

University of Mary Washington
State of the University
August 2006
Remarks by President William Frawley

Colleagues: Thank you for that kind introduction and the warm welcome. I must say that in the short time I have been at UMW and Fredericksburg, my family and I have experienced a remarkable spirit of care and thoughtfulness. I can't tell you how much we appreciate the welcoming attitude accorded us at every turn: it certainly says something key about UMW and about the city.

I would like to do two broad things in this presentation: discuss with you what UMW looks like at present and then lay out 10 ideas that I propose to guide us through both this year and in the near term. But before I do so, I would like to acknowledge four signal events in the institution that have gotten us to our present state and are illustrative of how we can and must move to the future.

First, let me reaffirm the importance of our excellent faculty and give special recognition to our new professors. Institutions can live without buildings or even books, but not without people – and it is these new terrifically accomplished faculty on whom we all are pinning our hopes. Please join with me in applauding, again, our new faculty.

Let me also introduce our new Vice President for Strategy and Policy, Nina Mikhalevsky. Dr. Mikhalevsky comes to us with a long record of academic and administrative accomplishment. She has already shown herself to be, in the first weeks, the Chief Planning Officer that UMW has long sought.

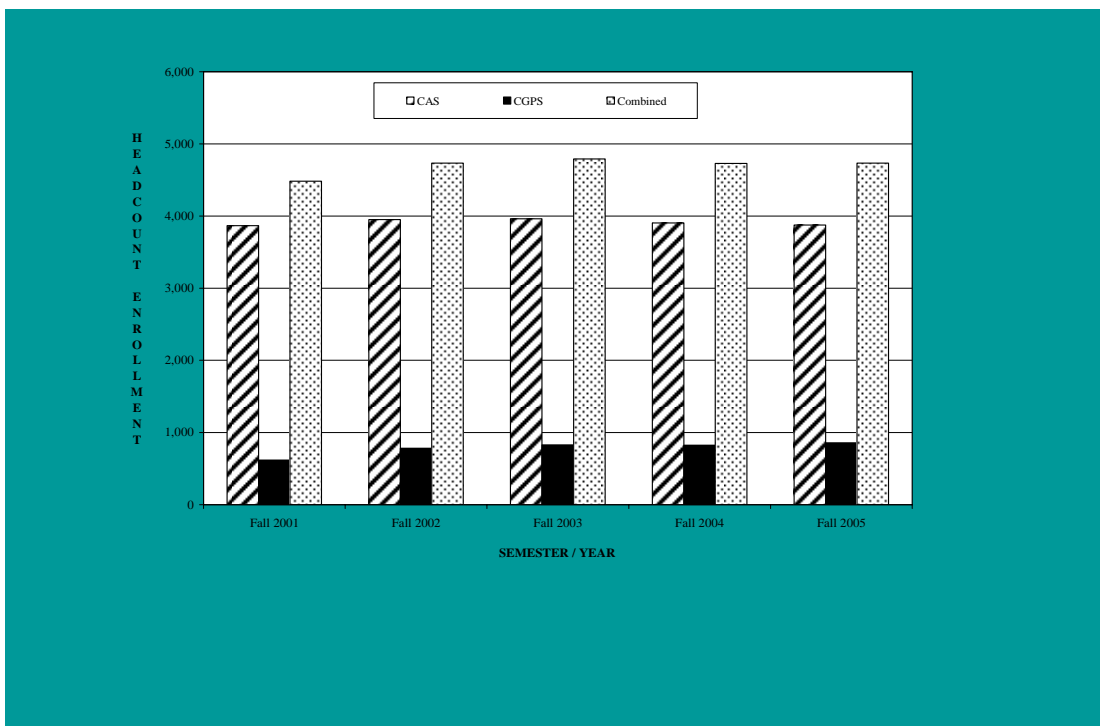
In case you have not seen, UMW received a state appropriation of \$22 million, a 35% increase over the last allocation and the largest percentage increase in the state. While this is evidence that many know that we are doing the right things, it is also testimony to the assiduous efforts of VP Rick Hurley, who pounded the lobbying beat relentlessly in Richmond this past spring to make this happen. We owe Rick a round of applause for his tireless and effective work.

Finally, as you all have probably seen, the US News rankings have just come out. University Presidents usually respond to these rankings by saying that they don't matter or somehow do not reflect the institution. I am a contrarian: built as they are on real categories, they do say something about the stock, prestige, and reputation of an institution. The 2007 *U.S. News & World Report* lists Mary Washington sixth among southern institutions in the Universities - Master's category -- up from eighth place. We rank second among public institutions in the Master's South schools and are praised for our graduation rate. I think we deserve to recognize the whole UMW community for these achievements. Of course in that latter category, we are second to a school somewhat west of here with just a slightly better football team. And four of the five schools above us in the first category are private and so unconstrained in ways that we are

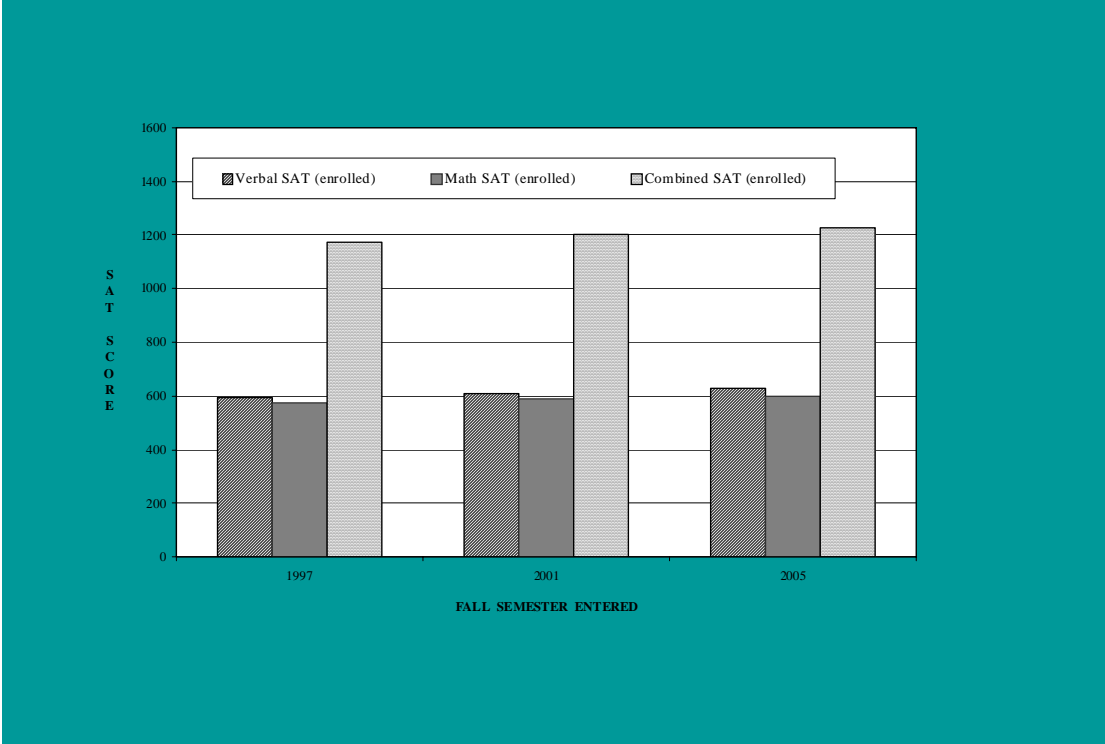
otherwise limited. When I lay out my ten ideas for the present into the future, I hope you will agree that we can move quickly past these competitors because our aspirants – the Davidsons, the Wesleyans, the Colgates -- are a much different set of institutions.

Now to where we are presently as an institution. I feel some apprehensiveness remarking on the current state of UMW since, after all, this is a state I have inherited not helped build. But my anxiety disappears when I say that the state of UMW is healthy and good. We can see this in many ways.

Here is a picture of our enrollment. You will see that we have strong student body in numbers, bolstered not only by our liberal arts and sciences reputation but also by our increasing effectiveness and hence demand for graduate and professional education:

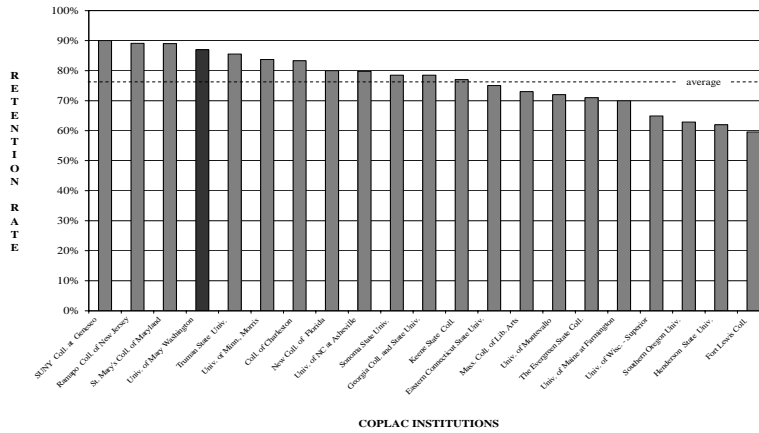


These numbers are matched by an equally impressive set of numbers on student characteristics. Here are the parameters of our freshman class:

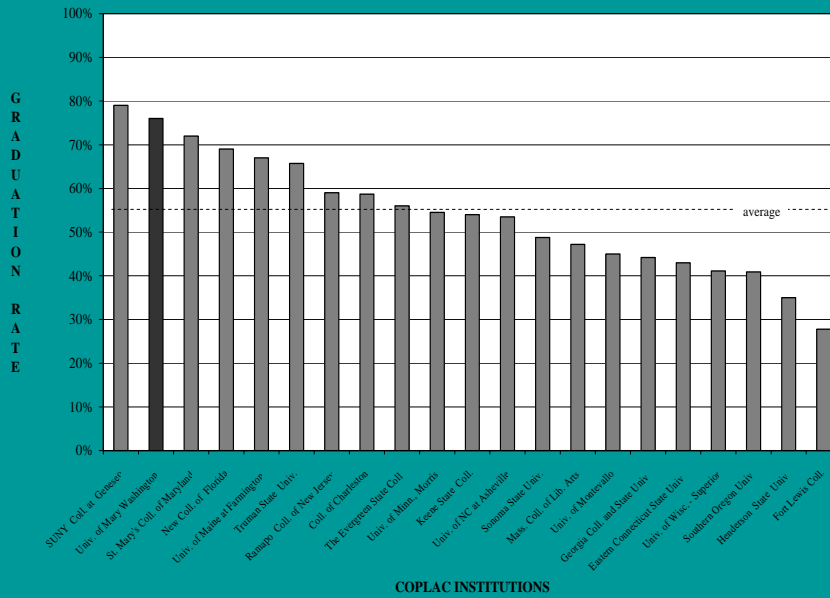


Our retention rates and graduation rates are more than respectable, as you can see in these comparative charts of schools in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC):

FRESHMAN-TO-SOPHOMORE RETENTION RATE FOR B.A./B.S. DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS AT COPLAC INSTITUTIONS (FALL 2003 ENTERING COHORT)

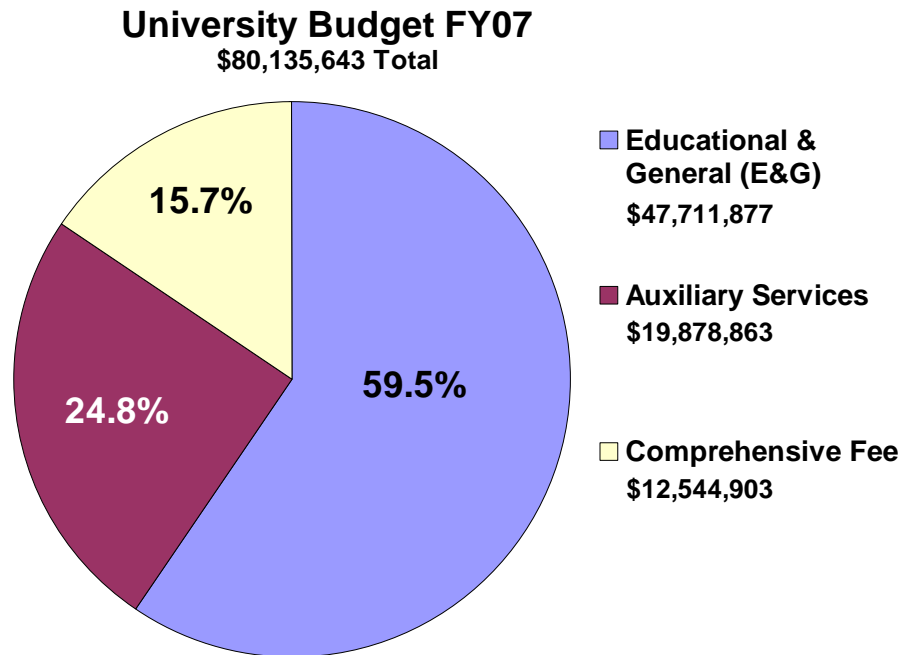


O'PAIR



Still, if you study these figures and related ones closely and over time, and look at other measures, you will note a relatively constant performance. And this trend, while a strong base, is a flag for us to come together for common work toward the future, a project I will discuss more in a second.

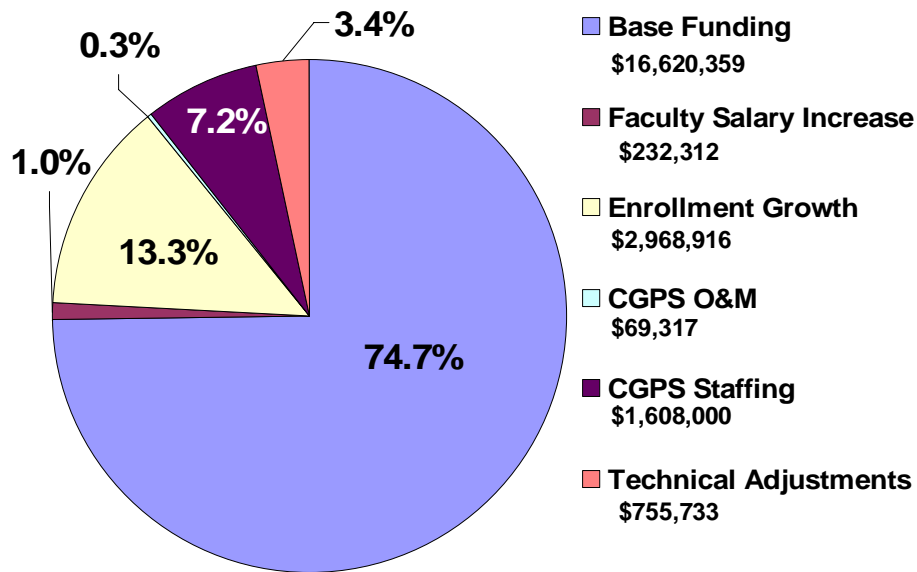
Financially, UMW is solid. With an \$80 million budget, new appropriations from the state, and a plan for capital funds -- both state appropriated and available for borrowing -- we are in a position to advance significantly:



Indeed, our state appropriation assists us greatly:

State Funding FY07

\$22,254,637



Granted, we must work on salaries and broader benefits (such as housing), But we must acknowledge that there is no silver bullet for these items; incisive work with the state and imaginative approaches to recruitment and benefit packages are key. I assure you these matters are on the front burner.

We would not attract good students and have a solid fiscal picture were it not for our faculty. Here is a brief synopsis of some major faculty accomplishments over the past year:

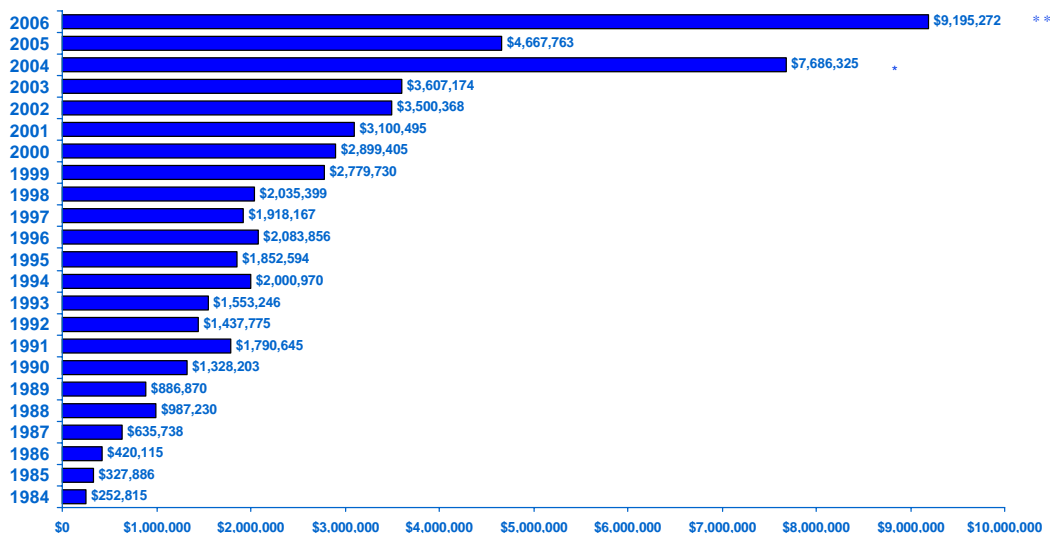
FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2005-2006

- Faculty gave more than 70 presentations at professional meetings including presentations at conferences held in Austria, China, Cuba, Germany, Hungary and Turkey.
- At least 36 articles were published and a number of faculty recently published books including Jason Davidson, Steven Greenlaw, Debra Schleef, Elizabeth Freund Larus, Martha Fickett, Stephen Farnsworth, Jack Bales and Medhi Aminrazavi.
- Three faculty were awarded Fulbright Fellowships, Christopher Kilmartin, Suzanne de Janasz and Stephen Farnsworth.
- Claudia Emerson received the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry.
- A number of faculty received external grants including Keith Mellinger, Craig Naylor, Medhi Aminrazavi, Doug Sanford, Alan Griffith, and Marie Sheckels.
- Faculty developed new programs:
 - Master of Science in Management Information Systems
 - Master of Business Administration: Public Administration
 - Dual Graduate Degree: MSMIS/MBA
 - Master of Education in Math Education
 - Master of Education: Literacy Specialist

I list these achievements not to be exclusive but to be representative. We teach well -- as evidenced by the student accomplishments throughout the UMW websites that match these faculty achievements -- and we are engaged in professional life, and we are visible and recognized.

Such achievements help me a great deal in one of my obligations as president: to match our passions with the passions of those interested in helping the university advance. Our vigorous and talented advancement staff has raised our endowment values and our annual giving, as you can see on the following slides:

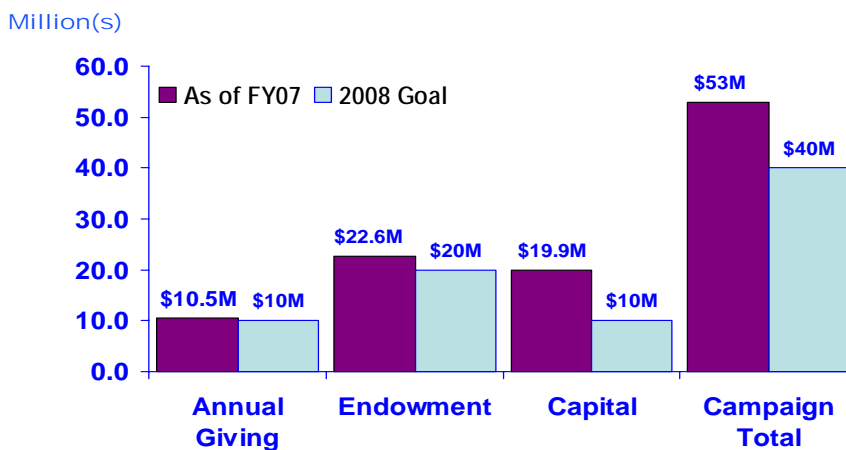
Total Contributions Report (1984-2006) University of Mary Washington



* Includes \$4.5 million gift of land in Stafford, Virginia

** Includes \$4.1 million gift of land in Stafford, Virginia

Centennial Campaign Progress: Cash, Pledges, and Deferred Giving

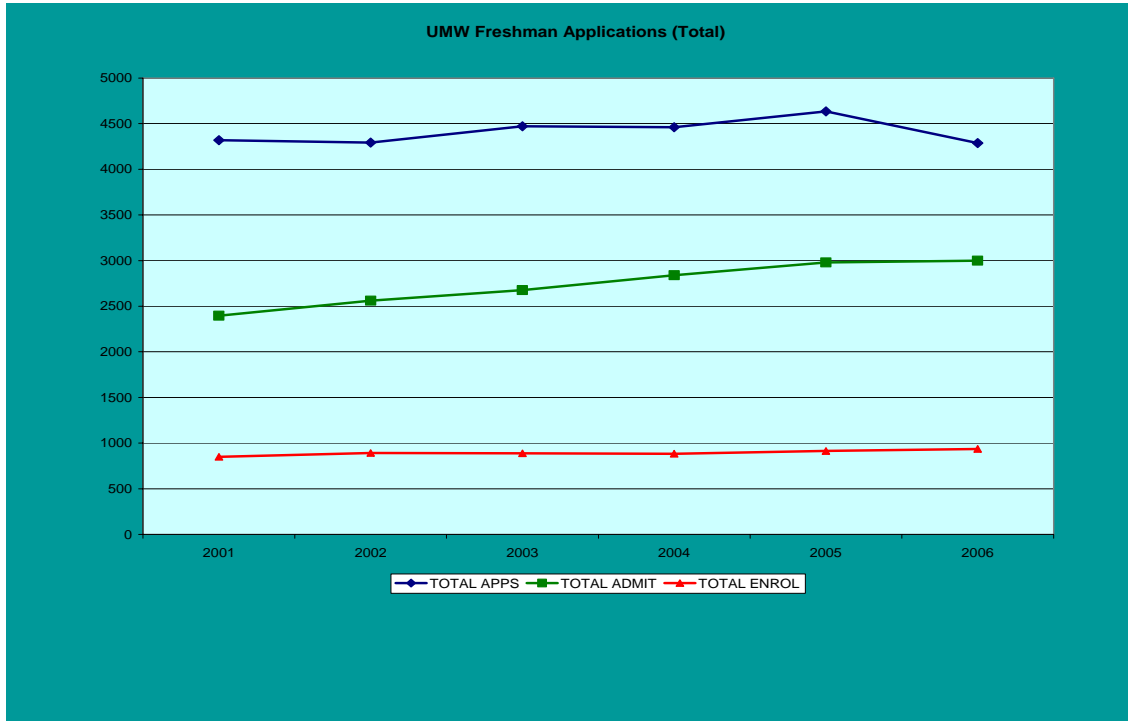


Numbers updated 8/21/2006

Now while the state of UMW is good, so is the state of our competitors. Virginia is one of the most competitive states for higher education. For every UMW, there is a GMU or

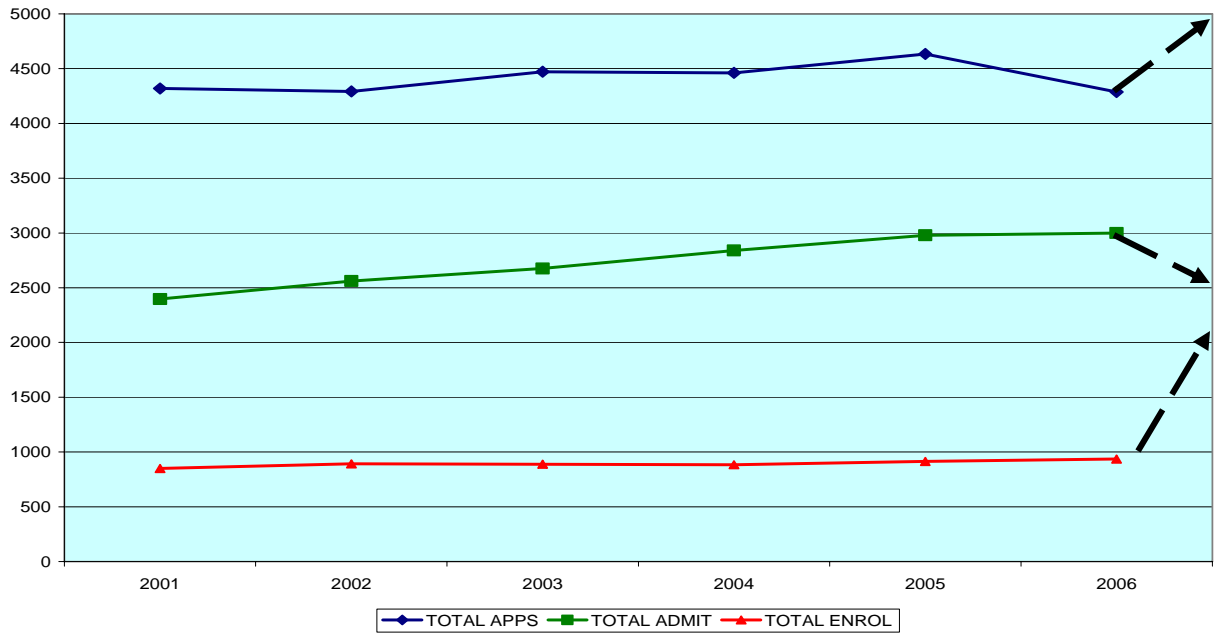
VCU or JMU or CNU or a Longwood at the door, not to mention every Elon, Richmond, and Middlebury, and Colgate. Many of our competitors have advanced by choosing to do what we have done so well over the years. I want to show you how and why we can and have to be better and set the new trend.

You will see on the following slide that our momentum has been good:



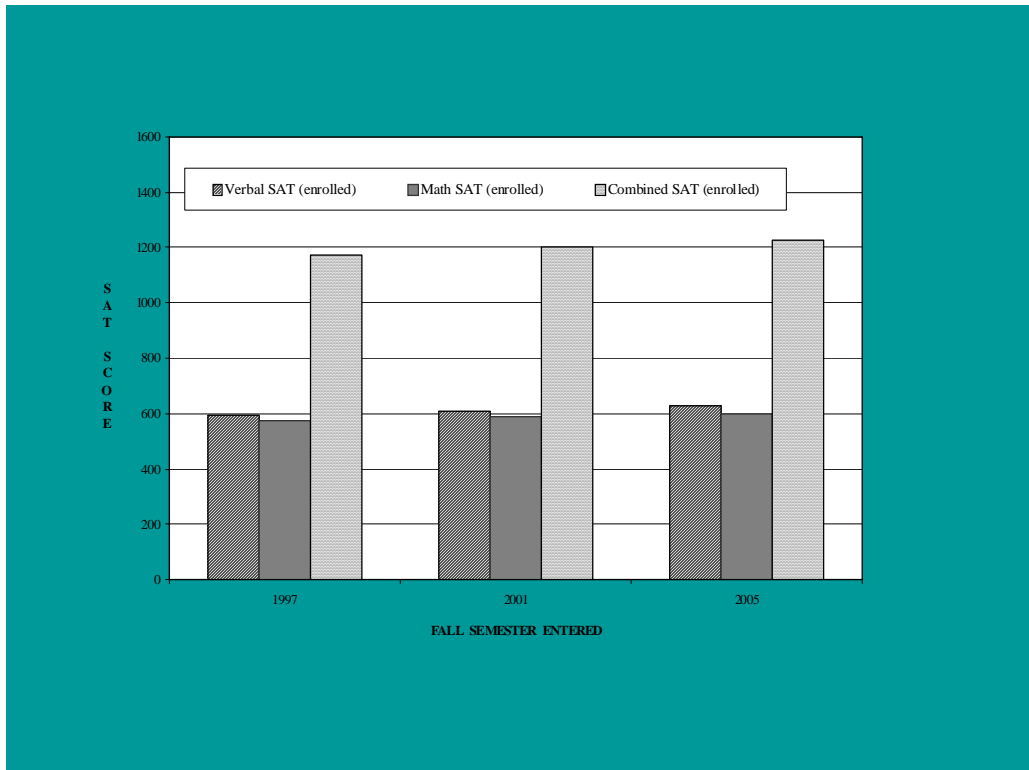
But in order for UMW to advance in to the cohort of Wesleyan, Davidson, Colgate etc., these graphs must begin to look as follows:

UMW Freshman Applications (Total)



This is a situation of high demand, high selectivity, and high yield. One of our challenges is that we have come to a point, from a decade or so ago, where we have to accept about one more student for every one we get. The competition is stiffer, and we need to recognize this, and aggressively reassert ourselves.

Moreover, when you look at our entering class, and I reproduce the slide here from the previous, our characteristics have not changed much in 10 years (some of our private school competitors' average entering SAT is lower, and yet ranked higher than we are):



And when you look at where we appear overall in our COPLAC group, we rank very much near the average in engagement, student life, expectations, and other core measures of student experience.

Now I don't think us of as like the COPLAC group in many ways. I think of our real aspirants as the best liberal arts and sciences schools in the country – we should be among the Wesleyans, Bowdoins, and the Davidsons. But to do that, we need to increase our first to second year retention rates by 5-7%, our sophomore to junior by 10%; we need to recruit students more strategically and effectively in our traditional areas and in new ones; we must recruit, retain, reward and renew excellent faculty; we need to build facilities that advance the mission and strategic direction of the institution as a whole, and we need to reaffirm our relationships with the friends of UMW, cultivate new ones, and put time and effort into building new and innovative partnerships – i.e., we need to raise more resources.

How do we do this? How do we move to the cohort of Wake Forest, Colgate, Bucknell, Bowdoin, Wesleyan, and Davidson? How do we examine, restate, bolster and advance our identity – our prestige and reputation? Let me offer ten guideposts for the near term.

1. **Values.** It is de rigeur for Presidents these days to stand up and assert a values program by saying that we will have *transparency and think outside of the box*. Whenever I hear these phrases, a great sleepy yawn comes over me. Transparency is not enough: if I were to be unyieldingly vague to you, my behavior would be entirely unhelpful, yet transparent – always vague! And cross-thinking for cross-thinking's sake is not compelling to me, since it can result in thin, for-the-moment proposals: we need some

inside the box thinking. Let me suggest seven values that start at the top and can help us move UMW through this year and beyond:

- ◆ High academic standards: our reach should always exceed our grasp.
- ◆ Authenticity: straightforward talk of, as mathematicians would say, all and only what you mean.
- ◆ Knowledge-driven and principle-driven thinking: a system in which decisions are unarbitrary and justified.
- ◆ Ideas first: don't let the university's structure determine the shape of our ideas; ideas drive the way the university works.
- ◆ Institutional altruism: a sense of common purpose and willingness to overlook our differences for the sake of the whole.
- ◆ Willingness to be convened: engagement in non-formalized thought groups who tackle focused problems directly and produce results. Another way to say this is -- **No task forces!** As soon as a task force is formed, it is the kiss of death for results.
- ◆ Vibrance: student LIFE, faculty LIFE, LIFE of the mind. Live and move. We're in this job not for the mid-year stock options, but because it is fun. Oscar Wilde said, "I would rather be wrong than boring." While I look on the actual choice of his words with some suspicion, it is safe to acknowledge his point.

2. Take stock. Reform, and give a 21st century shape to, the experience we are giving our students and hence, as faculty, the experience we are giving ourselves. Look at General Education, look at the majors, look at minors (as much as they are) and concentrations, look at our graduate programs. Everything should be on the table for examination, what we do well and what we need to change – and if we decide to reassert what we do well, we should do so only after subjecting it to hard scrutiny. In my view, we need a robust program of undergraduate research, living learning communities, global study and international and domestic exchanges, credit-bearing internships, freshman seminars, sophomore seminars, and senior theses. Overall, we offer a pretty conventional undergraduate degree, and I am concerned that we may be teaching too many things and doing so in fairly traditional venues. Breadth can come from depth. At the graduate level we need to develop new opportunities that are not just a response to whims of the market, but are tied to what we do well and how we can contribute to the growth of knowledge and professional accomplishment in a meaningful way.

For faculty, we should diversify our activities and recognize that our point of pride -- good teaching -- is also tied to retaining contact with and contributing to disciplines and professional life. By constantly teaching more and more and more, we do not necessarily become better teachers; by giving students more and more courses, they do not necessarily become better, deeper thinkers.

We cannot engage in this stock taking and reform by simply adding more faculty: that we must and will do, but we must look at what we are demanding of ourselves and examine workload, our teaching obligations, and the need for many of us, not all, to have a sustained and meaningful connection to research and professional life, in addition to

teaching, in order to be -- well, how can I put this? -- good teachers. We should also seek to hire not by formula and perceived need but via decisions to hire for the leading edge. Thus I would challenge the 15:1 program to be rethought in terms of UMW needing to be ahead of the pedagogical curve – whether that be through new faculty in computational economics, medieval history, Chinese, or biophysics. To that end, I have accorded the VP for Academic Affairs substantially new programmatic funds and have instructed the CFO to sequester as much money as we can for hires beyond the 15:1 target. I hope to give you more faculty than you had expected. What I am saying here has a simple encapsulation: we must recognize and build on our accomplishments, but we must also change the conditions under which we work, our expectations, and what we deliver and how – the whole student-faculty experience – to make real progress. And with such change we must also afford opportunities to embrace that change, not just ask that it be done as “one more add on.” If we do these things, we will change applications, yield, student body characteristics, retention, faculty expectations, and performance, and it will affect advancement. I need your help on this so that I can help the institution.

3. Look at how we do our business. We must be strategic and focused, not formulaic or across-the-board in how we operate. Decisions should be plan-driven, and those plans should be knowledge- and principle-driven. We have to examine our enrollment management as a comprehensive strategy, from pre-entry to years-out follow up. For this reason, I have moved all of enrollment, including the Registrar’s operations, under the new VP for Strategy and Policy. We also need to set out clear expectations for productivity, keyed to high standards of performance, and in this activity, we should reward outcomes. Woody Allen famously said, “The great thing about life is you get credit for showing up.” We have a responsibility in academia to tie our incentives and rewards to the goals (the “bar,” so to speak) for which we are constantly reaching.

4. Open up UMW. The institution needs to look more like the world around us. We should recognize that the world and the university are closely connected and that we can respect the deep traditions of the school and enhance them by connecting to the world. We need to grab the diversity issue by the horns and act on it decisively. We should seek out more international programs and exchanges, develop domestic exchange agreements, such as with HBCUs, McNair and TRIO programs, and we should look to the city and the region as mutual partners in our diversity effort. This is also a matter where the Fredericksburg campus and CGPS can come together quite productively. UMW is the idea broker in town. But we cannot be that idea broker without thoroughgoing involvement in the ideas and variety of the world around us.

5. Make opportunities, while avoiding mere opportunism. We should start, right away, identifying, developing, and sustaining new programs and partnerships that are key to the mission and identity of UMW, and by this activity generate new resources. If we don’t, others will (and I tell you they have already). To this end I have asked VP Braymer to add this activity to her portfolio and work with me directly on advancing the opportunities of UMW as a whole. There are enormous opportunities for UMW to take the lead in issues in regionalism, in graduate and undergraduate certificates, in garnering contracts for studies and planning papers for the state and city, and so on. One of my

signal goals is to raise substantial new funds for the institution and so I have raised the VP for Advancement to a direct report. But I can secure more resources only by pointing to how the institution as a whole is moving in these productive directions also.

6. Have an administration that is relentlessly helpful. I promise to provide leadership that is highly capable, has integrated activities, and understands its role as an instrument. Otherwise consensus priorities just convert to consensus frustrations. As you know, I have put together a new senior leadership group, changing reporting structures and major assignments. This team will integrate and consolidate operations and services across the two campuses, develop continuous strategic efforts, propose and implement complex solutions to complex problems, engage in responsible oversight, and, most of all, talk – with one another and with you. We will hire a Provost, I assure you, but we cannot do so until we put into place the proper structures and operations in which a new Provost can oversee and integrate all academic operations and prosper. This effort will take an entire year, and so, I would guess we will not begin the search for a new Provost until the summer of 2007.

7. Plan infrastructure to the future not just to meet the present. We need new student residences that are multifunctional, with computer labs, workout rooms, wireless coffee houses, classrooms, and faculty apartments. (Oh, and some beds, too.) We need to look at the library complex and move to make it a place of vibrance and informational excitement, not only for the university but also as a place where the city can come and get and gather ideas. We need to look at our laboratories and the facilities that create a genuine student life (such as bookstores and areas for the fine and performing arts), and we need to look at whether our existing facilities are being used to proper end and capacity. Moreover, we should be proactive in developing public and private partnerships in order to enhance our facilities and so connect more to the world outside UMW and connect that world to us.

8. Tell others more about ourselves and tell ourselves more about us. We can do a better job at explaining our excellence to the rest of the world and at representing ourselves with a consistent and forceful identity. It is for this reason that I have assigned VP Singleton the task of developing a unit wholly dedicated to this activity. There is no school which combines such deeply held tradition and cutting edge education at once. We need to tell others this: we can be a greater national presence, and we will be. But we also must tell ourselves more who we are. I expect to develop instruments of a variety of forms that help us know who we are, what we are doing, and how. As I have said, we must talk more to each other, openly and authentically.

9. Academic life is more than the books. UMW embodies the Greek ideal of accomplishment through the integration of mind and body. We have many scholar-athletes, and we must acknowledge the place of physical activity in overall student life and student affairs. But we also need to look closely at, and work vigorously on, social-academic life and on town-university partnerships more broadly. The UMW community needs to see that they can get a full educational experience here. So that we can re-

examine and re-invigorate student life, I have made the VP for Student Affairs a direct report to the President.

10. Make sure things actually happen. One thing about academics: we certainly know how to talk. And sometimes we get lost in the miasma of endless `task forcing` and planning our plans, vetting and meta-vetting our strategizing, self-directed micro-managing, and assessing how we might be assessing something! I have learned something very important in my two months here: **we know what we need to do.** Identify what is needed and act on the core matters – do so with resources and oversight, and do so rapidly and in a focused way. And, by the way, take some risks. To these ends, I expect to develop a cogent and fully doable plan of action as part of our Centennial activities. This will be something like the UMW Centennial Plan. But I assure you it will not be talked to death and we will all know what it is and we will do it.

I have gone on too long, to be sure. But as a fellow faculty member, I too am inclined to the life of homo loquitor. I ask your indulgence. I have tried in this state of the university really to say only one thing. We share the common value of reason through open minds, open hands, and open talk. But since this is a university and our very job is to agree and disagree, we will experience points of productive and intense debate, I am certain. I urge us not to construe agreement as acquiescence or disagreement as unreasonableness. We cannot advance our deep traditions or take the risks we need to take as an institution unless we are vigilant in reason. I look forward to seeing how the future state of the university looks in a year as we move together with openness and reason.