



# Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

## INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) is a residential institution offering baccalaureate degrees in targeted fields, transfer associate degrees, and non-transfer associate degrees. ABAC's state-wide mission in Agriculture and Natural Resources gives the college a unique identity among USG state colleges, but ABAC is also known for its strong nursing program as well as its traditional associate degrees with transfer pathways in the liberal arts, the natural and physical sciences, mathematics, and the social sciences. The reputation of the Stafford School of Business is developing rapidly with the addition of a baccalaureate degree in business focusing on small business and economic development. With its diverse array of quality programs, ABAC's overall goal is to be a strategic partner within the University System of Georgia to help create a more educated Georgia.

Total enrollment at ABAC in fall 2014 was 3456, an increase of approximately 2% over fall 2013 enrollment (See Appendix A for five-year trends in enrollment and graduation and retention rates). Of the 3456, 79% were white, 12% were Black (non-Hispanic), and 6% were Hispanic, comprising the three largest ethnic groups. Students over the age of 25 made up 11% of enrollment in fall 2014, and 33% of all students were first-generation college students. In fall 2014, 45% of students were Pell eligible. Students enrolled in at least 12 credit hours fall 2014 made up 71% of total enrollment. For the fall 2014 freshman class, the average high school GPA was 3.38 on a 4.00 scale, the average SAT composite score was 942, and average scores on the ACT were 21 Verbal and 21 Math.

The overall increase in enrollment, the growth of baccalaureate enrollment (1170 in fall 2014, a 26% increase from the previous year), a five-year increase in one-year retention rates from 51% to 59%, a total of 639 degrees awarded in 2014-15 (up from 576 the previous year), and an all-time high of 232 students participating in dual enrollment in spring 2015, indicate that ABAC's goals and strategies for Complete College Georgia are having a positive impact on college success and completion. Therefore, the College has continued to pursue goals and strategies outlined in its 2012 report and 2013 and 2014 updates, but has focused during the past academic year on improving advising to keep students on track to completion.

## INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS, ARL.HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES, AND ACTIVITIES

<b>High-Impact Strategy</b>	Change institutional culture to emphasize taking full-time course loads (15 or credits per semester) to earn degrees 'on time.'
<b>Related Goal</b>	Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned 'on-time' (associate degrees in 2 years, bachelor's degrees in 4 years.)
<b>Summary of Activities</b>	Beginning fall 2014, Academic Support Counselors began registering new students before their scheduled orientation session. Most of the students are registered for 15+ hours. Academic advisors review the schedules and make adjustments as appropriate. Advisors have begun advising students that 15 hours per semester is a full-time load as opposed to 12 hours, and that 15+ hours per semester are required to graduate on time.
<b>Baseline Status</b>	Among fall 2012 cohort, 96 (64.86%) earned an associate degree in 2 years.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	Among fall 2010 cohort, 37 (62.71%) earned a bachelor's degree in 4 years. 1027 (29.72%) of enrolled students fall 2014 were enrolled in 15+ hours; that was an increase from 736 (21.7%) in fall 2013. Only 176 (18.16%) of the fall 2014 cohort successfully completed 30+ hours during the 2014-15 academic year; however, that was an increase from 163 (15.64%) the previous year.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Increase the number and percentage of students enrolled in 15+ hours each semester. Projected target: 35% of fall 2016 cohort will enroll in 15+ hours. Increase the number and percentage of first-year students successfully completing 30+ hours of collegiate credit hours in their first academic year. Projected target: 20% of the fall 2015 cohort of first-year students will successfully complete 30+ collegiate credit hours in their first academic year. Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree in 2 years or a bachelor's degree in 4 years. Projected target: 74 associate-degree-seeking students from the fall 2014 cohort will graduate in 2 years, and 40 baccalaureate-degree-seeking students from the fall 2012 cohort will graduate in 4 years.
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	Many students do not seem to feel the urgency of completing their degrees OT. Because 12 hours is considered full time for financial aid, students maintain that mindset as well. Too many students repeat courses (multiple times in some cases) and withdraw from classes. Students who begin in LS continue to lag behind others. To address these challenges, ABAC has begun to emphasize financial literacy pre-enrollment and at orientation; beginning fall 2016, all attempts at repeated courses will count, which should discourage multiple repeats; we have considered limiting withdrawals but have not yet decided on a plan; we

	have adopted the co-requisite model for LS to try to reduce the number of semesters students spend in LS courses.
<b>High-Impact Strategy</b>	Establish milestones as part of program maps to facilitate defining when students are 'off track'
<b>Related Goal</b>	Goal 4: Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate
<b>Summary of Activities</b>	We have instituted a checkpoint to help students know when they are 'off-track': Academic Support Counselors (ASCs) check all baccalaureate-degree-seeking students at 90 hours to establish that they are on track to graduate on time, using such factors as RHSC deficiencies remaining, completion of the Core Curriculum, on track to meet residency requirement, curriculum completion on track, legislative requirements met, and meeting minimum GPA requirement for graduation. ASCs compile a list of these students and send information to their academic advisors and to the dean of the school in which the student is advised. The ASCs also follow up with the students who are identified as 'off-track' to assist them in getting on track for OT graduation.
<b>Baseline Status</b>	The first 90-hour check was performed spring 2015. That check revealed that 62 baccalaureate-degree-seeking students were off-track to graduate on time.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	Since we implemented this strategy in spring 2015, interim measures of progress will not be known until spring 2016, when these students should graduate. Progress made thus far is the identification of the students and actions taken by ASCs and advisors to get students on track.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	At least ½ the number of students, who are identified as being off-track at 90 hours, will graduate within 30 credit hours. Projected target: 31 of the 62 baccalaureate-degree-seeking students who were off-track at the 90-hour check mark in spring 2015 will graduate within 30 credit hours. Increase the number of baccalaureate-degree-seeking students who graduate OT. Projected target: 40 baccalaureate-degree-seeking students from the fall 2012 cohort will graduate on time.
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	We were surprised by the number of students who had reached the 90-hour mark without completing RHSC deficiencies and/or the Core Curriculum. Therefore, the ASCs are adding another checkpoint at 30 earned hours to check for completion of RHSC deficiencies and Area A of the Core. When students are found deficient, they will register them for the required course(s) the following semester. Advisors will also be notified so they can help insure that students do not withdraw from the required classes.
<b>High-Impact Strategy</b>	Ensure that students who meet off track criteria receive timely and targeted advising intervention.
<b>Related Goal</b>	Goal 4: Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate.
<b>Summary of Activities</b>	In addition to the checkpoints at 30 and 90 hours described above, the College targets students who are placed on academic probation after their first semester of enrollment. To help get students back on track, ABAC places these first-year students into a special course, ABAC 1100. A one-credit-hour course taught by the Academic Support Counselors (ASCs), ABAC 1100 features both group and individual interventions, offered both face to face and online, with the express purpose of helping students improve their GPA to avoid suspension after their second semester.
<b>Baseline Status</b>	The percentage of students who successfully completed ABAC 1100 after their 1st semester were 141 (78%) in AY12-13, 176 (66%) in AY13-14, and 184 (65%) in AY14-15. Of these students, 49% were placed on suspension in AY12-13, 49% were placed on suspension in AY13-14, and 59% were placed on suspension in AY14-15.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	The percentages of students successfully completing ABAC 1100 who avoided suspension increased from AY12-13 to AY13-14; unfortunately the percentage declined in AY14-15.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Increase the percentage of students who successfully complete ABAC 1100 after their 1st semester. Projected target: 78% of students in ABAC 1100 will successfully complete this course after their 1st semester. Reduce the percentage of first-year students who are placed on academic suspension after their 2nd semester of attendance. Projected target: 49% of students who successfully completed ABAC 1100 will be put on academic suspension.
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	The decrease in the percentage of students avoiding suspension after successfully completing ABAC 1100 during spring 2015 has led the ASCs to re-evaluate course methods and content. All four ASCs will be involved in course delivery and follow-up to improve the success rate of students in the course and in their overall academic performance in college.
<b>High-Impact Strategy</b>	Participate in dual enrollment or joint enrollment programs for high school students.
<b>Related Goal</b>	Goal 6: Shorten time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school and by awarding credit for prior learning that is verified by appropriate assessment.
<b>Summary of Activities</b>	During AY14-15, ABAC offered dual enrollment classes at Baconton Community Charter School, Colquitt County High School, Cook High School, Fitzgerald High School, and Tiftarea Academy. In addition, a number of Tift County High School students as well as students from Berrien, Irwin, Turner, and Worth Counties attended classes on the ABAC campus in Tifton. ABAC has a director of dual enrollment programs, who oversees the programs at various high school locations and at ABAC, schedules classes, advises and registers students for classes, monitors academic progress, and

communicates regularly with both current and prospective students, their parents, and their high school counselors. For several years, ABAC has waived all mandatory fees for dual enrolled students. ABAC plans to participate fully in the new MOWR program with a commitment to provide educational opportunities for qualified area high school students. A plan has been put in place to provide books for all MOWR students, to continue to waive all mandatory fees, and to absorb the tuition differential cost associated with eCore classes. Course offerings have been expanded to include courses which were on the accepted (old) MOWR supplemental directory as well as those on the Accel directory, giving students more options. Courses at area high schools follow the high school bell schedule so dual enrollment classes can be taken along with regular high school classes. On the ABAC campus, spaces are reserved for MOWR students in 8:00 am and 2:00 pm classes in the subjects most frequently taken by high school students.

<b>Baseline Status</b>	In fall 2014, 198 students were enrolled in dual enrollment classes at ABAC. That number rose to 232 in spring 2015. In AY14-15, dual enrolled students earned a total of 2599 credit hours at ABAC.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	The number of students in dual enrollment has steadily increased for the past five years, increasing from 120 in AY10-11 to 430 in AY14-15. Earned credit hours during those same years have also risen from 577 to 2599.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Increase the number of students participating in dual enrollment. Projected target: 508 students will participate in dual enrollment in the 2015-2016 academic year. Increase the number of earned credit hours by dual enrollment students. Projected target: Dual enrollment students will earn 3105 credit hours in the 2015-2016 academic year
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	Dual enrollment programs require a substantial allocation of resources. In addition to paying someone to direct the program, the College loses revenue due to the waiving of mandatory fees. The instructional cost is often high, especially for classes taught at area high schools, because class sizes are usually smaller than on the ABAC campus. The new MOWR program will be even more expensive for the College with the added requirement of providing books for all dual enrolled students and the inability to charge students the tuition differential between eCore and regular ABAC classes. Another challenge to increasing student participation is the difference in admission standards between USG institutions and TCSG schools. Both Fitzgerald and Cook high schools have decided to partner with Wiregrass Technical College rather than ABAC for delivery of MOWR classes in 2015-16 because more of their students qualify for participation under the TCSG admission requirements. A related challenge is that students who want to attend a selective university after high school graduation are being discouraged from participating in dual enrollment in favor of taking AP classes in high school, which supposedly the selective universities regard as more rigorous than college level courses taken through dual enrollment. To meet these challenges, ABAC has appointed the Honors Program director to oversee dual enrollment as well. She will seek ways to coordinate the two programs to maximize academic opportunities for students while they are in high school and to move them seamlessly from high school to college enrollment.
<b>High-Impact Strategy Related Goal</b>	Enroll most students in need of remediation in gateway collegiate courses in English and mathematics, with co-requisite Learning Support. Goal 7: Increase the likelihood of degree completion by transforming the way that remediation is accomplished.
<b>Summary of Activities</b>	In AY13-14, English and Reading Learning Support were combined. The co-requisite model was successfully piloted in English during spring 2014. In fall 2014, 43.59% of students needing English LS were placed in ENGL 099; 56.41% were enrolled in ENGL 0999/ENGL 1101. For students requiring remediation in math during fall 2014, 79.23% were placed into 0097 or 0099; 20.77% were placed into either 0997/MATH 1001 or 0999/MATH 1111.
<b>Baseline Status</b>	In fall 2013, no LS students were in co-requisite classes.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	By fall 2014, 43.59% of English LS students and 20.77% of math LS students were in co-requisite classes.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Place all students who require Learning Support in co-requisite classes in English and in either Foundational or co-requisite classes in math Increase % of students who start in co-requisite remediation who complete degrees on time. Projected target: The projected target will be established once baseline data for the fall 2015 cohort has been established. Increase % of students who start in co-requisite remediation who complete degrees within 150% of time. Projected target: The projected target will be established once baseline data for the fall 2015 cohort has been established.
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	Continued work is needed to identify and implement best practices in supplementing college-level instruction in the co-requisite course. ABAC math and English faculty are actively engaged in collaborative research to determine how best to structure these courses for student success.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

ABAC's most successful CCG strategies are increasing the number of earned credit hours each semester by focusing on enrolling students in 15+ hours each semester, increasing dual enrollment, and placing students needing remediation into English and math co-requisite courses. Although ABAC 1100 had been successful for two years in reducing the number of academic suspensions among first-year students, the course was less effective in 2014-15. As a result, the course has been revamped for 2015-16, with a renewed commitment by the Academic Support Counselors to continue the record of success.

Adjustments to completion strategies have been made based on evaluation of effectiveness, available resources, and changes in focus. The results of the 90-hour check, the importance of enrolling students in 15 hours or more each semester, the number of first-year students who get off track by their second semester, and the annual retention rate suggest that we need to focus more attention on intrusive advising strategies.