THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
2012 PERIODIC REVIEW REPORT

I. Executive Summary

This Periodic Review Report follows the format recommended in the twelfth edition of the Commission’s Handbook. This Executive Summary includes an overview of the institution, including some basic facts about academic programs, faculty, students, and staff. We discuss our approach to preparing the report, major institutional changes since the 2007 Self Study, and highlights from the report. We begin this Executive Summary with a description of the University as captured in its mission statement and in its most recent Strategic Plan, developed just after completion of the 2007 Self Study.

I.A. Overview of the Institution

The University’s institutional identity is well described in its mission statement, as “a public research university, the flagship campus of the University System of Maryland, and the original 1862 land-grant institution in the State.” It is a member of the Association of American Universities, an organization composed of the leading research universities in the United States and Canada. As a land-grant institution, the University shares its research, educational, cultural, and technological strengths with the Maryland citizenry and other constituencies. Its collaborations with state, federal, private and non-profit partners promote economic development and improve quality of life. As a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University (classified as Very High Research Activity), the University ranks among the best public research universities in the United States, and strives for excellence in all of its activities, including academics, the performing arts, and intercollegiate athletics. The full text of the mission statement, approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission in January 2012, can be found in Appendix A and online at http://www.provost.umd.edu/Documents/UMCP-Mission-Statement-Final-2011.pdf.

The University’s mission, goals and objectives are expressed most clearly in its newest Strategic Plan. Its development began while the University was completing its Self Study, with the appointment of a Strategic Plan Steering Committee in Fall 2007. The University’s culture of shared governance, open campus-wide discussions, and review of drafts all contributed to building consensus and a commitment that ultimately allowed the campus to embrace it in an overwhelmingly positive vote by the University Senate in May 2008. The end result, Transforming Maryland: Higher Expectations, is included as Appendix B and can be found online at http://www.sp07.umd.edu/StrategicPlanFinal.pdf. It has set the University on a new course to increase its rank among world-class, preeminent institutions of higher education. Four institutional priorities are the essential elements of the Strategic Plan:

- Undergraduate Education: Offer an outstanding educational experience, attracting a high achieving and diverse student body which completes its studies on a timely basis;
- Graduate Education: Provide the highest quality graduate and professional education, training students for leadership in their fields;
- Research, Scholarship, and the Creative and Performing Arts: Advance faculty research, scholarship, and other creative works to the highest levels in their respective disciplines;
- Partnerships, Outreach, and Engagement: Expand engagement of students, faculty and staff in activities addressing important issues in the community, state, and worldwide.
The Strategic Plan also rests on the University providing critical enablers: an outstanding faculty and staff, an infrastructure that supports learning and working at the highest level, an innovative and consultative process for allocating vital resources, and a vigorous external relations program to effectively promote dialogue between the University and its stakeholders. The Plan includes a 2% reallocation of the University’s state support operating funds each year, to promote new initiatives that advance goals of the Strategic Plan.

An annual assessment of progress towards its implementation is maintained on the Provost’s Web site (http://www.provost.umd.edu/implement.cfm). Because this new Strategic Plan is now the most important guiding document for the University, numerous references to it and to progress on its implementation are made throughout this Periodic Review Report.

I.B. Organization and Personnel

The University offers 81 doctoral programs, 101 master’s programs, and 90 bachelor’s degree programs, along with a relatively small number of certificates at the undergraduate and graduate level. Programs are offered through 12 academic colleges or schools. There is one fewer college than in 2007: in 2011, the two colleges with natural science programs were merged into a College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences, making it the largest unit on campus. The College of Health and Human Performance became an accredited School of Public Health in 2010, driving a substantial number of changes within its organization.

The academic colleges are home to 1500 tenured and tenure-track faculty, another 900 teaching faculty not on the tenure track. There are also more than 1500 faculty whose duties are predominantly in research and scholarship, largely supported by external funding. Approximately 5000 staff members support the university’s mission in various ways, about 300 of whom are part-time.

Sponsored research expenditures at the university have grown substantially in the last five years, from $325M in FY 2004 to over $450 M in FY 2011. Much of this growth is due a deliberate effort to target large grant opportunities and to create partnerships with federal organizations. More discussion of the growth in research activities can be found in Section II.B.1 and in Section III.C.3.

As of Fall 2011, the student body includes over 26,000 undergraduate students and over 11,000 graduate students, with about 6200 and 3300 new students each year, respectively. Typically, about 25% of undergraduates come from outside the state of Maryland, and about 2% are from outside the U.S. About 30% of new undergraduate students in a given year transfer in from other institutions, most commonly from Maryland community colleges. Graduate students are recruited both nationally and internationally, with about 25% coming from outside the U.S. About 22% of new graduate students enter into doctoral programs.

I.C: Governance and Administration

The University of Maryland, College Park (hereafter UMCP) is one of 11 degree-granting institutions, one research center, and two regional instructional centers within the University System of Maryland (USM, http://www.usmd.edu). The presidents of each USM institution report to the Chancellor of USM, who reports to a governing Board of Regents appointed by the Governor. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC, http://www.mhec.state.md.us) oversees all higher education throughout the state, and is led by the Secretary of Higher Education who is appointed by and reports to the Governor. Essentially all major institutional planning is carried out in cooperation with USM and the state. For example, proposals for new academic programs are vetted first by the University Senate, then the Board of Regents and the Chancellor, and then MHEC, before they are open for admission.
The administrative core of UMCP includes the President and six vice presidents who preside over the institution. Within Academic Affairs, led by the Senior Vice President and Provost, the next level of administration includes deans of each of the 12 colleges, a Dean of the Libraries, a Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School, with the two latter also given the title of Associate Provost. The campus has a strong tradition of shared governance, with a University Senate with representation from all sectors of campus. The Senate’s Executive Committee advises the President, and works closely with both the President and Provost on all matters of interest to the campus community. The University’s Plan of Organization is on the University Senate’s Web site, http://www.senate.umd.edu/governingdocs/Plan_of_Organization.pdf.

I.D: Major Institutional Changes

I.D.1: Administration

UMCP has undergone several changes in its key leadership positions since the decennial report of 2007. President Wallace D. Loh arrived as the institution’s 33rd President in 2011, replacing President C. D. Mote. Dr. Ann G. Wylie assumed the position of Senior Vice President and Provost in 2011, following Dr. Nariman Farvardin, who held the position from 2007 to 2011. Other changes include three new vice presidents, many new associate provosts and associate vice presidents, and seven new deans with two more searches in progress: an accounting of these recent changes is found in Appendix C. The Strategic Plan has been effectively used as a stable set of guiding principles for university-wide institutional planning and assessment throughout these changes in leadership.

I.D.2: Substantive Changes and New Program Offerings

Three Substantive Change Requests have been successfully completed since 2007, each for the listing of a new Additional Location:

1. (January 2011) the People’s Police Academy, Conhue, Tu Liem, Ha Noi, Vietnam, for delivery of a Master of Professional Studies in Justice Leadership;

2. (January 2011) the Regional Higher Education Center, 312 Marshall Avenue, Laurel, Maryland, for delivery of graduate-level instruction for the College of Education’s Masters Degree in Education with Teacher Certification for students wishing to become public school teachers;

3. (August 2011) the Valetta Campus of the University of Malta, along with a contractual agreement with the University of Malta to deliver a dual Masters program in Transcultural Counseling. Instruction in the program began in January 2012.

A large number of changes to the University’s program inventory have taken place over the last five years, including development of new programs, discontinuation of others, and numerous curriculum changes. A year-by-year inventory of academic program changes is maintained at http://www.provost.umd.edu/ProgDocs.

I.E: Highlights of the Report

In preparation for writing this Periodic Review Report, a Steering Committee was formed that included administrators from the major divisions, the vice chair of the University Senate, and two students. Four subcommittees gathered materials, with each led by an associate provost who was also a member the Steering Committee. Membership of the Steering Committee and the subcommittees is in Appendix D.

Section II of the report constitutes the majority of the document, and is largely a response to the 26 recommendations developed by the Self Study team. The recommendations themselves are included in Appendix E, with a cross-reference to both the Self Study and the PRR. We also make reference to the
recommendations directly in the text of report where relevant. There were no formal recommendations from the external review team and the suggestions of the review team essentially reflected the recommendations within the Self Study. As a result, Section II is organized around the Self Study, focusing on the two broad topics used in that report: Topic A: Institutional Assessment, Planning, and Resource Allocation, and Topic B: Educational Offerings and Effectiveness. Section II.A follows Topic A and includes a discussion of how resource allocation and planning is carried out in the context of the Strategic Plan and under the budgetary conditions of the last five years. We highlight some of the decisions directly affecting academic programs as well as long term planning for the campus infrastructure: buildings, the network infrastructure and the libraries.

Section II.B, closely following Topic B of the Self Study, begins with an overview of the faculty, how they are assessed, and some of the institutional efforts to address issues of diversity, and of support and mentoring for the growing cadre of part-time instructional faculty and for research associates. Recent developments related to enhancing the undergraduate experience, such as the establishment of an Honors College and the start of new living-learning communities, participation in Education Abroad programs, and involvement in undergraduate research and internships are also noted. The University has created a new plan for General Education with delivery beginning in Fall 2012. This new program is built upon a foundation of learning outcomes. The details of the program itself are in the University’s official document, “Transforming General Education”, which is included as Appendix F. Section II.B.3 describes the process used to develop the General Education plan and how the assessment of learning outcomes in the University’s existing program, CORE, influenced its elements. Section II.B.4 covers issues associated with admissions and enrollment planning and management. Section II.B.5 describes the many initiatives undertaken to support graduate education, highlighted as a major institutional priority in the University’s Strategic Plan. This section concludes with an analysis of ongoing efforts to develop a solid institutional structure for learning outcomes assessment as the basis for improvements to our academic programs.

Section III contains a qualitative discussion of some of the key challenges and opportunities facing the University over the next five years. This section is focused on four major themes: enrollment planning and delivery of instruction within the context set by the University System of Maryland’s 2020 Strategic Plan, international engagement, planning around the physical environment of the campus, and the very recent development of a structured partnership with the University of Maryland, Baltimore to stimulate opportunities of interest to both campuses.

Section IV contains a very brief overview of enrollment and financial trends. Detailed enrollment projections are included as Appendix J. Audited financial statements are provided as companion documents.

Section V focuses on linkages throughout the university between institutional effectiveness and student learning, but most notably on our processes to assess student learning outcomes and use them to facilitate continuing improvements to our offerings in both undergraduate and graduate education. Four broad areas are discussed in which outcomes assessment is now embedded in processes associated with curriculum revision: program management and review, graduate outcomes assessment, curriculum management and general education.

Finally, Section VI highlights a few specific examples in which linked institutional planning and budgeting processes, most specifically the annual 2% budget reallocation process adopted after the development of the Strategic Plan, has enabled funds for directed initiatives. Much of the discussion of the reallocation process is in Section II, so Section VI highlights just a few specific initiatives, including funds provided to develop courses for the new General Education program, resources to support major
research initiatives, and special education offerings such as new living learning programs and the
Blended Learning Initiative. It concludes with examples of how our comprehensive review of doctoral
programs is feeding back to curriculum revision.