform as well academically throughout their career as do students who enter as first-year freshmen. While a number of factors are believed to affect transfer student performance, the preliminary evidence indicates that transfer institutions are not adequately preparing students for the academic rigor of upper-level work. This situation is exacerbated by State legislation that requires institutions to accept the general education courses of community college graduates that, despite supposedly equivalent course work, are not generally as well prepared as students who enter as first-time freshmen. Complicating matters, BOR mandates and State pressure to move students through their baccalaureate degree program in an efficient manner without additional coursework increase the tension on transfer students. As a result, the University's retention and academic engagement initiatives have become high priority concerns.

National Acclaim: Although not a specific accountability objective but a distinction nonetheless that makes

use of a number of objective indicators to establish subjective rankings, for nine years, Salisbury University has garnered regional and national recognition from numerous publications including *America's Best Colleges* (*U.S. News and World Report*) and *The Best 361 Colleges* (*The Princeton Review*). Additionally, in the 2003 through 2007 editions of *America's Best Colleges*, SU was ranked as a "top tier" institution for both public and private universities in the North Region while in 2007 it was ranked 4th among public institutions in the same region. Although the U.S. News ranking system is extremely subjective and the topic of much criticism, the criteria or indicators used to establish the rankings, like the MFR and MHEC performance indicators, are largely objective. Further, claims of excessive tuition costs in comparison to peer institutions were rendered somewhat hollow when the University once again ranked as one of the top "100 Best Values in Public Colleges" by *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* magazine in 2006. With a ranking of 62nd for in-state students and 41st for out-of-state students, the University is associated with some of the finest institutions in the nation. In *Kiplinger's* guide, affordability is not a simple measure of the total cost of education. Rather, a best value classification considers the quality of the education in combination with the total cost and, using such a methodology, SU is clearly one of the best public values in education in the nation.

Alumni Satisfaction: Salisbury University alumni report a high level of satisfaction with their preparation for graduate or professional school (Objective 1.3). Over the past several years, satisfaction levels have ranged from 96% to 100%, a range, given the defined methodology that is statistically equivalent. The data in this regard are rather intriguing since the University surveys alumni annually. However, in 2003, we were forced to postpone our survey of the 2001-02 class until the next year resulting in information that, because of time constraints, is not comparable to other survey data and can not be used for accountability comparisons. However, from a contextual view, the data are significant. One year after graduation, approximately 27% of SU alumni enroll in graduate or professional study. After two years, the percentage increases to 35%. Additionally, two-year post-graduation survey data reveal a higher percentage attending law and medical school, a lower percentage of teachers employed in the teaching profession, and, as expected, higher salary levels. Perhaps most intriguing is the reported salaries of nursing graduates two years after completion. The salaries of these former students lead all fields, including high-tech and business graduates. This is an indication of market demand and the healthcare industry's response (to attempt) to alleviate the nursing shortage by offering highly competitive salaries to qualified nurses. It is also a lesson that state governments should strongly consider as they grapple with the ever increasing shortages of teachers who, coincidentally, are one of the lowest paid groups.

Salisbury University alumni also report a high level of satisfaction with their preparation for employment, a goal (Objective 1.4) established in the upper 90's. However, this satisfaction level is significantly higher than the typical rating that had hovered between 92-94% for many years. This new assessment may be an anomalous spike or may reflect, like the increase in retention, a change in student-University interaction and a healthy employment market. The University is intent on monitoring this objective closely as we confer with employers who have rising expectations and shifting workforce emphases that need to be addressed in University curricula and instruction.

Accreditations and Licensure: Ten academic programs are accredited with specialized agencies and fully six of them successfully completed self-study reviews and on-campus site visits in 2005-06.

- the Teacher Education programs completed a rigorous self-study and site visit by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and MD Education Department in November 2005. Along with the allied health fields, NCATE maintains the most rigorous outcomes-based review process of any specialized accreditation. To receive a favorable review, Teacher Education programs must provide evidence of outcomes achievement at the unit-level, i.e. the individual student, a voluminous administrative activity that consumes an ever-increasing amount of faculty time. The Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies passed its review in an exemplary fashion;
- the program in Exercise Science successfully earned its initial accreditation with the Committee on Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences (CoAES) through the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs;
- the program in Clinical Laboratory Sciences/Medical Technology successfully continued its

accreditation with the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS);

- the programs in Music successfully earned their initial accreditation with the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM);
- the program in Environmental Health Sciences successfully continued its accreditation with the National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council (NEHSPAC); and,
- the program in Athletic Training successfully continued its accreditation with the Joint Review Committee on Education Programs in Athletic Training (JRC-AT) through the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

Concurrently, SU concluded its multi-year institutional self-study and site visit by a team representing the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in March 2006. Among other items, the Middle States team noted the following strengths of Salisbury University: “... *a student body that is engaged in the institution and in the community; evidence of a student success culture, as documented by high retention and graduation rates ... [and] ... a loyal and dedicated staff whose pride in their work is evidenced by the well-kept facilities and efficient and friendly operations.*” The visiting team made particular note of our “*talented and student-centered faculty,*” and they stated that “*it is very evident that there is a tremendous dedication of the faculty to the students as well as to the institution and colleagues.*” Perhaps nowhere is this more evident than in the over **5,300 public service days** completed by SU faculty in AY 2005-06 in support of K-12 or community college activities, public or non-profit agencies, government, or in support of businesses that is in addition to their instructional and other professional and public service duties.

Specialized and regional accreditation reviews are more rigorous than at any time in history and require evidence along a continuum of quantitative, qualitative, and curricular measures that demonstrate institutional or programmatic Continuous Quality Improvement according to the stated mission of the institution or program. Some of these measures are included in SU’s MFR and accountability reports. For instance, Objectives 1.1 and 1.2 established performance goals relative to the pass rates of the nursing licensure exam (by nursing graduates) and the teacher licensure exam (by teacher education graduates), respectively. The University’s academic programs have had mixed results with these goals. At 97%, the benchmark pass rate for the teacher education exam was established at a level just beyond 2005’s record performance of 96%. However, in 2006 the rates returned to 91%, a standard more typical for that of SU students. Although the spike in pass rates in 2005 may have been an anomaly, the University is not content with a rate that is consistently in the low 90’s and well below our lofty target. As a result, several initiatives have been implemented in an attempt to improve the first-time passing rates of SU students, including:

- faculty will undertake a concerted study of PRAXIS II examinations in their content areas, both in terms of content tested by different portions of the exam and how that content knowledge correlates with required content area courses;
- student transcripts and plans of study will be reviewed to determine if there is an optimal time for candidates to take the PRAXIS II exam based on courses they have already completed and when they plan to complete other key courses. Subsequent to that review, faculty will recommend the most meaningful and appropriate time for candidates to take the test(s);
- students will be offered PRAXIS II workshops in early methods courses that will review the ETS Test (at a Glance) materials, specifically focusing on areas of the test and the kinds of questions the test requires;
- in the content area of history, faculty are considering requiring candidates to complete the social studies minor to increase pass rates. It should be noted that social studies is the largest content area of all secondary areas; and,
- test results will be analyzed for patterns of performance so that future adjustments to this plan can be made.

Nursing licensure exam pass rates rose dramatically from a low of 77% in 2003 to 88% in 2005 only to plummet to an alarming 73% in 2006. Although this represents the number of test takers who pass the exam the first time

and does not consider the large numbers who pass the exam the second attempt (after failing the first time), the rate is unacceptably low and of great concern to the faculty and administration of Salisbury University. As a result, the Nursing program has been engaged in discussions with the Maryland Board of Nursing in an effort to improve student pass rates. The Nursing faculty has also taken (or is taking) the following steps:

- revising the curriculum in an effort to address areas identified as weak when NCLEX-RN results were analyzed;
- completed online test item writing courses (basic or advanced) through the National Council of State Boards of Nursing;
- revisited the early admission policy, with the goal of eliminating any person from the program, regardless of their admission status, if their performance is sub-standard in prerequisite courses;
- increased individual and peer tutoring;
- provided all graduating seniors the opportunity to take the online NCSBN Review for the NCLEX-RN and the MedsPub 4-day review (held at SU) at no cost to the student; and,
- administered the HESI Exit Exam to graduating seniors in March 2006 to give faculty and students information on areas where students need increased preparation and to give students a sense of what it is like to take a 150 item exam on the computer.

A more comprehensive seven-page follow-up report has been filed with the Maryland Board of Nursing that provides the details of the program changes. The report highlights three areas of concern—admission, resource, and curricular factors—and further identifies the recent changes. Official data show the results of this year's exam participants passing at an improved rate of 83% and, with ongoing changes, it is anticipated that additional, consistent improvement will be realized.

Faculty: The faculty is critical to SU's success as an institution and competitive salaries are vital in the effort to attract and retain the best instructors. Salisbury University continues to lag behind in a vital academic input and institutional objective—faculty salary levels. In three years, faculty salaries as a percentile of AAUP peers fell from the 65th to the 58th percentile at the associate professor level and rebounded by only one point this year. Similarly, after declining dramatically for two consecutive years, assistant professors rebounded in FY 2005 from the 66th to the 76th percentile, only to drop an additional two points in 2005-06. Concurrently, full professors have now fallen to the 62nd percentile, their lowest level in 16 years. At all three ranks, the institutional and BOR goal has been established at the 85th percentile. Market and regionally competitive salaries cannot be achieved without an additional \$1,696,000 annually—a staggering amount that is nonetheless essential to attract and retain the highest caliber instructional workforce. Perhaps more telling is a comparison against SU's Performance Peers—comparisons that are used annually in the MHEC Peer Performance review. Although the University surpasses its Performance Peers on multiple quantitative and (subjectively) qualitative factors, at the ranks of assistant, associate, and full professor, SU salaries are at the 70th, 60th, and 60th percentiles, respectively. Despite the rebounding Maryland economy and modest salary increases the past two years, the AAUP data convincingly indicate that many states have continued their commitment to their higher education workforce while Maryland lags behind and, at salary increases of 4 - 4.5% annually, the gap will continue to widen. As a result, Salisbury University has become less attractive to faculty from all backgrounds, and is experiencing difficulty in securing commitments from top faculty applicants.

Maryland Workforce Initiatives and Partnerships

Nursing: The University has had mixed success with its objectives and goals relative to critical workforce initiatives and partnerships. Perhaps its greatest single success lies in crucial input/output indicators, i.e. growth in nursing enrollments and nursing graduates. In the past six years, nursing enrollment has exploded, more than doubling from 198 to 428 students. Undoubtedly much of this growth is due to market opportunities associated with a severe shortage nationally of nurses wherein the demand for nurses, unlike that for teachers, has been met by correspondingly high salary levels. As mentioned earlier, a survey of our alumni two years after graduation revealed that nurses, on average, earned the highest salaries of all graduates including those working in information technology, computer science, and business careers. The growth in nursing graduates parallels the growth in enrollment but, as also mentioned earlier, the University is engaged in an effort to ensure that the

licensure pass rates of those graduates demonstrate the competencies needed to excel in the Nursing field—the first time through. Concurrently, the annual number of SU nursing graduates employed as nurses in Maryland continues to increase toward our goal of 70 (Objective 2.3).

Teacher Education: Teacher Education enrollments remain virtually constant—with a few notable exceptions—with a corresponding trend in the number of graduates. The University expects this trend to begin to increase once the new TETC opens in 2009, with an increase in the number of Teacher Education graduates employed in Maryland recovering as early as 2010 or 2011 (Objective 2.1). However, the University will continue to remind its audiences that it has no control over the life choices of those graduates once they are provided the discipline-specific and general education competencies they need to be successful. State governments have not responded to the market the same way that private industry does and teachers salaries in Maryland are not as competitive as they are in some of the neighboring states. This, coupled with the escalation of housing costs in most metropolitan, urban, and desirable retirement destinations (like the Eastern Shore), have created market tensions that make other career options or other locations more desirable.

Information Technology: Information Technology (IT) programs have experienced growth and decline that mirrors the national employment market. Since the dot-com and high tech bust, increased competition for IT-related jobs has had a negative affect on IT related enrollment, IT graduates, and the estimated number of IT graduates employed in Maryland (Objective 2.2). After the number of IT graduates employed in Maryland climbed to a high of 59 in 2004, the number declined to 31 in 2005. Little rebound is expected in that trend in 2006 and, although SU applications and enrollment are booming, those interested in IT-related fields, as predicted, remain constant.

Additional examples of SU's efforts to address Maryland workforce initiatives and partnerships include:

- of the students who persist, SU graduates fully 75% in 4 years and over 95% in 5 years;
- 96% of SU graduates are employed one year after graduation (Objective 2.4) with 74% of those employed in Maryland or the D.C. and Northern VA suburbs; and,
- at a measured pace, the University continues to expand its course offerings at the Eastern Shore Higher Education Center and will begin offering a collaborative Social Work program, pending Middle States approval, at Harford Community College.

Educational Access

Freshmen and Transfer Students: Salisbury University continues to focus its enrollment on highly qualified, motivated first-time freshmen and transfer students. New freshman enrollment for Fall 2005 was 958, with a composite SAT score of 1,050 and 1,210 at the 25th and 75th percentiles, respectively, and an average high-school GPA of 3.45—input levels that far surpass our Performance Peers. Salisbury has responded to Maryland's college access needs by increasing undergraduate enrollment by 901 students since 1999 and, as the campus demographics shift, now has 1,090 more full-time undergraduates than it did 6 years ago. Additionally, over the course of an academic year, the University accepts nearly as many transfer students as it does first-time freshmen. Although facilities capacities are constrained by insufficient classroom space, nighttime usage rates will be increased as resources permit the University to hire additional faculty and to offer more courses.

With the first ever formulaic commitment by the State to fund enrollment growth, Salisbury University will grow an additional 323 FTES, most all of it at the full-time undergraduate level, by Fall 2006. This growth is consistent with our 2003 enrollment projections that were approved by MHEC and will see us grow by 2,000 students over the next decade, i.e. assuming the State remains committed to formulaic funding of enrollment growth and to facilities expansions, both of which are essential if Salisbury University is to accommodate greater numbers of students.

Applications to Salisbury University are at record levels. Each year, SU receives over 5,000 applications for approximately 950 freshman seats and accepts, over the entire year, nearly an equal number of transfer students. The demand was so strong for Fall 2005 that the University suspended all transfer enrollments after July 1, 2005, postponing their admission to the spring. This necessity was borne out of a limited resource base that constrained SU's ability to hire additional faculty. However, the State's commitment to fund growth in FY

2007 has allowed the University to hire additional faculty and, at last count, our number of new confirmed freshman is 7% over our target of 1,000 while transfer applicants—a number intentionally limited in 2005—are up 18% compared to last year. At this rate, the University may be forced to limit, once again, transfer admits in order to keep enrollment controlled to a level that is manageable within current facilities and course availability.

Diversity and Financial Aid: The University continues to grow a more diverse student body (Objectives 3.1 and 3.2) in order to enhance the educational experience of all students as well as to reflect better the diversity of our region. However, SU's efforts have always been challenged by the proximity of an Historically Black Institution that struggles with diversity nearly as much as SU and, because of its rich state funding position when compared against Salisbury University, is able to offer more scholarships, attract more out-of-state students, and charge lower tuition than SU. Moreover, for a number of years, Salisbury University has had among the lowest annual per student scholarship dollar amounts and highest loan amounts of any USM institution. Historically, inadequate state funding and relatively low tuition levels have been the cause of this dubious distinction and, even though the University has quadrupled its allocation of institutional funds for student assistance over the past five years, it has yet to reach a level of funding to provide packaged financial assistance at levels that are comparable to what is offered by our performance and State peer institutions. Nonetheless, need-based financial aid became a presidential initiative of the highest level several year ago and the University is dedicating a significant portion of all new revenues to need-based aid.

Similarly, SU has increased the number of African-American students enrolled by 69% (from 416 in Fall 2000 to 703 in Fall 2005) and more than doubled the number of Hispanic students enrolled (from 60 in Fall 2000 to 166 in Fall 2005). It has done this through special programs in selected high schools on the Western Shore, increased marketing efforts, and through the expansion of institutional scholarship programs. The efforts discussed earlier in international education, as well as that of the Office of Diversity, have played a role in increasing retention, while the Foundations of Excellence® in the First College Year work should have a profound impact on the academic experience for all students. As a result, not only has SU enrolled a more diverse class every year since 2001, but also it has retained a more diverse class. By the Fall 2005 semester, SU had the largest minority representation in institutional history with over 16.2% minority and 10.5% African-American students. When compared with enrollment percentages of 11% minority and 8% African-American students merely five years ago and given our 16% enrollment growth, these trends are significant.

Additional examples of SU's efforts to enhance educational access include the following:

- to ensure that the children of our local citizens are financially able to attend Salisbury University, scholarship funds continue to be earmarked for local high school and Wor-Wic Community College graduates;
- by academic year 2005-06, SU expanded need-based financial aid by over 700% since the 2000-01 academic year;
- by academic year 2005-06, SU expanded merit-based financial aid by 78% since the 2000-01 academic year;
- SU is pursuing alternatives related to enrollment management, time to degree, and on-line learning including additional offerings at the Eastern Shore Higher Education Center; and,
- the University has made considerable efforts to raise scholarship funds through the SU Foundation and has begun a capital campaign that targets fully 40%—10 million dollars—of our goal toward endowed scholarships.

Funding Issues: Cost Containment and Efficiencies

Salisbury University remains committed to maximizing efficiency efforts by restructuring organizational processes, upgrading to new and more efficient technologies, embracing new technologies and methods, and containing costs. Savings and cost containment efforts allow the reallocation of resources to other critical initiatives and functions. The following represent highlights of those efforts for FY 2005:

Collaboration (\$139,000):

- Salisbury University continues to collaborate with the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in both academic programming and support services. The two universities participate in two dual degree programs (Biology-Environmental/Marine Science & Social Work-Sociology), sponsor a joint Master of Arts in Teaching, and employ several faculty and staff members as joint employees of both institutions. It is estimated that \$139,000 in salary/benefit costs are saved annually.

Use of Information Technology Equipment (\$27,500)

- SU uses multi-function machines (i.e., copiers that fax, scan, and print) to reduce the need for personal printers and other office machinery. This also creates economies of scale when ordering paper and other supplies for the machines. (\$18,000 in savings)
- SU uses “one-card” for inter-departmental transfers to reduce paper usage and office preparation time. (\$2,000 in savings)
- Call-in maintenance service requests provides an estimated annual savings of \$7,500.

Maintenance and Energy Conservation (\$279,056):

- SU uses a total energy management system to monitor and control energy management, yielding an average annual savings of 15%. (equating to approximately \$252,056).
- The University has continued to use an overall preventive maintenance program to improve the readiness level of institutional buildings and avoid unanticipated major maintenance needs. (\$27,000)

Contingent Labor Force (\$480,125)

- The University’s state support Contingent II labor pool represents 18 full-time positions with a projected annual savings \$207,000. In addition, the University employs 36 full-time non-tenure track faculty at an additional savings of \$273,125 over a fully benefited position. This savings, however, will be significantly lowered as the University continues to reinstate its contingent conversion plan.

Hiring Freeze/delays (\$678,890)

- Due to fiscal constraints in the State and unavoidable, unfunded mandatory increases, the University imposed an internal hiring freeze prior to the state-mandated one. For most positions not frozen, a three to twelve month hiring delay was implemented. As a result of these actions, the University reallocated funds from both faculty and staff positions to meet its FY 2006 operating needs.

Web-time Sheets (\$3,000)

- SU uses “web-time” reporting for all non-swiper full-time faculty and staff, reducing the amount of paper timesheets purchased and manually processed. Estimated annual savings total \$3,000.

Total Highlighted Cost Containment and Efficiencies: \$1,607,571

Trends Influencing Performance Accountability

For years, SU has identified State funding levels that are substantially below those of its peers as a significant obstacle to institutional performance. We have highlighted our true position in the funding guidelines and equated that to corresponding real dollars ranging from \$7 million to \$9 million annually below the funding level of our peers. Although the University's funding deficit below our peers is substantial and continuing, the State's renewed financial commitment to the University in FY 2007 is already having a dramatic affect on University initiatives. With the first ever commitment to formulaic funding of enrollment, the University is able to renew its growth and access plan of 2003 that had been suspended in the wake of fiscal instability. However, although the State's efforts to recognize performance are significant, they do not yet go far enough. Historically low levels of State funding have necessitated higher tuition costs that hinder educational access for some segments of our society more than others while, as indicated earlier, academic quality is threatened anytime the University is unable to compete for the best instructional workforce. Despite additional incentive funding, Salisbury University is unable to designate ample resources into need-based aid, facilities maintenance, new academic equipment, personnel, and Maryland workforce initiatives. Low faculty and staff salaries create significant retention and competitive hiring implications and negatively affect academic quality. However, while preventive maintenance has been deferred at an excessive rate, the next fiscal year should see increased emphasis to classroom renovations, some new academic equipment, and some badly needed facilities overhauls.

Salisbury University has grown substantially over the past five years and is prepared to grow more. It has identified areas of growth and the resources needed to accommodate that growth. The State of Maryland has finally begun to recognize performance and to commit resources to fund success. While much more is needed, including additional facilities, this is a positive direction for the entire State.