



FY18 TESTIMONY

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUB-COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE
SUB-COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION

STUDENT SUCCESS

77%
all student second-year
retention

81%
minority second-year
retention

(2014 cohort)

50%
African-American
six-year graduation
USM Average: 45%

(2009 cohort)

AFFORDABLE

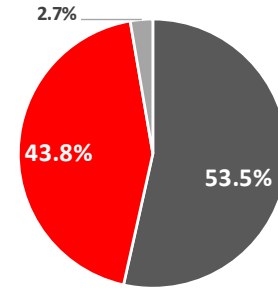


MONEY Magazine rated FSU one of its
Best Value Colleges for 2016



Marketwatch.com listed Frostburg
State University first among
universities for directing the largest
percentage of contributions toward
financial aid in 2016.

A DIVERSE CAMPUS



■ White ■ All Minorities ■ Unknown, NR Alien

INVOLVED STUDENTS

hours of student volunteer
service every year:

34,000+

NATIONAL RANKINGS



2016 Public Institution of the Year



From **GetEducated.com**

- #10** Best Online Master's in Management:
Recreation and Parks Management
- #14** Best Affordable AACSB Online MBA
- #19** Best Online Master of Education:
Special Education





FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Ronald Nowaczyk, President

On behalf of the students, faculty, staff and alumni of Frostburg State University, I thank you for providing me the opportunity to speak to you about our University's unique place in the State of Maryland, how we are meeting the needs of our state and of the University System of Maryland and the ways we are transforming the lives of our students.

I am grateful for the support for higher education from the General Assembly. Your support, especially in recent years when other states were reducing their support, has put the state of Maryland in a stronger position not only in terms of allowing more Marylanders to access higher education, but in building a better-educated workforce, especially in important emerging industries.

In that spirit, I encourage you to support Gov. Hogan's budget proposal as originally presented.

I am still in my first year at Frostburg State University, and during that time I committed to visiting with citizens in Western Maryland and met with friends and alums of Frostburg State University. I have learned that Frostburg State University:

- serves the entire state of Maryland by drawing many students from outside of Western Maryland and placing those graduates in jobs throughout the state;
- produces graduates who have grit and personal motivation and take pride in their alma mater; and
- serves as a primary cultural and economic asset to the citizens of Western Maryland.

I have emphasized two key elements of Frostburg's mission in my first year as its president: **student success** and **regional outreach**, and I will address where we are with both points today.



STUDENT SUCCESS

In terms of student success, we are encouraged by improving graduation and retention rates for all student groups in our very diverse student body. We have taken deliberate steps to achieve these improvements, and we are happy to see them paying off.

For example, Frostburg is continuing its intensive freshman advising system, the **Academic Success Network**, which represents a holistic effort to improve student retention and has shown positive results in its first years of implementation. We are especially proud that there is no gap in the first-year retention rate for our students of color.

Our goal is to provide better advising from day one, starting with

our summer orientation program, **Preview FSU**. Students are introduced to eight-semester plans – which have been developed for every major – to give them a more realistic view of the path ahead and to ensure that the correct prerequisites are taken for their chosen major. We then use scheduling audit software, which checks student progress against these plans, to keep students on schedule.

Our **Freshman Progress Survey** allows faculty to alert freshman advisors and others to behaviors and issues that could derail students' college careers. The surveys are issued in the third week of the semester, when national research has shown interventions can be effective.

FALL '16 PROFILE

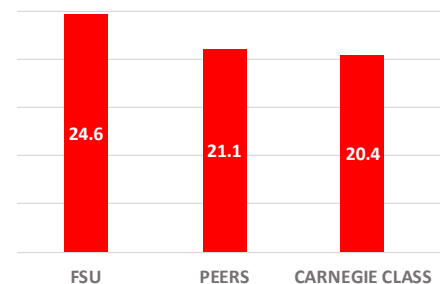
Undergrad	4,884
Master's	714
Doctoral	78
Total	5,676
Maryland Residents	5,012
Out-of-State	664

HIGH SCORING STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION

Freshmen scored Frostburg higher for the quality of student-faculty interaction than its peer institutions and universities of the same Carnegie Class.

Mean score based on 60-point conversion scale – NSSE statistically significant designation.

Source: National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2016 First-Year Students



These are just a few of the targeted services we offer, and our recent data from the National Survey of Student Engagement indicates that FSU students rank their first-year experience and their advising better than students from our peer institutions.

What's more, Frostburg has received recognition for the level of support we offer. Frostburg is recognized as a **College of Distinction** because of our engaged students, quality teaching and vibrant college community and successful alumni. For our service to our military and veteran students, *G.I. Jobs Magazine* has named FSU a **Military Friendly** institution for six straight years of increasingly strict criteria. The culture of service in our campus community has been recognized through the **President's Honor Roll for Service** year after year.

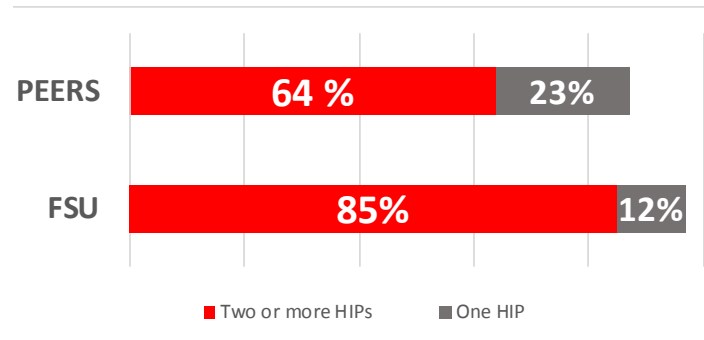
With the advent of the Department of Education's College Scorecard, which places a greater emphasis on outcomes, Frostburg has begun to gain recognition from new outlets.

MONEY Magazine rated FSU one of its **Best Value Colleges**, basing its new ranking on "providing a great education at an affordable price that prepares students for rewarding careers." Support for those three elements – great education, affordable, and rewarding careers – are found in some other recent accolades we have received.

In terms of a great education, Our University tag line, "One University. A World of Experiences," addresses the emphasis we place on providing students with multiple opportunities to apply what they learn at FSU through leadership, re-

A WORLD OF EXPERIENCES

Percentage of seniors who participated in a high-impact practice (HIP) such as an internship, learning community, research with a faculty member, study abroad, service-learning or senior capstone experience



Source: National Survey of Student Engagement 2016 | Seniors

search opportunities and off-campus experiences.

Last year the Washington Center named Frostburg its 2016 **Public Institution of the Year** for how well our faculty and staff engage with student participants and the wide range of interests represented. The Washington Center is the nation's largest academic internship program, and numerous Frostburg students land quality internships at Washington, D.C., agencies through them.

As for affordability, like all of the University System of Maryland, we work to keep costs low for our students, and we appreciate that Governor Hogan has provided funding in his budget that will allow us to cover our rising operating expenses while limiting tuition increases to our students. Reductions in the Governor's budget will make it more difficult to continue that level of service to students.

A college education is still a significant financial undertaking



2016 Public Institution of the Year



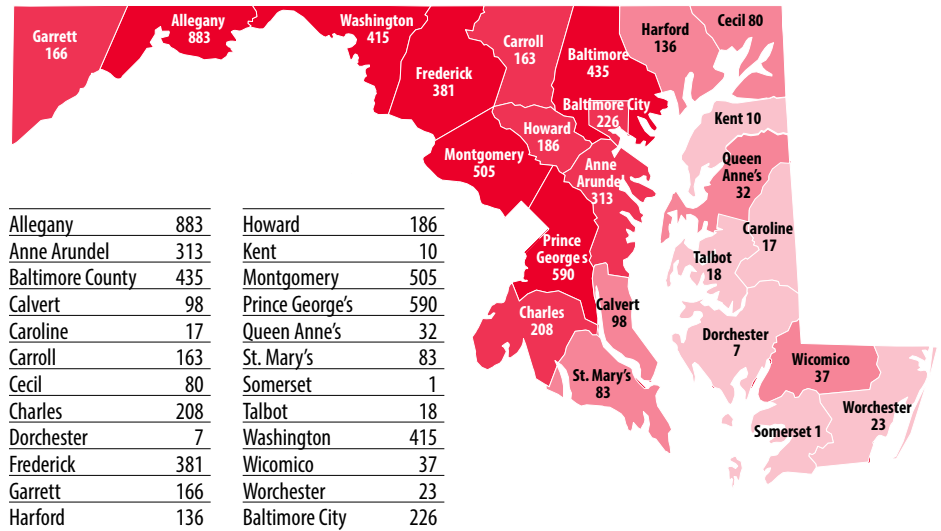
requiring many students to borrow to cover the shortfall. However, FSU students take on thousands of dollars less in principal debt than the average Maryland undergrad, according to a report from LendEDU, a student loan comparison service. And nationally, FSU comes in at **113 among all public colleges and universities in terms of lowest average student debt per borrower.**

Our students also are above the national average in paying back their loans, according to the Department of Education's College Scorecard.

But the proof is in the graduate, and our graduates do very well. Both *The Economist* magazine and the Brookings Institute say that FSU enhanced its graduates' earning potential significantly more than expected compared to other schools like Frostburg. They came to these conclusions based on data from the College Scorecard, among other sources of information. The **College Scorecard** places Frostburg's post-graduation salaries, at 10 years out, at \$10,000 above the average graduate, according to data from students who had received federal financial aid.

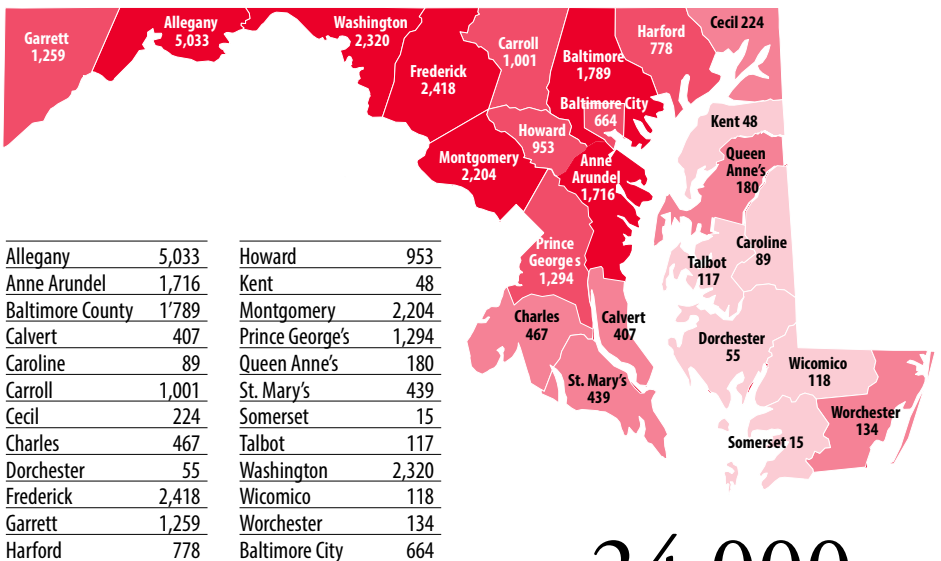
Most of these educated and successful alumni are Maryland citizens and your constituents. Nearly **24,000 graduates of Frostburg live and work throughout this state.** They are found in every county and Baltimore City. The maps shown here reinforce the statewide distribution of our alumni and student population.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY MARYLAND COUNTY FALL 2016



88%
Maryland Residents

ALUMNI BY MARYLAND COUNTY FALL 2016



24,000
Maryland Residents



REGIONAL OUTREACH

I believe that with your continued support, Frostburg State University will deliver a steadily increasing number of diverse, civic-minded graduates. These graduates will be experienced and equipped to serve the needs of the state's economy, for existing employers or through their own entrepreneurial creations. These will be the citizens who devise solutions to the problems facing our state and advance Maryland's economy through a complex, globalized marketplace.

Since you last heard from Frostburg State University, **we have awarded our first doctorates** in our applied doctoral program in Educational Leadership. Serving educational professionals across Western Maryland, degrees have been awarded to cohorts from Frostburg and Hagerstown, and new cohorts are under way in both locations.

We continue to develop new degree programs and realign current ones to serve the needs of our region's employers. Our **online MBA** is shifting to seven-week sessions

instead of the traditional semester format in response to our students' needs and wishes, allowing the student to focus on the subject matter in a more concentrated manner.

This online program and others we offer are particularly popular with working adults who want, and often require, advanced education, but previously could not manage to fit traditional classes, even evening classes, into their work schedules, nor could they afford to uproot their families to attend a full-time program.

Another popular online program, our accredited **R.N. to B.S. in Nursing program**, is showing exceptional growth, and our Master of Science in Nursing was just accredited as well. Those graduates will be prepared to be nursing faculty and health care administrators. This growth is indicating a market need for this and related programs. We awarded 16 bachelor of nursing degrees three years ago, and by 2014-15 we awarded 97, third among USM institutions. We also instituted a Health Science major in the fall of 2015 to prepare graduates



to enter a range of health-focused careers, and by the fall of 2016, we had 130 students declaring that as a major.

We intend to continue developing these much-needed health care programs, particularly to be able to focus on the mostly unexamined health care issues of rural areas, where primary care practitioners and specialists are in short supply.

Our emphasis on health is not only in the care area, however. FSU offers strong programs in exercise and sport science, recreation, health and physical education, and athletic training.

We even offer **adventure sports management** in collaboration with Garrett College, in recognition of our special place within the mountains of Maryland. We take our role



as a leader in Western Maryland seriously, and this program is just one way to do so.

Another way is in exploring how to leverage our strengths and ongoing commitment to sustainability into research on energy generation and related energy resources to be found in rural areas.

Likewise, Frostburg State University has long served as a significant economic engine in Western Maryland, and we continue to explore different ways to serve our region. Here are some of our recent efforts:

- Frostburg State, along with the Appalachian Regional Commission, supported the city of Frostburg in seeking a study to identify industries most likely to employ our graduates, with the aim of encouraging FSU graduates to stay in the area, which would have the effect of raising the education level of our regional workforce and enhance overall economic development. The report recommended that the region target back-office operations for metropolitan-based corporations, financial and accounting services, security software and services, environmental

and health software, health and environmental testing labs and service centers for those testing facilities. We were also encouraged to expand the region's niche lifestyle opportunities. In particular, the report identified our business, computer, biology and health sciences majors as appealing to prospective businesses.

- We are also partnering with Allegany County Public Schools and Allegany College of Maryland, as well as regional industries, on establishing an Allegany County P-TECH – Pathways in Technology Early College High School. We have received planning funds to create a program that would begin in ninth grade, creating a pathway to an associate degree in ACM's Cybersecurity program, followed

by seamless articulation into FSU's bachelor's degree program in Secure Computing and Information Assurance. All three institutions are involved in planning this opportunity.

- Looking at the potential of developing pathways for business owner succession in Allegany and Garrett counties, we have received a grant from the state of Maryland through the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund to conduct a feasibility study to see if the area could benefit from successful national programs in other rural regions. Creating these pathways could help preserve existing businesses in these two counties when the original owner retires.
- Finally, I have also been meeting with local officials and civic leaders in Allegany, Garrett and Washington counties to discuss economic development needs and strategies, and how the University can be a force for economic growth in the region, leveraging the expertise and abilities of the University to benefit all of Western Maryland.



SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

We are truly grateful to our elected officials for your leadership and feel confident you will continue to recognize and support higher education's role in defining Maryland's future. Again, I join the Chancellor in urging support of Governor Hogan's FY 2018 budget recommendation as originally proposed for the University System of Maryland.

Once again, on behalf of Frostburg State University and our students, faculty, staff and alumni, thank you.

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S QUESTIONS

The President should comment on the enrollment decline, particularly the decline in students transferring to the nursing program and what efforts are being taken to stabilize and increase enrollment.

Undergraduate headcount on the Frostburg campus has declined over the last year by approximately 77 students from a 2015 high of 4,961. Since 2012, the number of part-time students has risen by 365 to 743, nearly doubling. But the number of full-time students has declined by 112 since 2012 from 4,253 to 4,141.

FSU attributes the drop in first-time students to the continuing low number of high school graduates, particularly in rural Maryland, and the statewide decline in traditional-aged first-year students. Public and private institutions are experiencing increased competition for this smaller pool of students. In addition, students are opting for two-year colleges closer to home and transferring later. We note that our transfer student population is up from 468 in 2012 to 514 in 2016.

Our short-term plan is to eliminate the downward trend in first-time, first-year students and increase our retention rates for Frostburg-campus students. We have been showing some success in increasing the number of continuing students, with a steady increase over the last four years. Increases in retention and graduation rates are softening the decline in first-year students. We recognize, however, that as larger graduating classes are replaced with smaller classes, increases in retention will not be sufficient to eliminate the downward trend.

Our nursing program is almost entirely responsible for the increase in part-time students, since it is designed primarily for working professionals. The recent decline in the BSN program was relatively small, down just 12 students from 457 in 2016 to 445 in 2017. The decline can primarily be attributed to a leveling-off of the initial boom we saw in our nursing program, which grew dramatically in the years since it began in 2011. We awarded 139 bachelor in nursing degrees in 2016, up by 42 from the previous year's 97 – and that was, at the time, the third-highest number of BSN grads in USM. Again we are seeing increased competition for these students. For example, West Virginia University just announced in-state tuition for all RN-to-BSN students regardless of residency.

We have a series of recruitment actions under way to increase the number of new students to Frostburg State.

- We have revamped and extended financial aid packages for transfer students to make Frostburg more attractive and have finalized more detailed articulation and reverse-transfer agreements.
- We are weeks away from unveiling a new, mobile-friendly website that has been completely restructured to have an outward face focused on marketing to prospective students and their families, all based on higher education best practices. This site makes it easier for them to find our academic majors and programs, admissions procedures and financial aid information. New content also highlights our campus services and student life for future students.

- We have invested in a Customer Relationship Management system for our admissions process to ensure that prospective students and their parents are receiving quick responses and the appropriate information to make an informed decision about attending Frostburg State.
- We are utilizing a HELIO campus data warehouse to create predictive models to help us better identify students who are more likely to attend FSU based on historical data. This will help us to allocate recruitment resources more effectively and efficiently in our efforts to increase and stabilize enrollment.
- We are making an effort to prioritize institutional aid for students who have shown a strong commitment to earning a degree from Frostburg.
- We have begun discussions with local community colleges to expand our 2+2 program offerings, including in nursing. We have associate-to-bachelor's nursing agreements with six Maryland community colleges and are in discussions with five more.

The President should comment on efforts being taken to improve completions among all students.

As I noted in my testimony, Frostburg is continuing its intensive freshman advising system, the Academic Success Network, which represents a holistic effort to improve student retention and has shown positive results in its first years of implementation. We are especially proud that there is no gap in the first-year retention rate for our students of color.

By providing better advising from day one, starting with our summer orientation program, called Preview FSU, and early monitoring through the Freshman Progress Survey, better academic habits are instilled early in our students' college careers, giving them skills they can build on throughout. We first piloted the Academic Success Network in the fall of 2014, so its impact is still growing.

Additionally, students and their advisors have eight-semester plans in every major to consult throughout the students' college career. They give students a more realistic view of the path ahead, the sequence of courses, and the correct prerequisites for their chosen major. We have also added scheduling audit software, which checks student progress against these plans, to keep students on schedule.

All students may also take advantage of individual tutoring through our Tutoring Center for study skills help, peer-assisted learning, and other services that are part of PASS – Programs Advancing Student Success.

We employ Beacon alerting software that allows academic advisors, faculty, coaches, and even student organization advisors to share observations of concern about students. Examples may include lateness, not turning in assignments, or a need for tutoring, or more serious issues such as extended absences, roommate problems, or an inability to afford class materials. These updates (or alerts, for more serious issues) are then directed to the appropriate person or department to respond.

Beacon helps us create for each student a network of people who will support them in their educational journey, and we have seen numerous times how communication facilitated by the Beacon system has led to positive outcomes for students.

We are also increasing our efforts to ensure that enrolled students are positioned financially to continue their path to graduation. This includes working with the FSU Foundation and donors to increase merit funding for continuing students.

The President should comment on the continuing use of auxiliary surplus to cover shortfalls in E&G expenditures and what measures are being taken to minimize the reliance on these revenues in fiscal 2017 and 2018.

While the information in the analysis is correct for that point in time, there are subsequent accounting adjustments made to this information. These adjustments reflect the support for auxiliary enterprises provided by State Support departments such as maintenance, University Police, payroll, accounts receivable, etc. Our State Support budget has historically had sufficient revenue to cover State Support expenses once these adjustments have been made.

The President should comment on financial literacy efforts being taken to educate and guide students in making financial decisions.

Frostburg employs a range of financial literacy educational options:

- Financial literacy education is offered to every student in the form of CashCourse, a free, customizable, online tool provided by the National Endowment for Financial Education. This tool is also available to alumni.
- Our Financial Aid website offers students – and their parents – a number of educational tools on debt management, including links to debt calculators, free credit reports, and comparisons of Parent PLUS vs. Student Alternative Loans.
- Financial literacy education is a recommended component for our Introduction to Higher Education class sections, in which all first-time full-time students are enrolled. Intro to Higher Ed instructors typically employ CashCourse and/or an in-person seminar from our director of Financial Aid.
- Students who have been put on academic probation or received an academic warning must attend a workshop presented at the beginning of each semester. The workshop includes an explanation of how academic factors like students' not earning enough credits, repeating classes, or not maintaining the required grade point average affects financial aid eligibility. Too often, students are unaware of the impact that dropping a class or performing poorly will have on their financial aid package.
- Frostburg enrolls a significant number of first-generation and low-income college students who may not have received adequate financial education at home or in high school. Financial literacy education is part of the program for our students who participate in the federal Student Support Services program, which has proven to be highly effective in improving persistence to graduation for our Pell-eligible students. We offer multiple trainings and financial aid workshops with topics, including budgeting, credit card use/abuse, savings and checking accounts, borrowing, credit scores, and identity theft, as well as financial aid packages and student loan borrowing.
- The College of Education's College Scorecard would indicate that our graduates are getting the message. Among students who received federal financial aid, FSU students are above average in paying down their debt (national average – 41 percent, Frostburg grads, 61 percent). And as the analyst noted, according to College Insight, that while the percentage of our students graduating with debt is above the national average, both the average debt of graduates and the average debt of graduates having federal loans are below the national average. We are also proud of the fact that LendEDU.com ranked Frostburg State University second among public Maryland institutions in terms of the lowest level of debt for graduates.



VISION

Frostburg State University will be recognized as a student-centered teaching and learning institution. The University will be known nationally for its emphasis on experiential education, its commitment to sustainability, and for the quality of its graduates as critical thinkers, life-long learners, and technologically competent global citizens.

MISSION STATEMENT

Frostburg State University is a student-centered teaching and learning institution featuring experiential opportunities. The University offers students a distinctive and distinguished baccalaureate education along with a select set of applied master's and doctoral programs. Frostburg serves regional and statewide economic and workforce development; promotes cultural enrichment, civic responsibility, and sustainability; and prepares future leaders to meet the challenges of a complex and changing global society.

INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

1. Enhance experiential and applied learning opportunities for students both inside and outside the classroom.
2. Improve facilities so that students live and learn in a modern and technologically sophisticated environment.
3. Increase student quality and improve student persistence to graduation.



One University. A World of Experiences.

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY IS A CONSTITUENT INSTITUTION OF THE
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND