

# CREATING AN ELEGANT USER EXPERIENCE

2016 Annual Report



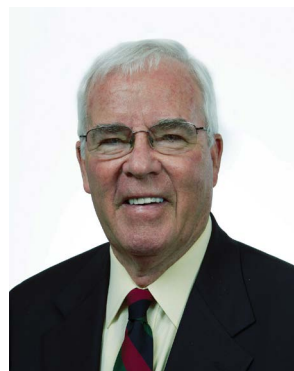
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# EMPOWERING STUDENTS

## A Message from the Chair of the Board of Trust

Kenneth McLennan, Ph.D.



The most important “users” of American Sentinel University’s education and services are our students. But we have many other stakeholders who interact with our university on a daily basis. Among them are students’ employers, alumni, faculty, staff, accreditors, regulators, and suppliers. With each of these groups, we are dedicated to making their interactions with us as seamless, easy and empowering as possible. In that vein, in 2016, we embarked on a program of digital transformation of our service structure and classroom experience.

We tackled a few areas such as student sign-in and submissions, and after achieving several successes, we decided to unveil a more extensive plan for 2017 and 2018. That effort will address most of the major service areas (student site, registration, etc.) and classroom enhancements, but we believe that this work must be continuous hereafter. We will invest \$2 million to improve the

student experience with enhanced classrooms and one-click access to a variety of student services.

To guide our activities, we have engaged students, alumni and additional stakeholders, including experts from other educational institutions. We have been most gratified by the response, but no more so than from students who provided us with nearly 10,000 written responses and questionnaire answers. More recently, we surveyed students about study habits and were rewarded with almost 1,000 responses. This rich insight is guiding our efforts.

While many of the transformation programs are in the form of digital administrative services, curricula and the classroom are also important—and we are striving to enhance our nursing and healthcare management education programs. One of the collateral benefits of providing digital services and classroom experiences is that we offer a real-time experience

to many of the same technologies that are rapidly transforming healthcare delivery. Our simulation and virtual intelligent agents are being used under contract by other schools of nursing, which gives us confirmation that our efforts are on track. In addition, we now have special educational relationships with more than 80 healthcare providers and pre-licensure nursing programs.

We are excited to share more about these and other innovations as well as our recent approvals for new programs from our accreditors in this 2016 annual report. In addition, we are proud to have been accepted for candidate status by the Higher Learning Commission.

Thank you for your interest and support as we celebrate our successes from the past year and lay the foundation for our next steps. Our goal is to ensure that our high-quality education and services translate into an elegant user experience.

# ONLINE AND DIGITAL

## A Message from the CEO

Richard W. Oliver, Ph.D.



Since the mid-1990s, businesses and entire industries have transformed themselves in the wake of the introduction of many new digital technologies. This evolution has created alternatives to more traditional modes of production, distribution and consumption.

One of the strategic results of digital technologies being readily available between the producer and the consumer is the empowerment of the consumer. More than ever, consumers are able to buy, sell and engage with businesses on their terms.

Take online shopping for example. Amazon, for one, has revolutionized the way people shop and embraced the use of analytics and automation to improve the user experience. They make browsing and buying easy and quick—and extremely convenient.

Last year, American Sentinel University asked students about what they wanted from us in terms of a user experience. The volume of responses we received generated a

great deal of excitement here at the university, and the consensus gained helped us focus and refine our plan. Armed with student feedback, we set out to find ways to improve the student experience and make it the best it can be.

Recently, we asked students how and when they study so we could better understand how to serve them. Again, the response was overwhelming—and provided us a great deal of information to better support our students. Here is a short summary of some of the responses we received:

Survey Results: How do our student study?

### Tech:

- 89% laptop
- 39% smartphone
- 38% desktop
- 21% tablet

### Books:

- 76% used print textbooks
- 34% would prefer to use digital books

### Where:

- 99% study at home
- 39% study at work

### When:

- 51% set aside an hour or more to do work
- 20% complete work in small 14-45 min bursts
- 11% set aside large blocks of time
- 12% only work on their days off

What did we learn from our students? We learned that while providing the best healthcare education is our main goal, how we provide it and the services that support the student throughout the educational journey need to be outstanding throughout the entire university (from enrollment and registration, to paying for school and the classroom, and through graduation and beyond).

The results of our research have helped us formulate a plan to create an “elegant user experience” for American Sentinel students. As an online university, today we are transforming ourselves to provide



students with empowering digital tools and services. Students have told us that they want more integrated, easier-to-use tools in the classroom, such as a single sign-on for Moodle and the student site; TurnItIn, an automated course extension system; and an entirely new student website featuring

one-click access to the services you use most. Many of these changes will already be rolled out by the time you read this annual report—and there is more to come over the next two years.

So much of our focus for 2017 is a direct result of what our students told us in 2016, and we are excited to share

more about our progress in the past year and our plans for the future. 2016 was a remarkable year for American Sentinel University, and we are excited about what is still to come.

# ACCREDITATION, VERIFICATION OF QUALITY

## From the President and Chief Academic Officer

Mary Adams, MBA



The year 2016 was memorable for American Sentinel for many reasons—one of which is that the university achieved candidacy status with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). There are two types of accreditation agencies, institutional and specialized, and institutional accreditation agencies are classified as either regional or national.

The Higher Learning Commission is a regional accreditation agency that accredits degree-granting institutions of higher education that are based in the 19-state North Central region of the United States, which includes Colorado (where American Sentinel University is headquartered). HLC will visit American Sentinel in December 2017 and again for initial accreditation during the 2019-2020 academic school year.

American Sentinel holds several other accreditations:

- Institutional accreditation – Through the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC), which is a national accreditor specializing in schools whose programs are more than 50% online or delivered at a distance.
- Specialized accreditation – Through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) (for our RN to BSN, MSN, RN to BSN/MSN programs), and the Accreditation

Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) (for our DNP program).

### Degree Program Changes

All four of American Sentinel University's accreditors (HLC, DEAC, CCNE and ACEN) require notifications of change when courses are added or removed, programs are changed, or new programs are introduced. Sometimes notification is all that is required to allow the university to make the change, although other times the accreditor (often at least two of them) must approve the change before the university can move forward.

American Sentinel reviews its programs and courses regularly in an effort to fulfill its mission to provide high-quality, innovative degree and certificate programs that enable students to enhance their professional and civic lives. Thus, we keep our accreditors busy. In 2016, DEAC and ACEN approved the new DNP Informatics Leadership specialization, adding to our two other DNP specializations in Executive Leadership and Educational Leadership.

Also in 2016, following an onsite visit, the DEAC approved the university to offer an MBA Healthcare in a competency-based format (CBE). The university has subsequently submitted

a request to offer the RN to BSN program in a CBE format and as of this writing, the request has been approved. We expect to make progress toward this in summer 2017 and anticipate a positive response from HLC on the MBA Healthcare offered in a CBE format by fall 2017.

We believe in offering students alternate ways to complete degree programs—so long as we continue to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes and mastery of competencies—thereby supporting the needs of our students. This also adheres to our mission. We are excited about these programmatic changes and look forward to reporting more about them in our 2017 annual report.

### Nursing Accreditation

On the nursing specialized accreditation front, CCNE extended the accreditation of the MSN program to 2024. Our next review will be in the spring of 2024 during which time CCNE will review both the BSN and the MSN programs.

### DEAC Awards

American Sentinel makes a conscientious effort to build strong relationships with its accreditors, maintaining regular communications





with them, volunteering as needed and when we believe we can make a difference. Staff and faculty participate in peer reviews of institutions accredited by or seeking accreditation from each of our accreditors.

In 2016, DEAC recognized both our CEO, Rick Oliver, and our President, Mary Adams. Dr. Oliver received the Innovation Award, which recognized his vision and guidance to introduce several key technological advances geared toward assisting students to successfully complete their coursework at American Sentinel. And following eight years of service to the DEAC as a commissioner and chair of the board of

directors, Ms. Adams was honored with the DEAC's Person of the Year Award, which is their highest recognition for individual achievement. This award acknowledges and celebrates the enduring achievement of one individual whose vision and scholarly work have shaped the path forward for distance education accreditation through leadership, innovation, partnerships, a focus on education quality, and a commitment to serving students.

At American Sentinel, accreditation is an important validation of how we serve our students and achieve our mission to provide high-quality, innovative degree and certificate programs. Just

as 2016 was a progressive year, 2017 will be another important period for American Sentinel as we keep working to improve our processes to provide our students, faculty and staff with an exceptional experience. Most importantly, we will seek ways to remove barriers to success and offer an engaging and effective learning experience to our students.



“Nursing is the backbone of healthcare in the United States and around the world. We must focus on providing relevant programs that fit our mission of helping students improve their professional and civic lives.”

*Mary Adams, MBA, President and  
Chief Academic Officer*



# *OUR PURPOSE AND VALUES*

## *MISSION STATEMENT*

American Sentinel University's mission is to provide high-quality, innovative degree and certificate programs that enable students to enhance their professional and civic lives.

### **AMERICAN SENTINEL UNIVERSITY VALUES**

#### *Continued Improvements in Quality Outcomes*

Place the creation of value for the learner at the center of all that we do.

Embrace the change necessary to continually improve standards and processes to create "best-in-class" educational content and learning assessments.

#### *Community of Scholars*

Keep our students, faculty, staff, communities and other constituents fully informed and engaged in a free exchange of ideas in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

Seek to identify the special service needs of our students and work diligently to meet or exceed them.

#### *Connected and Inclusive*

Act with integrity and behave ethically and transparently.

Value diversity among the Board, administrators, students, faculty and all other constituents and stakeholders.

Maintain a workplace characterized by safety, openness, creativity, challenge and innovation.

## VISION STATEMENT

### **TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A WORLD LEADER...**

... for providing accessible, quality, advanced education for the motivated, non-traditional learner/professional who seeks to lead in emerging industries or growing market sectors of the global economy...

... for providing new levels of access to motivated, non-traditional students who heretofore have not had the opportunity for advanced professional degrees for reasons of time, money or geography...

... for innovative use of technology that creates new standards in assessment and achievement of academic excellence...

... for understanding and meeting the changing needs of its students, communities and other constituents...

... for creating excellence in student and constituent services.

## STUDENT MANIFESTO

At American Sentinel, nurturing students' talent is our primary responsibility. We believe the only true measure of our success is our students' success in their chosen fields.

To achieve our goals, American Sentinel pledges to our students that we will, to the best of our ability:

- Offer high-quality educational programs.
- Provide a response to student requests within 24 hours.
- Create a variety of innovative courses and programs that equip students with the latest and most desired knowledge in the marketplace.
- Employ the most innovative educational technologies.
- Provide world-class student services and support.
- Operate in a fiscally responsible manner to ensure students receive the best value in tuition.
- Provide students annual reports on our progress toward meeting our goals.

# FACULTY MANIFESTO

At American Sentinel University, we understand that faculty (full-time and adjunct) are key to student success, as they have the central responsibility for achieving our mission to provide high-quality, innovative degree and certificate programs that enable students to enhance their professional and civic lives.

Our faculty is responsible for programs, courses, instruction, service and scholarship. At American Sentinel, we have created a work environment for our faculty that is connected and inclusive, respectful and supports a free exchange of ideas, and rewards student-centered quality learning outcomes.

To achieve our goals, American Sentinel pledges to our faculty that we will, to the best of our ability:

- Promote a culture among faculty that is inclusive and respectful.
- Offer ongoing dialog with administration to hear ideas, concerns and suggestions.
- Provide a response to faculty requests within 24 hours.
- Provide proper funding for the development and ongoing support of programs.
- Ensure that faculty are represented on department and university committees.
- Ensure that our learning management system meets or exceeds our goal of 99.9 percent uptime.
- Ensure our pay is fair, equitable and competitive.
- Provide relevant and timely training opportunities.
- Establish annual teaching schedules so that faculty can count on us.
- Receive an annual performance review and reward excellent performance in teaching, service and scholarship.

We ask in return that faculty support our mission and our goal to provide superior student engagement and satisfaction.

# EMPOWERED LEARNING WITH A DIGITAL CLASSROOM



MAURA®



**Elaine Foster, Ph.D., MSN, RN**  
Dean, Nursing and Healthcare  
Programs

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report (2010), *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, identified the need to increase the number of nurses with bachelor's (BSN), master's (MSN) and doctoral (DNP or Ph.D.) degrees in nursing by 2020. Although this has been a focus of healthcare and nursing organizations for some time, the shortage of nurses with bachelor's degrees (or higher) continues to intensify.

The aging population and large number of retirement-age nurses and faculty at nursing schools who plan to leave the profession within the next five years is expected to result in a shortage in the number of nurses required to meet the healthcare needs of the public of about one million.

At the same time, research clearly demonstrates that nurses' higher education levels are associated with improved patient outcomes. The higher the proportion of BSN- and MSN-educated nurses in a healthcare organization, the better the patient outcomes.

There is also an acute shortage of doctorally-educated nursing faculty members. Such demand fueled the creation of American

Sentinel's DNP Educational Leadership program, of which we are very proud. Our students continue to produce high-quality studies through their formal capstone projects. DNP students also participate in poster presentations during the graduation open house each June.

While demand for nurses remains high, it is also important that new nurses are capable of keeping up with the changing needs of the healthcare environment. Nursing education must change and evolve. Over the past decade, simulation and virtual reality have been incorporated into educational programs, and high-fidelity simulations have become a part of pre-licensure programs that teach students learn basic skills and critical thinking. Online programs have been slower to integrate simulation or virtual reality into coursework, perhaps due to the assumption that pre-licensure is the main area that needs this type of education.

Traditionally, many nursing schools have been slow to adopt new teaching strategies and techniques, even in an online world. American Sentinel University has always strived to embrace new technology. Our faculty actively integrate technologies into their courses and continuously look for ways to embed new technologies into the classroom to enhance student engagement and attainment of learning outcomes.

To empower our students' learning, American Sentinel created Sentinel City® in the Community Health course (BSN432PE) in the RN to BSN program and the RN to BSN/MSN program.





### PROFESSOR IQ®

Community health courses typically involve a community assessment known as a windshield survey in which students visit a community, drive around and identify characteristics that may cause health risks. There are some disadvantages to the windshield survey, namely the fact that a one-time pass through almost guarantees an incomplete community assessment. Sentinel City® removes many of these obstacles/barriers from the community assessment. Students tour the city virtually, providing a safe, controlled environment and allowing students to view the community as many times as they want in order to get a complete and thorough assessment.

Additionally, American Sentinel began using Virtual Intelligence Agents in the classroom and they are now an important part of the American Sentinel University classroom. Our first “bot,” was MAURA® (standing for My Anytime University Resource Aide). MAURA®’s function is to answer general student questions 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Due to MAURA®’s positive impact, the university also developed Professor IQ®, which addresses course-specific questions—from clarification on an assignment, to the length of a paper. Professor IQ® provides

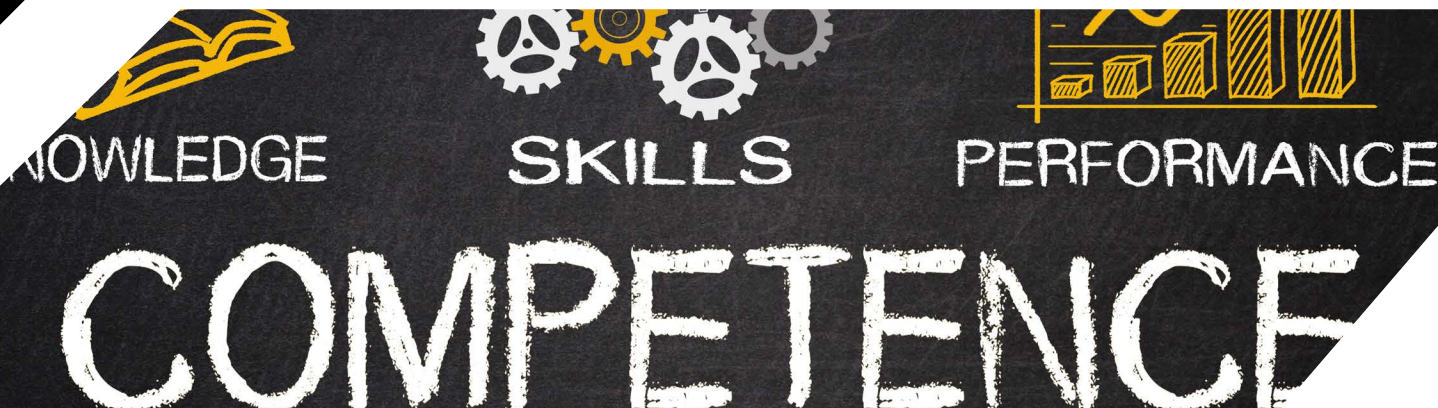
quick answers to students when faculty are not available and removes some of the redundant questions in the help area or emails that faculty receive, which frees up faculty members to concentrate on teaching. Professor IQ® exists in four BSN courses, but our goal is to place it in the remaining six BSN courses by the end of 2017. Eventually, we would like to place Professor IQ® in all MSN core courses as well.

As the healthcare industry advances through technology, American Sentinel is poised to embrace this trend. The use of technology in courses, and throughout all services provided by the university, continues to empower students to not only earn their degrees, but also to learn when, where and how best suits their needs.

### REFERENCES

B. N. Harder, “Use of simulation in teaching and learning in health sciences: a systematic review,” *Journal of Nursing Education*, vol. 49, no. 1, pp. 23–28, 2010.

# COMPETENCY-BASED INITIATIVES



**Karen Whitham, Ed.D, MSN, MS,**  
RN, CNE, Associate Dean, DNP and  
Healthcare Programs

opportunities.” (U.S. Department of Education)

As the country begins to look for ways to improve education, Competency-Based Education (CBE) is gaining traction. One of the draws to CBE is that it measures learning instead of time. Because American Sentinel is an agile university that works to meet the needs of not only students, but the needs of the healthcare industry, the university has launched its first competency-based master’s program, the MBA Healthcare, Project-Based. Building on the strength of the existing MBA Healthcare, Course-based program, the CBE version enables students to work through projects at a pace that fits their educations/experience. When a student has mastery of a project, they can complete the project in their own time and move to the next projects. Therefore students can complete the program in less than a year. Additionally, one highlight of the program is the real-world project component in which students focus on projects that impact their own organizations and work one-on-one with faculty coaches. This enables students to immediately impact their careers and their lives.

Since the inception of the program, academic leadership has

continued to refine it into a strong competency-based program, using faculty and student and industry feedback as the guide. The MBA Healthcare, Project-Based program now includes pre-tests for each of the twelve program competencies that have been mapped to three-credit course equivalents. Those pre-tests help direct students to the specific resources they need to optimize their learning.

Currently, nursing academics is in the process of developing a credit-based, competency-based RN to BSN program as well. While the current RN to BSN online program is a standard model for a BSN completion program, the way working adults approach education has changed, creating a need for an additional delivery option. The credit-based RN to BSN CBE program will consist of 10 competency areas that mirror the learning outcomes required of the traditional BSN program offered at American Sentinel University. Students will be directed to begin and end the program with two specific competencies but may complete the remaining eight in any order. Each of the 10 competencies of the credit-based RN-BSN CBE program is equivalent to a three-credit course. Every competency will begin with a 20-question pretest—a “knowledge check” to guide students to the resources needed for further development. Competency completion will be demonstrated by submitting artifacts that address each component of the provided rubric.

Because education changes as fast as healthcare, American Sentinel will work to incorporate the best-practices for teaching and learning into its programs to ensure students receive the most for the knowledge they already have, and learn new competencies needed for their careers.

## REFERENCES

U.S. Department of Education - <https://www.ed.gov/oii-news/competency-based-learning-or-personalized-learning>



# PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS



**Mark Cobb,**  
Senior Vice President Enrollment  
Services

Healthcare is changing rapidly due to pressure from patients, healthcare systems, and insurance companies. Healthcare professionals at all levels are facing the challenge and advanced education is needed to meet the changing demands. While many institutions are working to meet those demands, not all are able to work closely with healthcare partners (facilities, systems and schools) to create systems to help staff obtain the education and credentials needed.

American Sentinel has always worked to create partnerships with healthcare systems and schools to help the partners, and the students. Discounted tuition, deferred payments and cohort support are a few of the benefits of an educational partnership.

In 2016 the university took partnerships to another level. Traditionally universities attend Education Fairs and have a representative provide information to prospective students. This often means the prospective student is rushed, doesn't receive individualized answers and might not have interest to move

forward with the process. American Sentinel realized that this was not the best way to engage partner staff, so a new partnership model was created. A model that caters the process to the unique needs of the partner and their staff.

By developing and implementing an integrated partnership model that is supported and promoted internally by the leadership from partnering organizations, we feel we can eliminate most of the barriers for potential students and help drive the goals and directives of many of our educational partners.

This visual (on next page) shows the entire process to involve all areas of American Sentinel in support of the integrated partnership.

This new partnership model was implemented with Lakeland Health. In December, 2016, American Sentinel University was onsite at all partner locations of Lakeland Health (SW Michigan) over a 4-day period. Lakeland Health is focusing very heavily on RN to BSN completion and has identified a need to convert 250 ADN nurses to BSN nurses within the next 5 years with a goal of 50 conversions per year. While Lakeland supported these efforts with an internal scholarship, American Sentinel was able to support their directive and accelerate the process by creating a matching scholarship and utilizing on-site admission advisors to complete activities such as transcript evaluations, applications and enrollments. Nursing academic leadership also attended to



provide in-depth course information and demonstrate the online courses. As a result more than 30 students enrolled in the RN to BSN program at American Sentinel. Prospective students received "elegant service" catered to their needs and answering their specific questions. Additionally, Lakeland Health made significant progress toward their 250 BSN goal.

The new integrated partnership model furthers the university's goal to create partnerships for progress, benefiting students, partners and the healthcare industry. This new partnership model will be expanded to new and existing partners in 2017.

# ENGAGING STUDENTS WITH SENTINEL WORLD™

**Jeffrey Caplan, President, Healthcare Learning  
Innovations, A Division of American Sentinel University**



Several years ago, we began to explore a number of new digital tools to increase student engagement and learning. Three of our own innovations are already in use by students: MAURA®, available to all students; and Professor IQ® and Sentinel City®, our community health simulation that is used by our BSN students. These endeavors have proven so successful that we plan to continue to develop and use them more widely across the curriculum. In addition, Healthcare Learning Innovations has made these innovations available to other universities.

Sentinel City® is a simulated virtual city that harnesses cutting-edge technology to create an immersive, interactive learning experience for students in nursing and community health programs at the bachelor's level. American Sentinel students have been using Sentinel City® for three years in the community health course. They participate in simulated community health exercises and assignments earning practice experience and simulated/clinical hours. Today, 16 other colleges and universities also use Sentinel City® in their nursing and public health programs. In 2016, new functionality, visual enhancements, interactivity, and embedded data collection was added to Sentinel City®.

## FROM SENTINEL CITY® TO SENTINEL WORLD™

Because of overwhelmingly positive student and faculty feedback and academic success of the simulation, Healthcare Learning Innovations is developing a multi-phase expansion of Sentinel City® into *Sentinel World™*. This expansion will take place throughout 2017, and we expect many more schools to adopt *Sentinel World™* for their nursing courses. In addition to expanding the scale of the simulated environment and dramatically enhancing interactivity, *Sentinel World™* will also present pedagogical advances, including multiple case studies, embedded assessments, virtual intelligent agents, and voice and text-based instruction for learners.

The 2017 *Sentinel World™* development project will have three distinct phases:

- Enhancement of the existing urban area by increasing interactivity in novel ways.

- Addition of a new rural section with associated learning objectives.

- Addition of a new suburban section with associated learning objectives.

- Beyond offering compellingly vivid graphics and detailed

environments with realistic sights and sounds, game-like functionalities



**HEALTHCARE  
LEARNING  
INNOVATIONS**

will increase learner engagement. Not only will students participate in active learning through in-sim assignments, they will also benefit from the addition of 12 non-playable characters (NPCs) capable of engaging in dialogue tied to learning objectives. These NPCs exhibit remarkable variation in race, gender, sexual orientation, and religious preference, making *Sentinel World™* more representative of U.S. urban demographics and appealing to a diverse student population. We will further engage students by including a family and home assessment activity including environmental, health and safety hazards, culminating in a student-generated comprehensive care plan.

Compatible with BSN, RN to BSN, and advanced nursing and community health degree programs, *Sentinel World™* will be designed for 45 hours of in-sim practice experience and simulated/clinical hours.

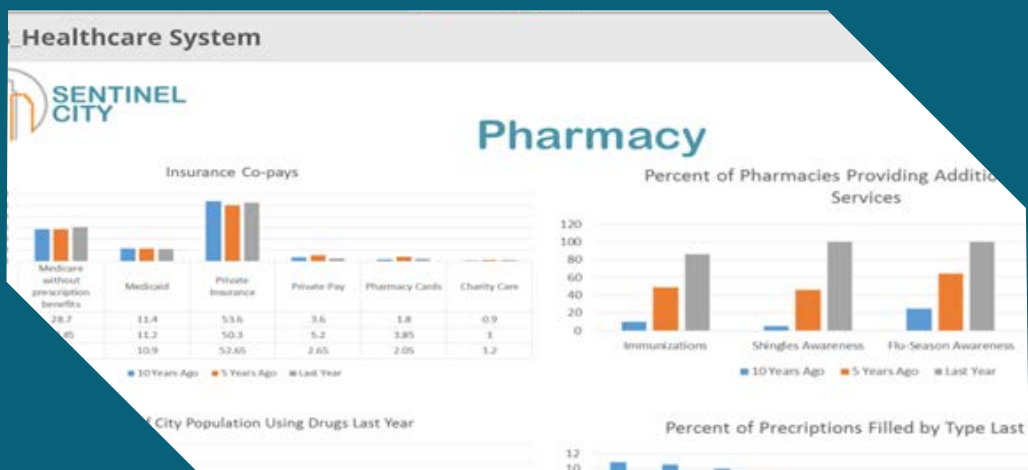
## WHAT'S NEXT?

Beginning with the integration of virtual intelligence agents, dialogue, and gamification, as well as urban, rural, and suburban settings in 2017, *Sentinel World™* will continue to expand in 2017 and beyond by adding virtual and augmented reality, artificial intelligence, and a nursing home, hospital, surgical center, and free clinic.

In addition to expanding content for pre-licensure, RN-BSN, community health, and graduate nursing programs, innovations will include new content around geriatric nursing, case management, nursing leadership, advanced assessment, health assessment, and informatics. A hospital simulation will be useful in emergency preparedness and disaster response training to meet increasing demand from a variety of sectors extending beyond healthcare providers to police, fire, EMS, hospital administration, and more.

American Sentinel and Healthcare Learning Innovations are excited about what this advancement will bring to the American Sentinel student experience as well as the experiences at other universities and colleges that embrace *Sentinel World™*. The future for educational simulation is bright, and advancing quickly and we are excited and humbled to be a part of that important conversation.









# FACULTY ENGAGEMENT DRIVES STUDENT SUCCESS



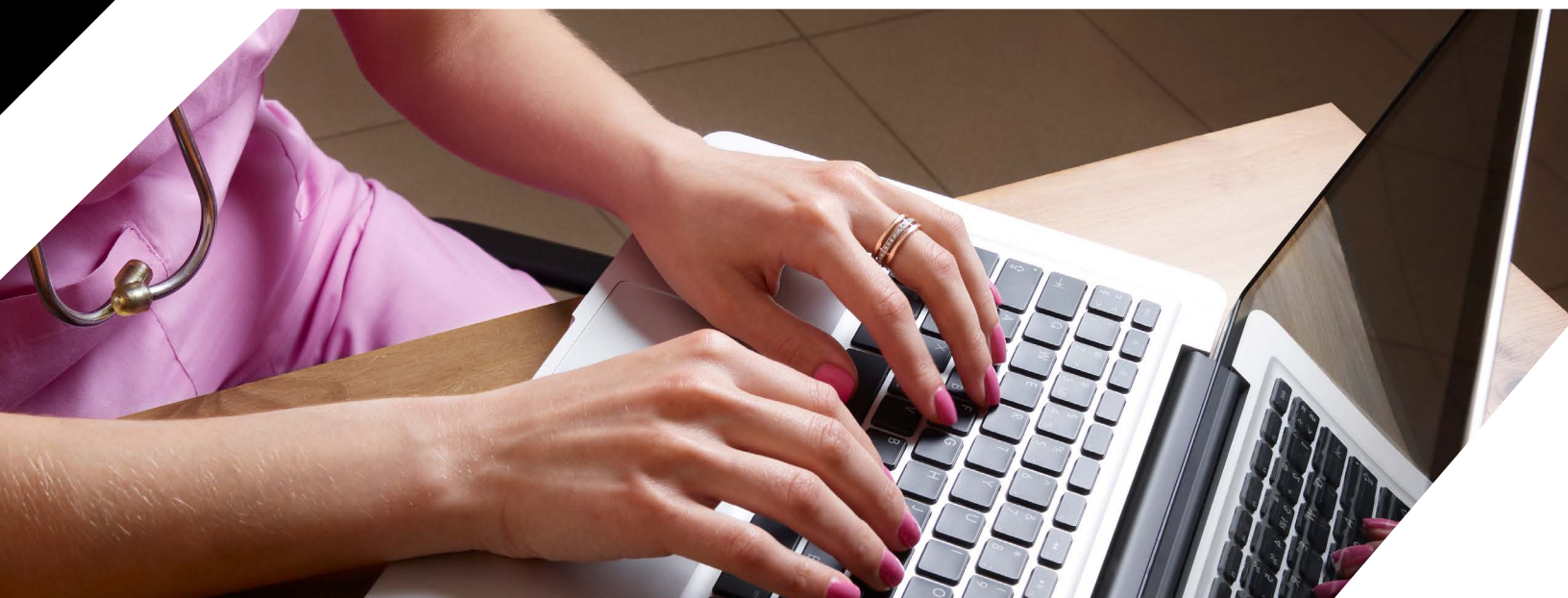
**Bruce Petrie, Ph.D.**  
Vice President of Research and  
Institutional Effectiveness

American Sentinel University faculty members are focused on student success, and ensuring that students who enroll in programs complete their degrees with skills that are demanded by employers. Faculty provide the program materials that students and employers need, by engaging in multiple activities that include:

1. Advisory group meetings that focus on review and possible revision of their programs
2. Assessment of student learning results from course, program, and institutional learning outcomes
3. Regular review and revision of courses
4. Development of new, and revision of current programs that are based on marketing analyses of the profession
5. Scholarship to develop new skills and investigate areas within the profession that are associated with issues of current and future importance

**Advisory Group:** The Professional Advisory Board Committee (PABC) is made up of experts in nursing education and meets two times a year to discuss the current state of the programs and advise of changes that could affect the profession and thus the programs. Faculty attend, contribute and use this information in making appropriate changes to courses and programs.

**Assessment of Student Learning:** American Sentinel faculty play a critical role in the assessment of student learning. In each course offered, faculty map the gradable assignments in each module to course outcomes, those course outcomes are mapped to program outcomes, which in turn are mapped to program outcomes. Every outcome is benchmarked and faculty review those outcomes at the end of every term. If a course outcome has not been met, faculty discuss this in either the regularly scheduled meetings of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or the Graduate Curriculum Committee. The discussions focus on determining what, if any, changes need to be made to the assignments that did not meet the benchmark. This level of attention to outcomes and course assignments is faculty driven and provides support for student success that is unparalleled in nursing education.



**Regular Review and Revision of Courses:** In addition to the regular review of assessment results, the faculty also engage in a three-year course revision cycle. Every course is checked by faculty members who are content experts, to determine if there are changes warranted. If course revision is required, the faculty make the changes and ensure that any new gradable assignments are mapped to course outcomes, so they can be measured when the course revision is made available to students. Faculty also revise courses outside the three-year cycle if issues with a course arise. For example, the DNP capstone course was determined, from complaints lodged by students and monitored by faculty, to have too many assignments, so it was modified well before it was scheduled to be reviewed in the three-year cycle.

**Development of New, and Revision of Current Programs:** As a result of American Sentinel's marketing analysis, the faculty developed five new core courses in order to launch the DNP Informatics Leadership specialization. This program has been recently launched, and is an example of the cooperation between the PABC, American Sentinel's Marketing team, and the faculty.

Faculty have recently revised the DNP courses, reducing the number of required courses from nine to seven. These two extra electives that can now be taken by students allows those students to move more easily into specialization areas.

**Scholarship:** American Sentinel faculty are now more engaged in scholarship than they have been in the past. As a result of being given more time to conduct scholarship activities (20 percent in 2017 vs. 15 percent in previous years), faculty members are now working on research activities that support courses, as well as Healthcare Learning Innovations in their work with Sentinel City®, and intelligent Bots that include Professor IQ® and MAURA®. This work is important to student success, and it allows faculty to contribute to their area of expertise, that in turn can be brought back to the courses and the students in those courses.

Overall, American Sentinel faculty are one of the main driving forces behind the University's focus on student success and currency in the profession.

# METRICS FOR MISSION

Data collection, analysis and reporting are key at American Sentinel to meet the mission of enabling students to enhance their professional and civic lives. Daily, weekly and monthly key performance indicators are communicated to all members of the organization to ensure everyone is moving towards better performance in providing the best experience to students. As mentioned by the Chairman of the Board, and the CEO, the data collected from students, faculty and industry experts has been utilized to create a comprehensive plan to offer students an elegant student experience. 2016 was a strong foundation to create the plan and these important metrics will be utilized in 2017 and beyond.



**Loren Ellison,**  
Executive Director, Digital University  
and Data Analytics

## Student Satisfaction - 2016

Did you achieve, or will you achieve upon completing your studies, the goals you had when you started the course or program?

**Yes: 98%**

Would you recommend these studies to a friend?

**Yes: 96%**

All things considered, were you satisfied with your studies with us?

**Yes: 98%**

### First Year Retention Rate for 2016

**86.8%**

### Graduation rates reported to DEAC for 2016

Bachelor's – **88%**

Master's – **73%**

Doctorate – **81%**

Name of Degree Program	Graduation Rate
RN to Bachelor of Science Nursing	<b>88%</b>
Master of Science Nursing	<b>74%</b>
Master of Science Information Systems Management	<b>100%*</b>
Master of Science Business Intelligence	<b>36%*</b>
MBA - Healthcare	<b>80%*</b>
Doctor of Nursing Practice	<b>81%</b>
Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science/Master of Science Nursing	<b>76%</b>
<b>Total Graduation Rate</b>	<b>81.0%</b>

*\*Review with caution- these programs have a cohort of less than 25 students for the reporting year.*





## Demographics

The following metrics include our active student population at the end of 2016:

Age	%
20–29	8
30–39	25
40–49	33
50–59	27
60 and Above	6
Unreported	1

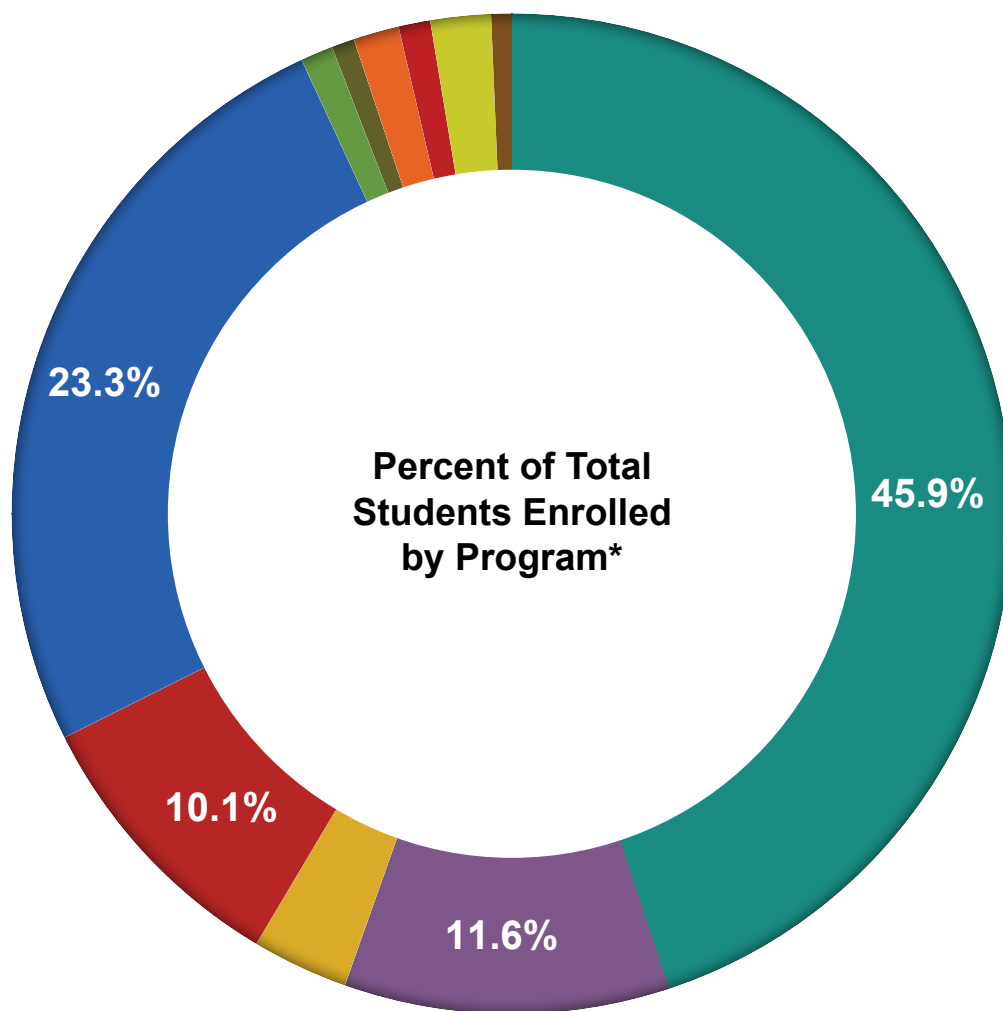
Ethnicity	%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.6
Asian	4.4
Black or African American	12.8
Hispanic/Latino	0.9
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.5
Race or Ethnicity unknown	5.7
Two or More Races	4.4
White	70.7

### Gender:

	%
Female	87.7
Male	9.9
Not specified	2.4

### Undergraduate/graduate:

	%
Graduate	53
Undergraduate	47



<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#008080;"></span> RN to BSN	1,123	(45.9%)	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#654321;"></span> MSISM	8	(0.3%)
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#800080;"></span> RN to BSN/MSN	285	(11.6%)	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#FF8C00;"></span> MBA-HC Course Based	45	(2.2%)
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#FFD700;"></span> DNP Executive Leadership	87	(3.4%)	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#DC143C;"></span> MBA-HC Project Based	14	(0.7%)
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#DC143C;"></span> DNP Educational Leadership	205	(10.1%)	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#9ACD32;"></span> Teach out	45	(1.8%)
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#0000FF;"></span> MSN	575	(23.3%)	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#8B4513;"></span> Certificates	4	(0.2%)
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:#3CB371;"></span> MSBIA	14	(0.7%)			

\*as of December 2016



### Graduates by Program

Degree Program	#
Doctor of Nursing Practice Executive Leadership/Educational Leadership	90
MBA Healthcare	16
Master of Business Administration	5
M.S. Information Systems Management	4
M.S. Nursing	257
R.N. Bachelor of Science Nursing	372
R.N. to Bachelor of Science Nursing/Master of Science Nursing	69
Teach out	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>872</b>

### 2016 Course Completion Rates:

- American Sentinel students complete **80%** of their courses.
- Of all American Sentinel courses, **44%** have a completion rate greater than **90%**, **22%** have a completion rate between **80** and **89%**, and **34%** have a completion rate of less than **80%**.
- All courses with a completion rate of less than **80%** are reviewed to determine if changes can be made to improve the completion rate.

# CONCLUSION



Traditionally an annual report, published after the first of a new year, just covers the events of the previous year. Because so much of what is happening in 2017 is a direct result of what students told us last year, this report covers the basic events of 2016 and the exciting innovations to user experience, empowering students in many new ways.

2016 was a truly remarkable year for American Sentinel University and the next several years will be even brighter.

**TRANSFORMING  
HEALTHCARE  
THROUGH  
EDUCATION**



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