

**St. Mary's College of Maryland
FY 2023 Operating and Capital Budget Requests**

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**Presented to the
Maryland Higher Education Commission
September 22, 2021**

Introduction

As the State's public honors college, St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM) provides a premier liberal arts education that is both affordable and accessible. St. Mary's College awards a variety of undergraduate degrees as well as a graduate Master of Arts in Teaching degree. With a faculty of gifted teachers and distinguished scholars, a talented and diverse student body, and a low student/faculty ratio, St. Mary's College provides a challenging curriculum within an academically nurturing environment. In addition, the College fosters a sense of social responsibility and community among its students through its curriculum and campus life.

The recently-overhauled core curriculum at St. Mary's College, called *Learning through Experiential and Applied Discovery (LEAD)*, integrates the proven long-term benefits of a traditional liberal arts education with the applied skills demanded in today's economy. Through LEAD, students receive the breadth and depth of a liberal arts education but also engage in credit-bearing experiences aligned with their gainful employment immediately upon graduation. All students, not just those from more privileged backgrounds, are immersed from their first semester at the College in personal and professional development around what will come after their time at St. Mary's College. Through the professional development portion of the LEAD curriculum, all students systematically explore their interests and the alignment of those interests with various careers. Students engage in micro-internships as a means of both expanding their interests and clarifying their career objectives; conduct a skills gap analysis between their talents today and the talents necessary to be successful in their career of choice; and fill the identified gaps with targeted coursework at the College. Students are trained in the expectations of today's workplace and in its standard professional protocols. This professional development portion of the LEAD curriculum culminates in the Honors College Promise – a guaranteed internship, international experience, or faculty-student collaborative research experience before graduation.

The LEAD curriculum is more than the professional development series. Through LEAD, the College's core curriculum has been revised to focus on the integration of disciplinary knowledge and skills within applied thematic areas, or Inquiries. This Inquiry approach explicitly 1) teaches students to be contextual thinkers and applied problem solvers and 2) replaces the traditional menu-based approach to providing students with breadth via clustered disciplinary requirements.

The LEAD curriculum extends into all programs at the College. All courses will explicitly identify the transferrable and practical skills learned in the coursework to allow students to become better advocates for the application of their learning. Also, majors at the College will include curricular content aimed at developing major-specific applied professional skills before graduation. Finally, the College recently engaged in an intentional redesign of our overall program array within the context of the LEAD curriculum. Two new majors in marine science and neuroscience began this

fall, and additional new applied majors and minors are planned that a) directly align with a liberal arts education and b) also align with the practical, employment-minded desires of today's students.

As a public college that is both accessible and affordable, St. Mary's College provides the opportunity for academically talented students from a broad socioeconomic, ethnic, and racial spectrum to acquire a liberal arts education. This diversity creates a rich academic and social environment that enhances the education provided by the College.

The precursor to the College was created in 1840 as a living memorial to Maryland's colonial founders and their ideals of tolerance and innovation. The school evolved into a junior college in 1926 and a four-year institution in 1967. St. Mary's College maintains its identity as a residential liberal arts institution, fostering principles of diversity, civic-mindedness, and intellectual exploration. The College offers academic and extracurricular programs that build upon the rich historical, cultural, and natural environments that come from its affiliation with Historic St. Mary's City and location on the banks of the St. Mary's River within the Chesapeake tidewater.

The College offers Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degrees in twelve programs and Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degrees in ten programs. The College, while primarily an undergraduate institution, offers a Master of Arts in Teaching program (M.A.T.), which can be completed by any eligible and admitted individual with an earned bachelor's degree. This one-year, full-time program meets federal and state requirements for highly qualified teachers and addresses a critical need area identified in the State Plan. The focus of the institution will continue to reside in undergraduate education, with the graduate program serving fewer than forty students annually.

With a Carnegie classification of Baccalaureate - Arts and Sciences, St. Mary's College is one of only twenty-eight public institutions nationally having this classification. As a public honors college, the College is the first of only two in the nation.

As always, the College is grateful to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Maryland Higher Education Commission for their ongoing commitment to higher education, in general, and to St. Mary's College of Maryland specifically.

The College has 1,491 (*1,467 UG, 24 Grad*) full-time students enrolled for the Fall 2021 semester and an FY22 unrestricted operating budget of \$71.4 million, of which the State of Maryland provides \$29.6 million. Tuition, room, board, and fees provide almost \$40.5 million. The remaining revenue is from a variety of other sources.

Supporting the two goals articulated by the State's historical vision for the College - the educational requirements of an honors program and the promise of access - sets St. Mary's College uniquely in the State and in the national higher education sector. St. Mary's College has been highly successful in supporting State-wide goals with some of the highest retention and completion rates among Maryland publics, a commitment to diversity, and in providing resources for students with financial need.

This report will detail how St. Mary's College is addressing the goals adopted by the Commission in support of the State Plan. Specifically, it will address:

- 1) Ensure *equitable access* to *affordable and quality* postsecondary education for all Maryland residents (*MHEC Strategy 1 - 3*).
- 2) Promote and implement practices and policies that will ensure *student success* (*MHEC Strategy 4-7*); and
- 3) Foster *innovation* in all aspects of Maryland higher education to improve access and student success (*MHEC Strategy 8 – 11*).

Equitable Access to Affordable Postsecondary Education:

Access and Affordability: The College's unique mission, to provide an honors-level liberal arts education that is both accessible and affordable to all Marylanders, is challenging. Through a combination of institutional efforts to control expenses and State support, tuition pricing was lowered in FY15 and has since been successfully moderated, making St. Mary's College more affordable for Maryland families. For the second year in a row, in-state tuition for the 2021-2022 academic year (\$12,116) was frozen at the 2019-2020 rates and is nearly the same as it was ten years ago for the 2011-2012 academic year (\$12,005). In 2021, St. Mary's College was ranked 29th among four-year public institutions for highest tuition rates by the U.S. Department of Education's College Affordability and Transparency Center, a significant improvement since 2013 and 2014 when the College was ranked 6th for highest tuition.

The current in-state tuition price of \$12,116 requires continued commitment to providing a robust financial aid program. For the Fall 2021 entering class, 95% of students are receiving institutional financial aid. St. Mary's College's relatively high four-year graduation rate (66%, five-year average) contributes to the lowest average student indebtedness in Maryland (\$25.6K versus the statewide average of \$32.2K) as students are more likely to graduate on time. The default rate for St. Mary's College students is 3.4% compared to the national average of 9.7%. Lower average indebtedness combined with the lower default rate and high four-year graduation rate means that St. Mary's College graduates are entering the economy faster and are gainfully employed with more disposable income. The LEAD curriculum, with its integrated and applied nature, will undoubtedly increase our students' employment options without extending time to graduation.

Access to Quality Postsecondary Education:

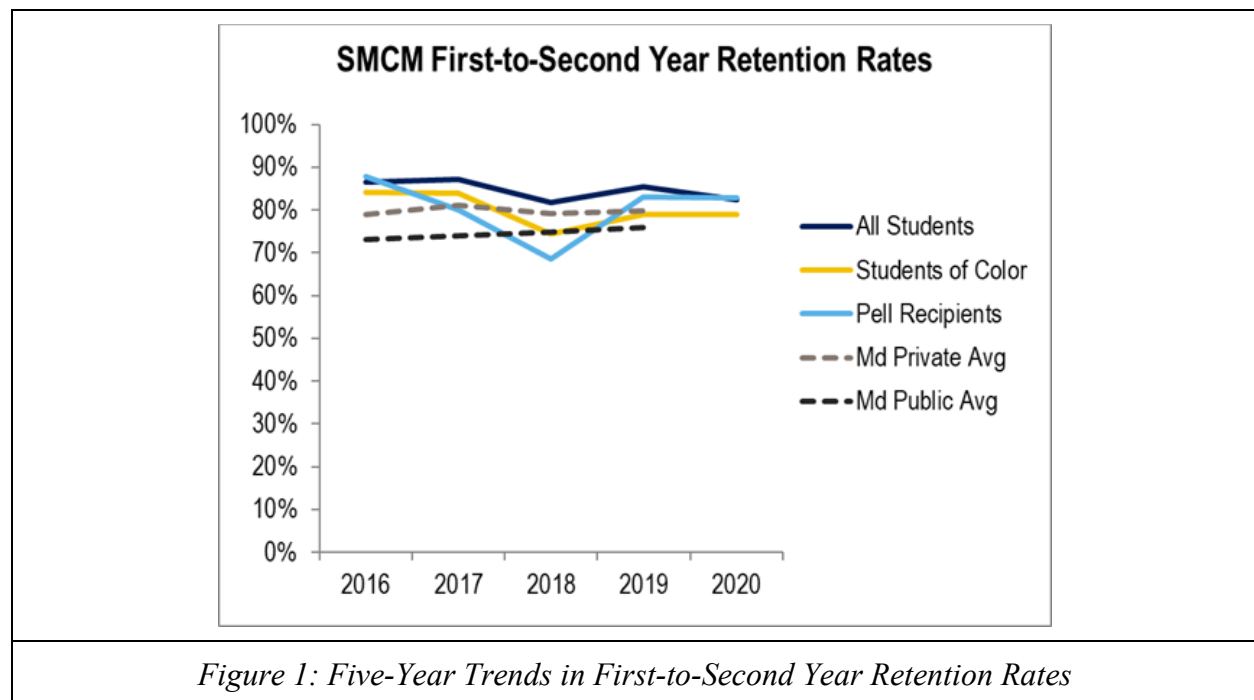
Quality: St. Mary's College has successfully responded to the charge to provide an outstanding academic program – akin to those offered by some of the best private liberal arts colleges in the nation – to the citizens of Maryland. Over the past 25 years, the College has invested significantly in creating an academic program that is focused on student learning. Major publications continue to highlight St. Mary's College as one of the top liberal arts colleges nationally, including the recent U.S. News and World Report (2022) ranking us 6th among public liberal arts colleges. Other laudatory commentaries have come from the Princeton Review, Colleges of Distinction, Money Magazine, Washington Monthly, and the Fiske Guide to Colleges.

Further, our low student–faculty ratio (9:1) provides for high-impact learning experiences and a vast array of research and creative endeavor opportunities for undergraduate students among our 22 majors and 29 minors. In fact, this student-faculty ratio is the best among traditional four-year public institutions in Maryland (average 15:1), and second best among Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) institutions (average 14:1).

Our graduates demonstrably succeed after leaving St. Mary’s College. The Career Outcome Rate for graduates, reflecting employment, public service, or continued education within six months of graduating, is 94%, compared with the national benchmark of 92% for baccalaureate arts & sciences institutions. The applied and highly marketable skills acquired through our LEAD curriculum are expected to continue to positively influence the six-month Career Outcome Rate.

Student-Centered Learning: A hallmark of an excellent liberal education is student-centered learning and St. Mary’s College remains one of the best in the nation. The St. Mary’s College program includes many high-impact educational practices. For the past five graduating classes, nearly every student (98.8%) has completed at least **two** high-impact practices compared to the national average of 86% at baccalaureate arts & sciences institutions, and many completed more than two (average of 3.1 for the Class of 2021). For example, among the Spring 2021 graduating class, nearly half (49%) of students engaged in a culminating St. Mary’s Project; 44% participated in an internship; 59% engaged in research with faculty; and 53% participated in an experiential learning experience. High-impact experiences, including internships and faculty/student collaborative research, are central to the new LEAD curriculum. We are confident that once fully implemented, the LEAD curriculum will result in significant gains in student participation rates across many high-impact practices.

Ensure Equal Opportunity for Maryland’s Diverse Citizenry: St. Mary’s College has made a significant impact in reducing the achievement gap with excellent retention and graduation rates for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Persistence of first-time students to the second year is strong, albeit with room for improvement, with a five-year average of 80% for students of color compared to 85% overall. As shown in Figure 1, the first-to-second year retention of students receiving Pell grants has historically equaled that of all students. After a brief dip during 2017-2018, the retention rates for Pell students are once again comparable to those of the overall student population.



Over the past five years, the average six-year graduation rate for students of color is 68% compared to 76% overall as shown below (see Figure 2). Graduation rates for other demographic groups are also high. The six-year graduation rate for students receiving need-based aid (Pell Grants or subsidized Stafford loans) is 74% (five-year average).

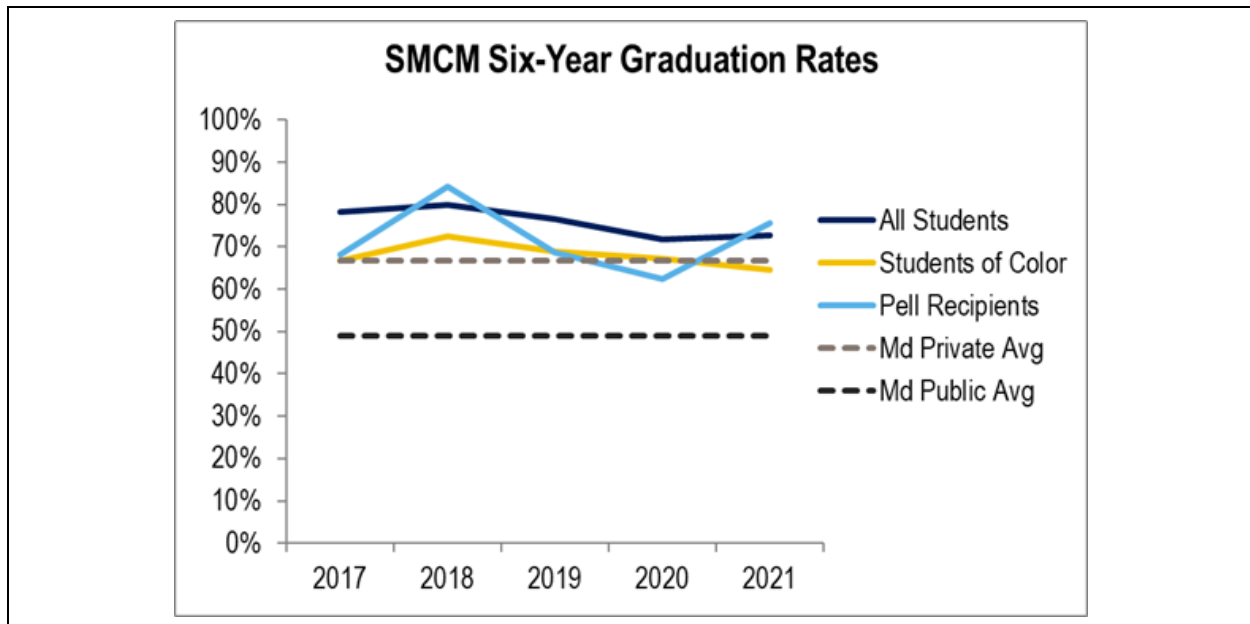


Figure 2: Five-Year Trends in Six-Year Graduation Rates

St. Mary’s College is also doing well recruiting a diverse student body. Students of color represent 31% of the Fall 2021 incoming class compared to 17% just nine years ago. St. Mary’s College has met or exceeded the target (25%) for the percentage of students of color for the eighth year in a row. Also, the Fall 2021 class consists of 25% first-generation students, above the target of 20%. The recent expansion of the DeSousa Brent Scholars Program has strengthened the College’s ability to support at-risk students. This enhanced support, expected to positively affect the completion rate of participating students, includes the implementation of an intrusive advising program in addition to leadership development activities. President Tuajuanda Jordan continued the First-Generation Student Initiative, a program enabling students who are the first in their families to attend college (like President Jordan) to be part of an on-campus support network including other first-generation students and faculty. The DeSousa Brent program is a member of First-Gen Forward, an initiative of the Center for First Generation Success that recognizes higher education institutions for their commitment to first-generation student success. Finally, the College participates in the American Talent Initiative, a consortium of colleges committed to the collective goal of enrolling 50,000 additional, talented, low- and moderate-income students at top colleges and universities by 2025.

It is worth noting that the LEAD curriculum, with its holistic and intentional inclusion of all students in required credit-bearing professional development and an applied liberal arts approach, will have a disproportionately positive impact on students from diverse backgrounds. Evidence clearly indicates that students from these traditionally underserved populations participated in applied co-curricular experiences at lower rates. In LEAD, these experiences are required of all and all are supported in gaining these experiences.

Alignment with State Plan

The College's operations are directly aligned with the objectives and strategies of the State of Maryland's Plan for Postsecondary Education, *Increasing Student Success with Less Debt*, as reflected prominently in the mission statement of the College.

State Plan Strategy 1 (Access): Continue to improve college readiness among K-12 students, particularly high school students.

Many St. Mary's College academic programs intentionally connect with our K-12 partners. For example, the Psychology Department works with local high schools on the content of AP Psychology courses and brings instructors to campus for discussions, demonstrations, and to meet with St. Mary's College faculty.

Perhaps our most direct contribution comes from our Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program. The College is committed to providing "model" preparation for K-12 teachers, driving a diverse array of special relationships to area schools, particularly St. Mary's County Public Schools. The College and the Superintendent of this system have signed a formal letter of partnership. Our faculty members are leaders in helping K-12 teachers learn how to incorporate instructional technology into curricula and classrooms in pedagogically meaningful ways. The College is a State-wide leader in modeling the most appropriate education for teachers and the offering of the MAT continues this trend.

State Plan Strategy 2 (Access): Cultivate greater financial literacy for students and families to encourage financial planning to prepare for postsecondary education.

For prospective students and their families, the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) offers public financial aid information sessions in conjunction with the Maryland County Library System and public high schools throughout the state. These sessions cover the basics of financial aid including FAFSA, federal funding, MD-529 plans, MHEC scholarships and grants, institutional funds, outside scholarships, private and direct lending options, and special circumstances. All admitted students receive a financial aid informational publication with a glossary of terms to help families better understand the financial aid nomenclature.

OSFA is also making numerous strides to promote financial literacy among matriculated students on campus. In addition to the required debt letters being sent to students (2018-HB 17), we have partnered with a company that offers a full suite of financial literacy tools. These tools will assist students in better understanding their responsibilities and assist them in planning during their time in school, between graduation and repayment, and when they begin working with their services to make payments. OSFA has also expanded its outreach on campus. We have begun holding information sessions on campus covering various topics in-depth to promote financial literacy to our students. A total of 6 sessions will be given this year by the staff. By making office staff and financial aid counselors more accessible to students, we hope that they will be more at ease to ask questions and stay aware of their next steps in the financial aid process.

State Plan Strategy 3 (Access): Expand efforts to cultivate student readiness, financial literacy, and financial aid for individuals outside the traditional K-12 school channels.

The previously mentioned financial aid information sessions offered in conjunction with the Maryland County Library System are open to the public and are held at multiple local library locations to provide convenient and visible access for students outside the traditional K-12 school channels.

Promoting Initiatives that Ensure Student Success:

As previously noted, the LEAD curriculum includes development of a new professional literacy pathway for all students. The LEAD core curriculum will integrate into our current liberal arts curriculum and this effort will result in a re-imagined, applied liberal arts program designed to provide students with a distinctive experience that enhances career preparation.

To enrich learning opportunities, the College has continued to increase academic programming aligned with the applied LEAD approach. New programs since 2015 include majors in environmental studies, neuroscience, and marine science; minors in materials science, business, creative writing, special education, and arts administration; and a concentration in archaeology. Over the past three years, the College has awarded 27% of its degrees in STEM-related fields.

State Plan Strategy 4 (Success): Continue to ensure equal educational opportunities for all Marylanders by supporting all postsecondary institutions.

The College is implementing an aggressive program to update and codify all program-to-program articulation agreements with community colleges in Maryland. This market is important to the College as roughly 1 out of 5 incoming students is a transfer student. Specifically, we are developing agreements that take into consideration academic requirements for each major at the College. This process will make it transparent to transfer students where they stand relative to College graduation requirements for specific programs. It will also encourage integrated academic planning for students to ensure they seamlessly transition from community college to St. Mary's College and do so in a way that promotes timely baccalaureate graduation. Because of the wide variety in applied experiences at other institutions, the LEAD curriculum will include a variety of entrance points for transfer students to ensure these students are met where they are and are not delayed by repeating professional development concepts already present in their prior experiences. We currently have over 20 program-specific articulation agreements in place with community colleges across the state of Maryland, many more are pending review.

State Plan Strategy 5 (Success): Ensure that statutes, regulations, policies, and practices that support students and encourage their success are designed to serve the respective needs of both traditional and non-traditional students.

St. Mary's College of Maryland provides support to all students. All of the College's workshops, support systems, academic advising, coaching, etc. are open to both traditional and nontraditional students. In June 2021, the College convened a Policy Equity Work Group to perform a comprehensive review of all College policies, with the goal of identifying (and making recommendations to correct) any inequities.

State Plan Strategy 6 (Success): Improve the student experience by providing better options and services that are designed to facilitate prompt completion of degree requirements.

St. Mary's College of Maryland prides itself on having one of the highest four-year graduation rates among public institutions in Maryland. Nonetheless, the College continues to invest in initiatives and strategic changes designed to promote timely graduation.

In 2016, the College implemented the Beacon early alert software system that allows faculty and staff to submit alerts on students who they believe are at risk of not succeeding. In response, a team of support coaches is formed specific to the student and his/her needs.

For several years, the College has offered multiple Emerging Scholars sections of STEM courses with traditionally higher rates of difficulty for students, particularly students from historically underserved populations. Through this program, students build self-efficacy, identity as scholars, and have a social support network by being involved in challenging problem solving in a low-stakes, social environment.

During the 2020-21 academic year, the College offered its inaugural Winter session (Winterim), a compressed term offered completely online and at low additional cost to full-time students. Winterim was implemented specifically to assist those students working to catch up on credits, and a substantial number of students were able to move from being behind to being on track for on-time four-year graduation. Winterim (with online courses) is planned again for the coming year, and online courses will also likely continue to be offered in the summer session. Both of these sessions provide convenient opportunities for students to earn additional credits in between traditional semesters, and we will continue to explore how best to ensure that Winter and Summer session offerings are financially accessible to as many students as possible.

Additionally, academic departments work to facilitate timely graduation. For example, our Physics Department offers a one-credit Calculus for Physics course that supplements the regular calculus course for introductory physics students without advanced placement. Our Political Science Department offers an applied internship program, called the Washington Program, through which students can earn 8-12 summer credits. The Psychology Department takes concrete steps, including opening additional course sections, to ensure that incoming transfer students can begin the two-semester methodology course sequence immediately upon entry.

Structurally, the College provides two key offices to assist students with timely graduation: the Writing and Speaking Center provides tutorials to assist students with the core academic skills of oral and written communication and the Office of Student Support Services (OS3) provides students with tools to achieve optimal academic performance. Two new initiatives of OS3 are the Seahawk Academic Improvement & Learning Strategies course (SAILS), which is designed to help students learn useful study and time management strategies, and the Peer Academic Success Strategies (PASS) Specialists who are trained in a variety of academic approaches and work with individual students or small groups to help them improve their study skills.

Finally, health and wellness are critical to a successful student experience, especially during a pandemic. The College's Wellness Center consistently provides quality physical and mental health care to all students, and over the past year also effectively managed COVID-related health care, daily symptom checks, surveillance and athlete testing, and vaccine communication and tracking. Mental health continues to be an important focus as well, with five dedicated professionals providing services while the standard for a campus of our size is one. Beginning in March 2020, the Wellness Center shifted to the remote environment, offering nurse triage appointments, medical appointments, and mental health counseling sessions by phone or Zoom. A 24/7 counseling helpline was also established for students. Beginning in Fall 2021, students will have access to My SSP, an inclusive 24/7 counseling service and smartphone app that allows real-time sessions via text, phone or video. Wellness Center staff also provide training and consulting for faculty, staff and student groups interested in learning about and contributing to student mental health.

State Plan Strategy 7 (Success): Enhance career advising and planning services and integrate them explicitly into academic advising and planning.

As discussed earlier, the College has implemented as part of its new LEAD curriculum a new credit-bearing introductory course sequence, COREP 101 and COREP 102, designed explicitly to engage students in exploration of career opportunities and the skills necessary for success. Through this two-course sequence, students develop personalized career and leadership development plans to both clarify attainable post-graduation objectives and map a path to reaching those objectives. Students use formal instruments to 1) identify areas of interest; 2) align those areas with career paths; and, 3) assess their personal values, strengths, and skills. Students also develop written and oral communication skills for representing themselves to graduate/professional school representatives and future employers as well as apply professional networking skills through Career Fair participation and internship interview preparation. This introductory sequence is the first-year component of a planned four-year curriculum on professional literacy begun in Fall 2020 as a required element of all St. Mary's College undergraduate degree programs.

Foster Innovation to Improve Student Success:

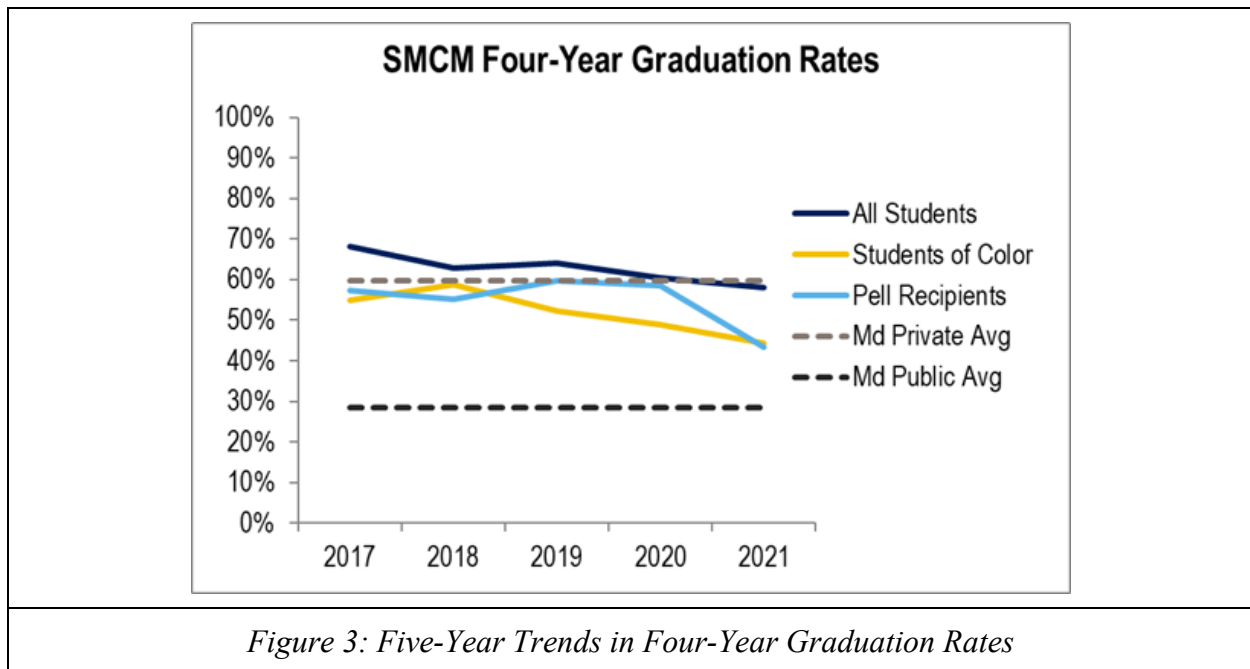
Promote Economic Growth, Advancement of Research, and Workforce Development: St. Mary's College (SMCM) works closely with the regional public-school systems and the nearby Patuxent River Naval Air Station to promote economic development and growth of a highly qualified workforce. The majority (over 90%) of the College's graduates from the Master of Arts in Teaching program work in Maryland schools, with many remaining in the Southern Maryland region. The College has expanded its agreement with the Patuxent River Naval Air Station and the Patuxent Partnership to provide research and internship opportunities for students and faculty in several areas. In designing the LEAD curriculum, several industry partners provided key input to ensure the knowledge and skills developed are those in high-demand by our current and projected future economy.

Enrollment and State-wide attainment goal of 55% of residents holding a degree by 2025

Until very recently, undergraduate enrollment has steadily declined each year for almost a decade, from 1,758 full-time undergraduates in 2013 to 1,467 this year. Some key factors affecting recruitment of new students include a continuing decline in the number of high school students in the mid-Atlantic region, continued challenges in the national dialogue regarding the value of the liberal arts, and significant turnover in the SMCM Office of Admission. That said, the College attracted a record number of applicants for each of the past two academic years (2,768 for 2020-21, and 3,076 for 2021-22) and, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, managed to enroll 460 new incoming first-year and transfer students in Fall 2020 and 465 in Fall 2021, meeting our new student enrollment targets set long before anyone even dreamt of what would unfold.

The College is engaged in a variety of proactive initiatives to increase enrollment that include changes in key enrollment management personnel, changes in marketing and recruitment activities, and revising our educational programs to become more attractive to the market. As expected, time is required to first stabilize the current trend and to provide the foundation for growth before the actual long-term growth can occur. The data suggest that the College's enrollment has stabilized.

St. Mary's College's retention and graduation rates contribute to the State's goals. The relatively rapid progress towards degree increases the number of students we can serve, reduces the amount of State funds needed to deliver a degree, and relieves students and families of excessive debt for extra years of study. Retention from 1st to 2nd year remains near the goal of 90% (Figure 1, above). Graduation rates also remain strong with 4-year graduation rates averaging 66% (five-year average; Figure 3), and 6-year graduation rates averaging 76% (Figure 2, above).



State Plan Strategy 8 (Innovation): Develop new partnerships between colleges and businesses to support workforce development and improve workforce readiness.

The College is engaged in implementing the new LEAD curriculum that includes a four-year, scaffolded curriculum on professional literacy and practical skills. The curriculum was designed with input from several business partners including leaders from CLB Advising LLC, Naval Air Systems Command, Avian – Unmanned Aerial Systems Division, JOB-IQ, PHTyson, and the Business-Higher Education Form. As envisioned, the professional literacy curriculum will be required of all students, offer stand-alone development courses, and integrate with every major offered by the College. The capstone professional experience, called the *Honors College Promise*, guarantees an internship, international or research experience for every St. Mary's College student. Also, the Center for Career and Professional Development designs custom recruitment plans for employment partners that work to satisfy immediate needs and build brand recognition of the employer among students. With the addition of the Assistant Director of Employer and Community Engagement, we are formalizing structures and processes to develop new and exclusive internship and/or employment opportunities for St. Mary's College students. Additionally, we are increasing the opportunities for our partners to recruit on-campus in traditional programs (career fair, on campus interviews, info sessions, etc.).

State Plan Strategy 9 (Innovation): Strengthen and sustain development and collaboration in addressing teaching and learning challenges.

St. Mary's College of Maryland is committed to top quality teaching and learning. The Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (CITL) supports the professional development of all instructors

within the SMCM community, with a particular focus on pedagogical strategies effective for neurodiverse students. The CITL hosts the annual Inclusive & Innovative Instruction (3I) Conference every August, a mix of external and internal presentations and workshops aimed at addressing effective pedagogy through adoption of best practices in the classroom. These workshops are well attended, often attracting as many as one-third of the instructional staff to each session. CITL also provides individual and programmatic consultations and classroom observations to assist faculty in enhancing their teaching and pedagogy.

State Plan Strategy 10 (Innovation): Expand support for research and research partnerships.

The LEAD curriculum explicitly includes faculty/student collaborative research as a form of professional development, particularly in fields where advanced degrees are expected. The College has been highly engaged in developing improved support for research and research partnerships. The College entered into an Educational Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC), Indian Head Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technology and The Patuxent Partnership (TPP), a non-profit member organization that works with government, industry, and academia to advance technology-related education and workforce development. The College signed a Navy Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) on Development and Studies of Energetic and Biocidal Materials with Medical Applications, as well as a CRADA on Development of Inkjet Printing Technology for Deposition of Electronic Devices. We initiated a connection with the University of Maryland Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Test Site located in Southern Maryland, which resulted in the following activities/outcomes: a) a visit of UAS Test Site by Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) liaison Dr. David Barrett and SMCM faculty members from computer science, psychology, chemistry, and physics as well as Career Development Center staff to discuss possible research collaborations and student internships; b) a visit from St. Mary's County economic development specialists focusing on multi-institutional collaborations that could foster research and internship opportunities for SMCM faculty and students, especially as they relate to UAS technology; c) the Psychology Department faculty started research collaboration with UAS and NAWCAD on virtual reality and human factors; d) a chemistry student received a prestigious UAS internship to work on a project titled "Increasing Flight Radius of UAS with Solar Cell Integration." The College also established a connection with the Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit (CESU) resulting in a signed Chesapeake Watershed CESU Cooperative and Joint Venture Agreement and a Cooperative Agreement between the National Park Service and the College to provide research, technical assistance, and education for resource management. Finally, the College was selected as one of 12 partnering institutions for the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) Transformation Project, a project to revise traditional four-year undergraduate curricula in biology, chemistry, physics, and psychology by focusing on high-quality undergraduate research throughout the four years of a student's major.

All of the activity described above is the direct result of the College's commitment to enhance our research infrastructure and support. Over the last five years, the College has added an Office for Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) with two professional staff as well as the addition of a Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations in the office of Institutional Advancement. The investment in ORSP was facilitated by a \$435K grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Biomedical/Biobehavioral Research Administration Development (BRAD) program.

State Plan Strategy 11 (Innovation): Encourage a culture of risk-taking and experimentation.

The College uses several mechanisms to encourage and support student risk-taking and experimentation. The Honors College promise states that students who complete the professional skills courses are guaranteed an internship, research experience, or a study abroad experience. Many of our academic departments require a year-long senior research experience. Both the Honors College Promise and the year-long research experience encourage risk-taking and application of the disciplinary knowledge attained. In addition, the Political Science Department employs classroom simulations that encourage students to think about programs from different perspectives. In the past, students have acted as Congress members, Supreme Court justices, and diplomats just to name a few. Nearly all St. Mary's College departments encourage students to try new things and take advantage of new opportunities through directed research courses, internships, and service-learning courses. For example, the Sociology Department offers an entrepreneurship course that prepares students for risk-taking and partners with local business and corporate leaders to mentor and evaluate students' entrepreneurial ideas/products.

The Physics Department at St. Mary's College is an exemplar of risk-taking and experimentation. One of their initiatives, the inclusion of professional development material within the Physics major, was recognized nationally as a case study of effective practices in *Phys21: Preparing Physics Students for 21st Century Careers*.

The College also supports risk-taking by individual faculty members. The College provides significant start-up funds to new faculty in support of new research directions and routinely provides faculty with stipends for innovative course development and curricular improvements. In addition, the College has invested in continued risk-taking through the awarding of junior faculty professorships that provide additional funding support to sustain scholarly/creative productivity.

Finally, in 2020, the College received a grant from the Sherman Fairchild Foundation to support, improve, and broaden the access and impact of undergraduate science education. The grant includes funding for a new "makerspace" fabrication lab that includes 3D printers, laser cutters and etchers for high-resolution fabrication, and assorted prototyping and fabrication tools designed to allow faculty and students to bring their ideas to reality.

College Strengths from Location: Historic St. Mary's City and the Chesapeake Tidewater

St. Mary's College's location at historic St. Mary's City on the banks of the tidal St. Mary's River provides unique opportunities for environmental, historical, cultural, and public policy studies. These opportunities are realized through course-related activities, faculty scholarship, student research, and special programs. They are further supported by partnerships and collaborative relationships with local, state, federal and corporate organizations. The College will continue to strengthen programs with direct connections to our location and community, such as museum studies, environmental studies, educational studies, political science, public policy, history, and the STEM fields. The recently added marine science major will allow our students and faculty to participate in research activities centered around the Chesapeake tidewater area.

Community Services. The College's students, faculty, and staff are key volunteers to both public and private organizations in the community. The newly formed Southern Maryland Folklife Center at St. Mary's College, which is part of the Maryland State Arts Council's (MSAC) Folklife Network, hosted the first annual Summer Folklife Institute. The three-day event, organized by College faculty in the humanities, offered workshops celebrating and supporting community-based

living cultural traditions of Southern Maryland. The athletic, recreational, and meeting facilities of the College serve as unique and valuable resources to the surrounding community and region. The College hosts an extensive series of lectures, concerts, exhibits, sports competitions, and other events to which the public is welcome. In addition, the College acts as a resource to the surrounding community by providing athletic facilities to local teams, extensive community swim hours in its pool, reception and convention facilities (especially important during summer months), and informal gathering places that enrich the lives of area residents. The College provides space for local high school graduations, hosts the Chesapeake Bay Aquatic Club practices and meets, and holds numerous athletics camps for regional students. The College's ability to host and sponsor external events, such as concerts, lectures, and conferences, will be greatly enhanced when the Performing Arts Center and Learning Commons Annex is opened in Fall 2022. The building will contain the largest auditorium (700 seats) in the county, and we intend to actively market its use.

Center for the Study of Democracy. As St. Mary's City was the first capital of Maryland, the College, in partnership with Historic St. Mary's City, has developed the Center for the Study of Democracy. This entity studies contemporary and historical issues in democracy from an interdisciplinary perspective. Through this program, various lectures, events, and visiting scholars are hosted for the benefit of both the College and broader communities. For instance, the Center co-sponsors an annual Patuxent Defense Forum, which provides an opportunity for rich interaction between internationally-recognized experts on defense issues to present and discuss ideas. Participants include academics, military and government officials, and members of the defense contractor community. The Center also hosts events, e.g., on Constitution Day and the Bradlee Lecture, that bring in renowned national and international speakers to discuss current events, as well as activities of local and regional interests (the Schaefer Internship Program and political candidate debates).

Operating Budget for FY 2023

For FY23, the College requests \$30,316,116 in State funds, including \$27,766,276 in the general fund grant, of which its annual inflator totals \$703,357 (2.53%). Higher Education Investment Funds (HEIF) total \$2,549,840.

Significant elements of the College's FY23 budget include:

- Salaries and Benefits: \$38.3 million (127 full-time faculty and 231 full-time staff).
- Financial Aid: \$8.5 million in direct College scholarships and waivers
- Facilities Renewal: \$1.3 million College plant budget
- Debt Service for Institutional or System Issued Debt: \$3.8 million

Capital Budget for FY 2023

The College's proposed FY23-FY27 State-funded capital budget request includes funding of various Campus Infrastructure Improvements, construction funds for conversion of vacated classrooms into labs in Goodpaster Hall and funding for the design and renovation of Montgomery Hall. Our request identifies essential investments in campus infrastructure specifically needed for St. Mary's College of Maryland to remain competitive and to reinvest in our deteriorating physical assets. Our request for State Capital funds is consistent with the Governor's CIP.

FY23-FY27 Capital Request			
		<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24-27</u>
Performing Arts Center and Learning Commons Annex			
	Construction*	0	0
	Equipment	0	0
	TOTAL	0	0
*Includes College Funds for the Café			
Infrastructure			
	Design	\$135,000	\$800,000
	Construction	\$1,365,000	\$7,700,000
	TOTAL	\$1,500,000	\$8,500,000
Goodpaster Hall Renovation			
	Design (College Funds)	\$26,000	0
	Construction	\$1,588,000	0
	Equipment	\$275,000	0
	TOTAL	\$1,889,000	0
Montgomery Hall Renovation			
	Design		\$4,932,000
	Construction		\$31,653,000
	Equipment		\$3,850,000
	TOTAL		\$40,435,000
Total CIP Request		\$3,389,000	\$48,935,000

Performing Arts Center and Learning Commons Annex

Construction of this new 31,159 net square foot academic complex will be completed in FY22 (anticipated May 2022). The complex will be put into service for the Fall 2022 semester. The State generously provided \$79.1M for this project, which also included the Jamie L. Roberts Stadium construction and the installation of the Commemorative to Enslaved Peoples of Southern Maryland. To date this project remains on budget and no further request for funding from the State is needed.

Campus Infrastructure Improvements

This project will provide infrastructure improvements in multiple phases to include improvements to building HVAC systems, building envelopes, and campus roadways to address critical deferred maintenance and renewal needs. The FY23 campus infrastructure improvement funding request is detailed in the CBIS report and will fund the removal of underground fuel storage tanks, provide an emergency generator and lower-roof replacement in the library, and make improvements to the north campus nodal loop.

Goodpaster Hall Renovation

Relocation of the Educational Studies program into the Performing Arts Center and Learning Commons Annex will allow STEM facilities to expand within Goodpaster Hall. Consistent with

the College's 2012-2027 Master Plan, this vacated space will be renovated into laboratory and office space to support instruction, as well as student and faculty research.

Montgomery Hall Renovation

This renovation project remains core to our strategic planning efforts to provide adequate facilities for our academic programs as identified in the College's 2012-2027 Master Plan. Upon completion of the Performing Arts Center and Learning Commons Annex in 2022, the College's Music department will relocate from Montgomery Hall, freeing space for other disciplines in the building. An extensive renovation of the entire 40-year-old building is anticipated to improve energy efficiency, update code compliance, and address programmatic space deficiencies. Our request is consistent with the Governor's FY22 CIP.