Following is the Action Plan presentation President Hendricks made to the BOG in Harrisburg on July 7, 2015.

Joining me today are Steve Crawford, Vice Chair, for Mansfield University’s Council of Trustees, Dr. Steven Siconolfi, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs / Provost and John Adams, V.P., Finance & Administration.

Present in the audience and listening on the phone are other members of the Council of Trustees and the University team.

Dr. Will George Butler, renowned music composer and professor, Class of 1897, captured the University’s timeless calling when he penned the following four words in the third verse of “Mansfield, Hail!” our Alma Mater, “When larger duty calls”.

For 158 years, a Mansfield education has prepared each of its students for “When larger duty calls”. The University has produced a governor, a State Supreme Court Justice, countless educators, doctors, lawyers and leaders on the national, state and local levels.

The Action Plan I will share with you today is a direct offshoot of our strategic plan, MU 2020, and is in perfect alignment with our Vision.

In his book Good to Great, Jim Collins enlightened us that only three of the top 100 companies in the year 1900 still existed in the year 2000. Each of those three companies had to proactively embrace change to succeed in a changing world.
Higher Education is changing. An ever shrinking student pool and diminishing state funding is our new normal. It is imperative you know your product and how it enhances the public you serve. Equally important is knowing your market space, your niche and how to claim your market share.

At Mansfield University, we are confident in our product and the faculty and staff that deliver it. Our direct competitors are not present in this room, nor are they determined by PASSHE geography. Our emphasis will be to brand Mansfield University as the high-quality affordable, public alternative to Pennsylvania’s small private colleges.

**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS OF DISTINCTION**
(Note: Each University was asked to limit its programs of distinction to four for this presentation.)

Among our many distinctive programs, Biology is notable for its integration of hands-on learning and independent student research.

The Medical Laboratory Sciences concentration is accredited by the National Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences, and graduates of the Fisheries program are certified as Associate Fisheries Professionals with the American Fisheries Society.

In addition, our Biology program is the only one in the State System featuring strong research connections with Cornell in the areas of microbiology, genetics, genomics, and veterinary medicine.

Our Health Sciences department features high-quality, fully accredited degree programs.
In the past three years all Mansfield University graduates from Nursing, Nutrition/Dietetics, and Respiratory Therapy have found positions in their fields of expertise. Students in the Nutrition/Dietetics, Radiologic Technology, and Respiratory Therapy programs have 100% pass rates for their licensure and certification exams.

Our Respiratory Therapy program received the CoArc Distinguished Registered Respiratory Therapist Credential Success award in both 2013 and 2014, the only program in PA to do so, and just one of 37 nationally to receive this distinction.

Our Geosciences department is notable for its use of cutting-edge technology and innovative methodology.

Most recently, Geosciences faculty and students have pioneered the use of state-of-the-art 3D printing technology in conjunction with aerial drone imaging to produce 3D maps of the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon terrain.

Their technique has drawn the attention of Research 1 faculty in the US, Canada, and Europe. Five utility patents are being considered to cover the methodology.

Mansfield maintains its own UAV fleet and is one of only three Geoscience departments in the United States with a dedicated 3D printer.

Historically, Mansfield University has been best known for its Music programs, and for good reason.
The program has a tradition of musical excellence that began in 1861 with one of the first music teacher training programs in the country. Over the years, our Music program has built a well-deserved international reputation.

The MU Concert Choir has won nine gold medals in international competitions over the past 10 years. The most recent being 3 Gold Medals from the World Choir Games in 2013.

The MU Marching Band performed in the Olympic Village and London in 2012. The MU Wind Ensemble has 7 instances of Grammy nominated eligibility within the past two years.

**OTHER PROGRAMS OF DISTINCTION**

The recently redesigned Mansfield University Honors Program features a "Great Conversations" curriculum emphasizing inquiry-based, experiential learning in an interdisciplinary context. In addition to core courses focused on fundamental, cross-disciplinary questions such as "How Do We Know?" and "Are We Free?" the program has a strong co-curricular service-learning component.

Mansfield University is one of only 26 institutions nationwide with membership in the Sino-American 1+2+1 Program. This program enables Chinese students to complete their first year of study at their home institution, the next two years at Mansfield University, and their final year back in China. Upon successful completion of the program, the student earns degrees from both institutions.
The Graduate Transition to Work program offers recent Mansfield graduates temporary one-year positions in the university workforce, providing an opportunity for graduates to apply what they’ve learned in their field of study while also gaining first-hand employment experience. Graduates are selected on the basis of academic achievement, service to the university, and the possession of the necessary skills.

Mansfield University is the only institution in our region offering a Senior Transitions Conference. The two-day conference for graduating seniors features informational sessions and workshops that prepare students for life after graduation. Students participating come from Universities and Colleges from across the state.

In January 2015, Mansfield University was unanimously accepted for membership in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) by its 28 member institutions. COPLAC limits membership to one institution per state. Membership offers exceptional access for our students, faculty and staff to partner in research and joint projects with other COPLAC institutions from across the United States and Canada. This admittance acknowledges our commitment to serve as Pennsylvania’s premier public liberal arts institution.

Marketing our distinctiveness to the public is a key component of our strategic plan. Our efforts to inform the public of our superb quality and innovation was recently acknowledged in our being named to the Colleges of Distinction listing for 2015-2016. This selection immediately followed Mansfield being named to the nation’s top 100 best values for colleges and number 14 for the Northeast.
MU2020 STRATEGIC GOALS

Our Action Plan and our Strategic Plan are both designed to enhance our identity as a small, distinctive, affordable alternative to similar sized private liberal arts colleges.

Crafted under the guidance of the Strategic Planning Team, with input from a wide range of campus and community constituencies, the MU 2020 Strategic Plan launched on July 1, 2014.

The Strategic Plan is a living document, and is reviewed, refined and amended as needed to ensure that the mission, vision, and plan are fully aligned. This process of monitoring and tracking the Strategic Plan is the purview of our University-Wide Assessment Committee and our Strategic Planning Action Team.

As you can see from the slide, our goals of Student Success, Resource Management, and Strategic Engagement are supported by: our commitment to infusing the liberal arts throughout our programs; integrating high-impact learning practices such as hands-on experience, internships, and undergraduate research; managing our enrollment effectively and making our size our virtue; expanding our community relationships through service learning and other high-impact activities; and continually assessing and improving our efficiency and effectiveness.

Enrollment Strategies

In 2009, we enjoyed an all-time historic high in enrollment. Our FTE was 3,153. Since then we have seen a 21% decline.
In our Action Plan, we forecast a further decline in enrollment for the coming academic year, with a return to measured positive growth in the following years. This deliberate positive growth will be realized through the initiatives listed on this slide.

Our best enrollment growth opportunities are with international students, community college transfers and targeted recruiting for high capacity programs. Strategic marketing will be key!

Our marketing efforts through social media are taking hold. At the start of AY14/15, The Meltwater Group Likeability Rating for Colleges and Universities had Mansfield ranked 99th nationally and 4th in Pennsylvania, trailing Penn State, Temple, and Duquesne. Presently, Mansfield is 17th nationally and 1st in the state.

Our retention efforts will continue to focus on programs designed to increase student to student and student to faculty and staff engagement.

MU’s first-year retention rate for AY13/14 was the second highest in the past twenty years, and early indications are that the first-year retention rate for AY14/15 will surpass that number by at least two (2) points, making it MU’s all-time highest retention rate for the past two decades.

Our efforts and strategies are working. Patience, time and resources are needed.
NEW AND EMERGING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Our new programs for Fall 15 include the online master's program in Nutrition that you approved earlier this year.

The Professional Writing concentration to the English major reflects growing interest among our students for writing internships in professional settings in our region and beyond.

A new online version of our two-year CIS degree will focus on the system and business aspects of computing and is designed to provide working adults and others with a more flexible, self-paced learning environment.

Our BA in Liberal Studies is being redesigned with an "integrated studies" option to enable our students to construct a Liberal Studies degree that combines focused areas of study from different disciplines into one coherent, integrated program.

The emerging programs you see listed here are in the planning stage; we are expecting curricular proposals in each area to be submitted this Fall semester.

Our emerging programs include the master's in Geosciences with concentrations in Watershed Management and Geographic Information Science and Technology. Building on the strength and success of our undergraduate programs, the master's in Geosciences will offer post-graduate students and working professionals the specialized skills credentials sought by a variety of industries and non-profit organizations.

The undergraduate programs in Environmental Studies and World Languages and Cultures are interdisciplinary in nature,
as is the proposed Forensic Psychology concentration, reflecting our commitment to the liberal arts and cross-disciplinary perspectives.

The concentration in Sports Information is in early discussion and exploration.

All our programs at Mansfield – current, new, revised, and emerging – are aligned with our mission: to provide students with a personalized education infused with the liberal arts.

**Performance Funding Indicators**

As depicted here, we are trending in the right direction with internal performance measures. Our improvement was largely the result of doing better on graduation rates and student persistence measures.

With respect to benchmark measures, the State System’s use of a common benchmark group for nearly all System universities has made it difficult for us to achieve success on many of these targets because this does not take into account our size and location.

We understand – and appreciate – the State System is making some adjustments to the benchmark group to make it more equitable, as otherwise benchmark targets relating to racial diversity and size will continue to remain largely unattainable for us.

**E & G Budget and Strategic Realignment**

As previously mentioned, resources, time and patience are needed for our Strategic Plan to take hold and be successful.
In addressing our fiscal shortfall, we will initiate a Board of Governors- approved High Contact Course Fee beginning the Fall of 2015. The annual expected revenue of $245 thousand dollars will help cover the costs of courses with high faculty contact such as science laboratory, art studio and music instruction.

To generate additionally needed revenue, we plan to submit a per-credit tuition model pilot to the Board of Governors for implementation in AY16. This pilot will generate $4 million dollars, of which $1.0 million will be earmarked for financial assistance for our neediest students, and the remaining revenue will be directed toward the University’s strategic initiatives and operating budget.

Faculty and staff adjustments from the 2010 to 2014 timeframe reflect a total employee reduction of over 47 FTE.

**Student Affordability**

Earlier I stated our direct competitors are not in this room. I will now explain that statement. Pennsylvania is home to 102 traditional colleges and universities. Very important to us is the fact that 76 of the colleges and universities are Mansfield’s size or smaller.

By our size, I mean fewer than 4,000 students. This is our true peer group, the U4K.

We have no intention of moving beyond this sector. At the next level up, that being the 4-7,000 students, there are presently 14 institutions, 6 PASSHE and 8 private. Again, it is not our intent to be number 7 of 15, when we are better positioned to
serve the Commonwealth as 1 of 76 similarly sized schools and 1 of 42 who share a similar liberal arts focus.

The U4K cluster of institutions account for 35% of the total student enrollment across Pennsylvania. This is our market space. Through our focused marketing efforts highlighting our quality, our value proposition and our affordability, we will gain market share.

The measure of our success will be determined by our ability to inform and educate the public of why Mansfield is the right fit for quality, the right fit for cost, and the right fit for Return on Investment.

For quality, we will line our faculty and staff up against any other.

In comparing the average cost of advertised tuition and fees, Mansfield has an “affordability” advantage of being 73% less expensive than our peer privates.

The average annual cost of a liberal arts education at Pennsylvania’s small private schools is just over $35,000.

By comparison, Pennsylvania resident students pay $9,500 at Mansfield.

Over four-years, the average tuition and fees at one of Pennsylvania’s small, private schools is nearly $141,000; Mansfield University’s is just over $38,000. That equates to a savings of $103,000.
This is an immediate and tangible ROI. In a time when student debt is a major concern, Mansfield is a great affordable and high quality alternative.

**Pricing Flexibility Pilot**

All approved Board of Governors Pricing Flexibility Pilots are set to commence in Fall 15. We will report on their success next summer.

Pending pilots include our Nursing Fee and a Per Credit Tuition Model. Both are patterned after previously approved Board of Governors pilots and are presently planned for implementation in Fall 16.

**Challenges and Opportunities**

Many of the challenges faced by Mansfield University mirror those of other PASSHE institutions: a structural budget deficit due to insufficient funding, growing unfunded mandates, and shrinking demographics resulting in declining enrollment. In Fall 13 we formally addressed these concerns by authoring a White Paper that clearly described the situation and the unsustainability of the current business model.

As a small, rural university, Mansfield University is presented with additional challenges for recruitment and retention, magnifying the negative impact of under-funding and diminishing demographics.

Imposed institutional costs that are not prorated based on university size, contrasted with the allocation of state appropriations prorated on size rather than documented need,
and an aging infrastructure leave Mansfield University with major challenges.

With regards to opportunities, I want to remind all, Mansfield is a fighter! Its history supports this claim.

Immediately following the opening of the school in 1857, 2 of its 3 buildings burned to the ground. The school was threatened with closure.

The dogged tenacity that is inherent in the region and the school showed itself and the buildings were rebuilt. For 158 years the school has been a major economic engine in the region and the launch pad for countless successful careers of first generation college students.

In 2006 when we lost our NCAA DIV II football team due to the University’s budget deficit, the same tenacity enabled us to find a way to keep playing football.

In 2008 we were admitted into the Collegiate Sprint Football League.

Mansfield is the first and only public school that plays in this 76-year old league made up of Ivy League Schools, West Point, Navy and other Private Institutions.

Our annual celebration of being the birthplace of night football gives us both a regional and national television audience to highlight Mansfield University and our offerings.

Opportunities going forward present themselves in the form of renewed advancement and alumni initiatives which will bring increased scholarship dollars for high-achieving students,
enrollment growth through international exchanges, high profile internships, and interdisciplinary degrees designed by and for the individual student.

The Institute for Security Studies, under development with a renowned alumnus, will focus on policing and security in the 21st century, and has the potential to garner national and international acclaim.

Potential for partnering for shared services with other Pennsylvania State System universities is being explored.

A shift to a per-credit tuition model will provide the necessary financial and human resources to bring these and other opportunities to fruition.

As Pennsylvania’s only member of COPLAC, Mansfield University is uniquely positioned to be the public, liberal arts university of choice for those students seeking a quality education in a small, intimate setting at an exceptionally affordable cost.

This Action Plan helps frame the opportunities and challenges we face. Adequate time and resources are needed.

In embracing these opportunities and looking for viable ways to overcome our challenges, we take great pride in Jim Dillon’s comments to the Mansfield COT during the recent dashboard presentation, when he shared, “No one does more with less than Mansfield”.

Equally important to us and where we are headed was the fact our brand as indicated in that same presentation was green and trending up.
Yes we have challenges, but we see even greater opportunities. Mansfield has always proven capable of finding a way to succeed.