

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID**

**REPORT SUMMARY**

**Date of Meeting: May 10, 2019**

**Date of Next Meeting: October 2019**

**Committee Chair:** Carlos Alcazar

**Committee Members:** Peter Bruns, Board Chair Sven Holmes, President Jordan, Ann McDaniel, Allan Wagaman '06

**Staff Member:** David L. Hautanen, Jr., Vice President for Enrollment Management

**Dashboard Metrics:** N/A

**Executive Summary:**

The Office of Enrollment Management is pleased to submit its May report to the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid of the Board of Trustees. This report includes information on 2018–2019 enrollment, Fall 2019 enrollment and financial aid, Fall 2020 recruitment and other initiatives, and updates on the international assessment and staffing.

**A. 2018-2019 Enrollment**

Spring Census:

The Office of Institutional Research completed the enrollment census for the spring term. We enrolled 28 new students (one first-year and 27 transfer students) on a goal of 28 new students. Of the 28 new students, four are part-time and 24 are full-time. This compares to 29 total new full-time students for Spring 2018 and 25 total new students, including four part-time transfer students, for Spring 2017.

In addition to the 28 new students, there were 1,420 returning students. The fall to spring term retention was 93.9%. This is 0.8% less than the comparative figure for 2017-2018 and 0.7% greater than 2016-2017.

The annual blended (average fall and spring) full-time equivalent enrollment is 1,506. This is a decline of two students compared to 2017-2018, and a decline of 58 students between 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.

**B. Fall 2019 Enrollment**

First-Year Students:

As of May 2, 2019, the College has received 1,599 first-year applications. This includes 742 Early Action applications, 32 Early Decision applications, 816 Regular Decision applications and five applications from students who deferred from a previous term. The Early Decision

application plan was reinstated after not being an option for a few years.

After the November 1 Early Action deadline, admissions staff began evaluating applications and decisions were released in waves beginning in mid-December. Financial aid awards were included with the admission decision letters in the packets sent home to admitted students.

The College has offered admission to 1,343 first-year applicants. We have not offered admission to almost 100 applicants. We have also withdrawn the applications of those who have not completed the application process despite multiple communications and outreach to have them complete their files. This was done to provide clarity on what applications remained active in the process for the admission committee's review. If a student then decides to complete their file, the application will be reactivated for review. We are continuing to review and make decisions on applications as they are received and become complete.

Following the release of admission decisions, the admission staff, in partnership with the Integrated Marketing team and other campus colleagues, implemented a comprehensive multi-channel yield effort that included personal outreach by students, faculty and staff, electronic and print communications, social media, texting, and on and off-campus events. The Office of Admissions hosted three off-campus Admitted Seahawk Welcome events in Bethesda, Edgewater, and Easton, MD.

Our signature yield events are the on-campus Admitted Seahawk Days (ASD). Between our February and April ASD events and a dedicated session at our Spring for St. Mary's Open House, we hosted 336 admitted students.

The recruitment strategy for the DeSousa Brent Scholars program was revised for the Fall 2019 entering class. Rather than asking students to apply for the program, a committee of admissions and DeSousa Brent staff selected admitted students with the desired qualities for invitation into the DeSousa Brent Scholars program. Thirty-seven enrolling students have accepted the invitation. This compares to 29 students who were admitted into the program at this time last year. An additional 24 students who were invited to become a member of the program have also submitted enrollment deposits. These students will be encouraged to become DeSousa Brent Scholars.

For much of the cycle first-year enrollment deposits were level or running ahead of last year at the same point in time. Beginning in mid-April this trend changed and the pace of enrollment deposit receipt slowed.

As of the close of business on May 2 we have received enrollment deposits from 302 first-year students, which also includes students who had previously deferred. This is 54 fewer students compared to Fall 2018 on the same date. Applicants who were admitted between December and mid-April had until May 1, the National Candidates Reply deadline, to submit their enrollment deposit. Students who are admitted after that time will have an adjusted deadline date. Between April 30 and the fall semester census date in 2018 and 2019 the College enrolled between 20

and 25 net additional students. To support the enrollment of further additional students, we will implement additional recruitment initiatives and review applications through the summer.

Once a first-year student has submitted their enrollment deposit, they receive information pertinent to the business of completing their enrollment, multi-channel engagement efforts, as well as invitations to participate in our summer orientation program. These efforts are being coordinated by the New Student Experience Team.

The day-long SOAR (Seahawk Orientation, Advising and Registration) programs will be on June 26, 27 and 28 for first-year students. Transfer students are advised and registered on an ongoing basis as they submit their enrollment deposit. In August, enrolling students will participate in the Transfer Day for incoming transfer students and Orientation for both first-year and transfer students as part of the move-in and matriculation process.

#### Transfer Students:

As of the close of business on May 2, we have received 95 transfer applications, 34 fewer than at the same time for Fall 2018. We have offered admission to 56 applicants and 24 students have submitted enrollment deposits. While we are running 13 enrolled behind last year, transfer staff are conducting ongoing outreach at our community colleges, hosting on campus Transfer Decision Days and are in close contact with prospective transfer students. We also have a significant number of prospective students who have started, but not yet submitted, their application for admission. The team on the ground feels confident in our ability to meet the transfer target of 100 at this time. The transfer admission priority deadline is June 1. Admission decisions and financial aid awards are released on a rolling basis and this will continue through mid-August.

#### **C. Financial Aid**

The Office of Financial Aid continued a number of initiatives to contribute to new student enrollment. A new financial aid piece was included in the admit packet mailing sent to all admitted students, 1,598 follow up mailings, 500 pro-active personal outreach calls to prospective students, and more than 30 special circumstance appeals by admitted families are included in these initiatives.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms have been filed by 1,060 admitted students (1,032 FY/28 TR) as of April 25. Financial aid awards have been distributed to 1,047 (1,024 FY/23 TR) admitted students. The current tuition/fees discount rate for first-year students who have submitted enrollment deposits is 43%. This is 3% higher than last year at this time. The first-year discount will likely decrease as additional first-year students enroll and assuming past trends. The current tuition/fees discount rate for transfer students who have submitted enrollment deposits is 15.2%. This is 7% lower than last year at this time. While the transfer student discount will offset the first-year student discount, we should expect a small increase in the overall new student tuition/fees discount compared to Fall 2018.

#### **D. Fall 2020 Recruitment and Other Initiatives**

Recruitment efforts for the Fall 2020 and later entering classes are in progress. The new student search campaign was initiated in early March, staff have completed a robust spring off-campus recruitment schedule, and the campus hosted the annual Spring for St. Mary's Open House on April 6, 2019. The Open House was a success with more than 600 guests, including 247 prospective students in attendance. This compares to the 147 prospective students who attended the April 2018 Open House.

New software was installed to make the scheduling of campus visits easier and more mobile friendly. It includes a suite of automatic email and text communications and event evaluation capability. This program was first implemented for the spring Open House and now is being used for the scheduling of daily visits. A feature of the software is that the option to visit campus is now more prominently displayed on the College's homepage and other select pages. We believe this software, along with a robust communication strategy to invite prospective students to the spring Open House, contributed to increased attendance.

In March, Sara Ramirez joined the admission team on a temporary basis to support special projects and recruitment efforts. Sara is a seasoned admission professional who has served as a director of admission at three institutions. Sara's first project has been to complete assessment of competitor and St Mary's College visit experiences. The goal of this project is to ensure we are delivering a daily campus visit experience that reflects best practices while effectively promoting the St. Mary's College brand.

The Office of Admission has been working with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) on two initiatives. The first is a concurrent enrollment program that will enable CSM students with interest in transferring to St. Mary's College (College) to be engaged in the life of the College and possibly take courses. The second is a reverse transfer program that will enable CSM students who transfer to the College before they receive their Associates Degree to receive that degree utilizing coursework taken at the College.

Following ongoing challenges with the current admissions customer relations management (CRM) system, the college requested proposals for a new CRM. We received six proposals which were fully reviewed by a committee that included staff from admissions, financial aid, and information technology. The College is in the process of awarding the contract.

#### **E. International Assessment**

International Education Advantage from Salem, Massachusetts conducted an assessment of the College's capacity and readiness to recruit, enroll and retain international students. During their two-day visit in November, they met with faculty, staff and students. They have also conducted interviews with alumni and parents. They delivered their report in early February and met with the campus community in late April to share the results of their assessment. This information will be used to convene a campus working group and inform the next strategic plan.

**F. Staffing:**

Two searches are currently underway. The first is for an Admission Counselor and the second is for the Assistant Director for Visitor Experience. The Assistant Director search was initially conducted during the fall and was failed in January.

**Action Item(s) related to specific strategic plan goals as appropriate:**

None

**ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF MAY 10, 2019**

**AGENDA**

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
  - A. Fall 2019 enrollment update
  - B. Fall 2020 new student recruitment update
  - C. Test-Optional Policy
- III. ACTION ITEMS (None)**
- IV. INFORMATION ITEMS**
  - A. Minutes from meeting of February 1, 2019

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Date of Meeting:** February 1, 2019

**Status of Minutes:** Approved March 31, 2019

**Admissions and Financial Aid Committee Members Present:** Peter Bruns, Ann McDaniel, Allan Wagaman '06, Board Chair Sven Holmes, President Tuajuanda Jordan (via conference call)

**Committee Members Absent:** Carlos Alcazar, Anirban Basu

**Staff Member:** David L. Hautanen, Jr.

**Others Present:** Bhargavi Bandi, Betsy Barreto, John Bell '95, Allison Boyle, Leonard Brown, Cindy Broyles '79, Mike Bruckler, Donny Bryan '73, Carolyn Curry, Susan Dyer, Cynthia Gross, Gail Harmon, Justin Hoobler '19, Kendra Lawrence, Meghan Lang '17, Jasmine Long '21, Rob Maddox '07, Faculty Delegate Leah Mazur, Paul Pusecker, Beverly Read, Danielle Troyan '92, Mike Wick, Staff Senate Delegate Marsha Wilcox, Anna Yates

**Executive Summary**

The Admissions and Financial Aid Committee member Ann McDaniel called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

**Review of Preliminary Spring 2019 Enrollment:**

- We have enrolled 30 new students compared to 29 last year.
- Returning student retention is down 0.5% to 94.2% compared to Spring 2018.
- The projected annual FTE is 1506 which is level with last year at this time.

**Fall 2018 Admitted Student Survey:**

Vice President Hautanen reviewed the results of the Admitted Student Survey and noted the following observations:

- Our primary competition are other in-state public institutions.
- Personal attention is a decision driver.
- Enrolling students are confident and comfortable with their enrollment decision.
- The LEAD curriculum matches interest and needs.

**Report on the Admitted Student Yield Strategy:**

Vice President Hautanen distributed personalized admit packet to the committee members. Committee members reviewed their packets and suggested that the financial aid piece be modified to more strongly highlight the bottom-line amount a student will owe after all financial aid has been applied.

Following admission notification, a comprehensive yield campaign featuring personal outreach, electronic and print communications, and social media is being executed by the Admission team in partnership with Integrated Marketing. The on-campus Admitted Seahawk Days are February 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 5<sup>th</sup>. There are three Admitted Seahawk Welcome events being held around the state. Once all dates and locations are confirmed, Vice President Hautanen will share this information with the committee.

Report on Fall 2020 New Student Recruitment:

Vice President Hautanen outlined the various strategies being used to recruit students for Fall 2020:

- We are working with a new partner for our annual new student search.
- Print communications are incorporating suggestions and recommendations from Creative Communication Associates.
- Our annual Spring for St. Mary's Open House is on Saturday, April 6.
- The Admission Office's public spaces are being refurbished.
- The College was invited to become a member of the Coalition for College Access joining the University of Maryland, College Park. Institutions need to meet certain benchmarks in order to be members of the Coalition. The College and UMD are the only Maryland public institutions that meet the benchmarks.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.