

Institutional Mission and Strategic Positioning

Georgia Southern University's mission statement reflects an institution that values, first and foremost, the success of its students and the quality of the learning environment. "The University's hallmark is a culture of engagement that bridges theory with practice, extends the learning environment beyond the classroom, and promotes student growth and life success" (Mission Statement, 2004). The institution prepares students to be participating citizens in a democracy by providing them with a first-rate education. Additionally, "the University offers a student-centered environment enhanced by technology, transcultural experiences, private and public partnerships, and stewardship of a safe residential campus recognized for its natural beauty" (Mission Statement, 2004). Moreover, the University remains "committed to advancing the state of Georgia and the region through the benefits of higher education..." (Mission Statement, 2004).

In the summer of 2011, the university leadership held two strategic planning sessions to develop action plans/steps to support the strategic vision set by the President, that is to promote academic excellence; enhance student success; increase research, scholarship, and creative achievement; and maintain fiscal sustainability.

Georgia Southern's Complete College Georgia Plan is guided by these four themes. The University has already accomplished notable progress in the retention, progression, and graduation (RPG) of its students (see Appendix A) while simultaneously maintaining academic quality. Part of the institution's Complete College Georgia Plan is to gain a better assessment of the many ongoing initiatives we have that identify those groups of students for whom our efforts are succeeding adequately, to determine where gaps may still exist, and to develop programmatic refinements needed to improve results. Our plan incorporates four goals which were informed by the data analysis and align with the institution's mission and strategic direction. The planning horizon for the goals reflected in this document is five years.

- Goal 1: Maintain the forward progress achieved with the institution's first-year students, ensuring that strategies in place continue to be effective in first-year student retention and progression.
- Goal 2: Continue to assess strategies to guide an increase of the overall sophomore retention rate from 64/66% to 69%.
- Goal 3: Shorten time to degree by addressing inhibiting factors, getting students to enroll for full semester loads, and continuing to promote summer enrollment.
- Goal 4: Evaluate programming to support student success, inventory all efforts, and build upon Georgia Southern's culture where students are engaged at multiple levels through intentional delivery of in and out-of-class opportunities.

The Divisions of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, and Information Technology Services will play key roles in the implementation of this plan, and each of these divisions was represented on Georgia Southern's Complete College Georgia team. To ensure campus-wide involvement, eighteen members from across the University formed the institution's team with representation from each college with undergraduate enrollments and the University Library. Professional staff advisors were also represented. The plan was reviewed by the President, the President's Cabinet, the

Provost's Council, the Council of Deans, the Faculty Senate leadership, and the student leadership. It is anticipated that this team will continue to work together during the implementation phase of this plan and hold primary responsibility for communicating with their constituencies and stakeholders as the plan unfolds. During the implementation phase, additional efforts will be made to involve all stakeholders, including hosting campus open forums, meetings with key stakeholders, and working directly with community partners.

Data Analysis and Discussion

In addition to considering regional economic workforce needs, Georgia Southern's Complete College Georgia team used campus data to track success, identify gaps, and inform the selection of our goals. Georgia Southern updates data on an annual basis to allow for constant monitoring and understanding of trends, whether it be RPG initiatives or other targeted groups by race/gender, ACT or SAT test scores, high school GPAs, military, first generation, transfer students, etc. Appendix B reflects the University's summary information that is enhanced by more detailed data available through the University's web and report summaries. Analysis of data reveals that the undergraduate student population at Georgia Southern University is overwhelmingly made up of full-time, traditional students. As of fall 2011, 89.2% of undergraduates were full-time; only 10.8% (n=1891) were part-time. In fall 2011, the mean undergraduate student age equaled 21. Indeed, students from under 18 years of age to 24 represented 94.7% (n=14,798) of the total undergraduate population. Undergraduates from 25 to 34 years of age accounted for only 4.4% (n=693) of undergraduates, and students 35 year old or older accounted for only .9% (n=143).

Analysis of the fall 2005 IPEDS first-time freshman cohort reveals that 47% of students graduated from Georgia Southern University within six years. An additional 12% graduated from other institutions (for a total graduation rate of 59%); 4% were still enrolled at Georgia Southern; and 10% were still enrolled other institutions (see Appendix C). Twenty-seven percent of the original fall 2005 cohort were documented as no longer attending college. Of the students who transferred out of Georgia Southern University in FY 2010, 58% (n=691) went to other University System state or research universities. Twenty-two percent (n=261) transferred to two-year colleges within the University System. Georgia Southern administers the Cooperative Institutional Research Project (CIRP) survey every other year. The CIRP results provide a pathway by which characteristics and attitudinal items can be mined for insights on incoming freshmen. In FY 2012, CIRP results were scrutinized with a focus on items denoting potential transfer out trends of the new freshmen. Additionally, University System of Georgia reports on transfers in and out of USG institutions are reviewed to understand feeder institutions as well as reverse transfers out to USG and non-USG institutions. Both the CIRP and USG reports factor into strategies that can be targeted to assist students in staying at Georgia Southern.

The number of freshmen and sophomores transferring out has declined from fall 2007 to fall 2009. In fall 2007, 401 (of 3029) freshmen transferred out, representing 13.2% of the cohort; 311 sophomores transferred out or 10.3% of the cohort. These percentages dropped in fall 2008. In that semester, 337 (of 3109) freshmen transferred or 10.8%. The sophomore transfer population represented 8.1% of the cohort (n=252). Fall 2009 witnessed a further decline with 10.5% of freshmen transferring out and 4.8% (n=169) of sophomores.

For those students who transfer to Georgia Southern, the data indicate that they exhibit a first-year retention rate comparable to the institution's first-year rate for first-time, full-time freshmen. For instance, in FY 2008, 1,085 transfer students were retained the first year, representing an 80% retention rate compared to a fall 2007 first-year, full-time freshman retention rate of 81%. In FY 2009, 1,157 transfers were retained for an 81% first-year retention rate which equaled the first-time, full-time freshman retention rate. The percentage dropped slightly in FY 2010 to 79% (n=1271) which again equaled the first-time, full-time freshman retention rate overall. Transfer student graduation rates are stronger than those of the overall student population. The FY 2005 cohort exhibited a 60% six-year graduation rate. In FY 2010, the majority of Georgia Southern's transfer students (51%, n=670) came from University System two-year colleges. Twenty-one percent (n=277) came from University System state colleges, and 20% (n=264) transferred from University System state universities (see Appendix D). These data support ongoing efforts to establish more articulation agreements with the associate degree-granting University System institutions.

Race/ethnicity data reveal that of the fall 2011 undergraduate student population, 25% (n=4385) are Black or African American, non-Hispanic/Latino students, representing the second largest race/ethnic category at Georgia Southern; 65.1% (n=11,413) of undergraduates were white, non-Hispanic/Latino. Interestingly, black students are retained at higher rates than whites. The African American student retention rate for the fall 2009 cohort returning fall 2010 equaled 85% compared to a white student retention rate of 78%. The six-year graduation rate for the fall 2004 cohort of African American students was 44% (n=597). White students in this same cohort graduated at a 46% (n=2195) rate. The overall six-year graduation rate for this cohort was 45% (n=2983). *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* has ranked Georgia Southern fourth in the nation for graduating African Americans majoring in the physical sciences.

Approximately one-quarter of Georgia Southern's undergraduate student population is first generation and the number of first generation freshmen is trending downward. In fall 2008, 28.6% of the incoming freshman were first generation students; 71.4% (n=1758) of incoming freshman were not first generation. Only 26.2% of freshmen in fall 2009 were first generation students, and 26.3% (n=816/3101) were first generation students in fall 2010. Fall-to-spring retention rates for this population indicate that first generation students are retained at a comparable rate to that of non-first generation students. For example, between fall 2008 and spring 2009, 92.5% of first generation students were retained compared to 94.8% (n=1649) of non-first generation students. This trend remained stable between fall 2009 and spring 2010 with 91.6% of first generation students retained compared to 93.6% (n=1994) for non-first generation. The difference between the two populations closed the following year with the retention rate of first generation students equaling 92.7% between fall 2010 and spring 2011 compared with 92.9% (n=2109) for non-first generation students (see Appendix E).

According to the Common Data Set, Academic Year 2011-2012, in fall 2011, 2040 first-time, full-time freshmen received need-based financial aid. Of all undergraduate students, 8057 received need-based financial aid, representing 46% of the total undergraduate population. Moving forward, it will be important for the institution to identify and determine the academic success rates of this segment of the student population. The institution is aware of the impact that the Pell program has had on summer enrollment. In summer 2010 and 2011, the federal government allowed students to claim a third Pell award in summer. This policy appears to have added significantly to Georgia Southern's summer enrollment in 2010 and 2011. Summer 2009 Pell applications totaled 597, increasing to 2760 in summer 2010, and 3077 in summer 2011. Pell applications fell to 656 in summer 2012.

Analysis of data helps identify areas that merit increased attention. Trend data reveal that sophomore students are leaving Georgia Southern University at an increasing rate; these data include all students (those who stop-out, dropout, withdraw etc.) not just those who transfer (see page 2 of this report). The fall 2005 cohort dropped from a 76% first-year retention rate to 66% in the second year. The fall 2006 cohort dropped from a first-year retention rate of 79% to a second-year rate of 67%—12 percentage point drop. The trend continued with the fall 2007 cohort, with a 13 percentage point drop—81% to 68%. The fall 2008 cohort dropped from a first-year rate of 81% to 67%—a 14 percentage point drop. Further investigation reveals that black males exhibit the largest drop in retention between the first and second years followed closely by white males. For instance, the fall 2009 black male cohort had a first-year retention rate of 82.1%. Only 63.8% of this cohort was retained into the third year, representing an 18.3 percentage point drop. White males had a first-year retention rate equal to 76.1% (n=975) and a second-year retention rate of 60.3% (n=773). These numbers represent a 15.8 percentage point drop. White females went from a first-year retention rate of 79.6% (n=895) to a second-year rate of 66.5% (n=747) or a 13.1 percentage point drop. Black females were retained at an 88.6% (n=328) first-year rate and 78.1% (n=289) second year rate for an overall drop of 10.1 percentage points.

As mentioned earlier, an area of concern is the retention and graduation rates for all male students, including sophomores. In fall 2010, 48.7% (n=9580) of undergraduate students were male. First-year retention for male students was 75.9% (n=1376) compared to 83.4% (n=1488) for female students. A similar trend is exhibited in fall 2009 where 77.7% (n=1403) of males were retained the first year compared to 81.5% (n=1373) of females. Second-year retention of male students is no better. Only 60.9% (n=1100) of male students were retained the second year, while the female student second-year retention rate was 68.6% (n=1155). Examining the fall 2008 cohort reveals a similar trend. First-year male student retention was 79.9% (n=1322) compared to 82.9% (n=1205) for female students. Second-year male student retention was 65.1% (n=1077) compared to 70.4% (n=1024) for females. Male students were retained at a 56.4% (n=933) rate for the third year, while female students were retained at a 63.9% (n=929) rate. Not surprisingly, this trend results in a lower graduation rate for male students. The six-year graduation rate for the fall 2005 male cohort was 39.9% (n=658) compared to 54% (n=795) for female students. For the fall 2004 cohort, male students graduated at a six-year rate of 39.1% compared to 55.1% for female students. The fall 2003 cohort continues the trend with 44.1% of males graduating in six years compared to 57.7% of females. These data suggest that the institution should place increased emphasis on the sophomore student population and male students in particular.

Another phenomenon identified in our data analysis is that the number of credit hours in which students are enrolling each semester is trending downward. This trend impedes their ability to progress in a timely fashion. In fall 2009, the average semester credit hour load was 13.57 for all undergraduates. This dropped to 13.52 for fall 2010 and 13.36 for fall 2011. The spring 2010 average semester credit hour load was 13.24 for all undergraduates. The average load rose to 13.32 in spring 2011, but dropped to 13.24 in spring 2012. Even summer enrollment is not immune. Summer 2010 average credit hour load for all undergraduates was 7.42, dropping to 7.37 in summer 2011, and 7.14 (projected) for summer 2012. The institution recognizes the need to gain a better understanding of why students are not enrolling for 15 credit hours or more per semester despite repeated advisement messages to encourage a full load.

Despite the declining credit hour load, class sizes are increasing. The average class size in fall 2010 was 43 students for lower-division courses and 24 students for upper-division courses. These numbers compare to 41 students for lower-division courses in fall 2009 and 24 students for upper-division courses.

In fall 2008, lower-division courses averaged 39 students and upper division 22. Similarly, the student/faculty ratio has increased from 21:1 in fall 2008 to 22:1 in fall 2009 to 23:1 in fall 2010. The institution will use funding received for the Complete College Georgia initiative to hire 35-36 new, full-time, faculty which should begin to address increasing class sizes and higher student/faculty ratios.

Goal 1: Maintain the forward progress achieved with the institution's first-year students, ensuring that strategies in place continue to be effective in first-year student retention and progression.

Georgia Southern University has made significant strides in first-year retention rates. Retention rates for first-year, full-time freshmen have gone from a 15-year low of 70% for the fall 1998 cohort to a high of 81% for the fall cohorts 2007 and 2008. The fall 2009 and 2010 cohorts' first-year retention stabilized around 80%. Not only is the institution succeeding in retaining more first-year, full-time freshmen, but the students are also achieving greater academic success. In fall 2006, 72.6% of freshmen earned grades of A, B, or C; 27.4% of freshmen earned grades of D, F, W, I, or WF. The mean GPA for this cohort equaled 2.41. In fall 2011, 80.2% of freshmen earned grades of A, B, or C; 19.8% of freshmen earned grades of D, F, W, I, or WF. The mean GPA for this cohort was 2.67. The intense emphasis placed by university leadership on improving the academic success of our students has resulted in a number of initiatives that can be credited for this progress, including implementing Conversations with Professors (First Year Experience 1000), requiring freshmen to enroll in the First-Year Seminar (FYE 1220) in their first semester of classes, and implementing the Limited Withdrawal Policy. Improving RPG is a theme constantly reinforced among the faculty by deans and others, and much success is due to coordinated efforts by the cadre of academic advisors, faculty advisors, and established facilities such as the Academic Success Center.

Building on this success, the University implemented a new freshman requirement this past year that is expected to yield further dividends in both retention and academic success rates. This new initiative requires all freshmen to enroll in the First-Year Seminar (FYE 1220) and Global Citizens (FYE 1410) within their first two semesters of classes, thereby providing freshmen with a full-year, first-year experience—considered best practice among first-year initiatives. Initially, the University piloted the program with the STEM students, expanding the program to the entire freshman class in fall 2011. As with other initiatives, this plan will be assessed, using first-year retention of the fall 2011 cohort as well as grade distributions and mean GPA data compared to earlier cohorts.

Additionally, the Henderson Library supports our FYE student experiences by providing modules on information literacy skills in which student learning outcomes have been adopted and evaluated. They provide library orientation and subject specific sessions to various courses across campus including FYE 1220 and Eng 1101/1102 and teach information literacy skills to students taking EGA 1220. They also offer drop-in workshops for any student needing assistance. Librarians are also assigned to work with each college. Anytime students or faculty have questions about library research, services, or resources they can speak directly with their assigned librarian. Librarians partner with the Writing Center (WC) to provide a writing tutor in the library during select hours for students who need help.

Georgia Southern has ongoing student intervention programs in cases where students need learning support in addition to that available in the standard course structure. An important element of our intervention efforts to assure academic success is the early alert grade program. In fall 2008, Georgia Southern implemented an early alert grade program for freshmen which alerted them as early as the third

week of classes whether they were making unsatisfactory progress in a course. In that first semester, 59% of freshmen received at least one unsatisfactory grade. Advisors work with students identified as having two or more unsatisfactory grades, converting approximately 40% into A, B, or Cs by the end of the term. Nonetheless, more information was needed as to why the student was receiving U grades; therefore, the institution expanded its early alert grade options to include more descriptive grades: S = Satisfactory; U = Unsatisfactory; UA = Unsatisfactory Attendance; UG = Unsatisfactory Grade; UP = Unsatisfactory Class Participation; UAG = Unsatisfactory Attendance & Grades; UAP = Unsatisfactory Attendance & Class Participation; UGP = Unsatisfactory Grades & Class Participation; and UAGP = Unsatisfactory Attendance, Grades, & Class Participation. As of fall 2010, 59% of freshmen were still receiving at least one unsatisfactory grade, but with this additional information, advisors are better positioned to guide students on actions needed to improve grades.

To provide students with additional learning support, the University's College of Business Administration Student Services Center piloted a program this past spring that required all freshmen with two or more U grades to seek extra-curricular help at the Academic Success Center. Of 109 freshmen with two or more U grades (a total of 231 U grades) who reported back to the College, the Academic Success Center helped to convert 95 U grades to an A, B, or C by the end of the spring semester, representing a 41% conversion rate. One hundred seven grades converted to either a D or F, representing 46%. Withdrawals accounted for 29 grades or 13%. The Academic Success Center reported being overwhelmed with the influx of students which may account for the high D, F conversion rate. We believe this strategy is a sound one, and it will benefit by greater coordination efforts between college advisement centers and the Academic Success Center. Additionally, more resources are needed in the Academic Success Center to provide the level of assistance needed to support a much greater number of students. There are other avenues of support to be explored for students with two or more U grades such as supplemental instruction and/or tutoring. Consequently, part of our Complete College Georgia Plan is to explore the financial resources needed to bring the Academic Success Center up to a staffing level sufficient to accommodate all freshmen students with two or more U grades. The plan will also study how many more supplemental instruction sections, and consequent resources, might be needed in key core courses to assist some of these students, depending on the type of unsatisfactory performance noted in the early alert grade. For example, students with a UG grade might be strong candidates for supplemental instruction and/or tutoring while those with UA or UP grades might benefit more from participating in the Academic Success Center. Securing sufficient faculty resources will be critical to the success of supplemental instruction efforts. The objective is to determine whether this strategy is financially feasible, consistent with the University's strategic theme of fiscal sustainability.

Annual evaluation of initiatives in support of maintaining forward progress in success and retention of first-year students will be conducted throughout the five year plan horizon. Additionally, action steps for ensuring that efforts directed toward first-year retention are having their intended effects will be developed in detail during the first year of the Complete College Georgia initiative. These include:

Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
Review all college advisement centers' early alert protocols for following up with freshmen, assessing the effectiveness of all follow-up efforts in converting unsatisfactory early alert grades to A, B, or Cs by the end of the semester. Eliminate or refine those efforts that are not working well and share those that are.	Academic Deans; College Advisement Centers	November 2012; annually
Identify patterns in the type of early alert unsatisfactory grade assigned (e.g., UA, UG, UP, UAG, UAP, UGP, or UAGP) to determine if larger trends/issues exist which need to be addressed on a global scale.	Provost/VPAA; Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs; Academic Technical Support	May 2013; then bi-annually
Monitor freshman student financial aid, working with the Office of Financial Aid to identify patterns that may impact retention.	VP-SAEM; Financial Aid; Strategic Research and Analysis	Ongoing; February 2013; annually
Modify the method of communicating with students not registered for summer/fall and executing notification earlier in the semester.	Academic Deans; College Advisement Centers; Registrar	Ongoing; November 2012; annually
Create integrated reporting of stop-outs from fall to spring to allow us to understand more fully the reasons behind student stop-outs. Stop-outs increased from over 300 undergraduate students between fall 2010 and spring 2011 to over 400 undergraduate students between fall 2011 and spring 2012.	Associate Provost; Academic Technical Support; Strategic Research and Analysis ; FYE	November 2013
Create cohort reports in Banner, tracking high school GPA, SAT scores (with writing score) by gender and race as these data help predict student persistence and success (see Appendix F).	Associate Provost; Academic Technical Support; Strategic Research and Analysis; FYE	November 2012
Explore the possibility of creating Residential Interest Groups (RIGS) for engineering and math majors to be housed in Freedom's Landing	Deans; Program Directors; Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; University Housing	June 2013

Goal 2: Continue to assess strategies to guide an increase of the overall sophomore retention rate from 64/66% to 69%.

As discussed in the data analysis section, Georgia Southern's retention data document that greater attention must be directed toward the sophomore student population. Retention rates not only drop between the first and second year, but the trend data suggest that more sophomores are leaving in the second year compared to previous years. Specifically, in fall 2005, there was a difference of 10 percentage points between first and second-year retention. That margin increased to 12 percentage points in fall 2006, 13 percentage points in fall 2007, and 14 percentage points in fall 2008 (OSRA web-based retention reports). On closer inspection, it appears that the institution is losing male students more so than females. In fall 2009, black males exhibited an 18.3 percentage point drop between first and second-year retention; white males were not far behind with a 15.8 percentage point drop. White females fared a little better with a 13.1 percentage point drop, and black females had a 10.1 percentage point drop.

Georgia Southern's second Complete College Georgia Plan goal is to increase the overall sophomore retention rate, and a preliminary target of 69% has been established. Further analysis of data will lead to refinement of the target. The first step in support of this goal is to gain a better understanding of the disposition of this population of students. Are they stopping-out, dropping-out, or transferring? How many of these students are leaving because they are in academic difficulty? Are they leaving because of financial problems? The first objective is to identify the specific issues related to sophomore persistence

and progression. The University will survey this population and plans to utilize focus groups as suggested in the best practice literature. Following data collection and analysis, the Complete College Georgia team will devise specific strategies for addressing areas noted as concerns. Best practice indicates that potential strategies include developing evidenced-based sophomore advising initiatives (e.g., expanding early alerts to the sophomore student population); developing residential housing pods and/or programs for sophomores; enacting a sophomore curriculum experience; and/or creating more sophomore co-curricular programs.

Annual evaluation of initiatives in support of assessing strategies to guide an increase in the overall sophomore retention rate from 64/66% to 69% will be conducted throughout the five year plan horizon. Additionally, action steps under this goal will be developed in detail during the first year of the Complete College Georgia initiative. These include:

Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
Review first-year U grades, looking for correlations with subsequent semester GPAs.	College Advisement Centers	June 2013; annually
Investigate further the number of changes of major as well as the majors students are entering and leaving to provide a better sense of where to target interventions.	Academic Deans; Academic Technical Support	December 2012; annually
Create reports on summer school enrollment as part of a completion profile.	VP-SAEM; Registrar; Strategic Research and Analysis	Ongoing; February 2013; annually

Goal 3: Shorten time to degree by addressing inhibiting factors, getting students to enroll for full semester loads, and continuing to promote summer enrollment.

The data suggest that students would be well served by several efforts aimed at shortening the time to degree. Despite repeated advisement messages at student orientation sessions as well as one-on-one advisor meetings, students continue to register for fewer than 15 credit hours per semester. The trend has gone from an average semester credit hour load of 13.57 for undergraduates in fall 2009 to 13.36 in fall 2011. The average semester credit hour load in spring 2010 was 13.24 for all undergraduates, which remained the same in spring 2012. Summer enrollment dropped from an average of 7.42 (summer 2010) to 7.14 (projected summer 2012).

Other data highlight the significant impact that enrolling in summer classes has on six-year graduation rates, consistent with national data. For example, for the fall 2003 cohort (n=2735), students who did not enroll in any summer classes exhibited a six-year graduation rate of 9.9% (n=100). On the contrary, 67.1% (n=208) of students in this same cohort who completed 9-12 credit hours during the summer were able to graduate within six years. This favorable trend continued with the following two cohorts. Fall 2004 cohort data shows that 5.3% (n=56) of students who did not enroll in any summer classes graduated within six years. This percentage compares to 64.0% (n=228) of students who enrolled in 9-12 credit hours during the summer and graduated within six years. In the fall 2005, 8.7% (n=92) of students who did not take any summer classes graduated within six years. Over Sixty-eight percent of students who took 9-12 credit hours during the summer graduated within six years.

Based upon this analysis, Georgia Southern's third Complete College goal is to shorten time to degree by addressing inhibiting factors, continuing to advise students to enroll for full semester loads, and

promoting summer enrollment. In this case, a major inhibiting factor is the Board of Regents' policy that requires students to pay per credit hour for any courses in which they enroll between 12-15 hours. If this policy was changed to allow students to pay a full-time rate for up to 15 credit hours per semester, it is anticipated that more students would register for full academic loads, increasing their chances of completing a degree within the six-year time span.

The institution will gain a better understanding of why students are not enrolling for at least 15 credit hours per semester despite repeated advisement messages, and why many do not register for a full load or attend summer school as means for staying on schedule. Specific action steps include the following and will be developed in detail during the first year of the Complete College Georgia initiative.

Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
Inventory the senior curriculum to determine the number of students who can register for no more than 12 credit hours due to the nature of their programs (e.g., student teaching, internships, etc.).	Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs; College Advisement Centers	May 2013; May 2015
Expand emphasis on course availability. Are students not registering because the courses they need are not available that semester? To what extent does course availability impact the overall average semester credit hour registration?	Provost/VPAA; Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs; Academic Technical Support	Ongoing; each academic term
Implement a four-year academic plan. Currently, freshmen complete a two-year academic plan as part of the First-Year Seminar (FYE 1220). Advisors will work with students to expand their two-year plans into four-year plans. This action will have the added advantage of reinforcing the four-year graduation message.	Provost/VP-AA; Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs; College Advisement Centers; FYE	May 2013; annually
Actively promote summer school registration through informed scenarios shared with students and parents. The University plans to develop a brochure to compare a four-year plan of study with and without summer school enrollment, including the cost of four years of study with housing. Similarly, five and six-year plans of studies will be developed with and without summer school, including all costs. This information will help students and parents better appreciate the value of summer school.	Academic Deans; College Advisement Centers; Registrar; FYE	Ongoing; November 2013; annually

Annual evaluation of initiatives in support of shortening time to degree will be conducted throughout the five year plan horizon. Additionally, action steps for ensuring that efforts directed toward shortening time to degree are having their intended effects will be developed in detail during the first year of the Complete College Georgia initiative. These include:

Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
Assess the impact of the math placement requirement on student GPA and compare to previous data.	COSM Dean; Mathematics Department Chair; FYE	Ongoing; May 2013; May 2015
Create a tracking system for ENGL 1101/1102 (Composition I and II) to better ensure that the Regents Exam Exemption policy is met each semester, which aligns with the BOR mandate for completing Area A within the first 30 hours.	CLASS Dean; Department Chair; Academic Technical Support; Registrar	Ongoing; May 2013; annually
Use DegreeWorks to help students stay on track to degree completion.	Academic Department Chairs; College Advisement Centers; FYE	Implementation Spring 2012; evaluate each term
Provide clear and innovative paths to degree completion, including articulation agreements with two-year and technical colleges.	Provost/VPAA; Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs; College Advisement Centers; FYE	Ongoing; November 2013; evaluate annually

Initiatives (Cont.)	Responsibility	Timeline
Review curriculum requirements to identify opportunities for greater flexibility in core courses, allowing easier transferability between programs of study when students change majors.	Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs	May 2014; May 2016
Implement more institutional structures that will provide student support in academically challenging courses.	Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs; Academic Success Center	Ongoing; May 2013; annually
Decrease class sizes in foundational core courses from an average of 43 to 30. This initiative will be helped by budget allocations such as we received for FY 2013.	Provost/VPAA; Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs	Fall 2013; evaluate annually
Evaluate the need for additional faculty hires to decrease student/faculty ratios and to allow faculty time to provide additional support to students in both core courses and in the major.	Provost/VPAA; Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs	Ongoing; evaluate annually
Implement Desire2Learn and other technology tools to provide faculty and advisors with sufficient academic information needed to provide improved advisement.	Academic Deans; Center for Academic Technology Support; College Advisement Centers; FYE	Spring 2013; evaluate each term
Survey state and local economic development partners to ascertain their employment opportunities and employee needs; Evaluate program availability and new program needs to meet these demands	Provost/VPAA; Deans, Department Chairs, CCG Committee members; CEO, Bulloch County Economic Development Authority	Fall 2012

On June 13, 2012, Georgia Southern University signed an articulation agreement with Savannah Technical College which will allow students completing a SACS/COC accredited Associate of Science degree in Logistics Management to transfer seamlessly into the Georgia Southern Bachelor of Business Administration degree with a major in Logistics and Intermodal Transportation. This articulation agreement is significant because it is the first for the University with a TCSG institution. Moreover, it directly responds to an economic workforce need in southeast Georgia for more logistics trained professionals.

Georgia Southern and Savannah Technical College are developing two other articulation agreements which also respond to regional workforce needs: construction management and tourism.

We are about to sign another articulation agreement with Armstrong Atlantic State University which will allow seamless transfer of students completing an associate's degree in engineering into one of Georgia Southern's bachelor degree programs in engineering. Once again, this agreement addresses a regional workforce need.

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) and Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) are two-year USG institutions that seek partnerships with other institutions to facilitate the progression of Hispanic and Latino students. An institutional agreement of continuing Goizueta scholarship support may facilitate student transfers from ABAC or GPC to a four-institution such as Georgia Southern.

Goal 4: Evaluate programming to support student success, inventory all efforts, and build upon Georgia Southern's culture where students are engaged at multiple levels through intentional delivery of in and out-of-class opportunities.

Research shows that students who participate in at least two high impact activities demonstrate higher levels of learning (Brownell, Swaner, 2010). Kuh (2008) defines high impact activities as: (1) first-year experiences; (2) common intellectual experiences; (3) learning communities; (4) writing-intensive courses; (5) collaborative assignments and projects; (6) undergraduate research; (7) diversity/global learning; (8) service or community-based learning; (9) internships, (10) capstone experiences, and (11) study abroad opportunities.

Brownell and Swaner's research has shown that participation in first-year seminars, learning communities (especially linked to gateway courses), service learning, and undergraduate research consistently results in greater student persistence as well as higher GPAs (Brownell, Swaner, 2010). Additionally, Hamir (2011) found "...that study abroad participants graduated at higher rates than either applicants or non-participants, and that participation increased the predicted probability of graduating in five years by 64% and in six years by 202%. In addition, time-to-degree was slightly shorter for participants when compared to all non-participants..." "Analyses of degree completion rates and differences in time-to-degree between participants based on program type, length, and classification at the time of participation also yielded multiple significant results." From this perspective, it becomes imperative to understand the degree to which these types of high impact activities are encouraged and utilized at Georgia Southern as well as which student populations have access to them.

We offer students a wide variety of rich opportunities to engage in co-curricular activities, including over 300 student organizations. As mentioned previously, we have a strong First-Year Experience Program and are continuing to build upon documented successes. In addition to its regular curricular programming, the First-Year Experience Program offers free evening educational programs featuring a variety of speakers who model the institution's general education outcomes such as "Quality of Life" and "Responsible Citizenship." First-Year Experience and the Office of Career Services offer courses and workshops on Career Exploration and job searching methods as well as career and major fairs.

The Multicultural Student Center celebrates and supports diversity by providing cultural opportunities in the curriculum and the co-curriculum that promote social responsibility, student learning, and personal well-being. These include a series of advocacy and support services, programs and activities that foster inclusion and pluralism. The Center serves the Georgia Southern community by hosting nationally recognized speakers, multicultural conferences, open forums, cultural performances and facilitates diversity training for student and staff development. It also serves to assist in the recruitment and support the retention of underrepresented groups through two successful peer mentor programs: the Minority Advisement Program for freshmen and new transfer students and the Pathways to Success Program for African-American men.

Faculty across campus mentor and guide undergraduate students on research. For example, over half the students in the College of Science & Mathematics complete research projects under individual faculty supervision. Faculty in the College's Chemistry department have been very successful in incorporating undergraduate research into their degree programs. The University Honors Program plays a crucial role with undergraduate research. Since the beginning of the program, students have been required to complete Honors Theses or Capstone Projects. These faculty mentored projects have spanned traditional research

models, applied research, and creative activities in all academic colleges and majors. Many other degree programs offer these types of opportunities as well. In addition, the Georgia Southern University Research Advisory Board is charged with enhancing undergrad research efforts within the colleges that each member represents. The Board will be providing seed funding to support these efforts. Additionally, the Zach S Henderson Library provides research assistance at the point of need via phone, face-to-face consultations, instruction, instant messaging, and email. The library has been and continues to embed library resources and provide research assistance through GeorgiaView and Folio.

As noted earlier, beginning in spring 2012, all freshmen were required to complete Global Citizens (FYE 1410) as part of their first-year experience. In 2010, Georgia Southern completed an inventory of capstone experiences. The majority of our degree programs offered internship or capstone experiences at that time, many of them required. Efforts were underway to begin initial assessments of student success.

As shown above, Georgia Southern has been active in promoting student engagement; however, we have been less attentive to measuring the impact of these activities and, in particular, the student populations reached. To that end, Georgia Southern's fourth goal is to inventory and build upon Georgia Southern's culture where students are engaged at multiple levels. Annual evaluation of initiatives in support of evaluating programming to support student success, inventorying all efforts, and building upon Georgia Southern's culture of engagement will be conducted throughout the five year plan horizon. Additionally, action steps will be developed in detail during the first year of the Complete College Georgia initiative. These include:

Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
Inventory both the type of high impact activities currently ongoing as well as the student populations impacted by race, gender, etc. Use this information to target students not currently being reached.	Provost/VPAA; FYE; VP-SAEM	December 2012; bi-annually
Explore the potential for offering more service-learning courses.	Center for Teaching, Learning and Scholarship; Student Leadership and Civic Engagement	Ongoing; May 2013; annually
Identify and document current undergraduate research experiences underway; Investigate the feasibility of providing additional undergraduate research experiences.	Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs; University Honors Program; GSU Research Advisory Board	Ongoing; October 2012; evaluate each term
Continue to encourage majors to develop capstone experiences.	Academic Deans; Academic Department Chairs; University Honors Program	Ongoing; November 2012; evaluate annually
Encourage/broaden the appeal for more students to participate in study abroad; Help students secure private financial assistance; Provide development and support for faculty interested in setting up study abroad classes/programs.	Center for International Studies; College Advisement Centers; FYE; University Honors Program	Ongoing; Fall 2012; evaluate each term

Goals and Strategies Relative to the Following Areas

- **Partnerships with P-12 to improve college readiness**

Georgia Southern has a strong record of participating in partnerships with P-12. As part of this plan, we will continue to work with our P-12 partners on efforts to increase access and college readiness. Within

the College of Education, the Georgia Center for Educational Renewal addresses current issues and commonly faced challenges encountered by school leaders and teachers in Georgia, throughout the U.S., and internationally. For instance, the Center focuses on the challenges presented by increasingly stringent calls for higher performance of all students, including increasing the achievement gap between white and minority students and between students from low to high socio-economic standing. Consistent with the University's mission, the Center's emphasis is on the special challenges faced by resource-poor schools serving in rural, underserved areas.

Closing the Achievement Gap provides educators with useful information on how to close the gap for all underachieving students. Clinical Associates are P-12 educators who serve as liaisons between his or her school and the College of Education, working to establish field experience placements as well as to coordinate other collaborative college-school activities. As a member of the First District Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA), the dean of the College of Education meets monthly with superintendents from member school systems. The Partnership Council recommends policy and procedural changes for new Partner School, Clinical Associate, or Clinical Supervisor programs.

The *Thinking and Learning Institute (TLI)*, an outreach program of the Georgia Southern Writing Project, is administered through the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. This program works with teachers (elementary through college level) to emphasize the teaching of critical thinking skills in content areas. Participants redeliver strategies from the program to their local students and colleagues. For instance, this summer *TLI* offered a cross-disciplinary and cross-grade-level academy with a focus on implementing the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts, Math, and Social Studies. CCS requires an adjustment of teaching to incorporating more and more meaningful writing into all disciplines. *TLI* is currently investigating partnerships with individual schools to develop professional development for Math and Science teachers, who will be required to implement CCS for those disciplines beginning academic year 2013. Four weekend activities over the two semesters are planned and will be open to teachers from any county.

Project Lead the Way Inc. is a national, non-profit organization that promotes STEM education in high schools across the country. The program offers a modular, hands-on, project-based approach to learning that trains high school faculty to teach the modules, ultimately preparing and encouraging high school students to pursue a science, engineering, technology, or math degree in college. Georgia Southern University has been an affiliate university for PLTW for the last six years.

Using data from the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange, the College of Science and Mathematics sets goals to encourage greater STEM participation. Based upon the findings of the 2009-2010 Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange STEM Report, the College has identified next steps:

Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
Increase the number of schools participating in Project Lead the Way from 24 PLTW active schools in the state of Georgia to 50 within the next five years. Increase the number of PLTW teachers in the state who are affiliated with the “active” school districts from 58 to 100 within the next five years.	COSM Dean; COE Dean; P-12 partners	Ongoing; July 2017
Pending continued funding, include more teachers in Project SENSE and Project BESST (in collaboration with the Georgia Southern University Museum). Project SENSE and Project BESST are both aligned with the Georgia Professional Standards, national standards, and Georgia Habits of Mind. These projects have averaged 40 participating teachers per year for 20 years, and plans are to stabilize at approximately 38 schools and 135 teachers working with these two projects each year.	COSM Dean; COE Dean; P-12 partners	Ongoing; July 2014
Increase the number of teacher participating in our 22 year old funded St. Catherine’s Sea Turtle Teaching Training Program. This program works with about 12 school systems, and we would like to expand that to 16 school systems. Additionally, we would like to grow the program from 22 K-12 teachers (2011) to 32.	COSM Dean; COE Dean; P-12 partners	Ongoing; July 2013
Extend the College’s Molecular Biology Initiative (National Science Foundation GK-12) to include more teachers and schools. We currently partner with seven partner high schools. With additional resources, we plan to extend this program to additional teachers and schools, including a summer university-based Upward Bound partnership.	COSM Dean; COE Dean; P-12 partners	Ongoing; July 2013
Capitalize on the College’s National Science Foundation Noyce Grant to recruit more top students to become STEM teachers. Our goal is to find 5-7 new STEM scholars in each of the next two years to finish the project, then to receive a renewal that will allow us to set a new goal of 24 new scholars (6 per year).	COSM Dean; COE Dean; P-12 partners	Ongoing; Fall 2012; Fall 2013

The Southeast Georgia World Languages Collaborative is a program administered through the Department of Foreign Languages. World language teachers from the middle school through college levels in a seven-county area collaborate to improve proficiency-oriented instruction across educational sectors.

For the last three years, the Georgia Southern library faculty have participated in a Technology Showcase with Bulloch and Liberty County School Systems. Specifically, K-12 teachers and media specialists were taught how to search GALILEO as well as how to embed library resources into their course management system and web pages. Additionally, library faculty have provided tours and library instruction to high school AP English classes and continue to provide library instruction to the high school students participating in the Upward Bound program each summer.

These are just some of the partnerships in which the University participates. As part of the Complete College Georgia Plan, the University plans to focus its efforts on continuing to assess the partnerships in place to determine what is working well and what needs to be changed. These analyses will be shared with the Complete College Georgia team as well as the University leadership.

- **Improving access and completion for students traditionally underserved in postsecondary education**

- **Part-time and working students**

As shown in the data analysis discussion, Georgia Southern's undergraduate student population is primarily full-time, traditional students. Part-time students accounted for only 10.8% of the fall 2011 undergraduate enrollment. Students 25 or older accounted for only 5.3% of the total undergraduate population. Nonetheless, Georgia Southern has recently committed to expanding the online track of the Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) degree program. Currently, the online BGS enrolls 300 students (predicted enrollment for fall 2011) with plans to increase the online enrollment to over 1,000 students by 2017.

The online Bachelor of General Studies degree targets non-traditional students and working professionals who wish to earn a bachelor's degree. The degree program is purposely quite flexible to allow students to design their program of studies to suit their individual goals. The BGS growth plan mandates that all growth in the online BGS program be consistent with the mission and vision of the program. The mission of the General Studies program is to prepare students for successful life-long learning by engaging them in a broadly applicable interdisciplinary degree program that reflects the growing complexity and connectivity of the modern world and is guided by integrity, academic excellence, and global citizenship. Although the online BGS degree is designed to provide students with a path to degree completion, it is essential that the degree have meaning and substance; as such, the BGS must remain a functional degree that enables and enhances each student's personal and professional growth. Retention and graduation rates for this population of students will continue to be carefully monitored annually (see Appendix G).

The plan to grow the BGS has been developed and will be reviewed by the Provost and President over the summer 2012 for final approval. If approved, implementation will begin immediately, targeting an increased enrollment as early as spring 2013. Projections anticipate enrollment in the program will grow by 200-300 students per year through 2014.

- **Adult learners and/or military students**

Georgia Southern University is recognized as a "military friendly" institution. Neither adult learners nor military/veteran students are presently a significant part of the University's undergraduate population, but that should change to the extent our efforts are successful. In the fall of 2011, 698 veterans (n=358) and dependents/spouses (n=340) were enrolled. This overall population is also being monitored for a better understanding of trends and services that are needed (see Appendix H). Effective Spring 2012, Georgia Southern has joined the GOArmyEd portal to improve efficiency in assigning equivalences and matriculation for military students.

- **First generation students**

As shown in the data analysis discussion, only a quarter of Georgia Southern's undergraduate student population is first generation, and these students persist and graduate at levels comparable to the general undergraduate student population. Thus, first generation students may not require targeted efforts to persist and graduate. Georgia Southern has identified other student populations (e.g., sophomore students) where efforts would be better directed given limited resources.

- **Minority students**

As shown in the data analysis discussion, African-American students comprise Georgia Southern's second largest racial undergraduate student population, representing 25% of the total undergraduate enrollment (Fall 2011). The data reveal that these students exhibit a first-year retention and graduation rate comparable to the total undergraduate student population. Where students go astray is in their sophomore year, and this trend impacts African American male students much more than African American female students. Since the data are not much better for white male sophomore students, Georgia Southern commits to continuing to track and target sophomore students to increase the second-year retention rate by 2% in 2014 and enable all students to persist to graduation (see goal 2). Nonetheless, it is important to note that Georgia Southern University has been ranked fourth in the nation for graduating African-American students majoring in chemistry, physics, and geology by *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*. This success is largely attributed to the opportunity undergraduate students have to participate in research; minority faculty members in key roles who serve as role-models and mentors to these students; and minority-focused student organizations that provide an additional support structure. The University ranked in the top twenty for graduating African-American students majoring in engineering technologies and engineering-related fields, marketing, parks and leisure services, and family and consumer sciences.

Georgia Southern's African American Male Initiative program, *Pathways To Success*, is a cohort-model program designed to increase the academic success of this group of students. On average, these students have higher retention rates (81% compared to 78%) and grade point averages (2.51 compared to 2.30) than African American male students in general. Due to the early successes of this program, Georgia Southern intends to double the number of participating students by expanding the incoming freshmen cohort to 60 students.

Also deserving of mention is a \$913,000 grant Georgia Southern received from the *Goizueta* Foundation to establish and support Hispanic/Latino student recruitment and retention. This grant includes \$500,000 for need-based tuition assistance for a period of seven years available to Hispanic/Latino students whose families currently reside in the United States.

Support efforts through the Multicultural Student Center are ongoing as of FY12 and will be evaluated annually with the support of Strategic Research and Analysis.

- **Low-income students**

As shown in the data analysis discussion, 46% of Georgia Southern's undergraduate students receive need-based financial aid. Review of the available data point to a need to track low income students better. If we define low income students by those who are eligible to receive Pell Grants, then the institution needs to enhance the tracking mechanism for this cohort of students to determine their persistence and graduation rates as well as what interventions may be needed (i.e., Financial Aid; Strategic Research and Analysis; SAEM-Technical Support). With help from the Division of Information Technology Services, Georgia Southern plans to investigate what specific tracking mechanisms are needed and begin to gather these data during 2012-2013 or as soon as possible after implementation of the technology.

- **Students with disabilities**

Georgia Southern supports students with disabilities through the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC). For confidentiality reasons, information on students with disabilities is not widely shared with advisors and faculty, which makes tracking this cohort of students at the college level difficult. SDRC staff, however, continue to monitor closely students receiving support and services through the Center. They monitor student performance based on GPA as well as retention, progression, and graduation.

The SDRC staff are closely involved with students in ensuring effective implementation of accommodations such as early or priority registration. As an example, this spring after a review for preregistering students, the staff found that a significant number of the students served by the SDRC were not pre-registered for the upcoming fall semester classes. To address this, a staff member was assigned to communicate directly with each student in order to better understand how the SDRC could assist in facilitating this process. Within three weeks, one-third of the contacted students pre-registered for fall classes. Additionally, the SDRC assisted many of the remaining students to receive the academic advisement needed prior to pre-registration. Such hands-on assistance provided directly to our students often plays a pivotal role in retention efforts.

Additionally, the SDRC works with students, paying careful attention to early alert U grades for freshmen as well as communicating key deadlines to all students with disabilities. Georgia Southern's goal for this population of students is, as much as possible, to increase coordination effective immediately in Fall 2012, between the SDRC and advisors/faculty so that students have clear, consistent support about academics and financial aid issues. The second goal is to create a collaborative endeavor between the SDRC and the First-Year Experience Office to report and enhance early alert U grade interventions; May 2013 is targeted for initial steps in this effort.

- **Restructuring Instructional Delivery**

Research documents the positive correlation between strong teaching/teaching excellence and student retention and persistence. To protect and preserve the University's teaching mission and ethos, President Keel convened the Teaching Legacy Task Force in fall 2011. Part of the Task Force's white paper forms the response to this section of the Complete College Georgia Plan. For the full report, please see <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/provost/pdf/strategic/TeachingLegacyTaskforce-WhitePaper.pdf>.

Georgia Southern's efforts to refine instructional delivery include offering more courses online, including an entire undergraduate degree program (the Bachelor of General Studies), optimizing instructional technologies within courses, and exploring degree efficiencies. The number of online courses continues to grow. Currently, the University offers about 11% of its courses online. Special efforts are made to put courses online during the summer term (23%, summer 2012) so that students who wish to return home to work during the summer can still enroll in a Georgia Southern course rather than become a transient student elsewhere. When increasing online instruction, it is critical to recognize that online course development and teaching necessitate a different approach to course development and delivery. Effective online instruction consistent with the University's teaching ethos requires that we adhere to course design standards that promote effective online teaching and learning. To that end, faculty unfamiliar with online course development and delivery need guidance before and during course development—particularly for courses that support the University's online degree programs.

Best practices for good online course design and delivery include: course overview and introduction; learning objectives and/or competencies; assessment and measurement; instructional materials, learner interaction and engagement; course technology; learner support; and accessibility. Other best practices for online course development are: student-faculty interactions; cooperation among students; active learning; prompt feedback; time on task; high expectations; and diverse talents and ways of learning.

Currently, the Georgia Southern University Center for Online Learning (COL) incorporates many of these best practices into its course and faculty development; however, missing from the COL's practice is a course review process. Requiring courses that support our online degree programs to pass a rigorous course review process (such as the Quality Matters™ Rubric) before they are delivered would promote higher standards and greater consistency in online course development and delivery as well as ensure compliance with our regional accrediting body (ensuring a quality learning experience regardless of the course delivery mode). In its work, the Teaching Legacy Task Force recommended that all Georgia Southern online courses undergo a rigorous course review process to ensure quality control.

An additional example of optimizing technology within instruction is the University's new Learning Management System (LMS), Desire2Learn, which will be fully online as of spring 2013. Called Folio, Desire2Learn includes functionality for course creation, delivery, and management of courses as well as course assessment tools and rubrics. Additionally, the LMS has the ability to "...create and share personalized ePortfolios, gain real-time knowledge with sophisticated analytics, and capture and distribute presentations worldwide" (<http://www.desire2learn.com/products/learning-suite/>). Desire2Learn Analytics complements WeaveOnline (the University's program assessment tool) by tracking, analyzing, and assessing student achievement over time at the course level. Included in the Analytics component is a set of standard reports tied to student success, retention, and graduation. Analytics will help identify at-risk students and assist faculty and advisors to design specific interventions for success. It will also facilitate the understanding of data patterns "...through competency mapping and reporting engagement data and achievement results" (<http://www.desire2learn.com/products/analytics/features/>). Folio will provide faculty and advisors with the data they need to make informed decisions about student interventions related to students' academic performance.

Additionally, the Henderson Library provides a number of online resources to help students regardless of whether they are on campus or not –

- Instant Messaging - <http://library.georgiasouthern.edu/libref/imref.html>
- Eagle Source - <http://library.georgiasouthern.edu/eaglesource/>
- Getting Started - <http://library.georgiasouthern.edu/libref/using.html>
- GALILEO – <http://www.galileo.usg.edu>
- DISCOVER @Georgia Southern – <http://library.georgiasouthern.edu/discover>

Finally, the University plans to explore additional degree efficiencies through an evaluation of each program of study on campus to determine if there is any possibility of restructuring degree requirements for selected majors. It may be possible, for example, to reduce the number of elective courses required for a major or to restructure courses to reduce the credit load for a major. The Comprehensive Program Reviews that are tied to USG guidelines provide an ongoing path by which the program evaluations are systematic for academic departments at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Conclusion

Georgia Southern University has established an institutional priority to continue to make significant strides in increasing retention, progression, and graduation of its students while preserving academic quality. Consequently, the focus of the institution's Complete College Georgia Plan is to expand those efforts which are already having a favorable impact and revamp others which may not be working as well as we had hoped. This action is especially applicable with our first-year retention efforts which have had documented success. On the contrary, our data analysis indicates that we need to focus greater attention on our sophomore students, especially male students. We will survey this population and conduct focus group interviews to learn what supports need to be put into place to ensure their persistence and academic success. Moreover, we have identified specific areas to investigate to determine ways to shorten time to degree. Much of this work has been ongoing, and we will build on these earlier efforts. Finally, the University will continue to encourage and promote student engagement in and out of the classroom, a hallmark of the University.

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TBA	Bulloch County Board of Education P-12 Representative

Appendix A. Retention and Graduation Rates of Fall Term, First-time, Full-time Freshmen

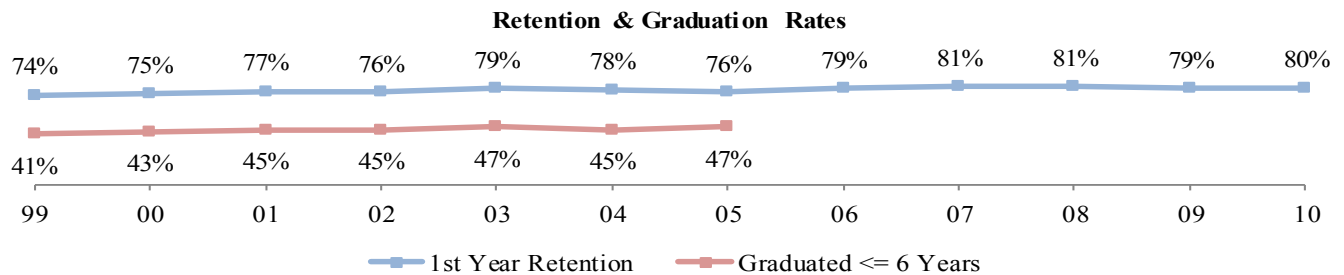
The tables below use the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Enrollment Cohort of First-time Freshmen defined as fall term, first-time, full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates. The cohort includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school). Students who graduated from high school within the same calendar year of the fall term are included even if they attended college before

Fall Term Retention and Graduation Rates

IPEDS First-time Freshman Retention & Graduation Rates

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Entering Cohort ¹	3,262	2,853	2,628	2,593	2,735	2,983	3,125	2,732	3,029	3,109	3,492	3,597
1 st Year Retention	74%	75%	77%	76%	79%	78%	76%	79%	81%	81%	79%	80%
Graduated <= 5 Years	34%	35%	38%	39%	41%	39%	40%	45%				
Graduated <= 6 Years	41%	43%	45%	45%	47%	45%	47%					

IPEDS First-time Freshman Cohort Retention & Graduation Rates



Fall 2010 IPEDS First-time Freshman Cohort Returning Fall 2011

	Black			Other			White			Unknown			Total		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Entering Cohort ¹	471	399	870	178	175	353	1,125	1,222	2,347	10	17	27	1,784	1,813	3,597
1 st Year Retention	86%	78%	82%	76%	73%	74%	84%	76%	80%	60%	82%	74%	83%	76%	80%

Graduation Rate by Race and Gender - Fall 2005 IPEDS First-time Freshman Cohort

	Black			Other			White			Total		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Entering Cohort ¹	315	303	618	82	113	195	1,075	1,235	2,310	1,472	1,651	3,123
Graduated <= 5 Years	51%	30%	41%	38%	23%	29%	49%	34%	41%	49%	32%	40%
Graduated <= 6 Years	60%	39%	50%	46%	34%	39%	53%	41%	46%	54%	40%	47%

Note. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Enrollment Reports, Student Information Reporting System (SIRS) and the USG Academic Data Mart Legacy Like Tables (ADM LLT).

¹These are the original IPEDS Enrollment Cohorts of First-time, Full-time, Degree-seeking Freshmen. They do not reflect exclusions as allowed in IPEDS reporting, however, the retention and graduation rate percentages do reflect the exclusions.

Appendix B. Georgia Southern University Fall Facts

Top Five Counties, States, and International Countries, Fall 2011 Total

Georgia Counties of Origin	States of Residence	Non - U.S. Countries of Citizenship
1. Gwinnett	1. Georgia	1. Honduras
2. Bulloch	2. Florida	2. Canada
3. Fulton	3. South Carolina	3. China
4. Cobb	4. North Carolina	4. Nigeria
5. Chatham	5. Virginia	5. India

Top Five Georgia Feeder High Schools of Beginning Freshmen, Fall 2011

School	Location
1. Harrison	Kennesaw
2. Roswell	Roswell
3. Milton	Alpharetta
4. Lambert	Suwanee
5. Brookwood	Snellville

SAT Average for Fall Term Beginning Freshmen, Fall 2007-11

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1108	1111	1106	1106	1112

Note. ACT average was 23 for Fall 2007-11.

% of Degree-seeking Undergraduates On Versus Off Campus, Fall 2011

On Campus	25%
Off Campus	75%

% of Total Enrollment, Fall 2007-11

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
UG	88%	87%	86%	87%	87%
Grad	12%	13%	14%	13%	13%

Average Age of Students, Fall 2011

UG	21
Grad	32

High School and Transfer Students' GPA Averages, Fall 2011

High School = 3.20
 Transfer Students to GSU = 2.81
 Note. Transfers are first-time, degree-seeking.

% of Beginning Freshmen who had a High School Class Rank, Fall 2011

Top tenth of high school class	17%
Top quarter of high school class	42%
Total freshman who submitted class rank:	54%

First-time, Degree-seeking Transfers to GSU, Fall 2007-11

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
876	914	1,080	1,033	1,160

First-time, Degree-seeking Transfers from Top 5 Institutions to Georgia Southern University, Fall 2011

1. East Georgia College
2. Armstrong Atlantic State University
3. Middle Georgia College
4. Gainesville State College
5. Georgia Military College

Enrollment Demographics, Fall 2007-11

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	07	11
Total	16,841	17,764	19,086	19,691	20,212		
Undergraduate	14,854	15,490	16,486	17,044	17,525		
Graduate	1,987	2,274	2,600	2,647	2,687		
Male	8,217	8,742	9,378	9,580	9,788		
Female	8,624	9,022	9,708	10,111	10,424		
Black	3,617	3,874	4,218	4,682	5,059		
White	10,995	11,864	13,113	13,111	13,247		
All Other Races	995	1,107	1,370	1,548	1,601		
Unknown	1,234	919	385	350	305		
Freshmen (IPEDS)	3,029	3,109	3,492	3,597	3,519		
Freshmen (All Other)	1,617	1,523	1,440	1,458	1,364		
Sophomore	3,538	3,598	3,853	3,932	4,171		
Junior	2,845	3,131	3,231	3,374	3,548		
Senior	3,120	3,229	3,614	3,754	3,965		
Other Undergraduate	705	900	856	929	958		
Masters	1,167	1,409	1,707	1,768	1,835		
Specialist	169	208	260	268	300		
Doctorate	502	531	517	510	482		
Non-Degree Graduate	149	126	116	101	70		

First-time Freshmen 1st Year Retention Rates, Fall 2006-10

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
79%	81%	81%	79%	80%

First-time Freshmen Six-Year Graduation Rates, Fall 2001-05

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
45%	45%	47%	45%	47%

Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year (FY), 2008-09 - 2010-11

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	08-09	10-11
Bachelor's	2,378	2,630	2,679		
Master's	497	601	708		
Post-master's certificates/EDS	51	78	96		
Doctoral	55	69	73		
Total Degrees	2,981	3,378	3,556		

Top Five Most Popular Majors, FY 2010-11

Bachelor's	Master's
1. Business/marketing	1. Education
2. Education	2. Business/marketing
3. Engineering Technologies	3. Parks and recreation
4. Health professions and related programs	4. Health professions and related programs
5. Parks and recreation	5. Social sciences



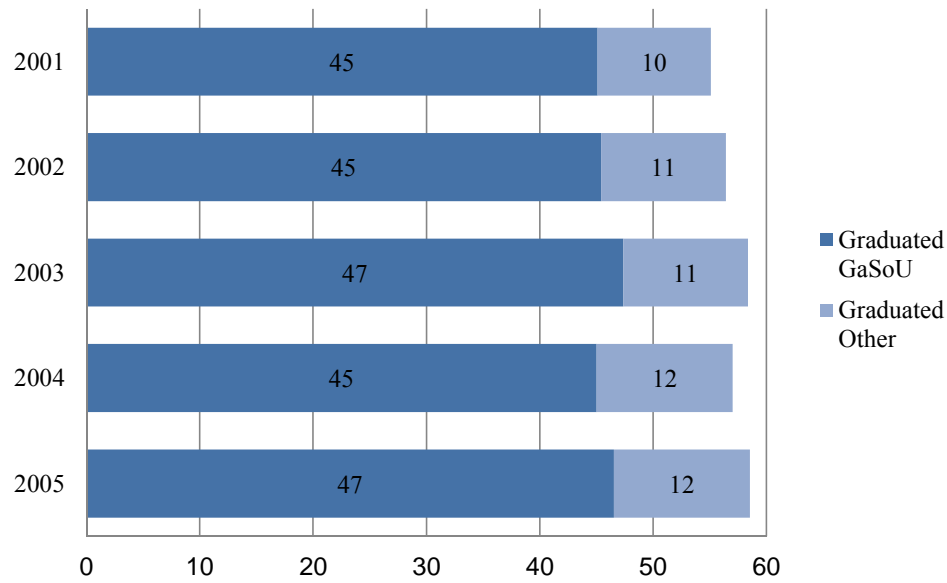
Appendix C. Georgia Southern University Institutional and Outside Institution Graduation Rates

Six Year Graduation Rates and Still Enrolled Percentages of the Fall 2001-2005 IPEDS First-time Freshman Cohorts

Fall Cohort	Cohort n	Georgia Southern Institution-specific				USG System-wide				State of Georgia non-USG				Out of State				Total			
		Still Enrolled		Grad.		Still Enrolled		Grad.		Still Enrolled		Grad.		Still Enrolled		Grad.		Still Enrolled		Grad.	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2001	2,633	120	4.6	1,187	45.1	197	7.5	224	8.5	63	2.4	7	0.3	97	3.7	34	1.3	477	18.1	1,452	55.1
2002	2,599	96	3.7	1,180	45.4	152	5.8	253	9.7	68	2.6	5	0.2	83	3.2	40	1.5	399	15.4	1,478	56.9
2003	2,735	119	4.4	1,295	47.3	156	5.7	241	8.8	68	2.5	9	0.3	73	2.7	42	1.5	416	15.2	1,587	58.0
2004	2,982	116	3.9	1,342	45.0	211	7.1	312	10.5	83	2.8	9	0.3	83	2.8	46	1.5	493	16.5	1,709	57.3
2005	3,123	119	3.8	1,453	46.5	179	5.7	329	10.5	61	2.0	7	0.2	78	2.5	41	1.3	437	14.0	1,830	58.6

Note. From the Fall 2001-2005 Student Information Reporting System (SIRS) file, the Fall 2001 - Summer 2011 SIRS and Academic Data Mart (ADM) G records tables, and the National Student Clearinghouse Subsequent Enrollment Search. Graduated is with a baccalaureate degree as of the summer semester of each cohort's sixth year. Still Enrolled is at the undergraduate level as of the fall semester following completion of each cohort's sixth year, and not having received a baccalaureate degree as of the prior summer (according to the NSC file). The Fall 2004 Cohort is less one exclusion, and the Fall 2005 Cohort is less 2 exclusions (per IPEDS definition).











Figure 2. IPEDS First-time Freshman Graduation Rates By Fall Cohort



Appendix D. Undergraduate Student Transfers Received by Georgia Southern University from USG Institutions by Institution Sector

The table below displays the total undergraduate student transfers that Georgia Southern University received from USG institutions by institution sector for FY09 and FY10. For both years, the majority of the undergraduate student transfers to Georgia Southern University were from two-year colleges.

Undergraduate Student Transfers Received by Georgia Southern University from USG Institutions by Institution Sector

Institution Sector	n	FY09		FY10		% Change ^a
		(n=1,132)		(n=1,308)		
Two-Year Colleges	545	 48%	670	 51%	23	
State Colleges	293	 26%	277	 21%	-6	
State Universities	209	 19%	264	 20%	26	
Research Universities	45	 4%	63	 5%	40	
Regional Universities	40	 4%	34	 3%	-15	

Note: From the FY09 and FY10 USG-BOR Transfer Feedback Reports.

^a% change is: (FY10 total students - FY09 total students) / FY09 total students * 100.

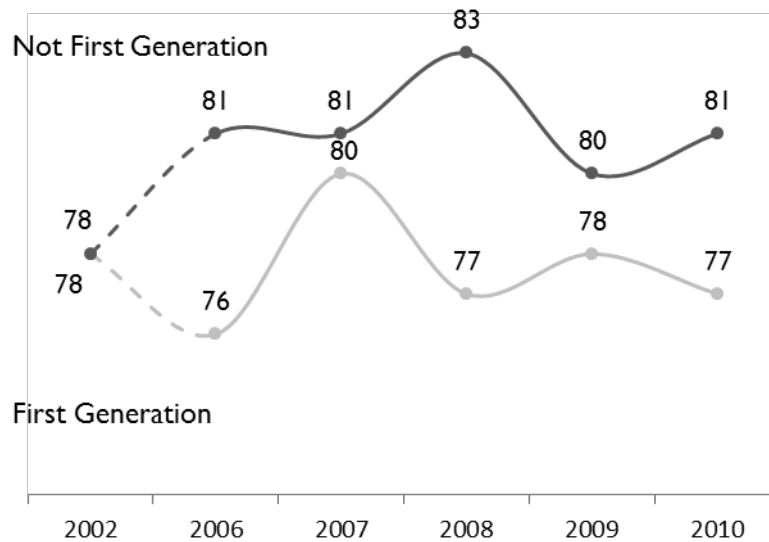
Appendix E. Georgia Southern University’s First-generation vs. Not First Generation Freshmen: Fall Term, First-year Retention Rates & Five- and Six-year Graduation Rates: 2002, 2006 – 2010

(Note. *Red* highlights tabulated below indicate highest comparative between-group values.)

	Cohort 2002 (n=1967)		Cohort 2006 (n=2107)		Cohort 2007 (n=2369)		Cohort 2008 (n=2461)		Cohort 2009 (n=2912)		Cohort 2010 (n=3101)	
	1 st	Not 1st	1 st	Not 1st	1 st	Not 1st	1 st	Not 1st	1 st	Not 1st	1 st	Not 1st
Entering Cohort (n)	647	1320	608	1499	710	1659	703	1758	763	2149	816	2285
1 st Year Retention %	78	78	76	81	80	81	77	83	78	80	77	81
Graduated <= 5 Years	36	41	39	47								
Graduated <= 6 Years	43	47										

Note: This report covers Fall first-time, full-time, degree-seeking freshman cohorts (IPEDS) for 2002 and 2006-2010. For the purposes of this report a student was considered not a First Generation student if one or both parents had completed college. Any other response was considered “First Generation.” Students who did not respond for both parents were excluded from this report.

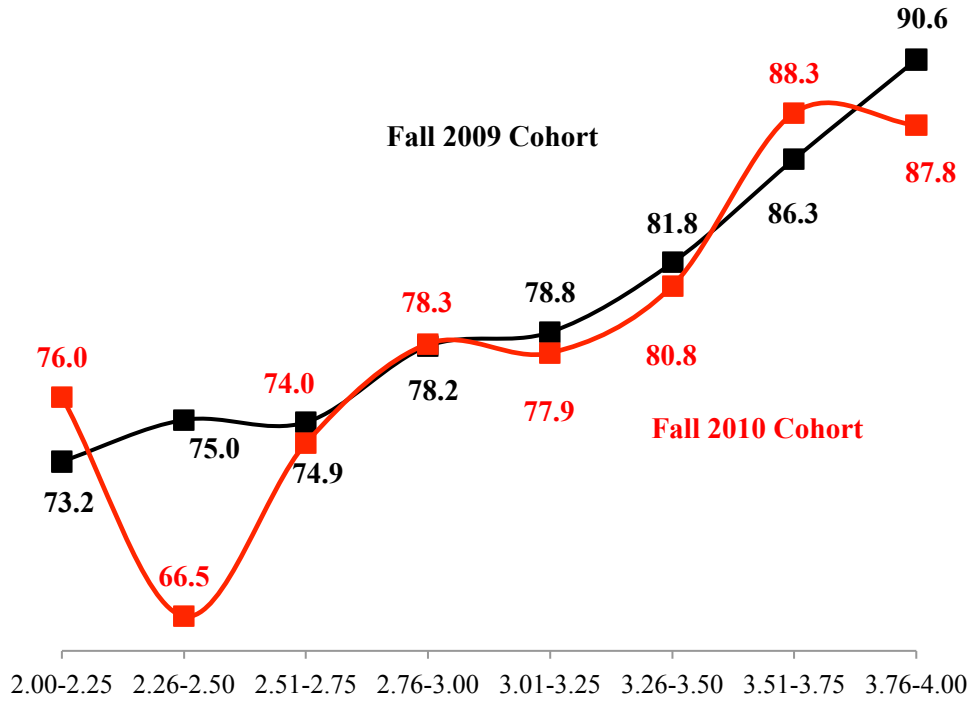
Source: Student Information Reporting System (SIRS), USG Academic Data Mart (ADM) Enrollment, GSU Data Warehouse



First Fall Term Retention Rates per Group

Appendix F. Georgia Southern University 1st Year Retention Rates By High School GPA Ranges

IPEDS First-time Freshman 1st Year Retention By High School GPA Range.



Note. From the Academic Data Mart Legacy Like Tables.

Appendix G. Retention, Progression, and Graduation Rates of BGS Majors by Semester

	BGS Cohorts (follow each cohort vertically down the column)																											
	F04		Spr05		F05		Spr06		F06		Spr07		F07		Spr08		F08		Spr09		F09		Spr10		F10		Spr11	
	n= 64		n= 45		n= 59		n= 53		n= 97		n= 80		n= 128		n= 97		n= 123		n= 110		n= 107		n= 83		n= 144		n= 156	
Retention/ Progression to:	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Spring 2005	49	76.6																										
Fall 2005 (1 st Yr)	31	48.4	26	57.8																								
Spring 2006	17	26.6	16	35.6	48	81.4																						
Fall 2006 (2 nd Yr)	9	14.1	7	15.6	32	54.2	41	77.4																				
Spring 2007	4	6.3	6	13.3	30	50.8	32	60.4	86	88.7																		
Fall 2007 (3 rd Yr)	0	0.0	1	2.2	17	28.8	23	43.4	62	63.9	55	68.8																
Spring 2008	1	1.6	2	4.4	8	13.6	17	32.1	49	50.5	47	58.8	102	79.7														
Fall 2008 (4 th Yr)	2	3.1	0	0.0	6	10.2	5	9.4	23	23.7	33	41.3	76	59.4	56	57.7												
Spring 2009	1	1.6	0	0.0	5	8.5	5	9.4	10	10.3	17	21.3	57	44.5	47	48.5	107	87.0										
Fall 2009 (5 th Yr)	1	1.6	1	2.2	3	5.1	6	11.3	8	8.2	12	15.0	29	22.7	31	32.0	73	59.3	85	77.3								
Spring 2010	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.4	1	1.9	6	6.2	8	10.0	22	17.2	20	20.6	58	47.2	76	69.1	83	77.6						
Fall 2010 (6 th Yr)	1	1.6	0	0.0	2	3.4	1	1.9	2	2.1	4	5.0	11	8.6	5	5.2	29	23.6	40	36.4	56	52.3	54	65.1				
Spring 2011	2	3.1	0	0.0	3	5.1	3	5.7	3	3.1	4	5.0	8	6.3	3	3.1	18	14.6	30	27.3	49	45.8	40	48.2	117	81.3		
Graduated	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	49	76.6	21	46.7	32	54.2	32	60.4	57	58.8	36	45.0	75	58.6	48	49.5	70	56.9	56	50.9	36	33.6	23	27.7	16	11.1	6	3.8

Note. From the Student Information Reporting System (SIRS), Academic Data Mart Legacy-like Tables, Data Warehouse census Enrollment Tables YSR, and Banner Degrees Awarded table SHRDGMR. BGS majors are undergraduates with >=45 total hours (earned and transferred). Students do not duplicate across years. Retained is enrolled and not having graduated as of the fall semester of retention. Graduated is as of Spring 2011.

Appendix H. Georgia Southern University's Military Veteran Students: Enrollment & Retention and Graduation Rates

Fall 2011 Enrollment by Load Type

Enrollment by Load Type of Veterans and Dependents/Spouses, Fall 2011

Type	Fall 2011		Type
Undergraduate Veterans			Undergraduate Dependents/Spouses
Full Time	265	319	Full Time
Part Time	37	4	Part Time
Total UG Veterans	302	323	Total UG Dependent/Spouses
Graduate Veterans			Graduate Dependents/Spouses
Full Time	24	9	Full Time
Part Time	32	8	Part Time
Total Graduate Veterans	56	17	Total Graduate Dependents/Spouses
Overall Total	358	340	Total

Source: University System of Georgia (USG) Academic Data Mart Legacy Like Table (ADM-LLT), Data Warehouse enrollment tables (YEN), and Registrar's Office

Retention and Graduation Rates

Retention Rate of Veterans IPEDS First-time, Full-time, Degree-seeking Freshman, Fall 2010 Cohort

Original Cohort	1 st Year	
	<i>n</i>	%
14	9	64.3

Graduation Rates of Veterans IPEDS First-time, Full-time, Degree-seeking Freshman, Fall 2005 Cohort

Original Cohort	Four-Year		Five-Year		Six-Year	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
10	1	10.0	2	20.0	4	40.0

Note. Retention and Graduation rates uses the Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Enrollment Cohort of First-time Freshmen defined as fall term, first-time, full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates. The cohort includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school). Students who graduated from high school within the same calendar year of the fall term are included even if they previously attended college.

Source: University System of Georgia (USG) Student Information Reporting System (SIRS), Academic Data Mart Legacy Like Table (ADM-LLT), Data Warehouse enrollment tables (YEN), and Registrar's Office