



**OPERATING BUDGET TESTIMONY
BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY**

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Operating Budget Testimony Bowie State University FY 2016

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**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON
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Bowie State University | FY 2016 Operating Budget Testimony

Good afternoon Madam Chair and members of the subcommittee. It is my pleasure to speak with you today on behalf of Bowie State University in support of the Governor's FY 2016 proposed operating budget for the University System of Maryland (USM) of which Bowie State is a member institution.

I want to first thank the members of this subcommittee and the entire General Assembly for its support of higher education over the years. With the serious budget challenges facing the state, along with competing demands for precious state resources, I understand that tough choices must be made in order to balance the budget. As you deliberate on the FY 2016 operating budget, I hope you will consider the critical role that higher education plays in helping the state's economic recovery and promoting future growth. I am happy to share some of Bowie State University's contributions to this effort.

It has been two years since I last spoke before this subcommittee. I am now in my 9th year as president, and Bowie State is in its 150th year as Maryland's oldest historically black institution. Our sesquicentennial anniversary brings much to celebrate. What began as a normal school founded by the

Baltimore Association for the Moral and Educational Improvement of Colored People to train black teachers has grown into a thriving comprehensive university. Today, Bowie State offers 22 undergraduate majors, 19 master's programs, 2 doctoral programs, and several certificate programs. We serve nearly 5,700 students with a rigorous academic program and the individual support they need to be prepared to compete in a changing world. We have strong programs in science, technology and liberal arts designed to prepare leaders for the careers of the future.

Our highest priority is academic excellence—the educational achievements of our students, including their intellectual growth, and the scholarly

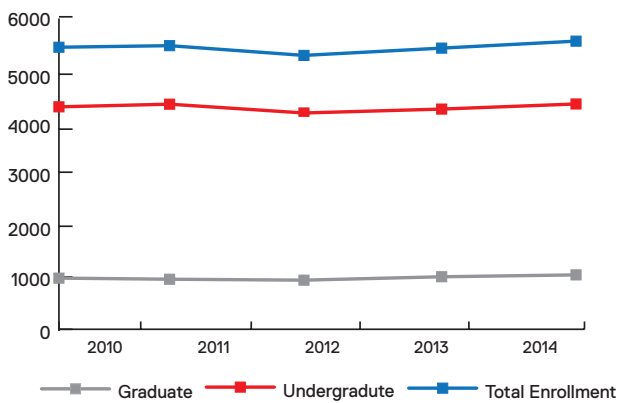


and pedagogical achievements of our faculty members. With your support and the support of the Governor, our faculty and staff have worked diligently in support of this priority. We are also making significant progress toward meeting important goals of the state. Our enrollment is growing, we are awarding more degrees than ever before, and we are enhancing workforce development in the state, all while maintaining our commitment to access and academic excellence.

Enrollment Growth and Degree Completion

Over the past five fall semesters, Bowie State's total

Fall Headcount Enrollment Trends 2010–2014



headcount enrollment grew by two percent. The undergraduate student body rose by one percent, and graduate enrollment expanded by five percent. Our enrollment increases at the undergraduate level were fueled by first-time cohort retention rates that exceeded previous levels, and improved progression rates of juniors moving to senior status (67% to 74%) and seniors who graduated (54% to 65%).

U.S. News & World Report recently reported that among all public institutions, only 72.3 percent of students on average return for sophomore year, and an average 74.4 percent of students come back

at private institutions.

Our second-year retention rate for the 2013 cohort was 74 percent, which placed Bowie State among the top 12 schools of more than 100 HBCUs where first-year students returned for a second year at this higher-than-average rate.

Our enrollment growth can also be attributed to significant increases in transfer students, aided by increased collaborations with community colleges. Between 2010 and 2014, our transfer student enrollment increased by 48 percent. Graduate student enrollment has also grown, bolstered by foreign student placements. In the past two years, we welcomed students from Saudi Arabia, India, Nigeria, Cameroon, Pakistan, and Turkey to study at Bowie State, often in STEM disciplines.

Bowie State continues to positively contribute towards the state's goal of increasing the proportion of college-educated Marylanders to 55 percent by 2025. Bowie State conferred 683 bachelor degrees in 2011 and 741 in 2014. Every year in between, we have increased the number of degrees awarded, and exceeded the projections of the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

Bachelor's Degrees Awarded

Fiscal Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
BSU Actual Bachelor's Degrees	683	688	739	741
MHEC Degree Projections	622	638	655	672
Actual Minus Projection	61+	50+	84+	69+

We also award over 280 master's degrees and 7–10 doctorates per year, including our first doctoral degree in computer science in 2013.



Workforce Development and Academic Excellence

In addition to our efforts to increase the number of Marylanders with bachelor’s degrees, we continue to enroll and graduate students in critical high-demand workforce areas like nursing. Constrained by a small facility with inadequate laboratory space, we are unable to expand our capacity substantially. In the past two years, however, we have worked hard to enhance our program and make a significant contribution to workforce development in the critical field of nursing despite these limitations. Our online RN to BSN program and MSN family nurse practitioner concentration offerings at the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center (SMHEC) have enabled us to grow our undergraduate enrollment 25 percent, and our graduate enrollment 28 percent. We

are pleased to be able to continue delivering our nurse educator curriculum at SMHEC.

We recently began offering two advanced certificate programs to train nurse practitioners and nurse educators, offering increased opportunities for nursing professionals to gain more specialized training to serve the health care needs in our region. We anticipate that once our new Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Nursing building is completed the additional lab and classroom space will allow us to produce even more nurses and other STEM graduates.

Bowie State is making impressive strides within critical STEM fields. Our fall 2014 undergraduate and graduate STEM enrollment was higher than the previous two years, as was the number of degrees awards for the same time period.

Trends in Enrollment and Degrees Awarded in STEM and Nursing

	Fall Enrollment				FY Degrees Awarded		
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
STEM							
Undergraduate	610	589	597	680	74	77	80
Graduate	127	127	189	235	30	31	34
NURSING							
Undergraduate	492	563	647	614	66	69	84
Graduate	96	115	132	123	22	28	53

Across the state and the nation, companies report more STEM jobs available than there are persons with the right skills to fill them. We are committed to graduating more students in the STEM disciplines to help meet the state’s critical workforce needs and prepare students for jobs of the future. Some of our efforts include the development of a signature program to create more real-world learning opportunities for our students while building a pipeline for students from Prince George’s county schools to flow into STEM programs at Bowie State, and ultimately into jobs in the region.

With the help of industry-leading Lockheed Martin, Bowie State has opened doors for students to develop solutions to real-world problems while working with expert faculty and other technology professionals. The Education Innovation Initiative (EI²) is Bowie State’s signature pre-K-20 science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) academic enrichment program that is grounded in advocacy for early career pathway exposure amongst under-represented students in Prince George’s County. Through the use of a multidisciplinary approach to discovery-based learning, EI² provides students with increased access to hands-on work experience that produces next generation solutions. The program, the brainchild of a Bowie State alumnus, has also expanded opportunities for future corporate and government partnerships that will prepare students for leadership positions in STEAM fields.

EI² enhances our ability to graduate more students with skill sets to excel in the workforce of tomorrow, and helps close the gap in underrepresented populations in STEAM career fields. Through the use of capstone challenges, students will understand the business value of innovative solutions in technology and advance beyond traditional research to benefit

from work simulations. Students will also be immersed in problems that are tightly coupled with entrepreneurial principles that highlight the knowledge required to successfully transition from a proposed concept to an operational solution.

We are proud to have been designated a Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education by the Department of Homeland Security and the National Security Agency, an affirmation that our programs are meeting the highest standards of excellence in preparing graduates for work in the critical cybersecurity industry. As part of a new consortium of 13 HBCUs that was awarded a five-year, \$25 million grant by the U.S. Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration, Bowie State will receive \$1.2 million to expand our cybersecurity curriculum and enhance our capacity to train even more students for cybersecurity careers. With support from a National Science Foundation grant, we recently launched an Applied Biotechnology Initiative to increase student training in basic and advanced interdisciplinary concepts and laboratory skills in biotechnology as they pursue their biology degree. These critical skills will help prepare our students for careers in the biotechnology field.





Our criminal justice program is one of our fastest-growing academic disciplines. Students explore contemporary issues such as global and domestic security, white-collar crime and juvenile delinquency, preparing for careers as investigators, forensic science technicians and criminologists. The program features a fully functioning forensics lab. Graduates with hands-on investigative experience are in high demand in law enforcement agencies, homeland security and drug enforcement agencies. To meet the workforce demand in Anne Arundel, Baltimore and Montgomery counties, we have forged partnerships with the community colleges in these counties to allow their graduates with associate degrees in criminal justice to continue their education at Bowie State by transferring up to 65 credits towards the Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice. I am pleased that we are also able to offer this high-demand program along with nursing at SMHEC, helping to meet workforce demands in southern Maryland.

Our on-campus business incubator operated in partnership with the city of Bowie is the first of its kind on an HBCU campus. It gives students in our College of Business direct access to local entrepreneurs. The first graduate of the incubator was a technology firm started by a recent Bowie State graduate.

We began an Entrepreneurship Academy in 2013 to provide a pathway of practical learning opportunities to help college and high school students develop their own businesses. This past fall, we launched the Student Business Hatchery, providing workspace and support for students aspiring to become entrepreneurs.

Teacher education is at the core of our history. We take tremendous pride in our 58-year legacy of continuous accreditation of our College of Education by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Since our founding, Bowie State University has contributed significantly to the education of teachers throughout the state of Maryland, producing graduates who have excelled in the profession. Ms. Beatrice Payne, Bowie State University's oldest living alumna, graduated in 1928 and went on to become a special education teacher and teaching principal. She recently noted that her experience at Bowie prepared her for a career in education, stating that "the teachers at Bowie really taught us and taught us well." Recognizing the tremendous need for teachers as well as highly trained principals in the state of Maryland, we recently launched an Aspiring Leadership Program for Student Success, a principal training program developed through a partnership with the Prince George's County Public School System. With a \$217,000 grant from the school system, we shortened our two-year Administrator I Certification program to one year. Offered exclusively to the educators in county schools, the program is designed to help expand the pipeline of school leaders.

With support from the U.S. Department of Education, Bowie State is aggressively meeting the challenge of producing more teachers and educational leaders who are equipped to serve increasingly diverse populations throughout the state. Our Culturally Responsive Leaders in Special Education (CRELSE) project will help prepare 15 leaders with a doctor of education (Ed.D.) in educational leadership with specific emphasis in special education leadership. Our Project Early Childhood Engagement Center (ECEC) provides support for special educators to enable them to serve culturally and linguistically diverse young students with disabilities. Participants in the ECEC will be able to earn dual certification in early childhood education and special education with training in working with English language learners and their families.

Student Engagement

In the fall of 2013, we opened a new Student Center. It is located in the heart of campus and offers our students a larger bookstore, expanded dining facilities, and meeting and conference spaces. It features solar-powered charging stations and is the first HBCU LEED Gold-certified student center in the nation. Studies have shown that students who are actively involved in campus life are more likely to persist and graduate. Our new Student Center is another important part of our efforts to retain our students.

This semester, Bowie State University students interested in exploring international opportunities for academic research and professional study can apply for the China Study Abroad Scholarship through the HBCUs-China Network. Bowie State is one of eight founding HBCU members of the network. The Chinese Ministry of Education awards scholarships to assist students attending HBCUs with the cost of studying

As a comprehensive university committed to teaching excellence, the heart of our institution is our faculty who are key to our effort to improve student success. Our faculty continues to explore opportunities to redesign courses and bring technology into the classroom in support of this effort. One of our professors, Allissa Richardson, was named a 2013 Apple Distinguished Educator for her creative teaching style and innovations in mobile journalism. As one of five 2014 Visiting Fellows at Harvard University's prestigious Nieman Foundation for Journalism, she recently developed a massive open online course (MOOC) to teach veteran journalists, citizens and journalism students to effectively report the news using mobile devices.



in China for periods of three weeks to one year. The HBCUs-China Network responds to the regional and economic development needs of the United States and China. It promotes the cultural and educational exchange of students from HBCUs and Chinese universities. Interest among Bowie State students has exceeded our expectations. We look forward to our students taking advantage of this exciting opportunity.

We continue to see promising results from our Scholar's Studio learning communities, where freshman students from a variety of disciplines take general education classes together for a semester, creating a supportive environment where they are learning through an integration of the core concepts of their courses. Starting as a pilot project with one student cohort in 2009, the Scholar's Studio has grown into an annual program providing extra support for students through transformative learning experiences. Students work on problem-solving projects that span the disciplines and require collaboration. The Scholar's Studio professors also engage in collaborative learning with regular meetings where they share best practices. As they continually reflect on the curriculum with their peers throughout the semester, they are better able to adapt to students' needs. The professors engage the students in their research interests, with an emphasis on real-world discovery.

Conclusion

I am proud of the many contributions Bowie State University is making to support the college completion and workforce development goals of the state. These goals are completely aligned with our mission. Bowie State was founded on the principle of providing access to educational opportunity for populations to whom it was denied. As we continue our efforts to become

one of the best comprehensive universities in the nation, we remain committed to providing access to high-quality educational programs for Marylanders. Now, perhaps more than ever, we recognize that higher education is the gateway to the middle class, to economic and social stability, and to a higher quality of life. It is also clear that Maryland's economic recovery and growth, and indeed the nation's competitiveness, are directly tied to our ability to produce a highly skilled, well-educated populace.

Our efforts to recruit, retain and graduate students who are prepared for the challenges of the new global workplace depend upon our ability to hire and retain talented faculty and staff to deliver the high-quality academic programs and support services our students deserve. Like other state employees, Bowie State faculty and staff did not receive cost-of-living or merit pay increases during FY 2010 – 2012. The Governor's allowance for FY 2016 does not provide funding for COLA or merit increases, and would rescind the COLA provided on January 1, 2015.

While we appreciate the very difficult fiscal situation the state faces, we acknowledge the hard work of our faculty and staff who must once again do even more at a time when salaries will remain flat or be reduced. The faculty and staff of Bowie State are extremely dedicated to our mission and to ensuring student success. Notwithstanding the state's fiscal crisis, we remain committed to doing our part to move the state forward. I respectfully urge you to support the Governor's proposed budget for FY 2016.

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Bowie State University | FY 2016 Responses to DLS Requests for Comment

The President should comment on if efforts to increase the graduation rates of the FT/FT 2007 cohort will be successful in improving the success of students to at least the same level as those prior to the 2006 cohort.

Response: The goal that undergirds our strategic plan is to improve our six-year graduation rate. Five years ago, we declared that we would strive to attain a 60% six-year graduation rate. This remains our goal.

We understand that in order to raise our graduation rates, we must do everything we can to retain more students beyond the freshman year. Several BSU initiatives designed to improve retention have been in place since fall 2009. These efforts include expanding Bulldog Academy participation (a summer bridge program), launching several academic recovery programs to specific student groups through the Academic Advising Center and in each of the Colleges, implementing iCAN (an early alert program), increasing institutional financial aid and intensifying tutoring services. These efforts are having an impact on first-time freshmen cohorts since 2008 (see table below). The second year retention rate for the 2013 cohort rose to 74 percent. The third year retention rate for the 2012 cohort was 62 percent — the highest level since 2005. The 2011 fourth year retention rate was 53 percent — up from 49 percent.

We are convinced that our efforts to increase the graduation rates of the FT/FT 2007 cohort will positively impact the success of students in future years. We will be disappointed if we do not surpass the pre-2006 levels. Given the most recent developments with respect to retention, we are confident that our efforts will continue to pay significant dividends.

Cohort 5-Year Retention Rate

Cohort Year	Cohort Size	RETENTION RATES		
		2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year
2005	923	71%	56%	45%
2006	765	71%	54%	49%
2007	820	69%	57%	47%
2008	664	69%	54%	47%
2009	635	71%	59%	53%
2010	608	75%	57%	49%
2011	573	71%	57%	53%
2012	477	70%	62%	
2013	625	74%		

Additionally, we are on the precipice of launching a data analytics program designed to better inform our intervention/graduation rate enhancement strategies. As we better understand the factors associated with student success, we will refine our strategies.

The President should comment on what is attributed to [the] drop in E & R expenditures.

Response: Our review of the IPEDS data used in calculating E&R expenditures shows the primary reason for the decrease in E&R expenditures between FY 2009 and FY 2010 was due to the university having multiple facility renewal and renovation projects in progress during FY 2009. This resulted in the FY 2009 expenditures for operations and maintenance being abnormally high for the institution. In FY 2010, these expenditures decreased by approximately \$4.1 million, returning to normal levels. We also had numerous vacant positions totaling \$1.8 million in the category of Institutional Support, and we reclassified some grant expenditures from other program categories to the category of Institutional Support.

The President should comment on the institutional priorities when determining how the budget reductions will be allocated over the program areas and in particular minimizing the impact on financial aid.

Response: As we prepare for significant reductions in our operating budget for FY 2016, we are very concerned about our ability to address our number one priority – improving our graduation rate and boosting enrollment. Our plan for addressing the reductions includes eliminating several vacant positions which are critical to our mission, reducing our operating budget as well as our budget for facilities renewal (deferred maintenance). These reductions will limit the availability of services needed to support and maintain a high-quality academic environment. Despite this very challenging situation, we remain committed to doing what we can to help our students persist through graduation. Accordingly, our plan does not include cuts to our financial aid budget.

We must delay progress on implementing our new EI² signature program as part of our efforts to improve the University’s academic program inventory, which is another institutional priority. In addition, our fundraising efforts and efforts to secure grants and contracts will suffer as a result of the budget reductions.

...[T]he President should comment on if other programs or initiatives to improve student success are being considered to be used in lieu of the BDA [Bulldog Academy].

Response: One of the strategies we have emphasized in recent years is the Bulldog Academy. During the first five years (2008-2012), participation was quite low because of cost. Students who would have benefitted from this important pre-college experience did not have the necessary financial resources. In 2013 this changed because the university received enhancement funds that were used to operate the Academy by absorbing a large share of the costs. Thus, as noted by the Legislative Analyst, participation in the academy increased. In 2013, 122 students or 19.5 percent of the freshman class enrolled in the Bulldog Academy. In 2014, 84 students of 14.1 percent of the freshman class enrolled. The decline was due in part to the unexpected and ill-timed resignation of the Bulldog Academy Director. Our recruitment of participants was compromised, resulting in an enrollment decline over the previous year.

What stands out in Exhibit 13 in the analysis is the performance of the BDA students with respect to credits earned. In 2011, 2012, and 2013, the progression of students in BDA is significantly higher than non-Bulldog Academy students. This is quite important because our data show that progression is as significant as retention with respect to improving graduation rates, i.e., student success. In the analysis, attention is drawn to the relatively equal retention rates displayed by Bulldog Academy and non-Bulldog Academy students. We are convinced that progression (number of credits completed) has a significant relationship to degree completion. Moreover, we are more likely to reduce the time to degree experienced by BSU students.

We are concerned that we have not attained a higher Bulldog Academy participation rate. We need to touch a larger share of our first-time, full-time population during the Bulldog Academy. This objective is the pressing and urgent focus of the BDA Director and the Director of Admissions. We are certain to bolster both the retention and progression rates of these students. This will undoubtedly positively impact their plans to attain the undergraduate degree.



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