Kennesaw State University

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Kennesaw State University is one of four comprehensive universities in the University System of Georgia and the third-largest university in the state of Georgia. The mission statement affirms KSU's commitment to student success.

> "The KSU community values open, honest, and thoughtful intellectual inquiry, innovative and creative problem solving, professionalism, expertise, collaboration, integrity and ethical behavior, engaged citizenship, global understanding, sustainability, mutual respect, and appreciation of human and cultural diversity. The University community strives continually to enhance student success, improve institutional quality and respond to public demand for higher education."

The KSU 2017-2018 Bridge Strategic Plan embodied the student success focus with the first strategic priority being to "enhance learning and services to improve retention, progression, and graduation rates." Furthermore, the current KSU 2018-2023 Strategic Plan exemplifies the student success focus with the first strategic priority being to "offer high-quality academic programs, providing each student with a clear and timely academic pathway that leads to graduation," a priority that is central to the mission of KSU.

As illustrated in Table 1, Kennesaw State University enrolled 32,741 undergraduate students in fall semester 2017, a 2.4% increase from fall semester 2016. Undergraduate enrollment has continuously increased since consolidation with Southern Polytechnic State University in Fall 2015. The proportion of full-time undergraduates has remained consistent at roughly three-quarters of the total undergraduate student population. The percentage of women has steadily decreased by one percentage point since consolidation; however, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of racial/ ethnic minority identified students. The percentage of undergraduate students receiving Pell Grants decreased two percentage points from 39% in fall semester 2015 to 37% in fall semester 2016. Pell grant data for fall semester 2017 were unavailable at the time of data collection.

The number of enrolled first-time freshmen decreased by 2% from 5,347 in fall semester 2016 to 5,238 in fall semester 2017. The full-time student percentage has remained consistent at 97% of the total first-time freshman student population. Female students remain relatively consistent at 48% while the percentage of racial/ ethnic minority identified students has increased to 42%, a percentage that has consistently increased since fall semester 2012. Similar to the overall KSU student population, the percentage of first-time freshmen receiving Pell Grants has decreased to 33% and has followed this trend since fall semester 2013.

TABLE 1. KSU DEGREE-SEEKING UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT 2012-2017

Undergraduate Enrollment Profile						
	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Total Undergraduates	27,904	28,138	29,332	30,281	31,976	32,741
Full-time	75%	75%	75%	76%	77%	76%
Female	50%	50%	49%	49%	48%	47%
Race/Ethnic Minority	37%	39%	40%	42%	43%	44%
Asian	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Black	17%	19%	20%	20%	22%	21%
Hispanic	7%	8%	8%	9%	10%	10%
Pell Recipients	42%	41%	41%	39%	37%	-

First-time Freshmen Enrollment Profile

	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Total First-time Freshmen	3,984	4,034	4,665	5,032	5,347	5,238
Full-time	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Female	50%	50%	47%	49%	49%	48%
Race/Ethnic Minority	30%	33%	35%	37%	40%	42%
Asian	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Black	13%	15%	17%	19%	19%	19%
Hispanic	8%	8%	8%	9%	10%	10%
Pell Recipients	37%	37%	36%	35%	33%	-

Source: USG

Note: Total Undergraduate Enrollment Headcounts corrected for all Fall terms reported

INSTITUTIONAL HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES, ACTIVITIES, AND OUTCOMES

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Strategic Thinking and Planning committee developed the 2017-2018 Bridge Strategic Plan in response to multiple executive leadership changes in 2016, including a change in presidency. The plan was informed by a survey of campus constituencies including 405 students, 359 faculty members, 333 staff members, 586 alumni, 9 trustees, and 84 community members.

Implementation of the Kennesaw State University Bridge Strategic Plan began in July 2017. The Bridge Plan contained five strategic priorities: enhance learning and services that improve retention, progression, and graduation rates; increase engagement and prominence regionally, nationally, and internationally; improve collaboration and the campus climate related to diversity, equity, and inclusion; expand, realign, and optimize resources to meet university priorities; and build, enhance, and sustain innovative research, scholarship, and creative activity. Multiple action steps were identified for each priority. Each action step was assigned sponsors and leads who were responsible for ensuring action was taken and progress was assessed. The action step leads submitted mid-term progress reports in early 2018 and final progress reports in July for each action step, including information about the results of initiatives and tactics.

The intention was to identify action steps that could make significant progress in one-year. Several highlights from progress across the Bridge Strategic Plan (BSP) on tactics, initiatives, and results related directly to student success are including within the identified strategies below.

During the 2017-2018 Academic Year, a Planning Task Force was convened to create a new 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. Due to another Presidential change, a Guiding Committee was charged with creating a one-page document containing themes and goals for a new strategic plan. After over twenty listening sessions and an online survey, themes and goals were developed. The themes include a purposeful journey, transformational learning, our inclusive culture, community impact, and institutional excellence.

The following describes several high priority, high impact strategies for KSU. Included are results from the BSP, alignment with the new strategic plan, and progress that has been made in several areas.

ADVISING AND ACADEMIC PROGRAM MAPS

BSP Action Step 1.3: Develop new advising structures that meet standards of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). [Improve advising]

2018-2023 Strategic Plan: Immersed Academic Advising. Every student will have access to excellent advisors who help students toward graduation drawing on both meaningful data and mindful empathy.

An Early Alert pilot began in Fall 2017 and continued into Spring 2018. Nearly 1500 students were marked 'at risk' by their faculty in Spring 2018. Students marked at risk who met with an advisor had a DFW rate of 47%, compared with 53% who did not.

KSU Advising captured reports on nearly 20,000 student interactions in the spring of 2018 in the EAB Student Success Collaborative (SSC). The number is significant, but also important because the narrative in these reports is viewable by all in the advising community and campus partners. The number and breadth of campus partners increased and includes: Campus Awareness, Resource, & Empowerment (CARE) Services; Career Planning and Development; Center for Student Leadership; Coles College of Business Tutoring Center; Hughes Leadership Career Coaches; and the SMART Center. This collaborative approach to student success through advising provides a supportive and proactive environment for students to be successful and supported during their time at KSU.

With the increased number of partners and advisors using EAB-SSC, we were able to establish a solid baseline of data from Spring 2018 data. Highlights from those reports include the following <u>averages</u> from across Colleges:

- Number of advisors per college is 5.4
- Advisor to student ratio is 637:1
- Number of advising reports was 2161
- Number of unique alerts issued 135.8
- Number of hours attempted 12.498; earned 10.951
- Percent below 2.0 was 16, above 3.5 was 37
- Number registered for Fall 2018 was 82%

Academic program maps offer suggested four-year schedules of courses for all of KSU's degree programs based on requirements in the KSU catalog. Each map provides a sample schedule each term, including milestones to help keep students on track for timely progress to graduation (http://academicmaps.kennesaw.edu/).

HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES AND HIGH-IMPACT EXPERIENCES

BSP Action Step 1.2: Enhance and expand high-impact practices and high-impact experiences.

BSP Action Step 1.4: Expand mentoring, life coaching, and academic enrichment for students.

2018-2023 Strategic Plan: Integrate Classroom and Co-Curricular Activities. We will more fully integrate curricular and co-curricular offerings to enhance student development and success.

The number of participants in internships and co-ops increased from 672 in AY17 to 933 in AY18. The Associate Director of Outreach and Communication in Career Planning and Development and Associate Vice President for Curriculum have been working closely to create zero-credit internship opportunities. The Student Career Ambassador program has launched and been successful so far and has begun recruiting and interviewing the second cohort of ambassadors.

An instrument assessing soft skills and higher-level thinking skills was developed and administered to students participating in internship and co-op courses and their supervisors in the College of Science and Mathematics and the Coles College of Business at the end of spring semester, 2018. Results and findings from the pilot are summarized below:

Items with highest ratings by students and supervisors (% of respondents with ratings of 4 or 5)
- Oral communication skills (92 and 93%)
- Written communication skills (92 and 91%)
- Work behaviors (91 and 93%)
- Ethical behavior (99 and 96%)
- Teamwork skills (93 and 97%)
- Students freely asked questions or felt free to ask questions (100 and 98%)
- Experience will assist with employment (95 and 99%)

Items with lower ratings by students and supervisors
- Leadership skills (82 and 85%)
- Problem solving skills (89 and 89%)
- Degree prepared students for experience (77 and 81%)

Items with discrepancy between student and supervisors
- Analytical/critical thinking skills (97 and 88%)
- Teamwork skills (93 and 97%)
- Recommend another student/supervise another student (96 and 86%)

Items with high rating: Student items only
- Experience met educational goals (99%)
- Experience was meaningful (97%)

A career aptitude test, YouScience, was piloted by Career Planning and Development, Counseling and Psychological Services, and several sections of KSU 1101. We are still evaluating the efficacy of the tool and appropriate length of the testing for the target audiences. An additional variable is that many of the school districts have begun using YouScience in high schools across Georgia. We are going to explore whether it will be possible to have access to some of this data to help with career and academic advisement.

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

BSP Action Step 1.2: Enhance and expand high-impact practices and high-impact experiences.

2018-2023 Strategic Plan: High-Impact Teaching Practices. We will ensure every academic program at KSU offers its students integrative, reflective learning experiences that lead to personal and professional development.

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) will facilitate integrative learning demonstrated through reflection by students after participating in high impact experiences characterized by a framework of quality.   This plan provides an opportunity for students to engage in multiple High Impact courses, which will include an active or experiential component of learning as well as individual reflections.   The goal is for students to be transformed and this will be demonstrated through a summative reflection on their overall experience at KSU and within the High Impact courses.   High impact courses are characterized by: active or experiential learning; high expectations of students; frequent feedback on student progress; a tangible product at the end of the semester that may have the potential for dissemination, such as a paper, poster, oral presentation, or report; and reflection on experiences.

In January 2018, select students who participated in multiple courses aligning with the QEP framework participated in a pilot, testing the summative reflection prompt and rubric. These students were given the opportunity to write a summative reflection and have it evaluated by the QEP pilot committee. Their feedback was collected and utilized to improve the experience and tools.

In Fall 2018 KSU will also begin reviewing select courses and faculty which align with the established framework. These faculty will be asked to attend a Course Enhancement Training at the end of Fall 2018 and utilize the enhanced framework in their courses. The course sections will also receive an attribute within the scheduling system, to allow students to search and choose courses that are considered high impact practices. This portion of the pilot will allow KSU to test the course enhancement training as well as the attributes within the scheduling system.

For each high-impact practice (HIP) included in the QEP, there will be an overview document, including the description from AAC&U, the KSU definition, and specific characteristics of the HIP as a transformational experience as well as a taxonomy with attributes of the HIP and descriptions for high impact, higher impact, and highest impact implementation. Currently, KSU has completed the documents for undergraduate research, internships and co-ops, and first-year seminars.

USG STEM INITIATIVE GRANT

2018-2023 Strategic Plan: Retention, Progression, and Graduation. We will improve our retention, progression, and graduation rates through initiatives targeted at the distinct challenges faced by students at each stage of their education.

Kennesaw State University implemented an integrated approach for improving student success in STEM courses and degree programs. Because every student regardless of major at the University must also take one course (3-4 credits) in math skills and 2 courses (7-10 credits) in science, mathematics, and technology, improving student outcomes in science and mathematics courses should have a material impact on the progression and graduation rates for the entire University, particularly students seeking degrees in STEM and STEM education. Highlights from the STEM Initiative progress report include the following:

- A predictive model using pre-matriculation data was developed and utilized to advise students into learning communities with a set of courses chosen to increase their chances of success.
- The Mentor Protégé Research Program is a broader scaffolding model that is guided by two areas of best practices in scholarly research-training and fosters undergraduate research projects and encourages grant proposal through research community models.
- Program maps for all of College of Science and Mathematics (CSM) degree programs have a clear, realistic path to completion in a four-year time frame.
- The Learning Assistant model was used in several courses and in a variety of ways, including peer-led, team-learning in Biology courses. 54 learning assistants have been employed over a two-year period and must take a pedagogy seminar as part of their training

MOMENTUM YEAR PROGRESS AND UPDATES

Kennesaw State has made significant progress towards the implementation of the Momentum Year Plan. Most of our 30- and 90- day strategies have advanced or been completed. In order to provide a comprehensive update of our progress, five primary areas of work have been identified.

COMMITTEE APPROACH
Kennesaw State University created a committee to implement the Momentum Year plan. The committee includes representation from faculty, enrollment services, faculty development, University College, deans, financial aid, business operations, institutional research, assessment, marking and communications, student affairs, curriculum, and advising. The current projects are Graduation Coaches, Focus Areas & Program Maps, Living-Learning Communities, and the Mindset Survey. A website (http://oie.kennesaw.edu/momentum/) has been created to provide information and updates to the broader community.

FOCUS AREAS
A small group used the current program maps to identify commonalities and to drive the identification of the focus areas. After an initial draft, the Deans were asked to work together and with faculty to finalize the focus areas. Currently, those focus areas are: STEM; Life Science, Exercise Science, and Nursing; Computing; Arts; Business; Education; Health, Nutrition, and Human Services; Social Sciences, Humanities, and World Affairs; Built Environment; and Exploratory. The plan is to finalize focus areas by October so curriculum changes can begin in November as well as changes to the admissions application. During the Spring semester, the committee will collaborate with orientation, advising, and student affairs to assist students in the transition to focus areas. In the Fall of 2019, there will be a focus on working to move undeclared students to a focus area.

GRADUATION COACH PROPOSAL
A Graduation Coach Proposal was submitted to the Provost as a strategy to address KSU's current challenges regarding student academic success, retention, progression, and graduation rates. The proposal includes an organizational structure which establishes the coaching program within University College with a Director to oversee six coaches with a caseload of approximately 250 students each. The criteria for student eligibility was identified to include first year students with a GPA just below the threshold for HOPE and second-years or higher who are first-generation or fit other at-risk qualifiers. The program design and purpose, graduation coach roles, budget, and additional benefits of the program are also described in the proposal.

MINDSET SURVEY
KSU wanted to increase the response rate on the Mindset Survey because of the value of the data in helping our Momentum Year plan and student success efforts. The plan was simple: integrate the survey in the first-year seminar. The Director of the First-Year Seminar communicated with the faculty about the survey and included it in manuals, seminar overviews, and course examples. A link was embedded directly into D2L for the students. As of early September, KSU had 2133 responses from students, well ahead of all other USG institutions. A similar strategy will be employed for the post-survey administration. A faculty research team within First-Year and Transition Studies will further analyze the data to help inform first-year seminar pedagogy, first-year experience programs, and first-year student success programs focused on access.

LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITIES
Housing and Residential Life is committed to elevating the living learning program to support the Momentum Year and other student success initiatives. Currently, living learning communities (LLCs) are theme based with related programming, have designated Resident Assistants (RAs), and access to funding for educational and/or service trips. The goal is to move to a more traditional living learning community with a faculty representative and a strong partnership between the curricular and co-curricular. A pilot is planned for Fall 2019 and will include at least two LLCs, one on each campus, a direct course connection, and themed by focus areas. In addition, there will be a Gaming LLC and possibly one for Honors and one for Science and Math. The application for the communities is set to go live in November. In order to avoid confusion and enhance collaboration, Housing and Residential Life is working with the Learning Communities Program in University College, which currently enrolls over 1500 students each year.