

**U.S. MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY
(USMMA)**

**2017 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION**

Prepared by the USMMA Advisory Board

June 1, 2017

Executive Summary

This report provides the U.S. Secretary of Transportation (Secretary) Elaine Chao with advice and counsel in accordance with the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA, or Academy) Advisory Board (Board) Charter, Order DOT 1120.45, issued on March 27, 2013. Pursuant to 46 U.S. Code of Regulations 51313, then-Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, appointed members to the Board in May 2013.

This 2017 report is the fourth Annual Report written by the Board. Its primary purpose is to advise the Secretary, Maritime Administration (MARAD) Administrator, and Academy Superintendent on matters that need immediate and continued attention to advance the Academy toward meeting its strategic goals and objectives.

The findings in this and previous Annual Reports are based on direct inspections and observations made during three or more visits by the Board to the Academy each year; oral reports and written documents provided to the Board by faculty and staff; survey data; and small group and individual discussions with Midshipmen, faculty, staff, administration, alumni, members of the maritime industry, and higher education accreditors. Recommendations are based on the Board members' collective knowledge of best practices and emerging trends and issues in higher education and the maritime industry, and on Board members' expertise.

Consistent with the Advisory Board's 2016 report, this report focuses on three areas requiring immediate and continuing attention: 1) Safety of Midshipmen; 2) Maintaining Regional Accreditation; and 3) Strategic Plan and Performance Measures for the Academy.

The appendices describe how the Academy is complying with the previous secretarial directives and meeting the Board's recommendations contained in previous Annual Reports. Where applicable, the Board has updated its recommendations.

1. Identify the current institutional climate at USMMA and any contributing subcultures;
2. Analyze the nature and scope of the problem of sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus and at sea derived from recent reports, research, survey data, policies, and interviews; and
3. Provide recommendations for improvement.

The LMI audit was conducted over 60 days and involved 162 structured interviews from a broad array of USMMA constituent groups, literature reviews, qualitative and quantitative analyses, and best-practice analyses. The audit found that USMMA Midshipmen experience sexual harassment and assault at a higher level than cadets at other Federal Service Academies. It also identified cultural aspects that contribute to these behaviors and provided recommendations to address them. The *Department of Transportation U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Culture Audit Deliverable 4: Final Report* (LMI Final Report) is available at: <https://www.usmma.edu/sites/usmma.edu/files/docs/USMMAReport%20508.pdf>.

Following publication of the LMI Final Report and as a result of the constructive response and action by maritime industry leaders, MARAD, and the Academy, then-Secretary Foxx approved a staged resumption of Sea Year. This involved Midshipmen returning to sea on State Maritime Academy (SMA) training vessels, U.S. military vessels, civilian-crewed vessels, and commercial maritime vessels that are compliant with newly established eligibility requirements to host USMMA Midshipmen during Sea Year. Use of SMA vessels then ceased once the use of credentialed commercial maritime vessels resumed.

Actions taken by the Academy and MARAD in partnership with industry are outlined below:

- MARAD engaged with maritime industry leaders to highlight the issue of sexual harassment and assault and discuss ways to provide more consistent support for victims and discipline for perpetrators, with a focus on protecting Midshipmen.
- MARAD engaged to strengthen a public-private partnership with industry and labor to prevent and end sexual harassment and assault. The following actions were implemented through this partnership:
 - “Sea Year Eligibility” requirements that include, but are not limited to, zero tolerance for sexual harassment and assault, vetted mentors to work with Midshipmen during Sea Year, and a no-fraternization policy between crew and Midshipmen.

Table 1. USMMA SAPR Strategic Goals

USMMA SAPR Strategic Goals	
Climate	Create a culture intolerant of sexual assault and sexual harassment and behaviors that enable such conduct.
Prevention	Deliver consistent and effective prevention methods and programs.
Response	Improve the availability of response support for sexual assault and sexual harassment victims. Increase victim confidence and lessen the stigma associated with reporting.
Accountability	Achieve high competence in holding offenders appropriately accountable. Improve capability and capacity for reporting, investigation, and prosecution of sexual assault. Elevate leadership engagement in response to sexual assault.
Assessment	Assess and report on program effectiveness, and use assessment information to make improvements in the program.

- USMMA established a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO), with a dedicated manager responsible for strategic planning, oversight, and integration of sexual harassment and assault prevention education program development, education, and response among all Academy stakeholders.
- USMMA faculty, staff, Regiment, and Midshipmen are collaborating in new ways to improve the culture and end harassment and assault:
 - Twelve USMMA faculty and staff attended the Military Service Academy Summit on Sexual Assault Prevention. They returned with ideas on how to frame the prevention of sexual harassment and assault message in terms of human dignity, which has been positively received on campus. Additional Midshipmen have joined this group and are actively engaged in enhancing the Academy's culture.
 - An interdepartmental committee comprised of faculty members, Midshipmen, and the Regiment created a Culture Campaign to highlight and integrate core values and achieve a shared vision to evolve the USMMA culture.
- The U.S. Congress added a requirement to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017 mandating creation of a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Working Group. This group must report to Congress in September 2017 on efforts to further address sexual harassment and assault prevention and reporting at USMMA. To meet the NDAA mandate, MARAD formed three working subgroups:

four new recommendations (for additional details, see Appendix B, Recommendation 3I: Safety of Midshipmen):

1. MARAD and the USMMA should continue to fund, carefully assess, and continuously improve the Sea Year Compliance Program to protect Midshipmen. They should ensure that the Sea Year experiential learning experience is constructive and contributes to achieving expected outcomes. This will build evidence that the Academy has embraced and is compliant with MSCHE *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation* (2015).
2. The Academy should fill open positions in the SAPRO, onboard staff, and ensure that the work of SAPRO is supported and integrated into the fabric of the Academy as quickly as possible.
3. The Academy should continue to use SAGR surveys to measure progress on preventing and ending sexual harassment and assault against peers, and use the data to continuously improve programs.
4. The Academy and MARAD should establish performance indicators and adjust them, as needed, to measure progress toward safety objectives so that Midshipmen and the Academy administration can be confident that appropriate efforts are being made to prevent sexual harassment and assaults, that incidents will be addressed promptly and forthrightly, and that there will be zero tolerance for retaliation against victims who report harassment or assault.

2. Maintaining Regional Accreditation – Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The Academy is regionally accredited by MSCHE. Regional accreditation is a primary indicator that an institution accomplishes its mission, achieves its goals, and has the resources and operating structure to provide its students with a quality education. In 2016, MSCHE placed the Academy on warning due to insufficient evidence that the institution was in compliance with five of 14 standards for accreditation and requirements for affiliation, specifically Accreditation Standards 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9 and Affiliation Standard 7.

Table 2. MSCHE Standards Not Met

Standards Not Met	Summary
Accreditation Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient evidence that resource allocation decisions directly link to mission and goal achievement at the institutional and unit level, including with Human Resources, Financial, and Procurement.
Accreditation Standard 3: Institutional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutes restrict the Academy from having access to the annual budget at the start of the fiscal year. • The Superintendent does not currently have direct control over the hiring process for faculty and staff to ensure adequate faculty, staff, and administration to support the institution's mission and outcomes expectations.
Accreditation Standard 4: Leadership and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Superintendent does not currently have direct control over the institutional functions of personnel hiring, financial planning and management, and procurement. The Superintendent must have the means, authority, and responsibility to effectively and efficiently accomplish the Academy's mission.
Accreditation Standard 5: Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Institutional Assessment, Director of Admissions, Academic Dean, Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources Officer, and other key administrator positions are all currently vacant or occupied by interim staff. While some of these positions, such as the Academic Dean, are filled on an interim basis with highly qualified, skilled, and dedicated individuals, the Academy must move forward with permanently filling these critical positions with administrative leaders who possess the appropriate skills, credentials, and training.
Accreditation Standard 9: Student Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the safety and climate of respect that all Midshipmen encounter during the Sea Year experience, the institution must take demonstrable steps in preparation for and upon return from the Sea Year experience. • The pervasiveness of sexual harassment on campus must be addressed as a pressing and substantial concern that has fostered a hostile environment for many cohorts of Midshipmen. The institution must implement specific steps to build a climate of mutual respect and trust among Midshipmen, faculty, and staff with respect to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Academy is purchasing software to organize and track the detailed intersections between the strategic plan, learning outcomes, assessments, budget, and resource allocations. This will help put the Academy in a much better position to compile data that supports the institution's continuous improvement and demonstrate beyond a doubt that it fully meets accreditation standards.

Recommendations

To support the Academy in reaching its governance, leadership, and administration goals, and in maintaining regional accreditation, the Board makes the following recommendations:

1. The Academy, MARAD, and U.S. DOT should understand and comply with the governance, leadership, and administration requirements for accreditation. It is important to articulate key entities' roles, including their responsibilities for oversight and execution, and adjust policies and statutes to adopt best practices and requirements for accreditation. (This recommendation was also contained in the Board's 2015 and 2016 Annual Reports; for additional details see Appendix B, Recommendation 2B: Governance.)
2. The Academy should purchase and implement software to track and communicate evidence of compliance with accreditation standards and staff the office of Institutional Assessment at an adequate level to develop and manage ongoing institutional assessment processes and programs.

3. Strategic Plan and Performance Measures – Advancing Strategic Goals and Objectives

A strategic plan is a requirement for accreditation. It is used to develop and shape the Academy's programs and practices and evaluate success. A strategic plan is usually developed by faculty, staff, and students in collaboration with the institution's governing body. This best practice in higher education is strongly preferred to the top-down approach used to develop the 2012-2017 strategic plan. The 2012-2017 planning process was directed by U.S. DOT and MARAD with limited input from faculty. The process resulted in a plan that omitted mention of some essential aspects of the Academy, like athletics, and lacked support from those who became responsible for making it operational.

To develop the 2018-2023 strategic plan, the Superintendent and a representative group of members of the Academy have chosen to use a more collaborative and comprehensive strategic planning approach called Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI was developed at Case Western University and has been recognized as a powerful strategic planning and change

Conclusion

The Board recommends that Secretary Chao and her administration prioritize the three areas discussed in this report: the safety of Midshipmen, regional accreditation, and the strategic planning process. Significant progress can be made using current budget and staffing resources.

Evidence of continuous improvement is characteristic of higher education and is a requirement for accreditation. Over the past five years, the Academy has demonstrated significant resilience and commitment to continuous improvement. Over this timeframe, the Academy rectified the issues identified in 2009 by the Government Accountability Office and advanced its management operating procedures, curriculum, leadership program, Regiment, athletics, student support services, Sea Year experience, culture, faculty development, and infrastructure.

Some of the changes made over the past five years have been controversial; a few have been divisive. The Academy is fortunate to have many stakeholders with such passion for the Academy and its mission. Stakeholders who are willing to understand different perspectives and collaborate are needed address divisions between all who care so deeply about the Academy.

The Academy, MARAD, and U.S. DOT should continue to work toward full implementation of the Capital Improvement Plan and prior secretarial directives. As time and budget allow, the Board's recommendations from its previous Annual Reports should be prioritized and resources allocated for their implementation.

While there is clearly more to be done, the Academy should be recognized for its accomplishments:

- Addressing issues of sexual harassment, assault, and retaliation on campus and at sea.
- Restoring to the Superintendent staffing, procurement, and budgeting authorities.
- Selecting the AI approach to develop the next strategic plan; this will increase the likelihood that the plan is widely accepted and will generate forward momentum toward shared goals. With shared goals and plans to achieve them it will be easier for the faculty to agree on desired learning outcomes and to allocate resources accordingly.

Appendix A. Summary of the Academy's Progress Toward Meeting Prior Secretary's Directives and Board's Recommendations

Table 3 provides a summary of then-Secretary Anthony Foxx's immediate and long-term directives issued after the Board's 2014 Annual Report, the Board's assessment of progress made to date on meeting these directives, as well as reference information for Annual Reports.

Table 3. Secretarial Directives and Summary of Board's Assessment of Progress

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Secretarial Directive	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
<u>Cutting Edge Programs</u>	Develop a faculty hiring strategy to ensure diverse and qualified faculty.	Partially achieved; need to adjust recruiting strategy to attract qualified, diverse faculty.	2014, Page 5, 1A
	Identify policy changes and resources to support greater professional development opportunities for faculty.	Achieved.	2014, Page 5, 1B
	Conduct a comprehensive review of education equipment, especially simulators and information technology (IT) infrastructure, and explore use of private funding.	Partially achieved; policy change needed to allow USMMA to accept equipment discounts and donations from manufacturers while making sure there are no conflicts of interest that violate applicable conflict of interest laws.	2014, Page 5, 1C
	Appoint an industry advisory entity.	Partially achieved; will be systematically implemented into the institutional assessment process in 2018.	2014, Page 5, 1D
	Develop a comprehensive leadership program.	Phase 1 implemented in 2015. Phase 2 implemented in September 2016. Assessing Learning Outcomes of the Leadership Program in 2017.	2014, Page 6, 2A 2014, Page 7, 2C 2014, Page 9, 3E 2015, Page 7, 1C
	Encourage faculty to be more available to Midshipmen.	Achieved.	2014, Page 9, 3F

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	Examine learning outcomes and success rates for each course, and develop a grading rubric that is transparent to Midshipmen.	In draft form until the strategic plan is formulated and then will align with institutional learning outcomes. Some progress on making grading rubrics transparent to Midshipmen.	2014, Page 9, 3A
	Develop and implement an interdisciplinary approach to curriculum development and programming that includes the four pillars of Academics, Regiment, Physical Fitness, and Sea Year.	Focus for second half of 2017. Will align curriculum while developing the strategic plan and continuously improve it as part of the institutional assessment program.	2014, Page 5, 1G 2014, Page 6, 2A
	Improve international visibility and collaboration by developing Kings Point as a venue for conferences and encouraging visiting professorships.	To be prioritized. No significant findings.	2014, Page 5, 1E 2014, Page 5, 1F
	The Academy should monitor its hiring processes and work with U.S. DOT to continuously improve them.	Faculty hiring strategy partially achieved. Recruiting and hiring processes have improved.	2014, Page 5, 1A 2017, Page 25, 1A
	Create a rolling three-year forecast of educational equipment capital investments and maintenance needs and report to the Secretary on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.	New.	2017, Page 26, 1C

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	an adequate level to develop and manage ongoing institutional assessment processes and programs.		
	Acknowledge the progress that has been made in moving ahead on leadership development for Midshipmen and maintain progress on this initiative.	Partially achieved. The addition of two required leadership courses is a great step forward.	2017, Page 30, 2A
	The Board encourages members of the Board of Visitors to ensure that the Academy is treated in the same manner as other Federal Service Academies during sequestrations, government shutdowns, and similar events.	New.	2017, Page 32, 2B
<u>Campus Culture</u>	Backfill the Admissions Officer position and make a higher level of commitment to diversity and social justice.	Completed and achieving desired results.	2014, Page 9, 3B
	Update job descriptions and performance measures for company officers. Resolve Midshipmen's confusion on expectations and ensure equity in the disciplinary process.	Some progress. New disciplinary policies and processes approved; will be published for implementation at the start of academic year 2017-2018. Midshipmen survey results indicate a decline in the perception of equality and fairness at the Academy. Performance measures are in development.	2014, Page 9, 3C
	Continue to provide funding for cultural outings and community service. Incorporate cultural and community service activities into the Academy's overall institutional goals and assessment program. Collect and use data for continuous improvement.	Partially achieved. Social and cultural activities have been expanded.	2017, Page 36, 3D
	Continue to monitor the quality and accessibility of food for all Midshipmen to	Partially achieved. Performance of food service provider is being monitored and documented.	2017, Page 37, 3G and 3H

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	MARAD, maritime industry leaders, and seafaring union leaders must take a strong stand against sexual harassment, assault, and retaliation, and recognize that sexual harassment is not an acceptable practice that mariners should expect because of industry characteristics.	Early progress. See actions described in pages 4-8.	2016, Page 7, 3
	MARAD, maritime industry leaders, and seafaring union leaders should develop appropriate incentives and consequences for vessel captains, owners, and crew members to maintain a safe working and learning environment for Midshipmen and all mariners.	Early progress. See actions described in pages 4-8.	2016, Page 7, 4
	Seek out and implement best practices from other state maritime and service academies and higher education institutions to greatly reduce victims' fear of reporting sexual harassment and assault crimes, and eliminate the retribution that victims experience.	Good progress. Enhanced Sea Year preparation; established new post-Sea Year debriefing and reintegrating process; revised Sea Year Guidebook; established SAPR Framework; established SAPRO.	2016, Page 7, 5
	Create an interdisciplinary program to develop a leadership culture in which Midshipmen have empathy toward victims and stand up to perpetrators, instead of ostracizing and retaliating against victims.	Good progress. Established Culture Campaign for roll out in June 2017. Will align curriculum while developing the strategic plan and continuously improve it as part of the institutional assessment program.	2016, Page 7, 6
	The Academy should fill open positions in the SAPRO, onboard staff, and ensure that the work of SAPRO is supported and integrated into the fabric of the Academy as quickly as possible.	New.	2017, Page 9, 2
	The Academy should continue to use SAGR	New.	2017, Page 9, 3

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Coast Guard.		
	Develop and expand partnerships with Kings Point graduates who have leadership roles in industry.	Some progress. Should be more systematic.	2014, Page 12, 5G
	Arrange for Midshipmen to accompany faculty and staff to relevant maritime conferences and events to expand their professional networks.	Partially achieved and well received. Funding for travel to scholarly conferences has increased to \$86,000 over the past four years.	2014, Page 12, 5H

Recommendation 1B: Faculty Support

Provide support for faculty to improve their teaching effectiveness, such as release time for curriculum improvement and development, as well as time for peer observations, teaching evaluations, and other feedback mechanisms.

Make modest policy changes to provide release time flexibility and encourage faculty attendance at conferences and participation in other professional development activities.

Summary of Status: Achieved

Details of Status: Faculty effectiveness is assessed in two ways: survey responses from Midshipmen and faculty observations by Department Heads. Based on the 2014 directive from the Secretary, the Academy has established a program to routinely evaluate faculty teaching methods in the classroom. Faculty have increased the frequency of feedback and observations over the past three years and are developing methods to utilize the data for continuous improvement.

Professional development funding, including funding for travel to scholarly conferences, has increased over the past three years with the Secretary's support and 2014 directive to identify policy changes and resources that provide greater professional development opportunities for faculty. Delegation of budget management to the Superintendent has enabled him to allocate funding to support travel by faculty.

Recommendation 1C: Educational Equipment and Infrastructure

Conduct a comprehensive review and upgrade of educational equipment, particularly the engine room simulator, and include IT infrastructure.

Explore opportunities to use private funds to develop this infrastructure, including renovating academic buildings and enabling wireless connectivity access across campus.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: The Academy's faculty use audio-visual equipment, computer technology, lab equipment, and simulators to teach Midshipmen the essential knowledge and skills they need to master their disciplines and learn the critical skills they need to serve our Nation in peacetime and war. With support from the Secretary, capital expenditures for learning technology, equipment, and simulators have increased appropriately over the past three years and some end-of-life equipment has been replaced. However, standard procurement procedures used by non-educational departments of the government are being applied to the Academy. The number of permissions required and the timeline to repair equipment is unreasonable for an educational institution. As a result, faculty and Midshipmen do not consistently have access to the learning equipment and technology they need to teach and learn.

To operate effectively, the Academy must continue to have sufficient capital funding for educational equipment. It must also have more authority to use operating expenses to maintain equipment, as needed, to ensure that working equipment is available for teaching and learning.

Updated Educational Equipment and Infrastructure Recommendation

Create a rolling three-year forecast of educational equipment capital investments and maintenance needs and report to the Secretary on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.

Recommendation 1F: International Collaboration

Encourage visiting professorships (such as sabbaticals) to foster international collaboration.

Summary of Status: Progress made

Details of Status: Starting in the second term of Academic Year 2015-2016, the Academy has granted a sabbatical to one faculty member for each term through Term Two of Academic Year 2016-2017. Future expectations are to grant at least three instructors a sabbatical each year. One faculty member is presently on sabbatical and traveling internationally to research the use of liquefied natural gas in the maritime industry.

Recommendation 1G: Institutional-Level Learning Outcomes

Encourage interdepartmental coordination (particularly between students' academic and Regimental lives) on planning and budgeting to leverage resources.

Take a more integrated approach to curriculum development and programming.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: The Academy has established a committee to develop institution-level learning objectives in accordance with higher education best practices and accreditation standards. The leadership development program is also addressing how to best integrate curriculum needs and Regimental training to optimize the Midshipmen's development. With clarity and agreement on institutional objectives and priorities, the Academy will be able to more effectively develop its Fiscal Year 2018 and 2019 budgets.

Recommendation 1H: Data Collection and Analysis³

Strengthen the Academy's capability to collect and use data in a meaningful way to support decisions and align with MSCHE's *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Requirements of Affiliation and Standards of Accreditation*.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: To support student learning, in 2013 the Superintendent created the Institutional Effectiveness Council to review and document improvements in overall institutional well-being. Each department and program was directed to establish a mission and goals, mapped to the USMMA strategic goals. The Director of Institutional Assessment drafted an Institutional Effectiveness Handbook and many divisions, programs, and units across the Academy have been using the Handbook. The Director of Institutional Assessment left the Academy in February 2015 and progress toward an integrated and systematic institutional assessment process stalled. In 2016, a new Director of Institutional Assessment was hired and has been working closely with the faculty and Regiment leaders to establish a systematic assessment strategy and process to share assessment results; discuss results with appropriate constituents; and use the data for institutional planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal, in accordance with accreditation standards.

³ Recommendation 1H is from the 2015 Annual Report and was identified as recommendation "C" in that report (see 2015 Annual Report, page 7).

2. Leadership

2012-2017 Strategic Plan Goal: USMMA aspires to “strengthen leadership, organizational capacity, and governance of the Academy at all levels.”

Overall Board Recommendation: Develop and evaluate a comprehensive leadership and governance approach to leverage synergies between academic and Regimental arenas and effectively address accreditation needs.

Recommendations and Status of Academy Progress

Recommendation 2A: Leadership Development

Develop a comprehensive approach to leadership development that addresses synergies between academic and Regimental student experiences. This could involve engaging all segments of the USMMA community, including students, faculty, administrators, alumni, the Advisory Board, the Board of Visitors, and MARAD, drawing on best practices from other institutions, including but not limited to, the other service academies. This could also involve developing leadership programs for Midshipmen that help enhance students’ understanding of leadership and acquiring the skills necessary for exercising leadership effectively.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: The Board is pleased to report that there has been continuing, significant progress in developing programs for Midshipmen to become leaders in times of peace and war. Then-Secretary Foxx’s priority item in his letter and directives to the Superintendent in July 24, 2014, was “the development of a comprehensive leadership development program.”

The faculty have embraced the addition of leadership to the academic program and a faculty committee created a sequence of two required core courses in leadership for the 2016–2017 academic year. In addition, an elective course on leadership has been well received. Increased attention to leadership is now an element of the athletics program. The Commandant’s Department has substantially revamped Regimental training to focus more on leadership skills. For Academic Year 2017-2018, the Commandant has reorganized the Regiment to create more formal leadership positions for Midshipmen in their sophomore, junior, and senior years.

Updated Leadership Development Recommendation

Acknowledge the progress that has been made in moving ahead on leadership development for Midshipmen and maintain progress on this initiative. The addition of two required courses is a great step forward. The faculty and Regiment should continue their work together to create a comprehensive leadership development program that integrates academic and Regimental student experience and places leadership development at the forefront of the Academy experience.

Faculty morale, which had been uncharacteristically low compared to faculty morale at peer Federal Service Academies and institutions with which Board members are familiar, continues to improve. USMMA morale as measured on the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey has substantively improved and shows a positive trend. Faculty members are taking a more active role in governance and a vote on new governance practices is anticipated in June 2017.

Regular civil communication between the Superintendent and the USMMA AAF occurs periodically after years of contentiousness. While the issues have by no means been resolved, the fact that there has been continued communication is a step in the right direction. The Superintendent has been appropriately attentive to his relationships with MARAD, the U.S. DOT Office of the Secretary (OST), and the Board of Visitors. The Superintendent's leadership was recognized in the 2016 MSCHE report.

Updated Governance Recommendations

The Board encourages members of the Board of Visitors to ensure that the Academy is treated in the same manner as other Federal Service Academies during sequestrations, government shutdowns, and similar events.

The Academy should purchase and implement software to track and communicate evidence of compliance with accreditation standards and staff the office of Institutional Assessment at an adequate level to develop and manage ongoing institutional assessment processes and programs.

Recommendation 2C: Sound Leadership

Refine existing and define new performance measures to measure progress toward meeting the Sound Leadership goal; evaluate these metrics with the Advisory Board.

Summary of Status: Not started

Recommendation 2D: Human Capital Plan (HCP)

Develop an HCP for staff and faculty to emphasize the need for continuous improvement and individual development.

Examine best practices at other service academies on how to effectively develop and assess HCPs. HCP activities should be part of the USMMA culture.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: Human resource services are centralized at U.S. DOT and the Academy has no human resource professionals on staff to provide required services, such as compensation planning, succession planning, strategic human resource planning, counseling, and managerial coaching and development. The U.S. DOT resource responsible for these essential tasks has been on long-term leave since the summer of 2015 and there is no near-term plan to provide these services to the Academy. This means the HCP is on hold until U.S. DOT Human Resources staff have the capacity to work on this recommendation.

Recommendation 2E: Strategic Plan

The Superintendent and a representative group of members of the Academy should investigate strategic planning best practices from other institutions of higher education and should choose a more collaborative and

3. Campus Culture

2012-2017 Strategic Plan Goal: USMMA aspires to have a “vibrant, diverse, and inclusive culture to attract and educate maritime leaders who excel.”

Overall Board Recommendation: Promote a positive campus culture through enhanced student body diversity, increased student life opportunities, more transparent grading structures, improved food quality, and more accessible faculty.

Recommendations and Status of Academy Progress

Recommendation 3A: Grading Rubric

Examine learning outcomes and success rates for each course and develop a grading rubric that is transparent to students.

Summary of Status: Unknown Progress

Recommendation 3B: Admissions and Diversity

Increase the pay and benefits budget to fund the approved admissions officer position.

Make a higher level of commitment to diversity training and social justice to help the Academy expand its diversity among women and minorities; this could include producing a formal Academy statement outlining the institution’s commitment to increasing diversity.

Summary of Status: Achieved

Details of Status: The Academy has made strong progress toward the goal of increasing racial and gender diversity. As shown in Table 5, females comprise 20 percent of admitted students for the graduating classes of 2019 and 2020 versus 13 percent of admitted students for the graduating class of 2014. Racial diversity of admitted students has increased as a percentage of total students admitted for five of the past six years, as shown in Table 6.

Table 5. Female Student Enrollment, Graduating Class Years 2014–2020

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Enrollment	44	42	41	38	47	50	55
Percentage of Class	13%	15%	15%	16%	19%	20%	20%

activities have been expanded, particularly on weekends, giving Midshipmen who do not have liberty to leave the Academy options for constructive social interaction. A robust schedule of events is planned and coordinated by Midshipmen with guidance and leadership from the Director of Student Activities. The Superintendent and members of staff and faculty regularly volunteer to chaperone Midshipmen on cultural outings.

Updated Campus Culture and Student Life Recommendations

Backfill the Director of Student Activities position.

Continue to provide funding for cultural outings and community service.

Incorporate cultural and community service activities into the Academy's overall institutional goals and assessment program.

Collect and use data for continuous improvement.

Recommendation 3E: Faculty and Student Collaboration

Provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to work together to develop dynamic, engaging student life activities and opportunities for leadership development.

Summary of Status: Completed

Details of Status: This recommendation is being accomplished in several ways. The Director of Student Activities is collaborating with faculty, staff, and Midshipmen to create dynamic, engaging student life activities and opportunities for leadership development. Through a new strategic planning process, it is anticipated that faculty, staff, and Midshipmen will also work together to create a vision, set goals and performance measures, and identify strategies to achieve these goals.

Recommendation 3F: Faculty Office Hours and Teaching

Ensure that faculty honor office hours and evaluate their curriculum and teaching methods on a rotating schedule to ensure up-to-date content and teaching methods.

Summary of Status: Completed

Details of Status: The former Academic Dean and the current interim Academic Dean have addressed this recommendation. Midshipmen regularly complete course evaluations. Faculty routinely receive feedback from peers and/or managers and use it to improve their teaching effectiveness. With support from MARAD and U.S. DOT, the Academy will have the funding and discretionary authority to maintain essential teaching and learning equipment, and will make it readily available to faculty and Midshipmen. With the implementation of the new industry advisory entity and institutional assessment program, data and input will be used to continuously improve the curriculum and ensure it is cutting edge, relevant, and effective in accomplishing the mission of the Academy.

Recommendation 3G: Nutrition and Dining Services

Hire a nutritionist to work with Dining Services to plan and prepare high-quality meals and snacks that meet students' nutritional and dietary needs, and upgrade the dining experience.

Make food available for purchase during times when the dining hall is closed.

Summary of Status: In process

Details of Status: The Academy and MARAD, in partnership with industry leaders, took several actions to make progress toward implementing the recommendations outlined above:

MARAD engaged with the maritime industry leaders to highlight the issue of sexual harassment and assault and discuss ways to provide more consistent support for victims and discipline for perpetrators, with a focus on protecting Midshipmen.

Then-Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx established a Sea Year Stand Down to allow time for the USMMA, MARAD, and the maritime industry to strengthen policies and practices to prevent and end sexual harassment and assault, hazing, bullying, coercion, and retaliation toward Midshipmen. Alleged occurrences of sexual harassment, assault, hazing, bullying, coercion and retaliation toward Midshipmen were identified for over a decade as a problem in varying degrees of frequency and severity by victims, witnesses, and DMDC SAGR Surveys. Then-Secretary Foxx issued a directive for an audit to: 1) identify the current institutional climate at USMMA and any contributing subcultures; 2) analyze the nature and scope of the problem of sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus and at sea derived from recent reports, research, survey data, policies, and interviews; and 3) provide recommendations for improvement. The full report is available at:

<https://www.usmma.edu/sites/usmma.edu/files/docs/USMMAReport%20508.pdf>.

The Academy and MARAD established a strong public-private partnership between the government, private industry, and labor which resulted in the following actions:

- Establishment of Sea Year Eligibility requirements which include, but are not limited to, zero tolerance for sexual harassment and assault; vetted mentors to work with Midshipmen during Sea Year; and a no-fraternization policy between crew members and Midshipmen.
- Requirement for all vessel crew members to be trained about sexual harassment and assault and requirement for shipping lines to verify that crew members understand the issue, their responsibilities, penalties for not reporting an incident, and the company's disciplinary procedures.
- Requirement for each company to provide USMMA with a written summary of the Midshipmen's experience on the company's vessel and note areas of concern and opportunities for improving the Sea Year experience.
- Support for the creation of the SCCT, comprised of 10 licensed mariners (four of whom are female), sexual harassment and assault experts, and civil rights experts. The initial SCCT was led by two MARAD officials who are USMMA graduates. The SCCT reviews documents submitted by companies that seek to participate in the Sea Year program to ensure compliance with the criteria. A full list of requirements is available on MARAD's website at <https://www.marad.dot.gov/criteria/>.

The Academy's faculty, Regiment, and staff sought out and implemented best practices from other SMAs, service academies, and higher education institutions to reduce victims' fears of reporting sexual harassment and assault crimes, and eliminate the retribution that victims experience. Best practices that have been implemented in the past 12 months include:

- Enhanced Sea Year preparation for Midshipmen. The Sea Year Committee was established in the summer of 2016 to review the Sea Year experience and make recommendations for future improvements to the program. The committee is working to ensure that Midshipmen are adequately prepared to go to sea by reviewing Academy-wide preparation strategies, with particular focus on training offered during indoctrination, regimental training, and lectures

The Academy should continue to use SAGR surveys to measure progress on preventing and ending sexual harassment and assault against peers, and use the data to continuously improve programs.

The Academy and MARAD should establish performance indicators and adjust them, as needed, to measure progress toward safety objectives so that Midshipmen and the Academy administration can be confident that appropriate efforts are being made to prevent sexual harassment and assaults, that incidents will be addressed promptly and forthrightly, and that there will be zero tolerance for retaliation against victims who report harassment or assault. Performance measures will include: (1) Number of Midshipmen and USMMA staff and faculty trained to identify, prevent, report, and assist victims of sexual harassment and assault; (2) frequency of alleged and reported incidents on campus and during Sea Year; and (3) number of perpetrators punished.

The Academy's faculty, Regiment, and staff should evolve an interdisciplinary program to develop a leadership culture in which Midshipmen are encouraged to have empathy toward victims and stand up to perpetrators.

barracks, increasing connectivity for Midshipmen and providing the Academy with the ability to install wireless room door locks if needed in the future.

U.S. Congress, U.S. DOT, MARAD, and the Academy made changes to the Academy's current governance and administration policies to restore authorities to the Superintendent that had been removed in response to issues that occurred under prior leadership. These changes are enabling the Superintendent and his staff to operate the Academy in a more effective and efficient manner and the backlog of routine maintenance issues are being addressed.

Recommendation 5E:

Develop and maintain an alumni database to retain and deepen alumni connections (e.g., encourage alumni to sponsor sea tour opportunities for Midshipmen).

Recommendation 5F:

Expand efforts to highlight contributions made by graduates to the U.S. Navy, Strategic Sealift Officer Program, U.S. Army, National Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Coast Guard.

Recommendation 5G:

Develop and expand partnerships with Kings Point graduates who have leadership roles in industry. This is an opportunity for private donors to contribute resources to meet the Academy's needs.

Summary of Status: On hold

Details of Status: Overall, there has been some progress toward meeting the objective of improved communication to build strong and lasting relationships with external stakeholders. There are efforts to educate the local community on the Academy and to establish stronger relationships with the mayors of Kings Point and Great Neck. Events such as a car show and Beat Retreat are open to the community. The color guard and band are participating in parades and other events. Weekly sports events are sent to the local press. Most press inquiries are from professional maritime magazines/journals.

However, substantive progress has been hampered by delays in filling the approved External Affairs positions.

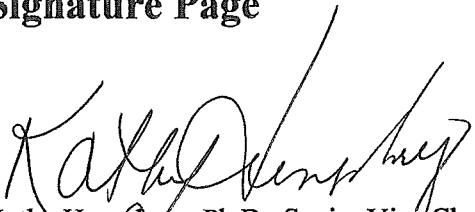
Recommendation 5H: Professional Networks

Send faculty/staff representatives accompanied by Midshipmen to relevant maritime conferences to expand their professional networks.

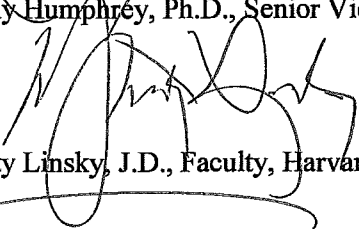
Summary of Status: In process

Details of Status: Over the past four years, the number of faculty attending professional and industry events and conferences has increased; frequently, Midshipmen are selected to accompany faculty to these events. Industry members participate in career fairs on campus and provide opportunities for Midshipmen to sail aboard approved vessels and gain real-world experience on working ships.


Signature Page



Kathy Humphrey, Ph.D., Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement and Chief of Staff, University of Pittsburgh



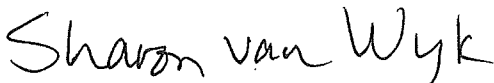
Marty Linsky, J.D., Faculty, Harvard Kennedy School and Co-founder, Cambridge Leadership Associates



William Pennella, Executive Vice President, Crowley Maritime Corporation



Jean-Paul Rodrigue, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Global Studies and Geography, Hofstra University



Sharon van Wyk, Ph.D., Chair of U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Board of Advisors and Senior Vice President and Chief Student Experience Officer, Walden University