

Team Report to the Commission on Higher Education

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Dates of Evaluation: April 8-11, 2018

The Evaluation Team Representing the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Section A: Team Members, Titles, and Institutional Affiliation

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Section B: Institutional Representatives at the Time of Visit

Officers of the Institution at the time of the visit:

Dr. David Wilson, President

Dr. Gloria Gibson, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Mr. Kweisi Mfume, Chairman of the Board

Section C: Team Findings

I. Institutional Overview: Context and Nature of the Visit

The Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church founded Morgan State University as the Centenary Biblical Institute in 1867. In 1890 the name was changed to Morgan College and it remained a private institution until purchased by the State of Maryland in 1939. In 1975, Morgan was granted university status with doctoral degree granting authority and designated as Maryland's Public Urban University. During the reorganization of Maryland Higher Education in 1988, Morgan's designation as Maryland's Public Urban University was reaffirmed. In 2017, the Maryland State Legislature designated Morgan as the State's "preeminent public urban research university."

Morgan is one of Maryland's thirteen public four-year colleges and universities, but it is not a part of the University System of Maryland and does not report to the System Chancellor. Morgan State University is governed by a fifteen (15) member governing Board appointed by the Governor of Maryland.

Morgan is one of only ten HBCUs classified as a Doctoral University: Moderate Research Activity (R3) by the Carnegie Foundation. Morgan awards a comprehensive array of postsecondary baccalaureate, masters and doctoral degrees. Its schools and colleges include the James Gilliam College of Liberal Arts, the School of Architecture and Planning, the Earl Graves School of Business and Management, the School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences, the School of Community Health and

Policy, the School of Education and Urban Studies, the Clarence Mitchell School of Engineering, the School of Global Journalism and Communication, the School of Social Work, and the School of Graduate Studies. More than 7,700 students actively pursue the University's degree programs.

The University has a core of more than four hundred and thirty-eight (438) full-time faculty. On an annual basis, the University also employs more than 103 part-time and/or adjunct faculty to provide instructional and student support services.

Morgan has received several state and national awards in recognition and support of its efforts to enhance student success, including the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) 2016 Turning Points Video Competition Award, APLU's 2015 Project Degree Completion Award, a 2016 Lumina Foundation \$717,000 HBCU Student Success Project grant, and a 2017 Hobsons Education Advances Award for Student Success and Advising.

Morgan State's Self-Study Process

The 13th edition of the *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation* issued by Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) in 2015 guided the self-study process.

The University held an official Self-Study Kickoff on March 8, 2016. An eighteen (18) member Self-Study Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Vice President for Academic Outreach and Engagement and the Assistant Vice President for Assessment and Operations, guided the work. Eight (8) Self-Study Subcommittees, drawn from a broad cross-section of faculty, staff, students, and Regents, focused on the seven standards and compliance with federal regulations and MSCHE Requirements for Affiliation. The Self-Study Steering Committee met regularly to produce and to review several drafts of this Self-Study. The Regents, the University Council, and the Student Government Association each received regular updates on the status of the Self-Study process.

Institutional Priorities

Its 10-year Strategic Plan adopted in 2011 guides Morgan's progress. The Self- Study is organized around the University's achievement of its five Strategic Plan goals: Enhancing Student Success, Enhancing Morgan's Status as a Doctoral Research University, Improving and Sustaining Morgan's Infrastructure and Operational Processes, Growing Morgan's Resources, and Engaging with the Community.

The Self-Study is designed to demonstrate Morgan's competency in delivering the best possible instruction and student support services as well as compliance with MSCHE's revised standards of accreditation. Specifically, given its growth and accomplishments since the 2008 MSCHE team visit and report, the Self- Study is intended to answer questions concerning the following trends impacting Morgan's future growth and development:

- Past Accomplishments and Future Direction
- Student Diversity and Development
- Policies and Procedures, and
- Communication and Dissemination

Such questions are interrelated and hold implications regarding how well Morgan meets the seven MSCHE Standards for Accreditation. There is a link to the Strategic Plan in the Self-Study.

II. Evaluation Overview

The Visiting Team received the Morgan Self-Study Report, appendices and Documentation Roadmap on February 23, 2018. The report is well written, every standard is analyzed to document compliance with the Standards' criteria, and evidence is included in the appendices and document links to allow the evaluators to arrive at initial conclusions

related to compliance. The visit was carried out to validate the information through multiple meetings with staff, students, faculty, executives, trustees, and members of the Morgan Foundation, among others. The conclusions of the Team, together with specific findings that merit recognition and several recommendations and suggestions appear below. There are no requirements since Morgan appears to meet all seven standards.

III. Compliance with Accreditation Standards

Standard I: Mission and Goals

The institution’s mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on the institution’s self-study document, other institutional documents and interviews with the faculty, staff and students, the Team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

Mission Statement: “Morgan State University serves the community, region, state, nation, and world as an intellectual and creative resource by supporting, empowering and preparing high-quality, diverse graduates to lead the world. The University offers innovative, inclusive, and distinctive educational experiences to a broad cross section of the population in a comprehensive range of disciplines at the baccalaureate, master's, doctoral, and professional degree levels.

Through collaborative pursuits, scholarly research, creative endeavors, and dedicated public service, the University gives significant priority to addressing societal problems, particularly those prevalent in urban communities.”

This mission statement, which was inculcated in the 2011-2021 strategic plan was approved by the Board in August of 2011. The goals in the plan are focused on the student learning experience and the full range of services offered by the institution.

Standard I

In the Team's judgement, the institution appears to meet this standard.

Suggestions

1. The institution should update the strategic plan webpage to remove tentative language such as "proposed" plan. Also, any reference to the 2008-2012 strategic plan as it relates to the mission statement should be updated.
2. The institution should insure that webpage links direct the reader to updated information.

Recommendations

As a result of the institution Self-Study, it derived recommendations that are "consistent with facilitating Morgan's transition to institutional preeminence in research and student success." The team supports these recommendations.

1. "Morgan should engage the University community and stakeholders in comprehensive review of *Growing the Future, Leading the World: The Strategic Plan for Morgan State University (2011-2021)* including an analysis of institutional strengths and opportunities as well as an assessment of the Strategic Plan's current goals and initiatives in order to identify the changes necessary to fulfill its new legislative designation as Maryland's preeminent public, urban research university." The Team

recommends that said designation be included in the mission statement.

2. “The University should develop a comprehensive evaluation process for assessing the implementation and impact of mission and goals including assessing feedback from external stakeholders and community partners to guide continuous feedback on attainment of mission and goals.”

3. “The University should develop a formal comprehensive evaluation process for assessing the implementation and impact of mission and goals including assessing feedback from external stakeholders and community partners to guide continuous feedback on attainment of mission and goals.”

Requirements

None

In the Team’s judgement the institution appears to meet the Requirements of Affiliation #7 and #10.

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on the analysis of the Self-Study, other institutional documents provided, and interviews with students, faculty, and administrators, the Team reached the following conclusions relative to this standard.

1. The institution is committed to provide a climate of academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for property

rights. It is especially interested in protecting the property rights of its faculty members by assisting each inventor in the process of protecting this right. No faculty member mentioned any issue involving academic and intellectual freedom or freedom of speech.

2. Based on its new vision and mission, the institution is focused on promoting a climate of respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration by emphasizing the recruitment, retention, and participation of faculty, students, and administrators from a range of backgrounds, ideas and perspectives in institutional activities. The institution's strategy for nurturing this climate is to engage their students to live and operate within such an environment on a daily basis. In recent years the institution has also been diligent in providing a growing number of exchange opportunities for students and visiting scholars' with foreign higher education institutions through agreements and the Fulbright Scholarships program. It has also increased its visibility in this arena. The institution's president, for example, is currently chair of the HBCU-China Scholarship network.
3. Fair and impartial policies and procedures are in place and disseminated, and expected to support promptness, appropriateness, an equitability of grievance resolution for all faculty, students and staff. The university is very diligent in developing policies and procedures and revising them as federal and state laws emerge or change, as new collective bargaining agreements are reached, and new situations arise that indicate need for new policies or revision of existing ones. However, the effectiveness of these policies and procedures is assessed only informally by those in charge of the academy, student affairs, and human resources.
4. The avoidance of conflict and appearance of conflict in all activities and among all constituents is managed through a *Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Form*. All members of Morgan's Board of Directors are required to complete one. It is unclear whether others are required to complete the same of a similar form. Many employees affirmed they are aware of the

need to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest. Others relied on their supervisors to identify if a conflict or potential conflict exists.

5. Policies and procedures are in place to promote impartiality and fairness in hiring, evaluating, promoting, disciplining and separating employees, but their implementation is not systematically appraised. Faculty raised questions about the percentages ascribed to research, teaching and service for promotion. They also expressed some concern with how such requirements apply to newly recruited faculty versus those already employed. As Morgan aspires to ascend in the Carnegie Classification of Research institutions, faculty members were concerned also about balancing their research and teaching duties.
6. There is honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admission materials and practices, as well as shown in available internal communications. The institution gives abundant consideration to the presentation of information and consistency in messaging. As stated in the Self-Study, their newly redefined mission of serving "... the community, region, state, and the world..." is available in a multiplicity of printed and electronic outlets.
7. Services and programs are in place to promote affordability for traditional, non-traditional, local, national and international students. Information on funding sources and options, value for cost and debt, is provided on campus to prospective students and other interested parties. This information is also available through the institution's website. A Money Management training program for students is at an early stage of implementation. The Office of Diversity is in charge of providing information of value for students to the Office of Communication to be presented and published on the web in an ADA compliant format. Accessibility is also provided through various technologies and software.
8. The institution complies with applicable federal, state, and Commission requirements, through the presentation of assessment results related to

academic achievement, graduation, and retention. Certification and licensing board pass rates are available at morgan.edu but is somewhat cumbersome to access. Its change in mission has been publicized in all corners of campus, and on their website. Related new goals are available in printed form and on its website.

9. The Team could not identify a systematic and comprehensive process in place to assess the implementation of policies, procedures and practices related to ethics and integrity. Informal appraisals seem to be the norm. Currently the Board of Directors has a committee to assess policies and develop a *Policy on Policies*. The institution's relatively low level of litigation, approximately 2 per year with most being resolved by the end of the year, may be considered as an indirect measure of performance on this criterion.

Standard II

In the Team's judgement, the institution appears to meet this standard.

Suggestion

Place all information regarding licensing board pass rates on a separate website location to highlight it.

Recommendation

Convene a task force or committee to systematically and comprehensively review institutional policies, procedures and their implementation.

Requirements

None

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence of all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other official documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students and others, the Team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

As stated in the Self- Study Report, and validated by the Team, the institution offers high quality face to face and online, certificate, undergraduate, graduate and professional academic programs across nine schools and the College of Liberal Arts. The University, recently designated the state's "preeminent public urban research university" is guided by a set of goals that include ensuring student success and engaging with the community.

Cross disciplinary and inclusive planning have established several strategies to assess student learning needs and opportunities, introduce measures to identify current baselines, and continuously evaluate the impact. With an expanding domestic and international student population, tools are provided to simulate work environments, create approaches that support diverse learning styles, and foster relationships with alumni, local industries, and community-based organizations for professional and financial collaborations. An example of student engagement is the recent creation of a Student Government Association position for a student representative from Disability Support Services. A Student Government

Association leader observed more frequent outreach from the administration for their perspectives on initiatives regarding faculty evaluations and advising.

Academic rigor is demonstrated through instructional approaches and research agendas of the faculty. Faculty model the University's core values of excellence, integrity, respect, diversity, innovation and leadership through professional scholarship and research. The productivity profile of book chapters, books, abstracts, proceedings, refereed publications, creative activities, presentations, public service, and external grants has increased since 2013. Administrative divisions have been created to support and encourage innovation. Department deans and program chairs are working to establish settings to provide research time to new tenure track faculty and generate research and teaching innovation incentives for senior faculty. They are also aware of the need to review and establish updated protocols for tenure and promotion.

The institution's undergraduate and graduate programs are examining operational processes to address their strategic plan goals through annual program review and accreditation standards assessment. The General Education Review Committee launched a new framework in 2014 to streamline undergraduate program credits, include ethics and diverse perspectives, and modify or redesign courses to address Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) general education requirements for: written communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, scientific reasoning, and information literacy. Their representatives identified a variety of approaches to encourage student recruitment. The committee provides orientation for course preparation and delivery for adjuncts by lead instructors, committees and course coordinators.

Graduate degree and certificate programs are offered in the College of Liberal Arts, and the Schools of Education and Urban Studies, Business and Management, Social Work, Community Health and Policy, Architecture and Planning, Global Journalism and Communication, Engineering and Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences.

Graduate student opportunities for teaching and scholarships are being connected to sponsored research, through faculty initiatives for student collaborations and competitive tuition awards and assistantships and community workforce affiliations. The Morgan Mile .2 project, a partnership of the School of Architecture and Planning, six umbrella organizations, and fifty six community associations, demonstrates an innovative collaboration that has engaged in review and discussion of community development projects that benefit health and safety, the environment and the needs of local residents. These partnerships have provided students with specific class projects for hands on learning and community involvement, and service. Faculty across undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs described ongoing conversations to identify approaches and resources for rigor in teaching and scholarship. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) is an initiative that will provide professional development workshops to support faculty pedagogy and student learning. Workshops are designed to incorporate active learning practices. Research is anticipated that will evaluate the impact of culturally responsive teaching content and strategies that lead to student success. The doctoral program in social work has sent their students to CETL workshops to assist their preparation for academic careers.

Standard III

In the Team's judgement, the institution appears to meet this standard.

Suggestions

The team agrees with the University's interests in:

1. Developing a database of program review and assessment variables to simplify access to analytics on student performance across student types and groups
2. Establishing a Post Tenure Review policy

3. Utilizing the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to orient faculty to the expanding diversity and ways to design and deliver instruction that respects cultural variations to achieve desired learning outcomes
4. Enhancing the online student learning experience for certificate and course programming
5. Convening a task force to review, strengthen and expand resources and infrastructure for graduate studies engagement
6. Maintaining a community informed presence

Recommendations

None

Requirements

None

In the Team's judgement the institution appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation #10 and #15.

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the

quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study Report, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the Team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

1. Enhancing student success is the first goal of Morgan State University's 2011-2021 Strategic Plan. Overall, the institution recruits students who have the capabilities to succeed at the institution. Through online and printed materials, admission policies are clearly stated for prospective students seeking admission to both undergraduate and graduate degree programs. A broad range of programs exist to support student success and retention.

a. Information concerning policies and procedures related to financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans, repayments, and refunds is widely available through the institution's website and in online catalogs. An endowment has been established to provide scholarship support for graduate students. The website also provides instructions for filing the FAFSA and on how need-based aid is calculated.

b. Students deemed not adequately prepared for study upon admission are provided support through MSU's Enrollment Management and Student Success (EMASS) unit. EMASS and/or the Office of Student Success and Retention sponsors initiatives such as The Center for Academic Success and Achievement's summer admissions bridge program, as well as programs such as NEXUS and CONNECT that provide students who begin their studies at community colleges with a pathway to enrollment at the institution.

c. The institution offers a four-day long, mandatory orientation program for first-time freshmen and their parents to receive information on financial aid, residence life, placement testing, academic advisement, and career counseling. The Office of Transfer Student Programming

offers transfer orientation sessions to new students to assist in their transition and acclimation to the institution.

d. All first-year freshman students are advised by the Center for Academic Success and the Office of Student Success and Retention. Departmental liaisons provide additional curriculum details and advising. The *MSU Academic Advisor Manual* (Undergraduate Students) provides a comprehensive overview of the roles and responsibilities of faculty and staff who serve as academic advisors. As part of the institution's campus-wide retention program, a Retention Coordinator is housed in every school. Software programs such as Degree Works and Starfish are used for degree auditing, early alert notification, and referral of campus resources. Through individual and group counseling sessions, the staff of the Counseling Center provides services to assist students with personal, social, academic and career concerns.

The institution's six-year graduation rate for the cohort of first-time full-time freshmen entering in fall 2011 is 38% - an improvement of nearly ten percentage points over the cohort of freshmen who enrolled six years earlier in 2005. Since its last MSCHE review in 2008, the first to second year retention rate at the institution has steadily climbed as well. A process is currently underway to increase the six-year graduation rate to 50% by the year 2025. Programs to support achievement of this goal include a number of University initiatives, as well as those secured through external funding.

The Transfer Evaluation and Articulation unit, housed within the Office of the Registrar, oversees compliance with policies regarding the transfer of course credits to other institutions within the state of Maryland. Additionally, the institution holds 14 active articulation agreements with community colleges throughout the state, as well as in Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, and Iowa.

Post-completion placement for students is primarily facilitated through the institution's Center for Career Development (CCD). The Center provides individual appointments with students and alumni, sponsors career fairs and other events, and has a number of online resources to assist those in the employment-seeking process.

2. Adherence to policies and procedures for the evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits are the responsibility of The Transfer Evaluation and Articulation unit. This includes credits awarded through experiential learning and other alternative learning approaches.

3. The institution has policies and procedures in place to ensure the safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information. These are clearly outlined in the institution's Information Security Policy as well as protocols that outline technology policies, standards, and guidelines. Policies and procedures for the release of student information and records are in compliance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

4. The institution's athletic, student life, and other extracurricular activities are regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles and procedures that govern all its other programs. More specifically, the institution's Division I athletic teams are regulated by policies and protocols set forth by the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference.

5. N/A

6. Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs that support the student experience is under the auspices of the institution's Office of Assessment. This unit, headed by an Assistant Vice President for Outcome Assessment, administers the institution's Comprehensive Assessment Plan (fall 2012 document) in collaboration with the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs through annual department assessment plans and reports, standardized and locally-developed testing,

and participation in nationally-normed and locally-developed student satisfaction and engagement surveys.

Standard IV

In the Team's judgement, the institution appears to meet this standard.

Significant Accomplishments, Significant Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

1. The Review Team commends the University for the Creation of its Enrollment Management and Student Success (EMASS) division. The establishment of EMASS signifies a clear and intentional strategy to increase the institution's retention and graduation rates.
2. The institution is to be commended for the significant investment it plans to make over the next decade to strengthen the infrastructure of its Office of Information Technology, particularly as it relates to enhancing the student life experience.
3. The institution is to be commended for securing a number of external funding streams to assist in its student support efforts.

Suggestions

1. The Team suggests that the University strengthen its periodic assessment of programs that support the student experience. Resultant data could then be used to improve overall program effectiveness.

2. The Team suggests that the University conduct an institution-wide assessment of academic advising processes, and level of student satisfaction, beyond the freshman year. Utilize data to enhance post first-year academic advising; provide training for academic advisors.

3. The Team concurs with the institution's suggestion that it continue to lobby the state for additional institutional aid, fundraise for student scholarships, and secure external funding to support its student success initiatives.

Recommendations

None

Requirements

None

In the Team's judgement the institution appears to meet Requirements for Affiliation #9 and #10.

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their programs of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study Report, other institutional documents,

and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the Team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

1. The Institution has clearly stated institutional goals delineated in the 2011-2021 Strategic Plan entitled *Growing the Future, Leading the World*. These five goals, aligned with the institution's mission, have 35 key performance indicators (KIPs) and are regularly assessed. Progress towards achieving the five institutional goals is documented in the annual reports required by Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Emphasis and assessment of the primary goal, enhancing student success, has resulted in improved retention and graduation rates.
2. Morgan's 2012 Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP) outlines the process for assessing institutional effectiveness, the process for the assessment of student learning, and the linkages between assessment, budget, and resource allocation. Degree and program level educational goals are determined by each program/degree in their individual assessment plans.
3. The university has processes in place for organized and systematic assessment of student learning and achievement. The Office of Assessment, under the leadership of the Assistant Vice President for Outcomes Assessment (AVPOA), carries out the institution's Comprehensive Assessment Plan and the evaluation of the General Education program. The office of the AVPOA, an outcome of Morgan's 2008 Middle States accreditation review, collaborates with the University Assessment Committee (UAC), the Office of Institutional Research (OIR), the Vice-Presidents, the Deans, faculty, staff, and students in the implementation of the institution's assessment of student learning. The UAC, composed of representatives of all schools/colleges, as well as administrators and staff from all administrative divisions, is charged with providing oversight to institutional assessment and promoting a culture of assessment at Morgan.
4. Every program at Morgan is required to submit a student learning outcome plan including strategies used for meeting outcomes, assessments, and the

use of results for improving the program. About 90 percent of degree programs have submitted plans for review by the UAC. Progress reports on those plans will be presented to the UAC beginning in June 2018. The strategy gives academic departments and other units the responsibility for collecting data and using data for making program decisions based on data. In addition to annual assessments plans and reports, the institution uses discipline-based accreditation and a cycle of program review to evaluate student learning outcomes. Faculty members were able to cite examples of changes made in the programs based on program review results. Funds have been allocated for the hiring of outside consultants to assist with the program review process for those programs not undergoing external accreditation.

5. The CAP has not been revised or updated since 2012, however, (AVPOA) indicated that the CAP will be reviewed in light of the new Middle States standards.
6. The General Education program has undergone revision since the last Middle States reaffirmation and the adoption of the 2012 CAP. According to the web-site, Morgan's General Education program is "a broad network of courses, tests, and extra-curricular activities aimed at ensuring a common core of liberal arts, knowledge, skills and collegiate experiences" for all students. A total of 40 credits addressing five competencies areas and organized into nine distribution areas are required. The General Education Committee chaired by the AVPOA oversees the General Education program and the approval of courses for the distribution requirements. The 2012 CAP states that the General Education program has seventeen discreet objectives and that the General Education Committee together with the AVPAO is responsible for the assessment of the program. Interviews with the General Education committee revealed that assessment of the general education outcomes and the distribution requirements occurs at the course level. Administrative staff cited proprietary assessments and surveys as the means to evaluate the general education component of the curriculum. The team found no evidence of a comprehensive student learning outcome plan for

General Education with specific strategies for meeting outcomes, timelines, responsibilities, or alignment of general education outcomes with assessments.

7. The university employs a variety of direct and indirect methods to evaluate student learning: standardized tests, nationally-normed and locally-developed satisfaction and engagement surveys, course evaluations, capstone projects, portfolios, comprehensive departmental exams, etc.
8. Currently, communication of assessment results is accomplished mostly through the sharing of data at cabinet meetings and through Google Drive. There is no centralized accessible infrastructure that stakeholders can access.
9. According to the CAP, all units and sub-units must use assessment results to inform their annual budget requests.

Standard V

In the Team's judgement, the institution appears to meet this standard.

Significant Accomplishments, Significant Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

1. The Team commends the institution for the creation of the Office of the AVPAO to coordinate assessment efforts and improve educational effectiveness and student learning outcomes.
2. The implementation of student learning outcome assessment plans and annual reporting requirement for all programs is to be commended.
3. The Team commends the institution for the creation and implementation of UAC that has oversight of assessment at the institution.

Suggestions

1. The Team suggests that the institution strengthen the linkages between resource allocation and student learning outcomes.
2. The Team suggests that the institution provide staff development on assessment strategies for faculty through the Center of Excellence of Teaching and Learning.

Recommendations

1. The Team concurs with the Self-study recommendation that the institution establish a centralized and accessible infrastructure for all data generated from academic program and administrative level assessments. Centralizing data would facilitate their analyses to determine trends, patterns, strengths, and improve educational programs and services.
2. The Team recommends that the institution review and revise the 2012 CAP and include an assessment of General Education that links general education outcomes with assessments.
3. The Team recommends that the institution implement strategies to disseminate, share, and receive feedback on assessment results from all constituents, stakeholders, and community partners.

Requirements

None

In the Team's judgement, the institution appears to meet Requirements for Affiliation #8, #9, and #10.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study Report, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the Team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

1. ***Strategic Planning:*** The strategic plan blueprint was developed with a cross section of stakeholders for the period of 2011-2021 entitled: *Growing the Future, Leading the World*. The institution has documented a planning process for its strategic plan that shows the linkage between institutional goals and the planning and allocation of resources. The measurement system in place for the strategic planning process is evident by using red, yellow and green indicators to track the status of each goal. The institution also reports their performance to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) via a Performance Accountability Report (PAR) that includes the status of the strategic plan and any known obstacles. Additionally, the institution must report to the Maryland Department of Budget and Management the actual performance of 45 indicators and future performance. The institution utilizes industry tools (Facilities Master Plan, Gartner assess surveys for IT, EAB, AGBIS, Student surveys, etc.) to help assess and document the process and best practice for operational execution of the strategic plan. The

strategic plan is reviewed annually and updated with the appropriate indicator status to the Board of Regents and the State of Maryland. Resources are assigned to each goal at the beginning of each budget cycle. Goals with yellow or red indicators are evaluated to ensure interventions are being made in a timely fashion by the respective process owner(s). The President addresses the progression of the strategic plan via University Town Hall meetings held twice a year. The institution has also purchased Argos (software reporting system) that will enhance their dashboard capabilities.

2. **Finances:** The institution demonstrates a solid financial position as denoted in the most recent audit's management letter. However, three deficiencies have been identified in the A-133 report. The institution has implemented corrective actions as documented by the auditor. The institution's net assets have increased from \$581.1 million to \$614.7 million for 2016 and 2017, respectively. The institution has a positive increase in operating revenues and non-operating revenues as represented by increases in tuition and state appropriations. The increases in expenditures are mainly due to the hiring of new faculty (and adjuncts), increases in benefits, investments in IT and operational costs of new facilities. The institution continues to have a positive operating net position as demonstrated in 2016 and 2017, \$48.5 and \$24.6 million, respectively. To help monitor financial activities, the institution has purchased a software application that will help track operation trends and analyze transactions performance that in turn will link to the institution's financial statements. This software will allow the institution to create financial statements on an interim basis instead of waiting to year-end. The institution continues to maintain an A1, A+ bond rating from Moody's and Standards & Poor's rating agencies, respectively. Currently, the institution is completing a \$250 million comprehensive campaign: *The Anniversary Campaign for Morgan State University*, which is at 85%

of its goal and projected to reach its targeted goal by 2020. The campaign includes dollars from grants (\$200 m) and private gifts (\$50 m). The institution has maintained a stable financial position over the years. The institution continues to identify initiatives that improve its financial position as well as operational effectiveness and efficiency as noted in strategic goals 3 and 4. Despite the fluctuations in the market, the institution's endowment has risen from \$14.3 m in 2010 year to \$30.0 m in 2018.

3. **Facilities:** The institution has put in both physical and technology infrastructures that support its strategic goals through its 5-year capital budget request and its Facilities Master Plan. The Legislature has supported the institution in its vision by providing capital appropriations over the years. Annually, the President presents the capital request to the legislative body of the State in his Legislative Testimony presentation and has been successful in securing additional dollars for new infrastructure. Currently, the institution is reviewing an assessment of its infrastructure performed by Sightlines. This study complements the facilities master plan and will allow the institution to formally prioritize projects as it relates to renewals, repairs, renovations and deferred maintenance. Projects are planned, designed and constructed with various stakeholders input across the university. New construction for the following buildings has been completed: the Center for the Built Environment and Infrastructure Studies (CBEIS) (\$50 m), Jenkins Behavioral and Social Sciences Center (\$79 m). The Calvin and Tina Tyler Hall (\$88 m) is slated to be completed by 2020, which will provide a one-stop student centric support home for students to improve customer service and collaboration among departments. These modern facilities have enabled new approaches to teaching, improved opportunities for research for students and provided innovative and creative spaces for student success.

4. **Budget:** The calendar for planning and budgeting starts around March and ends around August for the next year budget cycle. The institution's annual budget is approximately \$250+ million. The institution has a heavy reliance on State Appropriations (representing 37% of their operating budget). There has been a steady increase in revenues and expenditures over the years that demonstrates commitment of resources to the goals of the institution. This also helps the institution achieve future goals and invest in new initiatives. The institution established a Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) that recommends the allocation of additional resources beyond the continuation budget.
5. Around April of each year, the budget development process begins for the following next year. Units are instructed to complete the appropriate request forms as it relates to continuing resources, requested new resources, cost savings initiatives and whether the request is recurring or non-recurring. After receipt of this information, the Vice Presidents meet with the BAC to present their budget. When budgets are finalized, an email/memo is issued to the respective departments letting them know that their budget has been loaded into Banner. This process is aligned with the State of Maryland's Budget process. Reports can be viewed by departments through the Banner ERP system. This allows stakeholders and management to monitor the impact of variances in revenues and expenses. Budgets are executed on an annual basis.
6. **Internal Audit:** The Office of Internal Audit reports to the Board on a quarterly basis. Updates are given on the status of current audits, fraudulent investigations, internal control weaknesses and compliance issues or solutions.
7. **Information Technology:** The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is a critical tool in the functioning of an institution of higher education. The OIT's theme is "Restore, Grow, and Optimize":

meaning OIT's operational execution plan is to (1) restore current capabilities, 2) grow them to meet the outcomes required by the university and (3) optimize (continuous improvement) to make the best use of the available resources. The institution has invested \$22 million in a next generation network. Resources were determined by assessing the current environment and conducting surveys from stakeholders (every semester) regarding the technology needs of the institution. The OIT has successfully implemented four committees that meet every month to improve the operations and execution of the institution's technological needs. These committees include (1) an Enterprise Resource Planning Committee (2) an Academic Technology Committee (3) an IT Purchasing Committee and (4) a Change Management Committee. An OIT draft strategic plan has been developed to ensure technology needs support students and faculty in this new transformational environment.

8. ***Enrollment Management:*** The enrollment management vice president's division was implemented approximately two years ago. This division now houses undergraduate admission, financial aid, registrar office, transfers, center for academic success and achievement, student success and retention and dual enrollment – among other functions. A select number of administrators have drafted an enrollment plan that predicts enrollment growth. The institution is currently working with EAB to provide the appropriate data analytics and data insights to help with the development of strategies for enrollment and retention. The status of the draft enrollment plan is presented as a standing agenda item during each President's Cabinet meeting.

However, enrollment projections do not appear to be closely tied to the budget process. Budget uses a flat enrollment number for revenue

purposes which does not allocate for a true multi-year budget pro forma.

Standard VI

In the Team's judgement, the institution appears to meet this standard.

Significant Accomplishments, Significant Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

1. The Team commends the institution on its IT investment.
2. The Team commends the institution on its building infrastructure.
3. The Team commends the institution on maintaining A+ bond rating status.

Suggestions

1. The Team suggests that the draft IT Strategic Plan be approved.
2. The Team suggests that a formal IT Governance Model be approved and adopted.
3. The Team suggests that the 3-year audit plan be formally approved by the Board of Regents based on a formal risk assessment methodology.
4. The Team suggests that the institution continues to request operational dollars for new facilities from the State of Maryland.
5. The Team suggests that the institution develops dashboards for stakeholders to monitor the progress of the strategic plan in order

to create greater transparency.

6. The Team suggests that the institution continues to monitor the operating net position to ensure new initiative expenditures do not grow faster than revenue received.
7. The Team suggests that the institution continues to request deferred maintenance from the State.
8. The Team suggests that the institution continues to implement initiatives that diversify its revenue stream as they reach their goal of \$10 million of incremental revenue.
9. The Team suggests that the institution formally adopts and approves a multi-year enrollment plan.

Recommendations

1. The Team recommends that the University develop and implement a “formal” multi-year budgeting process.

Requirements

None

In the Team’s judgment, MSU appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation #8, #10 and #11.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituents it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious,

educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents and interviews conducted with students, faculty, staff, and others, the Review Team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

Morgan State University is the pre-eminent, comprehensive public urban university in the State of Maryland. According to the mission statement it provides “higher education and graduate study in the Baltimore area with a mission of instruction, research and service”. The President was elected by the Board of Regents in 2010 to fulfil the mission of the institution. Dr. David Wilson has used his authority as Chief Executive Officer to staff new administrative divisions consistent with the academic credentials and professional experiences required to lead the various divisions at the institution. Each new administrative division is headed by either a Vice President or director with the appropriate terminal degree in a relevant discipline and years of relevant professional experiences. For eight years, he has been able to achieve that objective with a shared governance structure made up of the President’s Cabinet, Vice President for Student Affairs, Deans, Chairs, and University Council (UC) made up of Students, Staff and Faculty representatives.

Since taking office in 2010, the President has overseen the implementation of the Strategic plan that has a broad appeal, from the Board of Regents to the UC. Members of the UC have had input on the selection of the Vice Presidents, Chief Information Officer, and the Vice President for Finance and Management (VPFM). The President has cabinet meetings every week with all the Vice Presidents and an extended cabinet meeting with Vice Presidents and Deans the following week. The Deans Council meets every Monday from 10-2pm. This is testament to transparency by the administration. Because of transparency within and

across these constituent bodies at the university, the President received a vote of confidence from faculty during his first few years in office. He is also annually evaluated by the Board of Regents and there is a committee with evaluation rubric to evaluate the Vice Presidents, Deans, Chairs and Faculty.

The institution's University Council brings together elected faculty, student and staff representatives. Two-thirds of the members of the council is made up of faculty and so it is a faculty-centered body.

The Vice Chair of the University Council is a member of the staff of the institution. Staff and student representatives have voting privileges. Some professional staff also have a union voice on campus.

The University Council meets twice a semester primarily to review proposed policies and more importantly to advise the President about those policies and propose recommendations to the Board of Regents. University policies where faculty are impacted are vetted by the University Council. The Chair has attested to the fact that they have a direct role in the wording of these sorts of policies and the President of the institution invites broad based support, especially when he creates task forces. He reaches out to the UC for recommendations on membership. In addition, according to the Chair, there is inclusion and dialogue with the administration on matters that affect staff and students. According to the Chair of the University Council there is no formal performance evaluation mechanism in place for the University Council Chair.

An examination of the procedures and structures necessary to achieve shared governance among the administrative units show accountability and transparency. For instance, the university's policies, goals and other initiatives are vetted by all the administrative units including the Student Government Association (SGA). The President of the SGA said during the interview that they partner with the administration to address concerns raised by the students. For instance, the SGA has organized meetings with representatives of the Enrollment, Admission and Student Aid offices at the institution to address issues related to customer service and student

life on campus. The SGA also convenes meetings with students to remind them of their role with respect to accountability and commitment to the mission of the institution. In order to demonstrate leadership and transparency in carrying out educational initiatives that impact the lives of undergraduate and graduate students, the Vice Presidents, Deans, Chairs and students provide input to new academic programs that are being initiated in the institution, be they in-person or online. Suggestions for improvements are vetted by all the units before they are approved and implemented.

Considering the fact that finances are crucial for the smooth functioning of higher education and is a continuous challenge to most institutions of higher learning, and given the fact that the institution is now being designated as the “pre-eminent public urban research university”, additional funding sources are being sought to sustain their various goals including increasing by 3.5% faculty research and publications by 2023.

Morgan State University does comply with the written conflict of interest policy designed to ensure impartiality of the governing body by addressing matters such as payment for services, contractual relationships, employment, and family, financial or other interests that could pose or be perceived as conflicts of interest and they have been having constant training for employees to make sure the conflict of interest policies are followed.

Standard VII

In the Team’s judgement, the institution appears to meet this standard.

Suggestion

Based on the statement made in the Self-Study “the president and his administration also make extensive use of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other social media platforms to communicate to students, alumni,

constituent and stakeholders across the globe,” it is suggested that the university have a social media policy in place for check and balances regarding its public image and communications.

Section D: Verification of Compliance

I. Affirmation of Continued Compliance with Requirements of Affiliation

Based on a review of the self-study and accompanying materials, interviews, and the Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations, the Team affirms that the institution continues to meet all of the *Requirements of Affiliation*.

II. Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations

The Team affirms that the institution meets all accreditation-relevant federal regulations, which is based upon the review of the self-study report, accompanying materials, the Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations, and the evaluation visit.

Section E: Verification of Data and Student Achievement

I. Verification of Data and Self-Study Information

The Team confirms that data and other information provided by the institution are reasonably valid and conform to higher education expectations.

II. Student Achievement

After interviewing institutional stakeholders, the Team confirms that the institution’s approach to its student achievement goals is effective, consonant with higher education expectations, and consistent with the institution’s mission.

Section F: Third-Party Comments (if applicable)

The team chair received third-party comments and the institutional response to the comments, which were shared with the team. The third-party comments were reviewed and discussed during the visit.

Section G: Conclusion

The Team wishes to convey its gratitude for the collegial and welcoming environment that we experienced during our visit. The openness and responsiveness to our questions were very helpful in understanding the remarkable progress being made at Morgan State. It is clear that the Morgan community shares a common vision and direction, and is committed to achieving its promising future. The self-study process was comprehensive. It is our hope that we have been helpful in bringing a constructively critical eye to the process, offering suggestions on refining your tactics and approaches to learning and assessment, and stimulating even more creativity in your already aggressive and forward thinking solutions. The impact you have on your students, present and future, is sure to be life changing. We commend you and wish you the best as you continue your journey to preeminence.