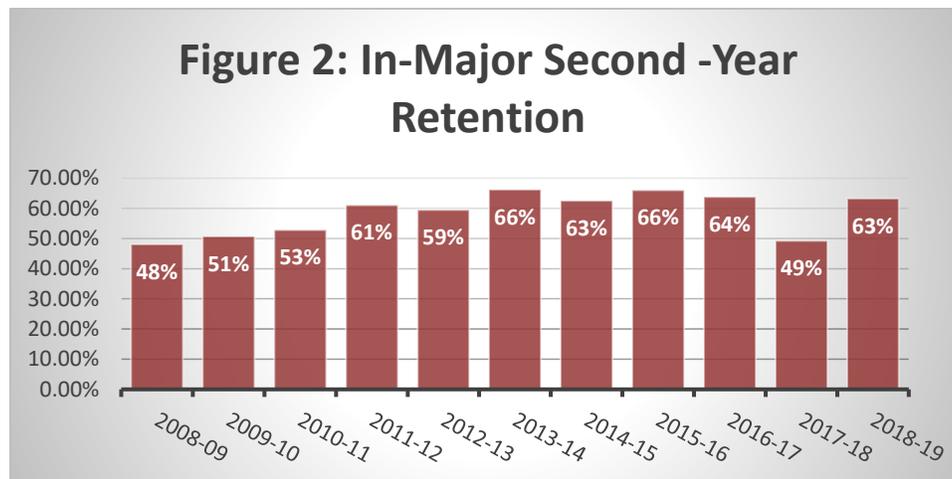# Enrollment Management Plan

1.   Background

During 2000-2010, the Business Administration and Accounting Programs' (the Programs') student enrollment increased the first eight of 10 years with significant increases in the 2007-08 and 2008-09 academic years. This trend mirrored Lock Haven University's (the University's) overall enrollment as well. During this time period, the number of Pennsylvania high school graduates steadily increased and peaked at an all-time high in 2008. State funding (while dwindling) was tied to FTE enrollment for both the state appropriation and performance funding allocations. As such, the University planned to increase enrollment and take advantage of the increased pool of students and funding that followed more students. These plans filtered down to the Programs by way of year-over-year enrollment increases up through 2008-09. As projected by the US Department of Education, the number of Pennsylvania's high school graduates began to decrease in 2009-10. At this point, the University's undergraduate enrollment flattened and the Programs' enrollment began to decline as shown in Figure 1. The decreasing pool of high school graduates (expected to decline through 2018) coupled with an economic downturn stifled the enrollment growth experienced in the prior decade. Particular to the Programs, the Admissions Office reported that the economy somewhat decreased prospective students' interest in business; however, the number of students reporting SAT scores from 2012-2014 to LHU and to institutions in the Middle States Region for business-related programs had actually increased which suggested potential for increased enrollment in business and accounting but really showed a loss in market share.

While the Programs enrolled a fall 2013 freshmen cohort closer to the size of our peak years, the 2014 and 2015 cohorts significantly declined. Competition for a smaller student pool increasingly became fiercer each year especially as privates and non-PASSHE institutions discounted tuition heavily; the PASSHE Board of Governor's policy limited the University's ability to use institutional aid this way. Tuition discounting, aggressive recruiting, demographic trends, and more discriminant students regarding college choice contributed to enrollment challenges.

Figure 1: Business and Accounting (HC) Enrollment
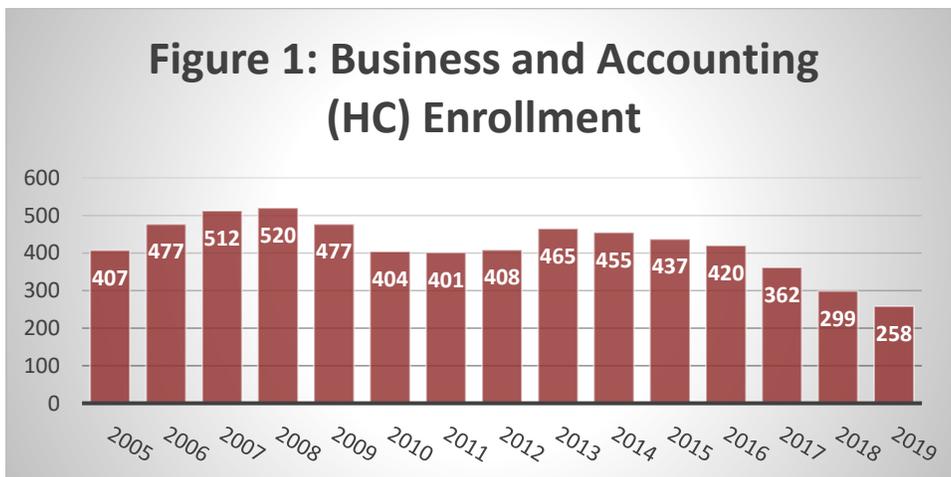
During the current and previous strategic plan, the Programs focused on increasing combined retention to a 65% in-major second year retention rates. The rate had steadily increased from 2008 to 2011 as shown in Figure 2 and then hovered in a range around 60 – 66%, except for the outlier in 2017; a number that mirrored University rates as well.

Figure 2: In-Major Second -Year Retention

Year	Retention
2008-09	48%
2009-10	51%
2010-11	53%
2011-12	61%
2012-13	59%
2013-14	66%
2014-15	63%
2015-16	66%
2016-17	64%
2017-18	49%
2018-19	63%

Overall, increased retention helped achieve enrollment targets in 2014-15 through 2016-17. Retention continues to be a key element of the Programs' enrollment management strategies. The following information provides more specific insight about the Programs' historical, current, and forecasted enrollments.

2.   The Programs' Historical and Current Enrollments (combined)

As shown in Table 1, the Programs' combined enrollment in the last five years has declined and more precipitously in recent years. For the beginning of the current strategic plan cycle (2018-23), the Programs projected gradual, steady increases in enrollment due to targeted recruitment and retention efforts. However, in the last five years (2014- 2019 Spring EOT) and especially in the last two years, smaller cohorts in both accounting and business, some larger graduating classes, fewer transfers in, and lower overall retention rates (across all years) caused enrollments to decline year over year. Overall, enrollment is much lower than anticipated at the beginning of the planning cycle.

Table 1: Enrollment Data for the Prior Five Years (Combined Programs)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Spring end of term enrollment (LY)	**455**	**437**	**420**	**362**	**299**
Graduates	100	97	115	97	65
Percent of enrollment	21.98%	22.20%	27.38%	26.80%	21.74%
Enrollment Subtotal	**355**	**340**	**305**	**265**	**234**
Increases					
New Admits	81	107	108	72	66
Transfers In	76	59	55	27	32
Returning Students	19	13	19	14	13
Late Registration	1	0	2	4	6
Enrollment Subtotal	**532**	**519**	**489**	**382**	**351**
Departures	95	99	127	83	93
Retention Rate	82.14%	80.92%	74.03%	78.27%	73.50%
Spring end of term enrollment (CY)	**118**	**110**	**87**	**299**	**258**

3. Business Program Historical and Current Enrollments

The Business Programs enrollment follows a similar trend to the combined program figures where, in the last 10 years, enrollment peaked at 2013 & 2014, and then, decreased especially in 2018 and 2019 with significantly more students graduating or otherwise departing, than incoming freshmen and transfers in.

Table 2: Enrollment Data for the Prior Five Years (Business Program)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Spring end of term enrollment (LY)	**334**	**319**	**310**	**275**	**233**
Graduates	73	72	86	66	52
Percent of enrollment	21.86%	22.57%	27.74%	24.00%	22.32%
Enrollment Subtotal	**261**	**247**	**224**	**209**	**181**
Increases					
New Admits	58	76	90	58	54
Transfers In	52	50	44	24	29
Returning Students	15	7	15	13	12
Late Registration	1	0	4	0	2
Enrollment Subtotal	**387**	**363**	**342**	**304**	**278**
Departures	68	70	102	71	73
Retention Rate	82.43%	80.72%	70.18%	76.64%	73.74%
Spring end of term enrollment (CY)	**319**	**310**	**275**	**233**	**205**

4. Accounting Program Historical and Current Enrollments

Typically, accounting majors averaged about 25 percent of the Programs' enrollment and really had fluctuated within a narrow range. In 2019, accounting enrollment dropped to 20.5% of overall enrollment, and the declines in freshmen cohorts and transfers started earlier than it did for the business program (i.e., declining trends starting in 2017 for new admits and 2016 for transfers in). Accounting generally experienced fairly good second-year persistence rates and stable enrollments with around 25 new admits, keeping within a range of +/- 5 students. In most recent years, projections have been complicated by very small entering cohorts and variable retention rates.

Table 3: Enrollment Data for the Prior Five Years (Accounting Program)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Spring end of term enrollment (LY)	**121**	**118**	**110**	**87**	**66**
Graduates	27	25	29	31	13
Percent of enrollment	22.31%	21.19%	26.36%	35.63%	19.70%
Enrollment Subtotal	**94**	**93**	**81**	**56**	**53**
Increases					
New Admits	23	31	18	14	12
Transfers In	24	9	11	3	3
Returning Students	4	6	4	1	1
Late Registration	0	0	-2	4	4
Enrollment Subtotal	**145**	**139**	**112**	**78**	**73**
Departures	27	29	25	12	20
Retention Rate	81.38%	79.14%	77.68%	84.62%	72.60%
Spring end of term enrollment (CY)	**118**	**110**	**87**	**66**	**53**

5.   Recruitment

The Programs primarily rely on the University's Admissions staff to recruit off-campus and to organize several ways in which faculty can participate in on-campus recruiting activities. Obviously, the University, faculty, and students can affect the number of new admits through participation in such recruitment activities as the following:

- Open House
- Faculty Phon-a-thon
- Accepted Student Mailers
- Accepted Students Day
- Summer Student Orientation (currently, a recruitment and retention initiative)
- Fall Student Orientation (currently, a recruitment and retention initiative)
- Business and Accounting Showcases
- Virtual events like academic webinars (more important with COVID-19)
- Individual meetings with prospective students

The Programs' faculty have increased participation in these activities where possible and implemented the marketing initiatives included within the Programs' new strategic plan. The University has hired a new marketing director in 2020 who has developed a marketing plan and new brand identity guidelines to improve marketing, brand recognition, and recruiting.

In addition, the University has contracted Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL), a consulting firm that specializes in enrollment management that was sought to recommend improvements for admissions processes. RNL conducted multiple studies analyzing national and statewide demographic trends, Pennsylvania's competitive environment, and comparative funnel conversion rates as well as conducting a competitive analysis and survey analysis regarding recruitment of first-year and transfer students. RNL studies have informed recruiting strategies including assisting with financial aid optimization. This study becomes very important as the Board of Governors rescinded restrictions to permit more institutional aid. These efforts are expected to enhance enrollment across the University and in the Programs. Increased funnel numbers in 2019-20 show promise, though COVID-19 had a negative influence on final numbers.

6.   Retention and Graduation Rates

Table 4 includes second-year persistence rates for the Programs, University, PASSHE and non-PASSHE Peer Group, where available. While both Programs' rates are variable, they compare favorably against LHU's second-year persistence rates in major (which is the best comparative number), but less favorably with in-University retention rates. Program data suggest that some departures are due to internal transfers (e.g., undecided students) to other University Programs, and these students contribute positively to the overall University in-major retention rate, but not the Programs' rates. While the Programs' second-year persistence rates compare favorably to the University's rates in major, retention (in the second year

and beyond) is certainly an area that both the University and Programs have targeted for improvement, and the Programs (combined) plan to stabilize at a 65% retention rate (see yellow highlighted section – data that relates to target).

Table 4: Second-Year Persistence Rates

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Program Second-Year Persistence								
Accounting	100%	80%	86%	63%	76%	72%	67%	58%
Business	71%	57%	64%	78%	70%	60%	47%	65%
Accounting/Business in Major	61%	60%	66%	63%	66%	64%	49%	63%
LHU in Major	51%	54%	51%	55%	52%	52%	50%	54%
Institutional Second-Year Persistence								
LHU Overall	71%	70%	68%	70%	73%	70%	65%	67%
PASSHE	76%	75%	77%	75%	78%	77%		
LHU Peer Group*	73%	75%	75%	76%	75%	74%		

*Peer Group includes less selective institutions (SAT composite <1080)
Source: Data Warehouse/Less Selective CSRDE Retention/Graduation Report – Table 8d

With an emphasis on advising, engagement, and student support, improvements in retention strategies appear to have led to increased graduation rates. Comparative numbers in Table 5 show that the Programs could improve graduation rates as well by pushing in-major graduation rates closer to in-university rates as an aspirational target. More intentional outreach to stop outs have impacted these rates too.

Table 5: Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates

Accounting In Major										
Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
4th Yr %	19%	21%	24%	39%	42%	27%	36%	32%	32%	37%
6th Yr %	42%	21%	47%	39%	46%	32%	64%	40%	45%	

Business Administration In Major										
4th Yr %	19%	11%	14%	16%	23%	23%	33%	31%	33%	41%
6th Yr %	36%	32%	36%	25%	28%	31%	36%	41%	42%	

LHU In University										
4th Yr %	27%	26%	27%	28%	30%	32%	35%	37%	40%	38%
6th Yr %	46%	47%	48%	48%	50%	48%	55%	54%		

PASSHE In University										
4th Yr %	35%	35%	36%	38%	37%	38%				
6th Yr %	59%	58%	59%	60%	60%	60%				

LHU Peer Group In University										
4th Yr %				20%	20%	20%	20%	22%	23%	24%
6th Yr %				45%	45%	45%	46%	48%		

Peer Group includes less selective institutions (SAT composite <1080)
Source: Data Warehouse/Less Selective CSRDE Retention/Graduation Report – Table 8d

7. Program Capacity

The enrollment capacity of the Programs primarily is driven by faculty resources. When the Programs' enrollment peaked in 2008 (n= 512) and 2009 (n=520), students experienced problems with availability of required core and concentration courses. Due to demand for required courses, staffing levels inhibited delivering elective courses and very few were offered. Results of the graduating senior survey indicated that students complained most about unavailable elective courses, an area that has improved. In addition, faculty increased section size to accommodate growth and allow senior students to graduate. The classes and capacities shown in Table 6 indicate where limits may exist within current faculty complement.

Table 6: Core Course Capacity/Academic Year

Course	Classes/Academic Year	Students/ Class	Capacity
ACCT110	8	40	320
ACCT115	4	35	140
MANG105	3	50	150
MRKT200	4	40	160
MANG315	3	40	120
MANG325	2	35	70
MANG305	2	40	80
MANG475	4	25	100
MANG302	3	40	120

Currently, the primary Program limit lies with MANG475 which can enroll a maximum 100 students per academic year. Since MANG475 only enrolls senior students, the Programs' combined target senior class would be 100 students. Additional limits in the accounting program reside within the upper-level accounting courses. As listed in Table 7, current staffing could accommodate 40 students per accounting cohort, but enrollments have never approached these upper limits.

Table 7: Accounting Course Capacity/Academic Year

Course	Classes/Academic Year	Students/ Class	Capacity
ACCT210	1	50	50
ACCT215	1	50	50
ACCT300	1	40	40
ACCT335	1	40	40
ACCT340	1	40	40
ACCT420	1	40	40

In fact, in the last three years, enrollments swung in a completely opposite direction and some courses were under-enrolled, so much so that sections were collapsed or canceled and independent studies used for some low-enrolled concentration courses. Since Program enrollments tracked downward with University levels, less demand arose from other programs and business minors in such courses as ACCT110, MRKT200, and MANG315 which generally enrolled to capacity. In doing enrollment management, the Programs have estimated a target in between current levels and the peak levels experienced in the last decade keeping about the same faculty complement.

Using the average retention rates to the second, third, and fourth year, and the maximum capacity of 40 accounting students and 100 senior students in the Programs, the projected upper range of enrollment levels are in Table 8.

Table 8: Projected Maximum Enrollments

Year	Accounting	Business	Total	Notes
Freshman	81	147	228	
Sophomore	49	80	129	
Junior	42	64	106	
Senior	40	60	100	(a)
			563	(b)

(a) Senior year is set at maximum capacity
(b) Does not account for transfers in

The absolute maximum enrollment would be 563 students. This number is the maximum theoretical capacity of students in the major, but does not represent the practical or desirable capacity since course caps and faculty load would be pushed to the upper limit in all courses and the figures do not account for course enrollments of students beyond those in the major (e.g., recreation management and sport administration). During our enrollment peak (n=520), the staffing and course offerings did not easily accommodate student needs. An estimated 85% of capacity (n=442 students) serves as a more reasonable upper target for program enrollment. The Programs would like to see a return to this level (400-450) from both an educational standpoint of a student body that brings vibrancy and robust engagement among peers and well as a financial aspect that provides adequate funding. The current landscape does not suggest that this aspirational goal is achievable in the near-term. Starting with fall 2020, the Programs want to stabilize enrollment (stop the drop) using recruiting and retention strategies.

8. Enrollment Forecast

Considering historical trends and the desire to right-size the Program where the faculty can deliver an excellent education while maintaining close personal interaction, no growth is projected in the next couple years. Table 9 shows projections for the business and accounting programs combined. Being in the midst of COVID-19, enrollment projections for 2020 are very difficult with such unknowns as the duration and full impact of COVID-19 on University operations, student attendance, and recruitment. Preliminary admissions and graduation numbers for 2020 suggest that overall, the programs will sustain a slight decrease and again, the impact of COVID-19 is unknown and could be more negative than projected. As a result, the Programs are suggesting relatively flat enrollments over the next few years with intention of gradually increasing enrollment once the pandemic subsides.

Table 9: Five-Year Enrollment Projections (Combined Programs)

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Enrollment	299	258	230	231	234
Graduates	65	82	56	55	57
Enrollment Subtotal	234	176	174	175	178
Increases					
New Admits	66	67	69	74	76
Transfers In	32	30	30	31	31
Returning Students	13	13	13	13	13
Late Registration	6	2	2	2	2
Enrollment Subtotal	351	288	288	293	300
Departures	93	58	58	59	60
Spring end of term enrollment (CY)	258	230	231	234	240

Table 10: Five Year Enrollment Data (Business Program)

As shown in Table 10, the Business Program expects a slight decline in enrollment in 2020, and then hopes to stabilize the enrollment for the next few years.

	2019 Act.	2020	2021	2022	2023	Notes
Spring end of term enrollment (LY)	233	205	191	186	188	
Graduates	52	54	46	45	45	
Enrollment Subtotal	181	151	145	141	143	
Increases						
New Admits	54	50	52	56	58	a
Transfers In	29	25	25	25	25	b
Returning Students	12	12	12	12	12	c
Late Registration	2	1	1	1	1	d
Total Increases	97	88	90	94	96	
Enrollment Subtotal	278	239	235	235	239	
Departures	73	48	47	47	48	
Spring end of term enrollment (CY)	205	191	188	188	191	

Notes

a	Use 50 based on admissions statistics with incremental increases
b	Held constant at lower number due to overall enrollment decline
c	Held constant which also represents four-year trend average.
d	Held constant which also represents four-year trend average.

Table 11: Five-Year Enrollment Data (Accounting Program)

Table 11 shows that the Accounting Program will sustain a little steeper drop in 2020 than the business program, in part, due to a large graduating class and consecutive small incoming cohorts; however, the cohort sizes are now more balanced across years which should show a more even impact of graduating classes on overall enrollment. The projections here show a gradual increase over the next few years.

	2019 Act.	2020	2021	2022	2023	Notes
Spring end of term enrollment (LY)	66	53	39	42	46	
Graduates	13	28	10	11	12	
Enrollment Subtotal	53	25	29	32	35	
Increases						
New Admits	12	17	17	18	18	a
Transfers In	3	5	5	6	6	b
Returning Students	1	1	1	1	1	c
Late Registration	4	1	1	1	1	d
Enrollment Subtotal	73	49	53	58	61	
Departures	20	10	11	12	12	
Spring end of term enrollment (CY)	53	39	42	46	49	

Notes

a	Use 17 based on admissions statistics/spring forecast and applied 1%/2% increase out
b	Use 5 based on admissions statistics/spring forecast and applied 1%/2% increase out
c	Held constant based on IR data
d	Held constant based on IR data

9.   Strategic Planning Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Total enrollments can only be influenced in a few ways. Specifically, institutions can increase new admits, increase the persistence rates, or increase internal transfers. Table 12 includes strategies and action plans from the Programs' Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 including relevant short-term goals, objectives, actions, outcome measures and targets. Actual progress made toward accomplishing these goals will be reported in the strategic plan progress reports for each plan year.

Table 12: Strategic Plan Goals, Objectives, and Actions related to Enrollment Management
2019-21 Actions

SP Goal	Objective	Short-term Actions	Outcomes and Target
Goal 1: Provide Quality Educational Experiences	Continually improve curricular offerings	Develop/implement a B.S. program or track in the Healthcare Management and B.S. in Finance, Insurance, and Risk Management; complete reorganization of economics track and develop managerial economics course; develop new track in industrial management	Conducted feasibility studies and developed curriculum proposals (as appropriate) with potential to attract new students
		Work on international initiatives – sign MOUs with schools for Europe for collaborative research and teaching, using graduate and undergraduate certificates (industrial management and FIRM, marketing, entrepreneurship)	New MOUs and international opportunities to attract both traditional and non-traditional students
		Consider how we may begin more online delivery (outside COVID-19) especially with the emphasis on adult learning and conversion of AS to an online degree	Increased percentage of online program delivery and adult learners
		Implement budgeting course (MANG307); Integrate QuickBooks, eye tracking software, and Google Analytics Search Engine into courses or learning activities; Collaborate with international faculty or enhance international aspects of courses to increase exposure to global topics; Contact LHU IT about instruction of SAP with perhaps integration into a course.	Developed/delivered curricular items to increase satisfaction with course availability/selection and increase recruitment and retention of students in the Programs
		Study the academic dishonesty issues at LHU and in the program as part of a University-wide initiative	Developed policy and proactive measures to address academic dishonesty and related topics.

SP Goal	Objective	Short-term Actions	Outcomes and Target
		Implement UCC approved syllabi for EL courses – MANG350 and MANG307	Increased course enrollment and attracted students from other programs.
		Team teach or guest lecture in MANG105 to help build a rapport with new students and have students do an advising assignment	Increased connection of students to program faculty and increase retention rate to 65%
		Update advising manual to assure all faculty are providing consistent and accurate information (retain) and edit the advising form to include more for graduate school preparation	Achieved student satisfaction rating with advising of 85% or greater and increased retention rates to above 65%
	Provide extra- and co-curricular opportunities for students to gain out-of-class experience	Maintain/improve quality of program and attendance at events like the open lecturers, new student social w/ faculty, lunch & learns, and young alumni panels	Attract 75 students to events, received 4 or greater rating on lecture evaluation, improved connection of students to Programs with increased in retention rates to 65%, held at least one ELC lecture/AY
		Require ACCT115 students to complete 10-15 hours of service learning through MountainServ	Increased presence in local community by increasing number of service hours and increase retention rates to 65%.
		Collaborate with Career and Professional Development to deliver programs or seek resources for job search and professional skills development.	Provided a least one new program to develop job search skills
		Mentor student groups so as to develop more activities (especially those that are student-led and mandatory) in professional skills, networking, social interaction, and preparing for graduate school	Increased activities, attendance, and retention rates
		Involve students in PASSHE Business Plan and Pitch Competitions (recruit/retain) and other experiential learning projects	Submitted 6-8 student entries and increased engagement in high impact practices

SP Goal	Objective	Short-term Actions	Outcomes and Target
Goal 3: Promote the Business Administration and Accounting Programs	Market the Programs and communicate with key stakeholders	Meet enrollment targets that were re-set in the enrollment management plan and in consultation with the Dean	Spring EOT total enrollment equals or is more than target
		Work with PR and Admissions to update materials, web site, and news items	Updated web and submitted at least 6 news items
		Improve use of social networking to connect with key stakeholders (recruit/retain)	Connected with at least 100 alumni through social networking
		Recruit student intern/EL/student worker to write news releases (e.g., submit student and faculty success stories to PR for various publications), create a newsletter for the majors (e.g., feature events, faculty highlights, and news), and help implement social networking plan using LinkedIn (e.g., share job posts, newsletters, and events).	Distributed two newsletters and posts to LinkedIn, at least six news releases, and in the AY
		Include senior students who have completed internships/independent studies in Open House (recruit)	Met enrollment targets
		Meet with Dean about potential for resources through private giving and submit a proposal for funding needs	Increased funding or programs to expand
		Hold Program Showcase and other recruiting activities in conjunction with admissions for rising high school juniors and seniors	Increased the incoming 2019 fall cohort numbers above fall 2018
		Collaborate with PASSHE schools on integration initiatives	Provided broader array of courses within the programs to broader audience
		Participate with admissions as appropriate with making connections in high schools and leverage new dual enrollment agreements in the region	Increased high school student enrollment and conversion to matriculating students

## 10.	Conclusion

The Programs have emphasized the importance of enrollment management by looking at past, current, and projected trends. Competition for a shrinking pool of traditional-age, college students and financial resources have elevated the need to consider additional ways to recruit students and retain them at a greater rate. By marketing the University more, leveraging financial aid optimization, engaging in more recruiting initiatives, enhancing program array, and focusing on student engagement and faculty/student interaction, the Programs can realize a healthy enrollment pattern.