



College of Coastal Georgia

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Provide a brief overview of your institutional mission and student body profile. Please briefly describe how enrollment trends, demographics (for example, % Pell grant-eligible, % first-generation college students, % adult learners), and how your institutional mission influences your completion work's key priorities.

MISSION STATEMENT

Revised and approved in November 2015, the CCGA mission statement reads as follows:

As a state college of the University System of Georgia, the College of Coastal Georgia will be a college of choice for residents of Georgia and beyond by providing an accessible and affordable quality education. Advocating excellence in scholarship and community engagement, the College promotes student progression and timely graduation through student-centered programs that offer a rich and diverse student experience. Students are prepared for meaningful careers, advanced study, lifelong learning, and participation in a global and technological society. The institution will provide associate and baccalaureate degrees that support the intellectual, economic and cultural needs of the community and region.

This mission statement is fully aligned with the University System of Georgia's (USG) mission, it represents the core principles and unique institutional characteristics of a state college, and it is accentuated by strong leadership, worthwhile community linkages and exemplary student development. Further, the new mission statement effectively infuses the College's new strategic framework that is structured around five central themes: Student Enrichment, Academic Excellence, Institutional Distinction, Leadership through Community Engagement & Partnerships, and Sustainability & Organizational Development. And, finally, the revised mission underscores the College's sustained commitment to community engagement that encompasses service-learning, volunteerism, practicums, and internships, contributing to the cultural, economic and social well-being of the local community, southeast Georgia and beyond.

FALL 2016 STUDENT PROFILE [\[1\]](#)

The College of Coastal Georgia experienced 12.7% and 11.2% increases in its fall 2016 enrollment and FTE, respectively, with an enrollment of 3,529 students and FTE of 2,971. In terms of self-declared race/ethnicity, 6.0% identified as Hispanic/Latino, 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.6% Asian, 18.9% Black or African American, 0.1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 66.3% White, 4.4% two or more races, and 2.6% undeclared.

With an average age of 24.2, the College's student body is composed of 65.8% female and 61.3% full-time students with 91.0% indicating Georgia residency, 7.9% out-of-state, and 1.1% out-of-country.

First-generation students account for 19.7% of new enrollment, while adult learners (25 years of age or older) and military/veterans account for 26.2% and 16.0%, respectively, of the total student body. Pell recipients account for 38.0% of students, while Move on When Ready (dual-enrolled) students total 304, or a 49.7% increase compared to fall 2015.

Over the past four years, the College has built the needed structure to expand the incoming freshman class while maintaining retention. In fall 2016, the overall enrollment increased by 12.7% to 3529 with a 19.8% increase in beginning freshmen and a 19.3% overall increase in new student enrollments compared to fall 2015, while students classified as juniors and seniors increased by 10.7% and 6.9%, respectively. Given current new enrollment trends and the retention and progression of the College's current enrollment, the College is projected to increase by 3% for fall 2017.

INFLUENCE ON COMPLETION WORK

CCGA's institutional mission is a beacon that guides its completion priorities. First, by providing access and affordability, CCGA addresses the needs of the region and is particularly impactful for communities that are traditionally underserved in postsecondary education. Secondly, the College promotes student progression and timely graduation by expanding and improving retention systems and instructional delivery to support student success. Finally, by increasing student campus and community engagement, the institution prepares students to engage in meaningful careers and satisfy the economic and cultural needs of the community and the region.

To ensure the College maintains a strong focus on the alignment of the institutional goals and strategies with the college completion plan of the state, a Complete College CCGA Task Force has been appointed. The charge of this task force is to evaluate, identify, implement, and monitor high-impact strategies and activities that increase retention, progression and graduation rates.

The strategies identified in Section 2 are just a subset of the many institutional initiatives that are part of the College’s completion efforts; however, it is important to recognize that the College needs to be flexible to effectively engage the variety of learners it serves, particularly adult learners, military students/veterans, under-represented populations, at-risk, first generation, and dual enrolled (Move-On-When-Ready) students. As an example of these targeted efforts, the College has initiated several key strategies and initiatives that are positively impacting military student/veterans’ academic success. An Office of Adult Learners and Military/Veteran Students was established to provide a one-stop source of information and student support; an informative and interactive web page is being maintained, highlighting services and support provided for military/veteran students; and military/veterans’ lounges were added on the Brunswick campus and at the Camden Center to provide a central location for military students/veterans to study and socialize. These efforts have resulted in an increase of 117% in our military affiliated student population from 241 in 2013 to 523 in 2016. Additionally, CCGA collaborated with the USG Director of Military Affairs at the Board of Regents in developing a Military Students/Veterans’ Online Survey to identify particular initiatives and best practices being employed to better address military and veteran student campus needs.

With a strong emphasis on the institutional mission, the alignment of the selected high-impact strategies of section 2 can be categorized thematically as follows: access and affordability is addressed in strategies 2, 4, 5, and 6; promoting progression and timely graduation is addressed in strategies 1, 3, 4, and 5; and finally campus and community engagement which is addressed in strategies 2 and 4.

INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS, HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Based on your review of data on completion indicators, your institutional mission, and the resources available, please identify and report on your institution’s high priority, high impact strategies. The strategies and goals you select to highlight should emerge from Part I: Campus Plan Strategy Guide and Metric Survey.

High-impact strategy (1)	Mariner Milestone Initiative: Celebration of important educational milestones in the student life-cycle.
Related Goal	<p>CCG Goal 1: Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.</p> <p>CCG Goal 5: Award degrees to students who may have already met requirements for associates degrees via courses taken at one or more institutions.</p> <p>Institutional Goal A1: Enhance opportunities for student engagement by providing an educational, inclusive and socially responsible learning community within the College and beyond.</p>
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	This important initiative is meant to signify and celebrate important time periods in the life cycle of a college student, particularly students that initially intend to complete a baccalaureate degree. Creating and encouraging the completion of milestone markers (i.e., one-year Certificate, Associate’s degree) has the potential to encourage students to continue on and provide a tangible credential in case they discontinue their studies prior to completing a baccalaureate degree.
Primary Point of Contact	German Vargas, Assistant Vice President for Academic Student Engagement, gvargas@ccga.edu
Summary of Activities	In alignment with CCG Goals 1 and 5, the Mariner Milestone Initiative is already in action and after a thorough audit of all students with 60 or more credits during fall 2015, spring 2016, and summer 2016, 159 students were identified as eligible to receive an Associate’s degree that had not applied to receive one. This initiative resulted in an additional 126 students receiving an Associate’s degree during the spring 2016 Mariner Milestone ceremony and 33 during the summer ceremony. Although the initiative started with the award of Associate’s degree, the College has now received approval from the USG to also award a Liberal Arts First Year Certificate and a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) first-year certificate, and these certificates will be awarded in addition to the Associate’s degrees after the 2016-2017 academic year.

Measures of Progress and Success	
Measure, metric, or data element	Number of Associate’s Degrees awarded for students that are in baccalaureate programs.
Baseline measures	The students identified as eligible for an Associate’s degree under the Mariner Milestone Initiative were students that were not applying for a degree, and therefore the baseline for this particular initiative would have been zero as these students were not planning to receive a degree.
Interim Measures of Progress	Beyond the increase in the number of Associate’s degrees awarded, the Mariner Milestone initiative is aimed at rewarding progression by giving the students something tangible that reflects their accomplishments, while at the same time and promoting retention.
Measures of Success	Number of students receiving an Associate’s Degree that would not have otherwise applied for one = 151 (2015-1016 academic year)
Lessons Learned	As the College performs additional thorough degree audits, this presents an increased level of upkeep in particular for the first-year certificates. The institution needs to develop a procedure that will allow it to identify those students eligible for the first-year certificates that will be effective, efficient, and sustainable.

High-impact strategy (2)	Adult Learner Pathway: Increase access and completion for adult learners.
Related Goal	<p>CCG Goal 1: Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.</p> <p>CCG Goal 9: Increase Access for underserved and/or priority communities.</p> <p>Institutional Goal A1: Enhance opportunities for student engagement by providing an educational, inclusive and socially responsible learning community within the College and beyond</p>
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	<p>In an attempt to encourage greater access and post-secondary participation and baccalaureate degree attainment, the College of Coastal Georgia has created two streamlined pathways of access to ease admission and the transition to entering a degree program. These pathways are designed for all students who have graduated high school or earned a GED but have little or no prior college experience and/or are returning to college after being away several years.</p> <p>The College of Coastal Georgia is committed to reducing the hurdles for students, particularly those that have self-efficacy and test anxiety by streamlining and simplifying the admissions process and assisting students to overcome initial testing hurdles. By creating a short application process and basing Mathematics and Reading/Writing placement on classroom achievement, one-on-one advising, and guided choice, students are able to build their self-efficacy and academic confidence to eventually lead to degree attainment and success.</p>
Primary Point of Contact	<p>Jason Umfress, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, jumfress@ccga.edu</p> <p>Kimberly Burgess, Admissions Counselor: Adult, Military, and Transfer Students, kburges@ccga.edu</p>
Summary of Activities	Established a personalized enrollment pathway for adult learners. Each student now jointly works with his/her admissions counselor and academic advisor to develop an enrollment pathway. This enrollment plan begins with a counseling session with an adult learner admissions counselor that outlines all possible pathways to establish successful academic and financial plans. The student finishes with a meeting with the academic advisor to work on placement and the first semester schedule.
Measures of Progress and Success	

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Measure, metric, or data element	Preliminary metric associated with access for this traditionally underserved population: Enrollment yield for non-traditional age students (25 and older)
Baseline measures	30.3% (91 out of 300 total applicants enrolled). (fall 13, 14, and 15 combined)
Interim Measures of Progress	The development of this new Adult Learner Pathway has resulted in a substantial increase of registered adult learners. For fall 2016, the number of registered students increased from 29 to 52, a 79.3% increase from the fall 2015.
Measures of Success	Enrollment yield increased to 36.1% (52/144)
Lessons Learned	New approaches and pilots will often result in the disruption of long established traditions and protocols of advising. The College is already experiencing the implications of the new pathways on enrollment trends and now it needs to carefully monitor the efficacy of the pathway and how well students are progressing through the gateway courses.

High-impact strategy (3)	Creation of a new Academic Advising model
Related Goal	CCG Goal 3: Decrease excess credits earned on the path to getting a degree CCG Goal 4: Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate. Institutional Goal A1: Enhance opportunities for student engagement by providing an educational, inclusive and socially responsible learning community within the College and beyond
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	After a thorough evaluation of our academic advising structure, which included the evaluation of feedback from faculty, staff and students, the evaluation of the Regents Advisory Committee on Academic Advising Survey, and following best practices across the nation, the College is implementing a new Academic Advising Model for the 2016-2017 academic year.
Primary Point of Contact	German Vargas, Assistant Vice President for Academic Student Engagement, gvargas@ccga.edu Pat Morris, Lead Academic Advisor, pmorris@ccga.edu
Summary of Activities	In the new model, the College is shifting first-year advising to be handled by the Advising Center using first-year professional advisors. The first-year professional advisors, assigned to a specific department/major, will help students complete a 4-year academic plan, monitor student's academic performance, direct advising when registering and assist in major selection, seek individualized services as needed, and encourage students to engage in the CCGA community. Once the student reaches the 30-plus credit target, primary advising would be transferred to the academic department (faculty advisor). This dual model of advising provides important quality contact with students to help them connect with their classes, their program of study, their faculty, and their end goal for jobs and career.
Measures of Progress and Success	
Measure, metric, or data element	The implementation of this new academic advising model aligns well with many of the strategies associated with CCG Goals 3 and 4, and aligns with our commitment improve retention, progression and graduation rates. In particular, as this first phase of restructuring addresses first-year students, the College will use first-year retention rate (IPEDS definition) as one of the metrics for evaluation
Baseline measures	First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Retention: 55.6% retention from fall 2015-to-fall 2016.

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	Interim Measures of Progress	This is the College’s first semester implementing this new model and now has 4 full-time academic advisors, one Move-On When Ready Academic Advisor, and one part-time academic advisor serving close to 1900 students under 30 credits.
	Measures of Success	First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Retention: Achieve a fall-to-fall retention rate of 62% by fall 2018
Lessons Learned		The feedback collected from previous hybrid and decentralized models of academic advising indicated the need to improve consistency and accountability. The variety of advising models that were being used throughout the different Schools at the College resulted in a marked inequity of the distribution of workload and most importantly a lack of consistency and availability experience by the students.

High-impact strategy (4)	Increase Move On When Ready (MOWR) student outreach to local county school districts.	
Related Goal	CCG Goal 6: Shorten time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school and by awarding credit for prior learning that is verified by appropriate assessment. Institutional Goal A1: Enhance opportunities for student engagement by providing an educational, inclusive and socially responsible learning community within the College and beyond	
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	CCGA’s commitment to the MOWR program was ratified by the appointment of a new MOWR Coordinator. The new coordinator is providing the leadership and support structure to ensure that this growing population is served appropriately.	
Primary Point of Contact	German Vargas, Assistant Vice President for Academic Student Engagement, gvargas@ccga.edu Linny A. Bailey, Academic Advisor/Move On When Ready (MOWR) Coordinator, lbailey@ccga.edu	
Summary of Activities	CCGA continues to expand and enhance the relationship development with high school counselors, locally, regionally and state-wide. Under the leadership of the new MOWR Coordinator, CCGA is hosting annual MOWR breakfasts for all area high school counselors that include Glynn, McIntosh, Camden, Wayne, Brantley Counties as well as area private high schools. The strengthening of the bonds with the school systems in the region is paired with a focused student recruitment plan which is increasing the MOWR student enrollment from area high schools. The institution is offering regular College information programs to continually update guidance counselors on new degree programs, etc.	
Measures of Progress and Success		
Measure, metric, or data element	MOWR enrollment during the fall term	
	Baseline measures	203 MOWR students enrolled in fall 2015; a 43.0% increase from the previous fall semester.
	Interim Measures of Progress	The momentum gained by the MOWR program is well supported by CCGA’s commitment to strengthen the partnerships and collaboration with the regional school systems.
	Measures of Success	304 MOWR students enrolled in fall 2016; a 49.3% increase from the previous fall semester.

Lessons Learned	The State now permits MOWR students to enroll in classes during the summer semester. In anticipation of any challenges created by reduced personnel in the school system during the summer break, CCGA worked closely with local schools to provide all the support necessary to accommodate the enrollment needs of current and future MOWR students.
High-impact strategy (5)	Enroll most students in need of remediation in gateway collegiate courses in English and mathematics, with co-requisite Learning Support.
Related Goal	CCG Goal 7: Increase the likelihood of degree completion by transforming the way that remediation is accomplished. Institutional Goal A1: Enhance opportunities for student engagement by providing an educational, inclusive and socially responsible learning community within the College and beyond
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	In order to promote access while at the same time promoting retention, progression, and graduation, it is imperative that the College has an effective structure to support students who arrive at college with a gap in academic preparation. The College needs to shift its focus, however, from traditional remedial education as a standalone enterprise, and concentrate on supporting students in the credit-bearing collegiate level courses that align well with each individual program of study.
Primary Point of Contact	German Vargas, Assistant Vice President for Academic Student Engagement, gvargas@ccga.edu
Summary of Activities	CCGA has transformed the Learning Support structure by focusing its efforts on co-requisite remediation. For the Area of Mathematics, students that would have been previously placed in MATH 0099 are now enrolled in the gateway Mathematics course appropriate to their programs of study (i.e., Quantitative Reasoning or College Algebra) while taking the linked support course (co-requisite component). The students with a larger gap in preparation (who were previously placed in MATH 0097) are now placed in the LS Foundations course of their year-long pathway. For the area of English, students requiring remediation are now placed in the appropriate collegiate/co-requisite English course (ENGL 1101/0999) or the Foundations for English Composition (ENGL 0989).
Measures of Progress and Success	
Measure, metric, or data element	Success rate of Learning Support students in collegiate level courses.
Baseline measures	The students that are now placed in corequisite remediation would have been traditionally placed in a two-semester sequence of a remedial course followed by a gateway course. The historical success rate through this two-semester sequence was close to 36%.
Interim Measures of Progress	During fall 2016, 83.8% of students requiring remediation in Mathematics and 86.9% of those requiring remediation in English, were placed directly in the gateway course with corequisite support
Measures of Success	70% of the students from fall 2014 through fall 2015 received a grade of C or better in English 1101, 67% in MATH 1001 and 56% in MATH 1111.
Lessons Learned	It is important to note that the rates identified above correspond to the success rate in a single semester of gateway courses paired with corequisite support, while the comparison with traditional remedial sequence would correspond to the success rate after a 2 semester which would yield success rates around 36%. This is evidence that the students are not only succeeding at higher rates, but they are also shortening the time to graduation. However, this still represents a concern, because the institution now has year-long pathways for students with a larger gap in preparation which would traditionally be in a 3-semester sequence, but are still affected by the compound effect of attrition of a longer sequence when compared to corequisite remediation.

	Given the great success of corequisite remediation, the College needs to ensure that it places as many students directly in collegiate level courses with support. This calls for the reevaluation of current placement thresholds for the English Placement Index (EPI) and Math Placement Index (MPI). The College will engage in this probability of success (POS) analysis in spring 2017.
High-impact strategy (6)	Promote access and affordability by adopting low cost and open educational resources in core courses.
Related Goal	CCG Goal 8: Restructure instructional delivery to support educational excellence and student success. Institutional Goal B2: Enhance and promote excellence in scholarship, creativity and teaching
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	With the goal of promoting access and affordability of higher education, the College is committed to adopting open and low cost educational resources as alternatives to high price textbooks, without compromising the standards of the courses.
Primary Point of Contact	German Vargas, Assistant Vice President for Academic Student Engagement, gvargas@ccga.edu
Summary of Activities	With the support of Affordable Learning Georgia, and with institutional support from faculty and administration, the College has now adopted open or low cost educational resources in 12 courses in the core curriculum institution. To further encourage and support the evaluation of new OER alternatives, the Office of Academic Affairs has launched an OER Reviewer initiative, where faculty members receive a small stipend to engage in additional review of OERs.

Measures of Progress and Success	
Measure, metric, or data element	Student savings per year generated by the adoption of open or low cost educational resources.
Baseline measures	After receiving the first at-scale Affordable Learning Georgia grant, CCGA students started saving \$312,000 per year.
Interim Measures of Progress	Since this first ALG grant, which transformed College Algebra, Trigonometry, Precalculus, and Probability and Statistics, the institution has transformed or is in the process of transforming Principles of Macroeconomics, Principles of Microeconomics, Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, Principles of Chemistry I and II, and Organic Chemistry I and II.
Measures of Success	More than \$649,000 in student savings per year by 2017.
Lessons Learned	The institution has received funding from the Affordable Learning Georgia initiative for transformation projects in Mathematics, Chemistry and Psychology. The institution continues to raise awareness regarding the elevated cost of textbooks, and the final goal is to have at least one course in each of the core areas (A through E), allowing students to complete most of their core courses with low or no cost of textbooks.

OBSERVATIONS

What strategies and activities have been most successful? What have been least effective? Has your institution made adjustments completion activities over the past year? If so, please explain why? Looking ahead, do you anticipate changes for next year’s plan? Please briefly describe the direction you think your work will be going in the coming years and why.

Although the strategies shown above have been selected because of their priority or impact, the College of Coastal Georgia has implemented several additional completion strategies that have proven to be successful. A few of them, such as initiating academic success workshops to address personal and academic development issues and provide skills training and support, and expanding Supplemental Instruction (SI) programming and support have been part of the College’s strategic completion approach from the beginning. Others, such as establishing a Prior Learning Assessment process, offering a new Bachelor of Science degree program in Interdisciplinary Studies/Bachelor of Applied Science in Workforce Development and Leadership, and enhancing a comprehensive student worker program, emerged from researching the underlying barriers to student success and have contributed to the design of effective student retention and progression strategies that meet the needs of students.

The Student Entry and Access for Student Traction and Retention (SEASTAR) program has been design to provide greater access to the College of Coastal Georgia for students within the local region. SEASTAR is designed for students meeting the USG standard for entry but falling short of the College’s standard. As part of the program, the College will have students engage in intensive advising, participate in leadership, financial literacy, and study skills coaching by staff and faculty.

The opportunity of a degree with a strong elective component will allow CCGA to promote retention and student success. Additionally, an interdisciplinary studies degree option allows adult learners who have accumulated a number of credit hours, but who are no longer actively pursuing a major, to be able to successfully complete a customizable program and graduate with a degree offering concentrations in communication, business, science, technology, education, social science, and culture, based on existing classes, and consolidating existing programs.

One target population for the BS in Interdisciplinary Studies (BSIS) are current students who have not graduated, have more than 30 earned hours, and their program of study is not at the baccalaureate level. A recent institutional snapshot identified 388 students who fit this profile that included single parents, minorities and non-traditional returning adult students. These students, along with 408 who are either enrolled in the Associate of Science Interdisciplinary Studies pre-major or identified as undecided are a collective population of 796 students that are at-risk for non-completion or slow progression.

To fully participate in the USG goal to respond to Georgia’s need for a more highly qualified and competitive workforce, to serve adult students, veterans, and minorities with some college and no degree, to help CCGA play a strategic role in the “Come back, move ahead” initiative, and to target populations most at-risk for non-completion or slow progression, the BSIS degree program will actively contribute to helping meet the future employment needs of the region by providing an affordable, outstanding education for tomorrow’s leaders and citizens.

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As an interdisciplinary major, students will soon be able to utilize Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) to help them clarify educational goals and through this transformative experience feel more confident in finishing their degree in a timely manner. PLA will offer adult learners a range of options from recognition of military and workforce schooling to portfolio development. By awarding college credit for learning that has taken place in the workplace or through other life experiences, CCGA will help ease the return to postsecondary by connecting adult learners' college-level competencies gained in the workplace with their academic degree program.

The retention and progression priority is embedded in everything the College is engaged in, including performance reviews, annual reports and budget reviews. The focus is to create a learning-centered environment for traditional, adult, first-generation, and military/veteran students that will increase student learning, promote student progression and, ultimately, lead to improved graduation rates. The College believes its student progression metrics, standards and retention/graduation strategies are clear evidence of those expectations and a strong foundational commitment to growing enrollment and focusing on graduation with distinction as the overarching campus priorities.

[1] Based on USG Preliminary Student Enrollment Report data for fall 2016.