

## Concluding Remarks and Summary of Recommendations

In preparing this Self-Study Report, the seven working groups carried out a comprehensive review of the university’s documents, policies, procedures, and informal practices to evaluate whether the university meets the criteria for accreditation. In all cases, the working groups concluded that the criteria have been met. The working groups also identified a number of areas for improvement. The eleven recommendations in table below are themes that emerged from the working group reports, particularly those that either cut across multiple standards or those that, if pursued, have the most immediate potential for continued improvement of the university. Each of the recommendations can be found within the relevant standards indicated in the table, in order to highlight the context from which each recommendation has emerged.

### Overview of Recommendations emerging from the Self Study

Number	Recommendation	Relevant Standard
1	<b>Develop a “policy on policies and procedures”</b> that explains how policies are created and revised, and that calls for regular reviews of existing policies and procedures. An example of such a policy with the USM is <a href="#">that of Towson University</a> .	<b>II: Ethics and Integrity</b>
2	<b>Improve methods to disseminate and increase awareness of important policies and procedures among all of its constituencies.</b> This includes providing standardized and up-to-date information and resources, such as regarding special needs, specialized programs and differential tuition for majors, to undergraduate and graduate students across the university. It may be particularly helpful to integrate data from central databases (e.g., a single, integrated customer relationship management (CRM) system) so that student-facing websites are automatically updated with curricular changes and other changes to degree requirements.	<b>II: Ethics and Integrity</b> <b>III: Design and Delivery of Student Learning Experience</b>
3	<b>Strengthen the university's efforts to hire and retain underrepresented minority faculty.</b> Although our current policies are firmly grounded in ethics and integrity, the university should continue to move forward with efforts in recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority faculty, if there is to be significant progress. Efforts should include review of existing practices as well as revision of policies.	<b>II: Ethics and Integrity</b>

4	<p><b>Continue to integrate and clarify the roles of tenure track faculty, professional track faculty, and librarians, and develop strategies to redress salary compression.</b>                  The policies and procedures for PTK faculty around salary adjustments, workload, professional development, and participation in the university’s shared governance process, lag those for TTK and permanent status faculty and for staff.</p>	<p><b>II: Ethics and Integrity</b></p> <p><b>VII: Governance and Leadership</b></p>
5	<p><b>Develop a coordinated approach to assessing the impact of programs and services supporting educational excellence</b> (e.g., TLTC, learning communities, General Education faculty boards, instructional grants), and of current programs and courses designed to help students transition to life at the university (e.g., UNIV 100 courses, new student orientation).</p>	<p><b>III: Design and Delivery of Student Learning Experience</b></p> <p><b>IV: Support of the Student Experience</b></p>
6	<p><b>Develop a more intentional and collaborative approach to student success that is inclusive of faculty, advising (colleges), and programs within the Division of Student Affairs</b> (e.g. Counseling Center –learning assistance and disability support services, Health Center, Resident Life). Streamline processes for student advising and support across colleges, including initiatives for career readiness. Update and unify advising technology and resources to create a streamlined and comprehensive advising experience for students and advisors across campus. In addition, an evaluation should be conducted on how students who are not adequately prepared for their educational goals are identified, placed, and supported. Evaluate the utility of data analytics tools to better assess the student experience.</p>	<p><b>IV: Support of the Student Experience</b></p>
7	<p><b>Standardize the university’s data governance practices</b> at the steward, manager, and user level. Work to mitigate procedural differences that could be harmful (including procedures for training understanding of privacy and release of student data, procedures for parent interaction and boundaries around data, medical/health records, procedures for procurement of student data systems (e.g. screening process, legal counsel, etc), and implementation of actual data security practices by users.</p>	<p><b>IV: Support of the Student Experience</b></p>

8	<p><b>Standardize the process of articulating desired learning outcomes, assessing outcomes, and using outcomes to inform program and curriculum changes.</b> Structured template reports could be utilized to establish more consistency across units. The university should provide increased support (e.g., workshops, resources, faculty learning communities) to faculty in assessment of student learning outcomes. We recommend that the Graduate School develop a plan for how to assess graduate student learning outcomes at the campus level and guidance on how to assess these at the program level.</p>	<p><b>III: Design and Delivery of Student Learning Experience</b></p> <p><b>V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment</b></p>
9	<p><b>Strengthen the university’s commitment to the practice of appropriately allocating resources,</b> so that units and divisions can operate effectively and are able to align themselves with the institution's mission and strategic goals.</p>	<p><b>VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement</b></p>
10	<p><b>Complete the analysis of the recommendations to identify new revenues and efficiencies and implement those that are deemed feasible.</b> This should include a review of revenue allocation policies and practices so that revenues and expenses will be equitably and transparently aligned at the central and programmatic levels.</p>	<p><b>VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement</b></p>
11	<p><b>Develop a robust, centralized budget model that facilitates transparent resource allocation, accurate multi-year projections, and data driven decisions consistent with the university’s strategic goals and mission.</b> This should include developing a strategy to identify resources, over multiple years, to invest in IT infrastructure and to maintain aging buildings. The university should develop more training for staff which is focused on high level use of financial and administrative systems. The university must continue efforts to improve data structures and make the data accessible, to facilitate the use of a “business intelligence” tool, and to support other efforts to implement financial, administrative, and academic improvements.</p>	<p><b>VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement</b></p>