



# Fort Valley State University

## INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

### Institutional Mission

The mission of Fort Valley State University (FVSU) is to advance the cause of education with emphasis upon fulfilling commitments that our community members have undertaken collectively. As an institution of the University System of Georgia, Fort Valley State University naturally embraces the principles articulated by the Core Mission Statement for State Universities as approved by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The university's primary commitments include, among others, enhancement of teacher training programs grounded upon a liberal arts foundation, as reflective of over 120 years of experience and tradition. Additionally, the university recognizes with great pride and desires to further its responsibilities as Georgia's only 1890 Land Grant institution by offering programming excellence in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, extension, technology and military science and leadership, as well as to further its traditions of excellence in programs in the liberal arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural and physical sciences.

### Student Body Profile

The following narrative and summarized tables present a snapshot of key elements that influenced FVSU completion work's key priorities. Tables listed below provide data that assisted with development of the plan.

FVSU enrollment reached a high in 2011 (3896) and now stands at 2695. The student retention percentage was slightly lower than it has been over the last two years but has averaged 57.9% for the last three years, after having reached a peak of 77.8% in 2003. However, the current retention rate is 76.8%! This is a whopping increase of 18.9 % over the previous three year average. FVSU administrators believe this increase is due to many initiatives that have been implemented. Much of the **previous** enrollment increase and retention decline can be attributed to the increase in the number of underprepared students that were admitted to FVSU over that period. Likewise, the influx of less-prepared students possibly resulted in a decline in the four-year graduation rates by cohort, which was only 6.1% in 2011. The six-year graduation rate by cohort, likewise, has suffered a decline and is only 28.5% for the 2009 cohort. Clearly, FVSU serves a unique population. The majority of FVSU students are African-American (94%) and as of 2014, 84% of FVSU students received Pell Grant Funds. Approximately only 5% of the incoming freshmen class were considered adult learners (25 years or older), so the bulk of the student body is made up of high school graduates who are products of lower-performing high schools in the inner-cities or rural areas. **However a shift has occurred in the enrollment practices and the reward for this is a higher retention rate and, hopefully, a future increase in graduation rates.** Our slightly higher female population is consistent with national trends. These indicators were used as the committee devised the Complete College Georgia Plan for FVSU as benchmarks and as points of reference for strategies that needed to be developed and for historical perspective as the plan was outlined for the future of FVSU.

Table 1: Enrollment, Retention and Graduation Rate by Cohort

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Male Enrollment											1529	1530	1574	1442	1286	988	1063
Female Enrollment											2024	2198	2322	2126	1894	1606	1632
Total Enrollment		2561	2485	2446	2537	2558	2174	2176	2568	3106	3553	3728	3896	3568	3180	2594	2695
Retention by Cohort		72.7	75.3	77.8	67.9	74.8	75.2	74.5	71.1	63.5	58.93	58.4	59.3	57.7	56.7	76.8	
Four-Year Graduation Rate by Cohort		13.95	14.7	15.9	13.1	14.9	15.53	10.4	7.6	10.8	10.9	6.4	6.1				
Six-Year Graduation Rate by Cohort	25.6	36	32.3	35.1	33	34.3	33.6	29.4	27.9	30.6	28.5						

TABLE 2: Enrollment by Ethnicity

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
African-American	2017	2351	2850	3304	3510	3650	3100	3045	2446
International	35	33	26	23	21	12	15	17	15
Caucasian	54	50	51	43	51	57	84	88	91
Hispanic	5	6	15	13	11	11	5	10	9
Asian	2	4	8	6	6	7	2	12	2
Native-Am.	3	1	1	0	0	0	2	2	2
Multiracial	4	9	18	23	17	11	42	6	4
Not Listed	0	0	0	7	16	7	0	0	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>2120</b>	<b>2454</b>	<b>2969</b>	<b>3419</b>	<b>3632</b>	<b>3755</b>	<b>3250</b>	<b>3180</b>	<b>2594</b>

Table 3: Pell Recipient and Adult Learners by Incoming Freshmen Cohort

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Enrolled Cohort	319	515	720	1071	1030	869	1063	669	538	224
Pell Recipients	190	335	503	742	761	709	893	563	435	187
Pell Recipients (%)	59.6	65.0	69.9	69.3	73.9	81.6	84.0	84.2	80.9	83.5
Adult Learners	10	26	26	22	44	49	48	19	10	11
Adult Learners (%)	3.13	5.05	3.61	2.05	4.27	5.64	4.52	2.84	1.86	4.9

Table 4: Learning Support versus Non-Learning Support by incoming Freshmen Cohort completion

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Enrolled Cohort	457	319	515	720	1071	1030	869	1063
<b>4-year completion</b>								
Learning Support	18	15	15	16	25	29	19	16
Learning Support (%)	9.3	9.0	5.8	4.6	4.7	5.5	3.9	2.5
Non-Learning Support	48	29	28	27	72	82	37	50
Non-Learning Support (%)	18.2	19.0	10.9	7.3	13.3	16.3	9.7	11.9
<b>5-year completion</b>								
Learning Support	38	37	45	59	93	84	72	
Learning Support (%)	19.7	22.3	17.5	17.0	17.6	15.9	14.8	
Non-Learning Support	82	50	55	77	155	139	81	
Non-Learning Support (%)	31.7	32.7	21.3	20.7	28.6	27.7	21.2	
<b>6-year completion</b>								
Learning Support	54	49	68	86	128	119		
Learning Support (%)	28.0	29.5	26.5	24.7	24.2	22.5		
Non-Learning Support	106	57	76	115	199	176		
Non-Learning Support (%)	40.2	37.3	29.5	30.9	36.7	35.1		

**INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS, HIGH IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES**

**High Impact Strategy**      **Pre-College Academy:** Students formerly rejected for admission to FVSU, but who met the program’s minimum criteria, were invited to attend a five-week, intensive program designed to fortify their skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. Based on their successful completion of this program, they were admitted to the University the following semester.

**Concept:** The Pre-College Academy is designed to assist in the transition from high school and college. It is an opportunity to offer the university experience to students who, otherwise, might not receive admission. This highly concentrated program of study offers strengthening of basic skills in an on-campus environment which can lead to admission into the FVSU University College. Its mission is to increase the skill levels of selected high school graduates in mathematics, reading, and English; to increase students’ motivation to pursue college careers; and to enhance students’ perceptions of the value of attending college. In addition, the Pre-College Academy at FVSU will ensure that students will meet FVSU’s admission standards and are adequately prepared for the rigors of the academic curricula prior to being enrolled. The program will serve as a pipeline for admission to FVSU for students who successfully complete the program.

**Identification, Analysis, and Prescription:** The Office of Admissions at Fort Valley State University identifies all applicants who meet the following criteria: SAT Math 310 (ACT 14) and SAT Verbal 350 (ACT 13) and a high school GPA of 2.2 or above. By invitation, they are invited to campus to participate in the five-week program during which an analysis is conducted of the participants’ reading, writing and mathematics deficiencies, classes are tailored to the needs of participants, and tutoring and Supplemental Instruction are designed to address weaknesses.

**Coordinated Activities:** For a five-week period, program participants will attend classes in three subjects, reading, English, and mathematics. Each class will meet one hour and fifteen minutes per day, Monday through Thursday. Study sessions are also planned for evenings and throughout the day. Fridays will expose students to University Orientation where they will learn the basics needed for successful navigation of a college career. Weekends are devoted to recreational, cultural, and professional development activities.

**Metrics to be Utilized:** The impact of the program will be measured by test scores and perception surveys, designed to assess progress toward the program’s purpose. Pre- and post-tests will be administered to determine outcomes students have mastered before and after instruction. Course-embedded assessments in math modeling, reading and writing will be used to assess the students’ achievement in the various subject areas. Also, perception surveys utilizing quantitative and qualitative measures will be utilized to

	<p>measure students' awareness of higher education opportunities both before and after participation in the program.</p> <p>Assessment and Anticipated Outcomes: Successful performance in the three courses will be measured by course-embedded assessments. Pre- and post-testing will allow assessment of the increases in reading ability related to the program. It is anticipated at least 75% of the students will successfully complete the course and will, therefore, be able to qualify for admission to FVSU in it University College program.</p>
Related Goal	<p><b>Goal 1:</b> Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.  <b>Goal 2:</b> Increase the number of degrees that are earned "on time" (associate degrees in 2 years, bachelor's degrees in 4 years).  <b>Goal 9:</b> Increase Access for underserved and/or priority communities.</p>
Summary of Activities	<p>The program has been implemented and is currently preparing for the third cohort of students. The first cohort of students enrolled at FVSU at the rate of 89.3 %.( 25 students) Moreover, their retention rate from Spring 2015 to Fall 2015 was 96 %( 24 students). The program was held in the Fall of 2014, which means these participants enrolled at FVSU in Spring 2015. Cohort #2 started in the Summer of 2015 and 100% (21 Students) of them enrolled at FVSU in Fall 2015. Approximately 98 % of cohort members improved in each area (Math Reading, and Writing on the Compass Placement exam. FVSU believes that these participants will have a better chance of graduating.</p>
Baseline Status	<p>24.2% of underprepared students graduate from FVSU in six years.</p>
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>Increase the success of students who are underprepared by 5% over the next three years.</p>
Measures of Success	<p>Increase the success of students who are underprepared by 5% over the next three years. The outcome will be assessed based on retention and graduation rates of this population. Additionally, formative evaluations will be conducted annually by reviewing the course completion rates of this population.</p>
Lessons Learned/challenges	<p>The challenges that were encountered were mainly centered on the lack of funds. A budget must be allocated for this important initiative. The program does work and FVSU must decide which initiatives are accomplishing outlined goals and objectives and then fund them adequately. Also, the ability to admit more students into this program would enhance our opportunity to increase the number of undergraduate degrees at FVSU immensely.</p>
High Impact Strategy	<p><b>Expand Adult Learning Opportunities:</b> FVSU Expanded efforts to identify needs and increase access to FVSU programs and degree completion for adults returning to college, active military, and current student veterans to include creating additional assessment, planning, and intentional programs and services as needed.</p>
Related Goal	<p><b>Goal 9:</b> Increase Access for underserved and/or priority communities.</p>
Summary of Activities	<p>FVSU Created a virtual one-stop-shop for military students and online students, to include admissions, registration, advisement, graduation applications, and financial aid counseling. Also, through Advance2Go, a project funded by the Adult Learning Consortium, FVSU provides assessment, competency-based introduction in math, reading, and writing skills in preparation for the COMPASS exam, support and instruction in learning and personal strategies, career counseling, and Prior Learning Assessment evaluation. Advance2Go includes marketing to and identification of adults who may benefit from the program as they begin or reenter college. Additionally, FVSU launched the "Recruitback" program. The program targeted over 10,000 former students who had "dropped" or "stopped" out by sending them info on what it took to get reenrolled at FVSU. This effort netted approximately 139 students. Intrusive advising and academic support were provided to these students. FVSU will track these students and monitor their success rates. The Recruitback program will be duplicated and all persons who didn't respond will be contacted again as life situations might have changed .Next, a position was developed and assigned to maintain records of students with potential to earn credit through Prior Learning Assessment and enlist faculty support to offer PLA opportunities to adult learners and military. Hiring of a military liaison/resource center coordinator has been requested to implement one-stop process. The VA certifying official is responding to active military recruits who indicate an interest in FVSU through CONAP immediately. The VA certifying official is completing transfer of credit forms based on the ACE Guide and forwarding these to departments where veterans have chosen to major so veterans can receive academic credit they are entitled.</p>
Baseline Status	<p>Currently, Adult students make up 4.9% (2014) of the first-time freshmen student enrollment along with Adult students comprising of 1.3% of first-time freshmen online students. The Adult student population graduates at rate of 27.3%. The Total Online</p>

	population makes up 2.7% of the first-time freshmen enrollment.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	Increase the enrollment and graduation rates of adult students by 5% over the next three years.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Increase Graduation and retention rates of this population by 5% over the next three years. Also as an indirect assessment, the institution is collecting survey data from this population that provides the perceptions of FVSU from the students.
<b>Lessons Learned/Challenges</b>	FVSU has experienced a remarkable amount of turnover and leadership changes. As this turnover is reduced, this initiative will flourish even more. Again, budget issues are of concern. Title III has been helpful and the Advance2Go grant helped to offset some cost; however, much more funds are needed.
<b>High Impact Strategy</b>	<b>Use Data Analytics:</b> FVSU is using data analytics to better inform decision makers on campus. The beginning phases of this effort started with just using SPSS and Excel but it is quickly grown to using Tableau, data visualization software, and currently there is a proposal to purchase EAB Student Success Collaborative, which will give FVSU access to Grades First as well. This initiative will allow FVSU to use predictive analytics to identify students who are “off track” and to help them understand their likelihood of success in programs and to ensure students who are off track receive timely and targeted advising intervention. Georgia State University seems to be the leading entity to try this collaborative in the State of Georgia and they have proven the collaborative works. Columbus State University and Savannah State University have come on board as well and now FVSU is moving in this direction if the funding is available.
<b>Related Goal</b>	<b>Goal 4:</b> Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate
<b>Summary of Activities</b>	The Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness has been using Tableau to better prepare data visualizations and providing data dashboards to key decision makers. This level of access to data has increased the culture of data driven decisions being made on the campus. Additionally, weekly data reports are being developed to help contextualize key data for the institution. The end game is better decision making. A proposal has been submitted to the Title III Administrator for the purchase of the EAB Student Success Collaborative. EAB Student Success Collaborative (SSC) combines technology, consulting, and best practice research to help colleges and universities use data to improve retention and graduation rates. At the core of SSC is a proprietary predictive model that identifies at-risk students as well as an analytics engine that isolates systemic barriers to degree completion. To complement the predictive model, SSC provides advisors and other student success specialists with powerful communication and workflow tools to transform insight to action and administrators with customized change management guidance to support institutional transformation. Also, Accutrac is being used to monitor students as they utilize the academic support services around the campus. It is being used to keep up with student contacts as FVSU begins to identify areas of support that have a correlation with overall student success. This feature will work well with EAB Student Success Collaborative as we enhance our Predictive Analysis capabilities. The audience for these data consists of Key Stakeholders including President’s Cabinet members and other frontline decision makers.
<b>Baseline Status</b>	Limited Predictive Modeling taking place initially, this only includes the manual process of using SPSS and Excel. The Retention Rate at FVSU is 56.7% and the six-year graduation rate is approximately 28.5%.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	Data driven decisions being made based on data reports. 90% of the President’s Cabinet members will state on the Administrative Survey that decisions being made are based on relevant data. 85% of at risk students who are enrolled at FVSU will be identified and advised by Retention Specialists. Retention and graduation rates at FVSU will increase by 5%.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Indirect Assessments to include surveys and an increase in graduation, retention, and course completion rates.
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	Funding is needed to move this initiative forward. Title III has been instrumental in moving these efforts forward and FVSU is currently deciding on the EAB Student Success Collaboration. The timeline for this is before the end of Fiscal Year 2016. Training sessions for Tableau and EAB (when we receive it) will be scheduled asap. The Tableau rollout has happened and three sessions with Dean’s at FVSU have been facilitated.
<b>High Impact Strategy</b>	<b>Intrusive Financial Aid Advising:</b> Identify and implement initiatives to address financial needs of students from these populations in a timely fashion. Proposed efforts will include seeking external funds for more scholarships, changing policies on campus, and providing financial literacy education. All students will receive the financial literacy courses during their first semester at FVSU.

<b>Related Goal</b>	<b>Goal 4:</b> Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate.
<b>Summary of Activities</b>	The reorganization of the Office of Financial Aid, to include the addition of a Banner Systems Analyst, has resulted in the development of a proper business plan for Financial Aid operations. This includes the timely notification of students who have been selected for verification; placed on SAP dismissal, need to submit missing documentation, etc. The University has contracted with a default management firm to provide financial literacy education to students and their parents and to decrease the FVSU Cohort Default Rate. The Office of Institutional Research Planning and Effectiveness worked to develop flow charts to outline Financial Aid Processes. This was done to identify gaps in the processes that could cause conflicts with students completing the overall process in a timely manner. Additionally, this will aid the department in identifying issues for the non-traditional students in the educational pipeline as well.
<b>Baseline Status</b>	Eighty-Three Percent (83.5%) of FVSU students receive Pell Grants and 92.6% of students receive some type of loan. Thirty-Seven Percent (37.3%) of the enrolled population was considered paid on the first day of class.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	Enhance the effectiveness of the Financial Aid Office and the processes involved with getting students in the paid category prior to class starting in the Fall Semester by 30%.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Sixty-Seven Percent (67%) of enrolled students on the first day of class will be in the paid category and their accounts satisfied. Additionally, students will continue to provide their perceptions of the effectiveness of the Financial Aid office through the FVSU Listens Survey and the Student Satisfaction Survey. At least 85% of students surveyed will state that they are satisfied or above-satisfied with the effectiveness of the Financial Aid Office.
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	Many technology lessons have been learned as FVSU has transformed its processes to eliminate long lines and frustrated students. Retention is impacted by financial aid especially at FVSU where a high number of our students receive some type of financial aid. With this in mind, a new Vice President of Student Success and a new Director of Financial Aid were hired and many of the challenges are being eliminated.
<b>High Impact Strategy</b>	<b>Intrusive Advising:</b> Provide customized academic support services to students on academic probation and academic warning, as well as those on warning for violating Standard Academic Performance (SAP) requirements. FVSU has developed proactive and intrusive intervention strategies.
<b>Related Goal</b>	<b>Goal 1:</b> Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions. <b>Goal 4:</b> Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate.
<b>Summary of Activities</b>	New advisors are being hired along with a new Director of the Center for Retention Services. Advisement for freshmen and sophomores is done in the Academic Advising Center. Faculty representatives advise juniors and seniors. Both groups of advisors monitor all students that are assigned to them. In addition, a limited number of faculty members were assigned to work within the Center for Retention Services to assist with advising of freshmen and sophomores students, especially during peak periods. An advisement manual was prepared; advisors are being trained with materials from NACADA (National Academic Advisement Association) and advisors have attended the national conference for professional development. October has been designated as Advising Month and advisement information sessions have been developed. Registration and Post-Registration follow-up meetings are now mandated with spring semester following a similar plan. Also, Retention Specialists are assigned to students on Academic Probation, Academic Warning, and SAP violators. Each time these students see their Retention Specialist; they must see their Academic Advisor. Advisors will assist with assigning Tutorial Services and monitoring their attendance with tutorials. Students must attend tutorials at least 10 times during the semester. These students must develop Academic Improvement Plans and are placed on an academic contract to hold students accountable. Additionally, students meet with Retention Specialists bi-weekly to discuss improving academically and developing appropriate academic behaviors. Credit
<b>Baseline Status</b>	Eighty-percent (80.2%) of credits attempted were successfully completed.
<b>Interim Measures of Progress</b>	Increase the percentage of credits successfully completed by 5%.
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Increase the percentage of credits successfully completed by 5%. This direct assessment will incorporate an analysis of Passed courses (A, B, C, and S) versus attempted courses (D, F, W, WF, and U). Additionally students will continue to have an opportunity to provide their perceptions of the effectiveness of the advising center and the team of retention specialists through student satisfaction surveys. Also, Student Credit hour attainment will be tracked.
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	Four years ago FVSU, as a cost saving strategy, decentralized the advising process. This

decentralization of these services transferred all advising duties to faculty members at FVSU. This strategy was not successful as the implementation of the strategy was not well planned and many students did not understand the new approach especially new students. As this decentralization has now been reversed, the issue of funding has become very prevalent; however, funds have been allocated to reengineer the advisement process and a new Advising center has been established. New positions have been posted and the interviewing process has begun to fill positions.

## **BRIEF OBSERVATIONS:**

Fort Valley State University has had success in the shift of culture as it relates to being cognizant of retention, progression, and graduation efforts as evidenced by the latest retention rate of 76.8%. This effort has been assisted by an infusion of direction and intentional efforts of the Past President, Dr. Ivelaw L. Griffith and the current Interim President, Dr. Jessica Bailey. Dr. Bailey has been very instrumental in the recent success of the retention/graduation initiatives. She organized strategic meetings to deal with issues to include enrollment management, collaboration/partnership development, special populations' recruitment and adult/military student populations.

The activities that have been most successful and unsuccessful are identified as follows:

Reengineering the Advising Process has been a successful strategy as this transformation has allowed FVSU students and campus stakeholders to know where the process emanates and who is responsible for this important retention initiative. Also, with this change the "15 to Finish" model can be employed and monitored to ensure success. Additionally, now the model includes a partnership with Faculty and Professional Advisors, which promote stronger communication and less students falling through the cracks.

The development of the new Center for Retention Services has allowed for a great working collaboration for student success as Academic Advising and the Retention Specialist work as an extension of each other. This working relationship includes the advisement center creating the right road map for success and the Retention Specialists in the Center for Retention Services ensuring that the students are doing the things that are needed to be successful. These intrusive advisors monitor student attendance, student engagement, and instruct Freshmen Orientation courses as most student attrition occurs during the freshmen year at FVSU. Moreover, FVSU has developed a partnership with AVID for Higher Education. AVID collaborates with institutions of Higher Education to systematically address the goals of increased learning, persistence, completion, and success beyond college. AVID supports students in their efforts to earn a college degree and/ or certificate by developing and strengthening academic skills and personal development.

The Pre-College Academy Numbers are very positive as aforementioned.

Fort Valley State University has not been successful at providing additional scholarship funds for low income and first generation populations. Scholarships have been a major point of contention as the institution is not in a position to increase the amount of scholarships awarded.

FVSU employed a working group for Financial Aid processes and the entire process was mapped out and new processes and deadlines were established. However, FVSU still encounters problems with technology and infrastructure in regards to processing and eliminating/reducing lines and other obstacles. Many of the past problems were attributable to personnel. A new Financial Aid Director has been hired.

Purchasing a learning analytic system has been a part of the FVSU plan; however it has not been completed. The FVSU team has been looking to find an affordable solution. Leaders visited Georgia State University and received instruction and demonstrations of the learning analytics they have in place; however, the cost has been prohibitive. Currently, Tableau is being sampled in order to see if it can be used as a work around until the funds are available purchase a data analytic tool. Additionally, in house work has been initiated to develop data dashboards as a quick and accurate method to share data with key internal stakeholders. Fort Valley State University must purchase the tool from the Educational Advisory Board and make data analytics a part of the progressive culture of the institution.

FVSU reengineered its version of the Complete College Georgia Plan approximately two year ago as leaders realized that the first version had been completed in a silo. Many stakeholders shared with new leaders on the campus the fact they didn't know what the plan consisted of and didn't know whether the plan was doable or matched the needs of the institution. A committee was then established and a change process that included having a diverse representation of stakeholders involved. Additionally, the team did not believe the plan was measureable and in some instances achievable. From the involvement and participation of the Deans Council and President Cabinet, a new plan was devised. This plan is the current version of the activities of the CCG plan at FVSU.