



OVERVIEW: INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

The University of Georgia a public, research, land- and sea-grant institution with statewide commitments and responsibilities. It is the state's oldest, most comprehensive and most diversified institution of higher education with more than 10,000 faculty and staff members, over 36,000 students (undergraduate, graduate and professional) enrolled in 17 schools or colleges, and a history of more than 200 years of teaching, research and service. Its motto—"to teach, to serve and to inquire into the nature of things"—reflects the University of Georgia's integral role in the conservation and enhancement of the state's and the nation's intellectual, cultural and environmental heritage. According to its mission statement, the University of Georgia endeavors to prepare the University community and the state for full participation in the global society of the twenty-first century. Through its programs and practices, it seeks to foster the understanding of and respect for cultural differences necessary for an enlightened and educated citizenry. It further provides for cultural, ethnic, gender, and racial diversity in the faculty, staff, and student body and is committed to preparing the University community to appreciate the critical importance of a quality environment to an interdependent global society. The University espouses a dedication to excellence in research, scholarship, and creative endeavors, to teaching and learning, to serving a diverse student body and to promoting student success.

With over 146 undergraduate majors, 98 undergraduate and graduate certificates, and 257 graduate programs, there is no single student profile at the University of Georgia. Rather the institution is a rich tapestry of diverse students with widely varying backgrounds, interests, experiences and challenges. In fall 2015, the University of Georgia undergraduate population numbered 27,547 students; 94% of those undergraduates were enrolled full time, 43% were male and 28% were of racial/ethnic minority status. In 2015, the University of Georgia conferred 6,935 bachelor's degrees. The typical UGA undergraduate is of traditional age (≤ 24 years), enters as a first year student, lives on campus for the first year, and is seeking a first undergraduate degree. In addition to its undergraduate population, 6,974 graduate students and 1,609 professional students enrolled at the University of Georgia in fall 2015.

The University of Georgia is a highly selective school with an academically well-prepared undergraduate student population. The cohort that matriculated in fall 2015 had a mean SAT score of 1913 and high school GPA of 3.91. The class was 87% in-state, and 30% of the students self-identified as non-Caucasian (7.6% African-American, 12.4% Asian, 5.7% Hispanic and 5.1% other). The class also included first generation students (6%), Pell recipients (19.1%) and students from families where English is not the first language (almost 7%). The figures for the 2016 cohort of full-time first-time freshmen are academically very similar and slightly more diverse with 31% of the class self-identifying as non-Caucasian (8.4% African-American, 13.6% Asian, 5.8% Hispanic and 3.3% other) and 6.5% coming from families where English is not the first language.

All of the University of Georgia's Complete College Georgia goals are aimed at improving retention and graduation rates, with particular attention on increasing the four-year graduation rate from 62.5% to 68% by the year 2020.¹ Data show an upward trajectory in both of these metrics over the last two years. First-year retention continues to be very strong; it had been holding steady around 94% since 2008.² and is now 95.2% for both the 2014 and the 2015 cohorts. This year our four-year completion rate improved by over 3%, rising from 62.7% for 2011 cohort to 66.1% for the 2012 cohort.

Also worth noting are our first-year retention rates and six-year completion rates for underrepresented populations. For example, the first-year retention rate for Black/African-American students in the 2015 cohort (95.9%) exceeds that for the student population as a whole (95.2%) while the six-year graduation rate for all Hispanic students in the 2010 cohort (86.9%) exceeds that of the population as a whole (84.3%, see Table 3). Indeed, the rates for women are particularly strong:

¹ This 68% four-year graduation rate represents the average of our aspirational institutions for the 2007 cohort.

² The rate varied from 94.5% for the 2008 cohort to 94.2% for the 2013 cohort; see Table 2.

	Four-year completion rate	Six-year completion rate
Asian women	64.7%	83.8%
Black/African-American women	72.4%	82.8%
Hispanic women	69.4%	87.2%
Women of all races/ethnicities	73.8%	85.4%

The University of Georgia continues to invest in faculty, staff and innovative programs to ensure that our students have an unparalleled learning experience; this upward trend in first-year retention and four-year completion rates show that these investments are having a positive impact on student success. Indeed, in the fall 2016 U.S. News & World Report’s “Best Colleges” edition the University of Georgia is ranked 18th (up from 21st) among public universities.

The University of Georgia has a high performing and academically strong student body and supports students with a number of high impact programs that affect student success. These programs include our very successful First Year Odyssey Seminar program required of all first-year students, first-year learning communities, undergraduate research opportunities, study abroad programs, internships and service learning courses. For example, undergraduate research is sponsored by the Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities (CURO); although the CURO office is housed within the Honors College, all University of Georgia undergraduates—including students in their first year—have the opportunity to engage in faculty-mentored research regardless of discipline, major or GPA. Through the CURO program, undergraduates may also submit their research to the *Journal for Undergraduate Research* which publishes original research papers in the areas of humanities, social sciences, sciences, and policy as well as art-related content. More and more students are taking advantage of the opportunity to conduct original research through the CURO program; indeed, in the 2014-15 academic year, 488 unique students completed 704 CURO courses with 302 faculty members from 83 academic departments. In addition, in Fall 2016 the University of Georgia became the largest institution in the country to require that all undergraduates engage in experiential learning before graduation. By ensuring that every undergraduate benefits from hands-on learning, this requirement will foster deeper engagement of students within and beyond the classroom; in addition, the personalized mentoring that students receive through Experiential Learning will strengthen student-faculty relationships. Engaged learning and connection to faculty have been shown to improve student outcomes, and we expect that this requirement will have a positive effect on retention and completion, as well as satisfaction and promising career outcomes for University of Georgia students in the years to come. With the implementation of the Experiential Learning transcript, which will aggregate all of a student’s experiential activities within and beyond the classroom, students will have a robust and meaningful tool to help them articulate how their Experiential Learning portfolio integrates their university experience and propels them into their postgraduate endeavors.

We know that courses and programs that engage students help keep them on track for completion and make them more likely to be successful. To take one example, in the 2016 spring semester 2,483 individual undergraduate students took a course with a service learning component, and 277 of them took more than one service learning course; that same semester, 79.3% of those students who responded to a survey reported that the service-learning component of the course positively influenced their intention to complete their degree (see Table 7). Similarly, our Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) supports an open educational resources program for classes that have large enrollments and use expensive textbooks; CTL also holds workshops to help faculty design or redesign courses to include high impact strategies such as flipped and blended classrooms, “Reacting to the Past” pedagogy, active learning, and problem-based learning (see Appendix B). In the 2015-16 academic year, the University of Georgia also took the unprecedented step of making an initial investment of \$4.4 million to reduce class sizes by hiring faculty and creating more than 300 new course sections in 81 majors across campus; these new course sections fall into three large categories: 1) high-demand courses in growing fields such as engineering, business and public health, 2) courses that historically have high failure rates and 3) “bottleneck” courses. We do not yet have data to know what impact this initiative is having on retention and completion but will be tracking it for future reports.

The University of Georgia is continuing to focus on improving advising for all undergraduate students. In FY15, the University added 25 professional advisors to its advising corps and 10 more in FY 2016. All of the schools and colleges that serve undergraduate students now have professional academic advisors working with their students and all have adopted a more centralized advising model to keep each student, whenever possible, with the same academic advisor throughout their undergraduate career. To help students find a major that is a good fit for their talents and aspirations, we opened the Exploratory Center in August 2016. In addition to advising students with intended-business and intended-journalism majors, the Center advises all students with unspecified majors. Advisors in the Exploratory Center work one-on-one with students who have not yet selected a major, are having trouble selecting a major or feel they are in the wrong major and need help selecting a major and a career path that aligns with their interests and skills. In addition, we are developing meta-majors, tracks or pathways that cluster a number of academic majors with common or related content that are aligned with potential academic and career goals. Such tracks, when completed and made available to students, will ease students into selecting the appropriate major by providing broad pathways that they can then narrow down, based on their interests, knowledge, skills, abilities and career goals. The creation of a meta-major program presents an opportunity to design a holistic education that addresses all domains of learning from day one and University of Georgia

takes the student through an informed, natural process of narrowing interests to help students clarify their goals and interests, narrow down their major choice and take advantage of every educational opportunity open to them at the institution and in the community. The meta-major—as we are defining it at the University of Georgia—is not simply a list of majors with similar core requirements. Rather it reflects a community of engaged learners, advisors, faculty and support personnel who work in concert with one another in ways that lead a student to in-depth specialization while taking advantage of practical and scholarly experiences along the way. Success will be measured by rates in the numbers and timing of selecting and changing a major, time to degree, direct observation and evidence such as student focus groups and exit interviews.

The University of Georgia’s completion strategy combines programs targeted to specific populations as well as those that impact the entire undergraduate population. Our completion strategies were implemented with our high performing, academically strong student body in mind—to challenge, engage and support students on their way to timely completion.

INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The University of Georgia is pursuing the following *Complete College Georgia* goals:

Goal 1: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.

Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned on time.

Goal 4: Provide targeted, pro-active advising to keep students on track to completion.

Goal 8: Restructure instructional delivery to support educational excellence and promote student success.

Goal 9: Improve access for underserved communities.

Other Goal: Provide a number of high impact curricular opportunities that support student success at the University of Georgia and beyond.

To meet these goals, the University of Georgia has implemented a number of strategies that are synergistic and designed to advance multiple goals simultaneously. Some are targeted to specific populations; others impact the entire undergraduate population as a whole. In addition to making sure that students understand the financial benefits of taking 15 credit hours per semester through the Regents’ flat-rate tuition policy and many other endeavors, we are reporting this year on the following strategies that were designed to meet these goals.

Strategy 1: Hire additional advisors and restructure advising to be more pro-active and to offer additional interventions for students to stay on track to timely graduation (CCG Goals 1, 2 and 4); campus contact: Judith Iakovou, jiakovou@uga.edu

Strategy 2: Create an Exploratory Center and meta-major tracks to help students find the right major quickly and stay on track to timely graduation (CCG Goals 1, 2 and 4); campus contacts: Judith Iakovou, jiakovou@uga.edu and Naomi Norman, nnorman@uga.edu

Strategy 3: Develop predictive analytics to predict student academic risk and identify incipient academic challenges for the purpose of early intervention (CCG Goals 1, 2 and 4); campus contact: Naomi Norman, nnorman@uga.edu

Strategy 4: Expand online course offerings, particularly in the summer sessions, to give students more flexibility in planning their programs of study and keep them on track for timely completion (CCG Goals 1, 2, and 8); campus contact: Naomi Norman, nnorman@uga.edu

Strategy 5: Increase funds for merit-based scholarships and, in particular, for need-based scholarships to increase accessibility among under-represented groups (CCG Goals 1, 2 and 9); campus contact: Bonnie Joerschke, bonniej@uga.edu

Strategy 6: Provide both a range of high impact curricular opportunities, including service learning, undergraduate research, study abroad, internships, a first-year experience, experiential learning, learning communities and additional resources such as supplemental instruction, flipped classrooms, and open educational resources to promote student success (CCG Goals 1, 2 and Other); campus contact: Naomi Norman, nnorman@uga.edu

MATRIX OF INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES

Strategy 1	Hire additional advisors and restructure advising to be more pro-active and to offer additional interventions for students to stay on track to timely graduation.
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<p>Related CCG Goals</p>	<p>Goal 1: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions. Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned on time. Goal 4: Provide targeted, pro-active advising to keep students on track to completion.</p>
<p>Summary of Activities</p>	<p>The University of Georgia’s mandatory undergraduate academic advisement programs are an essential part of enabling students to attain their academic goals. Meaningful relationships with advisors are critical elements of excellent undergraduate education and degree completion. On a campus with over 26,000 undergraduate students, students may at times need the kind of guidance, support, and encouragement that only well-trained advisors can provide.</p> <p>A) In recognition of the key role played by advisors on campus, the University of Georgia has added 35 professional academic advisors to its advising corps in the last two FYs. Each of these new advisors received extensive training and were distributed among several different schools and colleges on campus. At this point, every undergraduate student in every major works with a professionally trained academic advisor.</p> <p>B) The University hired a Director of Academic Advising Services in summer 2015. She provides leadership for university-wide academic advising initiatives and ongoing support for college-level advising services. She is tasked to plan, manage and participate in academic advising initiatives, with an emphasis on university-level strategic partnerships between advising units and other student support services at the University of Georgia; to oversee assessment of advising campus-wide; to recommend policy to increase retention and degree completion; to help develop best practice guidelines and training for academic advisors across campus; and to advise the administration on ways to communicate with “millennials” to increase their likelihood to stay on track to completion.</p> <p>C) The University of Georgia also is deploying two technological solutions to help with our goals to decrease the time to graduation by improving advising: DegreeWorks Planner and Starfish. Our campus has used DegreeWorks for a number of years to help advisors and students track progress towards a degree; the Planner allows students, in collaboration with their advisor, to create a long-term plan for degree completion, verify that the courses included on the plan will fulfill their degree requirements and show them when they are “off-plan” to graduation. Once students learn how to use the Planner effectively we expect that it will both increase the number of degrees awarded overall and decrease excess credits accumulated by students. Technical difficulties have delayed the use of the Planner at the University of Georgia, and the vendor has been working to address these. We anticipate launching this tool in the Spring 2017 semester for all undergraduate students and advisors. We have also purchased two tools from Starfish, “Connect” and “Early Alert,” that will improve communications between students and advisors, help manage workflows, collect information about students, raise flags about students, and help direct students towards resources when they need them. The two Starfish tools will integrate with our predictive tool (known now as “OIR Analytics”—see below) and will be piloted in Spring 2017 for an anticipated campus-wide deployment in Fall 2017.</p> <p>D) The 2016 cohort was asked to take several assessments before Orientation to determine if a student’s study skills, support, commitment and self-efficacy are robust so that, if needed, an advisor can provide the earliest possible intervention to help that student get and stay on track to completion.</p>
<p>Baseline Status</p>	<p>In Fall 2014, the University of Georgia employed approximately 115 professional advisors/program coordinators: of these, 81 were full time with an average case load of 325-350 students each; 22 were 75% time with an average case load of 235 students each; and others held supervisory roles within the corps of academic advisors. On average, each advisor was advising too many students and most did not stay with a student more than 1-2 years. A total of 35 additional advisors were hired in FY15 and 16 to address these concerns and to help foster an enriched and more effective advisor-student relationship, one that would focus on individual needs and goals, guide the student to think critically and reflect on their learning experiences and provide students with information about co-curricular and experiential learning opportunities.</p> <p>Changes in the advising structure are expected to improve retention (especially second and third year retention) and completion rates. Targets for 2020: first-year retention rate to improve to 96% and four-year graduation rate to improve to 68%.</p>
<p>Interim Measures of Progress</p>	<p>With the addition of several advisors, the average case load for each advisor was lowered by approximately 20-25%.</p> <p>In addition to pre-Orientation testing of a student’s study skills, support, commitment and self-efficacy which will help identify students in need of additional advising, we are also developing</p>

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	<p>some predictive analytics solutions to help identify students who may have difficulty staying on track. Both of these efforts will help us deliver timely interventions to students and will help students understand their likelihood of success in particular degree programs. The first stage of the predictive solution has been completed and introduced to advisors across campus. We expect this restructuring will help us both retain first-year and transfer students at even higher levels and improve our four- and six-year graduation rates.</p>
Measures of Success	<p>New advisor hiring has been completed, and 35 new professional advisors have been added to the corps of professional advisors since Fall 2014. Although first-year retention rate had been holding steady at 94.2% for several years, it increased to 95.2% the fall following our first significant increase in the advising corps at the University of Georgia.</p> <p>Plans for restructuring advising have begun for each college that services undergraduate students. Some colleges have revised their practices to create four-year advising models with professional academic advisors, while others have moved to using professional advisors in tandem with faculty advisors. While not all colleges have completed this transition, they are expected to complete it in the current academic year. The University of Georgia follows a hybrid model for advising. In addition to using primarily a decentralized, professional-distributed advising model in which each school and college has an advising office for students within that school or college, we have also created a centralized Exploratory Center (see Strategy 2 below).</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>Because we are in the early stages of planning and implementation, no metrics directly related to student data are available as yet. We will be monitoring and measuring these metrics for future reports.</p>

Strategy 2	Create an Exploratory Center and meta-major tracks to help students find the right major quickly and stay on track to timely graduation (CCG Goals 1, 2 and 4)
Related Goals	<p>Goal 1: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.</p> <p>Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned on time.</p> <p>Goal 4: Provide targeted, pro-active advising to keep students on track to completion.</p>
Summary of Activities	<p>In the light of data provided by the Office of Institutional Research, the University of Georgia opened the Exploratory Center in August 2016. The Center is staffed by professional academic advisors who advise all students who are unspecified, are in an intended major (e.g., intended business or intended journalism etc.) or need to transition from one major to another. Currently, 13 advisors are employed in the Exploratory Center. Additionally, the Career Center holds walk-in hours, and advisors are partnering with both Career Center and Student Affairs on programming opportunities.</p> <p>In addition, the Office of the Vice President for Instruction is working to create meta-majors, tracks or pathways that cluster a number of academic majors with common or related content that are aligned with potential academic and career goals. Such tracks, when completed, will ease students into selecting the appropriate major by providing broad pathways that they can narrow down, based on their interests, knowledge, skills, abilities and career goals. We anticipate that the meta-major tracks will be available for the 2017 cohort.</p>
Baseline Status	<p>In FY 2016, the Office of Institutional Research at the University of Georgia conducted an exhaustive study of the academic pathways our students take from enrollment to graduation. In evaluating student data for more than 4,310 first-time freshmen who graduated in spring semester 2014, we observed that only 32% of these students graduated with the same major in which they started and about 38% changed their majors at least once, with 19% switching majors twice and about 6% changing majors three times or more. These kinds of changes in major can result in more student debt, extraneous credits and a longer time to graduation. It is apparent that a large number of our students may benefit from advice specifically tailored to help them better navigate the myriad choices of majors available to them.</p> <p>And there are myriad choices. As of Fall 2016, we offer 146 undergraduate majors, 45 undergraduate certificate programs, and 91 minors and several programs provide pathways for students to earn simultaneously an undergraduate and Master's degree.</p>
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>Within the first week of business, the Exploratory Center helped nearly 600 students. We expect to see even more growth by the end of this academic year and anticipate increasing the number of</p>

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	<p>advisors assigned to the Center.</p> <p>Advisors and students are being introduced to the meta-major tracks this fall in the Discovery Showcase (previously known as the Majors Fair). At the Discovery Showcase majors, minors and certificates will be clustered according to our working meta-major groupings. In addition, we will integrate the meta-majors with our First year Odyssey, Learning Communities, Exploratory Center, Experiential Learning, Service Learning, and Leadership and Service Student Organizations to bring all of these resources and opportunities together in a thoughtful, intentional way to create the fabric of each meta-major. In this way, resources and opportunities that already exist will be strategically deployed to undergird the meta-majors.</p>
Measures of Success	<p>Because of the Exploratory Center, we expect to see a decrease in the number of students changing their major this year. Success for meta-major tracks will be measured by rates in the numbers and timing of selecting and changing a major, time to degree, direct observation and evidence such as student focus groups and exit interviews. We will track this data for reporting next year.</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>As these are both new programs, lessons learned will become apparent in future years.</p>

Strategy 3	Develop predictive analytics to predict student academic risk and identify incipient academic challenges for the purpose of early intervention (CCG Goals 1, 2 and 4)
Related Goals	<p>Goal 1: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.</p> <p>Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned on time.</p> <p>Goal 4: Provide targeted, pro-active advising to keep students on track to completion.</p>
Summary of Activities	<p>The Office of the Vice President for Instruction initiated work last year on creating predictive models to guide advising. The work was undertaken by the Office of Institutional Research in partnership with Academic Advising, the Office of Registrar, the Office of Admissions, the Office of Financial Aid, Curriculum Systems, Student Affairs and others. The OIR Analytics Tool, which was rolled out to advisors in fall 2016, was created 1) to provide the academic advisor with additional information or “tools” that can help them provide students with proactive and actionable decision making for the benefit of the student, 2) to put that information in a location where that data and information are readily accessible and 3) to give the advisor advance notice of student risk across the different dimensions of the student (academic, financial and engagement). The model is being refined as more data becomes available. The tool also provides advisors with information such as first-generation status, distance from home and other possible risk factors.</p>
Baseline Status	<p>Incoming students who are potentially at-risk are identified by Admissions using a limited predictive formula based almost entirely on the student’s GPA, high school, and standardized test scores, but that information is not given to advisors nor does it give the academic advisor critical information to guide early intervention for a student. Indeed, at present, academic advisors have no access to student performance information that would help inform advising strategies.</p>
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>The OIR Analytics Tool was shown to advisors this fall. As each advisor passes a quiz on the tool, what it means, and best practices for using it, s/he will get access to the tool to use during advising appointments for spring and summer registration. We will be able to track how often advisors access the tool.</p>
Measures of Success	<p>We expect that the use of this model and its subsequent refinement will improve retention and completion rates. Success will be measured by increases in these numbers. We will also collect feedback from advisors who use the tool and will track their use. We will track all of this data for reporting next year.</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>As this is a new program, lessons learned will become apparent in future years.</p>

Strategy 4	Expand online course offerings to give students more flexibility in planning their programs of study and keep them on track for timely completion.
Related	<p>Goal 1: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.</p>

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Goals	Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned on time. Goal 8: Restructure instructional delivery to support educational excellence and promote student success.																
Summary of Activities	In 2013, the Office of Online Learning (OOL) launched the Online Learning Fellows Program to provide faculty with the training and support to design, develop and teach high-quality online courses. Through this initiative the University of Georgia has developed over 250 online-only courses or online versions of high-demand courses that fulfill several areas of degree requirements (see Table 6). In addition to individual online courses, recent efforts have focused on creating and delivering online degree programs, including an entirely online BBA degree. By offering high-demand, required courses in an online format during the summer, students have flexibility in course scheduling and have access to courses in high-demand areas that allows them to meet degree requirements in a timely manner, ultimately contributing to increased degree completion and reduced time-to-degree.																
Baseline Status	<p>Since 2012, OOL has partnered with Schools and Colleges to develop online course offerings at the University of Georgia. Although the majority of credit hours are still earned in residential, face-to-face courses, the roster of online courses continues to grow. These courses offer students more flexibility in planning their programs of study and allow students who are studying or interning off campus or who must return home to work fulltime during the summer to stay on track for graduation. Data show that 90% of all students who earn their degrees within four years have taken one or more summer courses, many of them online.</p> <p>Increasing the availability of online courses is expected to improve retention and completion rates. Greater flexibility in fulfilling course requirements through online courses is also expected to increase second- and third-year retention rates. Targets for 2020: first-year retention rate to improve from 94.2% to 96% and four-year graduation rate to improve from 63.1% to 68%. Future reports will include greater analysis of how online courses are impacting retention and completion rates.</p>																
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>Since the summer of 2013, enrollments in online courses have steadily increased, as has the number of online courses offered throughout the year (see Table 6). The largest growth has been in online courses offered during the summer terms. Indeed, summer online enrollments have quadrupled between the summer of 2013 and the summer of 2016: in summer 2013, online courses enrolled 1,496 undergraduate students; 2,230 students in summer 2014; 3,421 in summer 2015; and 6,209 in summer 2016. The data below also show that more and more students complete their undergraduate degree with at least one online course in their program of study.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="337 1199 1425 1360"> <thead> <tr> <th>FISCAL YEAR</th> <th>TOTAL</th> <th># TAKING ONLINE CLASSES</th> <th>% TAKING ONLINE CLASSES</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>6575</td> <td>691</td> <td>10.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015</td> <td>6897</td> <td>1397</td> <td>20.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016</td> <td>6972</td> <td>2439</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL	# TAKING ONLINE CLASSES	% TAKING ONLINE CLASSES	2014	6575	691	10.5%	2015	6897	1397	20.3%	2016	6972	2439	35%
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Measures of Success	It is clear that online courses contribute to student credit hour production and to progress toward degree completion. Reduced time-to-degree for participants in online courses is the ultimate measure for success, and we will continue to track this data for future reports.																
Lessons Learned	The University of Georgia has seen significant increases in summer enrollment, especially in online courses over the past two summers. It seems clear that increased communication across campus helped drive these increases and that effort will continue. The OOL will continue its various programs, such as Online Fellows, to support the creation of additional online courses, in particular courses that fulfill core requirements, major requirements, or are in high demand. In addition, the Registrar started using the waitlist feature in Banner to help departments identify high demand courses early enough to add more sections to accommodate students.																

Strategy 5	Increase funds for merit-based scholarships and, in particular, for need-based scholarships to increase accessibility among under-represented groups.
Related Goals	Goal 1: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions. Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned on time. Goal 9: Improve access for underserved communities.

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<p>Summary of Activities</p>	<p>The University of Georgia launched the Georgia Access Scholarship program (formerly the Gateway to Georgia campaign) in 2010 in response to the increased need for student financial support, especially need-based aid for students from low-income backgrounds. The scholarship program hopes to improve access to college and increase retention and graduation rates at the University of Georgia. As frequently cited in higher education literature, financial need is one of the greatest barriers to college completion. By reducing the amount of unmet financial need, the Georgia Access Scholarship improves the likelihood of completion for students.</p> <p>The Gateway to Georgia Scholarship campaign began in 2010 and ended in 2015. With the end of the Gateway to Georgia Scholarship campaign in 2015, the Georgia Access Scholarship has grown over the past few years thanks to additional support from donors. In addition, raising private support for student scholarships is a top priority in the University’s comprehensive capital campaign. In 2015, the Georgia Department of Revenue Non-Endowed allocated \$250,000 and the Georgia Department of Revenue Endowed allocated \$42,586 from the sale of University of Georgia license plate to the Georgia Access Scholarship Fund; the Georgia Athletic Association Non-Endowed allocated \$622,352, and the Georgia Athletic Association Endowed allocated \$75,652 toward the Georgia Access Scholarship; the University of Georgia Foundation Need Based Scholarship (Pooled Funds) allocated \$206,915 toward the Georgia Access Scholarship; and in 2015, the University of Georgia continued to partner with the Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation to award \$215,000 to 119 students, which has helped under-represented students at the University of Georgia. An estimated 34% of the Georgia Access Scholarship recipients are from first-generation families as reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and 65% are from ethnic households. The average Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of the Georgia Access scholar is \$84 per year.</p>
<p>Baseline Status</p>	<p>Since 2011, the University of Georgia has experienced dramatic growth in the Georgia Access Scholarship program. An important goal is to decrease the amount of unmet financial need for Georgia Access scholars by 2020.</p>
<p>Interim Measures of Progress</p>	<p>During the first year of the program (2010-11), the University of Georgia awarded \$316,000 to 141 undergraduate students. In 2015-16, the University of Georgia awarded over \$1,620,000 to approximately 1,081 undergraduate students. This represents a 666% increase in Georgia Access Scholarship recipients and a 413% increase in award amounts; despite this rapid increase, the average amount of the award (approximately \$1,455) is inadequate since the average financial aid gap for Georgia Access scholars is \$9,206 after the Federal Pell Grant and gift aid is taken into account.</p>
<p>Measures of Success</p>	<p>Of the 141 students who received a Georgia Access Scholarship in 2010-11, 107 have graduated (76%). Six of the remaining 34 are still enrolled at the University of Georgia as of the 2016 Fall semester.</p> <p>In fall 2013, OSFA developed financial aid recipient profiles for each of the University of Georgia’s colleges/schools. These profiles have been finalized for each academic year through 2014-15. They are meant to assist individual academic units gauge the financial needs of their students.</p>
<p>Lessons Learned</p>	<p>As frequently cited in higher education literature, financial need is one of the greatest barriers to college completion. The assumption is that reducing the amount of unmet financial need will impact retention and completion rates. The OSFA will track this for each cohort moving forward and will report it as data become available.</p>

<p>Strategy 6</p>	<p>Provide both a range of high impact curricular opportunities, including service learning, undergraduate research, study abroad, internships, a first-year experience, learning communities and additional resources such as open educational resources to promote student success.</p>
<p>Related Goals</p>	<p>Goal 1: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions. Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned on time. Other Goal: Provide a number of high impact curricular opportunities that support student success at the University of Georgia and beyond.</p>
<p>Summary of Activities</p>	<p>A) The University of Georgia’s Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) supports a number of initiatives that impact student success and completion. For example, it coordinates an Open Education Resources (OER) program for classes with large enrollments and traditionally expensive</p>

	<p>textbooks. CTL staff also hold regular workshops to help faculty design or redesign courses to include high impact teaching strategies such as flipped and blended classrooms, “Reacting to the Past” pedagogy, active learning, and problem-based learning; and they run a variety of fellows and mentoring programs that help faculty utilize these and other high impact strategies. See Appendix B for a complete description of the programs sponsored by CTL that support Strategy 6.</p> <p>B) The First-Year Odyssey Seminar (FYOS) program, implemented in 2011, provides all first-year students an opportunity to engage, experience and explore the breadth and depth of the academic culture at the University of Georgia. A required course for first-year students, the FYOS program seeks to introduce them to the importance of learning and give them an opportunity for meaningful dialogue with a tenured or tenure-track faculty member, which encourages positive, sustained student-faculty interactions. Furthermore, seminars introduce students to the instruction, research, public service and international missions of the University. The use of tenured and tenure-track faculty is a unique feature that connects students to faculty scholarship at a research university.</p> <p>C) This year the University of Georgia made an initial investment of \$4.4 million to reduce class sizes by hiring faculty and creating more than 300 new course sections in 81 majors across campus (about 55% of the areas in which students can major); these include high-demand courses in growing fields such as engineering, business and public health, courses that historically have high failure rates, and “bottleneck” courses that students must take but have a hard time getting into because of limited classroom slots or scheduling problems. The smaller class size and the increased number of sections will help students be more successful and decrease the time it takes for many to graduate.</p> <p>D) This summer the University of Georgia used the waitlist feature in Athena to help academic departments keep abreast of course demands/bottlenecks when building their course schedules to prevent students from being shut out of courses they needed for degree completion. We will continue to use this feature during the academic year.</p> <p>E) In 2014, the University launched the Undergraduate Research Assistantship Program to support undergraduate research, a very effective high impact practice. This program provides \$1,000 stipends to undergraduate students across schools and colleges to conduct research alongside faculty. The program recently was expanded to support a greater number of students.</p>
<p>Baseline Status</p>	<p>A) By the end of the AY 2015-2016, we estimate that we had thus far collectively saved University of Georgia students \$1,781,570 through the use of Open Educational Resources.</p> <p>B) The FYOS was created as the Quality Enhancement Plan for UGA’s SACSCOC Reaffirmation and launched in fall 2011. We require 100% of all incoming freshmen to take an FYOS that connects them with tenured/track faculty in a small class environment. Since fall 2011, 32,701 first-year students have enrolled in First-Year Odyssey seminars taught by over 700 different faculty.</p>
<p>Interim Measures of Progress</p>	<p>A) As part of our predictive analytics work, we examined the impact of the FYOS and noted that students who took the seminar in their first semester outperformed their predicted GPA while those who took it in the spring did not, even after controlling for incoming GPA for the two groups. As a result of this work, we are encouraging students to take the FYOS in fall semester to get off to the best possible start. In addition, students are asked each year to complete a survey; 58% of students who responded said their seminar helped them make plans for future learning, 59% learned about an opportunity to participate in undergraduate research and 81% said they were introduced to faculty members’ roles at the University of Georgia. These surveys also indicate that a majority of students believe their experience in their FYOS helped them understand 1) the importance of taking responsibility for their learning experience, 2) their personal goals for learning and 3) their plans for their future learning. The seminar clearly has been effective at introducing students to the academic culture of the University of Georgia and integrating them into campus life.</p> <p>B) We also will be monitoring the impact of the smaller class size initiative and the Experiential Learning requirement, both of which were launched this year (Fall 2016).</p>
<p>Measures of Success</p>	<p>We will monitor the impact of the small class size initiative and the launch the DegreeWorks Planner on degree completion and also on facilitating dual degrees or otherwise optimizing students’ time at the University of Georgia.</p>
<p>Lessons Learned</p>	<p>As these are primarily new programs, lessons learned will become apparent in future years.</p>

OBSERVATIONS

The University of Georgia's retention and completion plan is focused both on having an engaging and supportive environment designed for the success of all students and on providing specific programs for students who are at risk. At the University of Georgia, students are being retained and are completing bachelor's degrees at exceptional rates. The first-year retention rate for all students has hovered around 94 % every year from 2008 through 2013; this rate far exceeds the average (89%) of our comparator institutions and is virtually on par with the average (95%) of our aspirational peer institutions (see Tables 2-4). Of particular interest is the fact that the first-year retention rates for underrepresented populations increased from 93.2% (2012 cohort) to 95.1% (2014 cohort) for Black/African-American students and from 91.5% (2012 cohort) to 94.3% (2014 cohort) for Hispanic students. Our four-, five- and six-year completion rates for underrepresented populations also outpace most peer institutions and many aspirational institutions (see Table 5). Over the past 10 years, for example, completion rates for the entire population have also increased by several percentage points. For the 2007 cohort, the four-year completion rate was 58%, and has risen to 63.1% and 66.1% for the 2010 and 2012 cohorts, respectively. Similarly, the average time to degree for entering freshmen has steadily declined, from a high of 4.28 years for those graduating in 2005 to an historic low of 4.02 years for those graduating in 2015 (see Table 8). We see a similar decline in time to degree among transfer students which went from 2.93 years to 2.58 years over that same time period. Our goal is to boost our four-year completion rate to 68% by 2020.

An important part of our effort to create an engaging and supportive environment designed for the success of all students is the First Year Odyssey Seminar (FYOS) that was discussed in previous updates. This program has completed its fifth year; 100% of all incoming freshmen take an FYOS that connects them with tenured/track faculty in a small class environment. As part of our predictive analytics work, we examined the impact of the FYOS and noted that students who took the seminar in their first semester outperformed their predicted GPA while those who took it in the spring did not. As a result of this work, we are encouraging students to take the FYOS in fall semester to get off to the best possible start. Data discussed previously clearly suggests that this program has been effective at introducing students to the University of Georgia and integrating them into the campus.

Previous reports have also discussed specific programs available to students who are at risk, in particular the Collaborative Academic and Retention Effort (CARE) program, an early intervention program housed in our Division of Academic Enhancement. We are encouraged by the progress that students on academic probation who participate in that program make towards returning to good academic standing. Students who participate in CARE see significant increases in their GPAs and are often back in good academic standing within one semester of participation. By identifying struggling students early and helping them get back into good academic standing, retention and completion become more realistic outcomes for these students. This strategy has been effective and will continue as part of the University of Georgia's efforts to reach our retention and completion targets.

An increase in online courses, especially those offered in the summer, has also been reported on in previous years. Over the last three summers, the University of Georgia has seen dramatic increases in online summer offerings and more and more students are graduating with at least one online course in their dossier. This strategy is paying benefits and will continue to play a part in the University of Georgia's retention, progression and completion plans.

We are collecting more data on student engagement on campus—both academic and co-curricular engagement—and are using this data to create predictive models that will help us identify different factors affecting student success. We expect to be able to launch the DegreeWorks Planner this academic year after resolving with the vendor a number of critical issues with the software. Once this program is launched, we will have informational sessions available for students and academic advisors to make sure students know how to use the program effectively to stay on track to degree completion.

This year's report focuses on several new strategies and initiatives to help reach the institution's CCG goals. These initiatives include 1) the creation of the Exploratory Center to help students identify interest/major fit early in their academic career and take advantage of the many co-curricular opportunities available to them; 2) creation of meta-major tracks to allow students to narrow interests to appropriate major/career fit without loss of applicable credit hours resulting from major changes; 3) creation of a predictive analytics tool to assist advisors in early identification of and intervention with students academically at risk; 4) a plan to hire faculty to teach more than 300 new course sections in high-demand courses, in courses that historically have high failure rates, and in "bottleneck" courses that students must take but have a hard time getting into because of limited classroom slots; and 5) more high impact practices that support educational excellence and promote student success, including the Experiential Learning requirement that began in fall 2016. As we implement these initiatives this year, we will be putting assessment, evaluation and data collection procedures in place to judge the effectiveness of these initiatives. Improved metrics and better methods for identifying students with multiple risk factors will be essential to our retention, progression and completion efforts. These initiatives will help the University of Georgia reach its targets for 2020: first-year retention rate to improve to 96% and four-year graduation rate to improve to 68%. We will be tracking and reporting on these initiatives in future reports.

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This year the University of Georgia Retention, Progression and Graduation Group will be reinstated and will include representatives from financial aid, institutional research, academic enhancement, instruction, student affairs, and various schools and colleges. This group will meet frequently to discuss the progress of various new initiatives, evaluate new initiatives, and discuss data collected for all of our strategies.