



Kennesaw State University

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

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

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

The KSU 2017-18 Bridge Strategic Plan embodies the student success focus with the first strategic priority being to "enhance learning and services to improve retention, progression, and graduation rates."

ENROLLMENT

In fall 2016, KSU enrolled 31,611 undergraduate degree-seeking students, a 5.9% increase over fall 2015 (see Table 1.) There has been an increase in the last two years in the percentage of full-time students in the undergraduate population, although the percentage of first-time freshmen attending full-time has remained steady at 97%. Women make up less than half of undergraduate and freshman enrollment. Since 2012, minority undergraduate enrollment increased from 37% to 43% and minority freshman enrollment increased from 30% to 40%. African-American undergraduate and freshman student enrollment increased 5-6%. Hispanic undergraduate and freshman enrollment increased 2-3%. The percentage of students receiving Pell Grants has decreased 2-3% for undergraduates and freshmen.

TABLE 1. KSU DEGREE-SEEKING UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT 2012-2016

Undergraduate Enrollment Profile					
	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Total Undergraduates	27,696	27,817	28,927	29,841	31,611
Full-time	75%	75%	75%	76%	77%
Female	50%	50%	49%	49%	48%
Race/Ethnic Minority	37%	39%	40%	42%	43%
Asian	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Black	17%	19%	20%	21%	22%
Hispanic	7%	8%	8%	9%	10%
Pell Recipients	42%	41%	41%	39%	
First-time Freshmen Enrollment Profile					
	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Total Undergraduates	3,984	4,034	4,665	5,032	5,347
Full-time	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Female	50%	50%	47%	49%	49%
Race/Ethnic Minority	30%	33%	35%	37%	40%
Asian	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Black	13%	15%	17%	19%	19%
Hispanic	8%	8%	8%	9%	10%
Pell Recipients	37%	37%	36%	35%	

Source: USG

RETENTION

KSU's retention rates are the highest in five years. Retention increased across all groups based on enrollment status, gender, or race. As shown in Table 2., KSU's retention rate for full-time students, at 80% is approaching the USG system rate of 81%. KSU's retention gains for both females and males are similar to system gains with females retained at higher rates than males.

For minority students, KSU’s five-year retention gains exceeded USG retention gains. In 2011, the gap between KSU’s rate of 76% and the USG’s rate of 88% for Asian students was 12%. That gap has been reduced to 1% in 2015. KSU’s retention rates for Black students increased 3% over last year and is 7% higher than the system rate. Hispanic students showed an 5% in retention over last year and currently have a rate 4 % higher than the system rate.

TABLE 2. FRESHMEN RETENTION RATES FOR KSU WITH USG COMPARISON

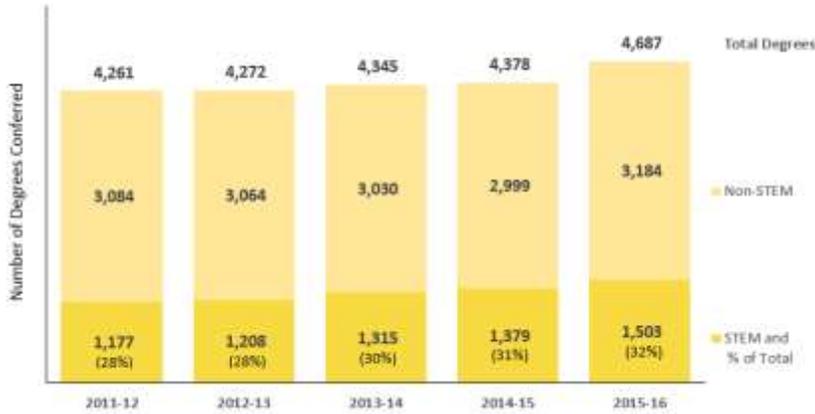
Freshmen Retention Rates 2011-15						
Fall Cohort Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	5 YR Change
Full-time	3,459	3,834	3,881	4,500	4,887	
KSU Retention Rate	76%	76%	78%	78%	80%	+4%
USG Total	78%	79%	80%	80%	81%	+3%
Females	1,824	1,988	2,023	2,190	2,443	
KSU Retention Rate	77%	78%	79%	80%	82%	+5%
USG Total	77%	79%	81%	81%	81%	+4%
Males	1,748	1,970	1,981	2,454	2,589	
KSU Retention Rate	75%	72%	76%	75%	78%	+3%
USG Total	75%	76%	77%	78%	78%	+3%
Freshman Retention Rates by Race 2011-2015						
Fall Cohort Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
Asian	140	172	193	236	234	
KSU Retention Rate	76%	78%	80%	83%	89%	+13%
USG Total	88%	89%	89%	89%	90%	+2%
Black	468	516	599	794	932	
KSU Retention Rate	75%	80%	80%	79%	81%	+6%
USG Total	70%	73%	75%	75%	74%	+4%
Hispanic	266	324	339	382	472	
KSU Retention Rate	79%	77%	79%	77%	83%	+4%
USG Total	78%	78%	78%	78%	79%	+1%
White	2,406	2,581	2,593	2,916	3,073	
KSU Retention Rate	76%	74%	76%	77%	78%	+2%
USG Total	79%	79%	80%	80%	81%	+3%

Source: USG

DEGREE COMPLETION AND GRADUATION RATES

As shown in Figure 1., the number of bachelor’s degrees conferred has increased 10% in the last five years from 4,261 to 4,687. The number of STEM degrees conferred has increased 28% in the same time period and now comprise almost one-third of baccalaureate degrees completed.

FIGURE 1. BACHELOR’S DEGREES CONFERRED (INCLUDING % OF STEM)



Although the number of degrees awarded to students has increased, KSU’s 4-year and 6-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time students have varied approximately 2-3% since 2007. As detailed in Table 3, the USG showed similar fluctuations for these years. KSU’s 4-year rate is, on average, 12% lower than the 4-year rate for the USG. In the last three years, the gap in the 6-year graduation rates between KSU and the USG total has narrowed from 10% to 7%.

TABLE 3. 4-YEAR AND 6-YEAR GRADUATION RATES

Cohort Year	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012
Full-time	2,824	3,166	3,210	3,443	3,459	3,834
4-year (100%)	15%	16%	15%	14%	13%	14%
6-year (150%)	44%	43%	42%	43%		
USG						
4-year (100%)	27%	27%	26%	26%	26%	28%
6-year (150%)	54%	53%	51%	50%		

Source: USG, Academic Data Mart

To understand the relationship between student progression and graduation, it is helpful to look at multiple retention rates and graduation rates together. In figure 2, the lines represent retention rates and the columns represent graduation rates. The top line, Retention to Year 2, is the standard retention measure of how many students return for a second fall term. Retention to Year 3 is the percentage of students who return for a third fall and Retention to Year 4 is the percentage of student who return for a fourth fall.

The bottom section of the column is the 4-year Graduation Rate. The middle section, Graduated in Year 5, is the percentage of students who graduated in their fifth year. The top section of the column, Graduated in Year 6, is the percentage of students who graduated in their sixth year. Adding the three sections of the column together gives the 6-year Graduation Rate, the number at the top of the column.

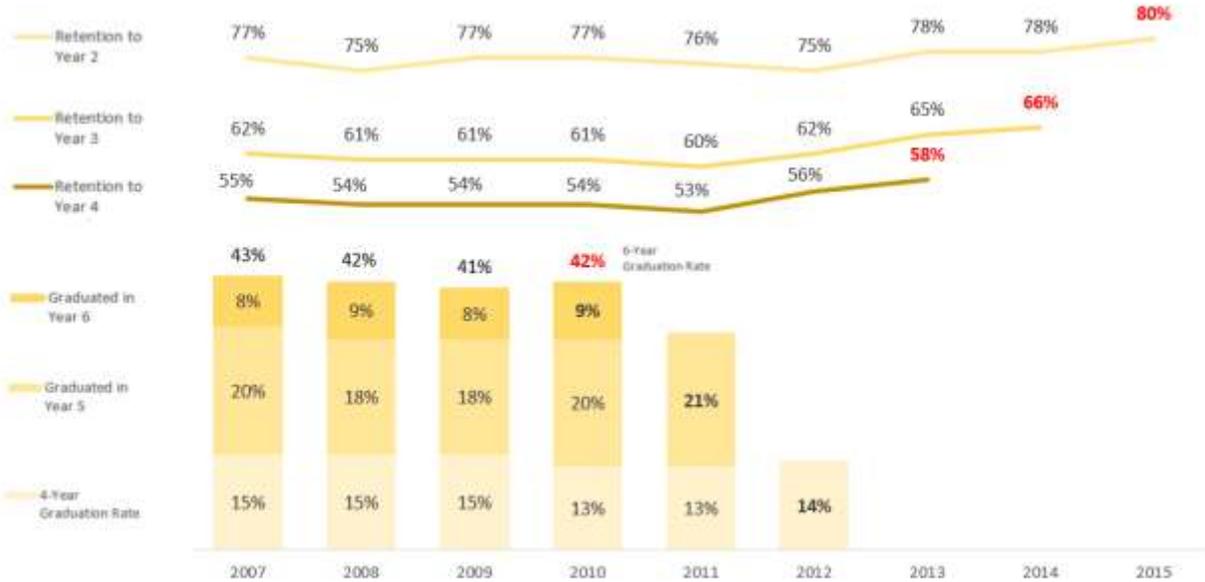
Retention rates were relatively flat for first-year, second-year, and third-year retention from the period of 2007-2011. Retention for all years began increasing with the fall 2011 cohort. On average, 77% of students returned for a second year or, conversely, 23% of students did not return. Another 12-16% of students did not return for a third year and 6-7% did not return for their fourth year. Put another way, just over half of students return for a fourth year with the largest losses occurring from year 1 to year 2, and then year 2 to year 3. It should be noted that retention and class standing are not synonymous. A student who has not completed 30 hours in the first year may return for a second year but would still be a freshman. If a student does not take 15 hours a semester, or drops or fails courses, the student is not going to graduate in four years.

In 2010, 13% of students graduated in 4 years. One-fifth of students who started in 2010 graduated in five years. A student who is taking 12 hours a semester is considered full-time and may successfully complete 24 credits a year. However, the student is only accumulating 24 hours a year rather than the 30-32 hours required for a 4-year graduation date. The result is a five-year graduate. Less than 10% of students graduated in their sixth year.

Slightly over half of students return for a fourth year – and one in ten of those students who did return did not graduate from KSU in that year or in the two years after. In examining data like these, we can look at the relationship between retention and graduation and design appropriate interventions.

We believe that the retention programs implemented as part of KSU’s Complete College Georgia plan are contributing to the rise in first-year retention rates as well as subsequent year retention rates.

FIGURE 2. RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES FOR FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME FRESHMEN



Source: Institutional Research

INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS, HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

For this report, there are four broad categories of strategies that will be addressed. These are: 1) Advising, 2) DFW Rates, 3) Predictive Analytics, and 4) Beyond Financial Aid.

HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGY – ADVISING

Undergraduate advising has been transformed across the institution with new advisors in every college and a common advising platform to coordinate and track outreach and intervention activities.

RELATED GOALS

CCG Goal 4: Provide intentional advising to keep students on track to graduate.

KSU Bridge Strategic Plan Goal 1: Enhance learning and services that improve retention, progression, and graduation (RPG) rates.

DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY OR IMPACT

Five years ago, the academic advising structure at Kennesaw State University and Southern Polytechnic State University differed not only from the advising model today, but the two distinct (and now consolidated) institutions at the time in their approach to and philosophy of academic advising. Both models were highly decentralized. The SPSU model relied on several professional advisors but was largely dependent on faculty to conduct the bulk of the advising responsibility. Kennesaw State (pre-consolidation) also relied heavily on faculty for advising, but also had professional staff and even undergraduate peer advising in addition to faculty advising. As part of the consolidation, advising has moved to a more standardized model.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

In August of 2016, KSU launched the Education Advisory Board’s Student Success Collaborative Campus (EAB-SSC Campus) platform to over 80 advisors, staff, and faculty. Used in conjunction with DegreeWorks, EAB-SSC Campus connects advising activity across campus. Advisors are all using very similar processes for scheduling advising appointments, recording advising activity, making more proactive outreach to students who are potentially at risk, and monitoring enrollment in heretofore unexamined ways.

Staff: An AVP for Academic Advising was hired to provide centralized leadership and best practices for advising at Kennesaw State University. Primary-role (professional staff) advisors are now seen as the primary academic advising resource in each of the colleges. KSU has added 20 new advising positions in the 2016-2018 fiscal years, and has moved the student: advisor ratio from over 1000:1 to less than 600:1.

Training: Advisors have an organizational body on campus (the Academic Advising Network) that provides twice-monthly professional development and advisor training opportunities. Over 20 advisor professional development opportunities were offered since August 2016. The Advising Council (one member of the leadership team from each college) also meets monthly and collaborates on shaping the university-wide role of academic advising as a critical driver of student retention, progression, and graduation.

MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

Baseline data are currently being collected for the first year of EAB-SSC. The measures of advising activity, such the utilization and adoption outcomes, should be positively associated with better student outcomes. Students who are actively engaged in the process (e.g., keep appointments, respond to advisor outreach) should ultimately make better academic choices as evidenced by a reduced risk status and their continued progression towards graduation.

At the start of Academic Year 2017 (AY17), there were 91 users who were classified as “advisors.” This includes full-time advising professionals as well as other faculty and staff whose responsibilities include advising. By the end of AY 17, there were 155 unique users – an increase of 31%. During the same time frame, the number of advisor logins went from 287 to 1,207 – an increase of 321%. There are 23 active locations on campus providing advising and student support services.

From August 2016 to July 2017, there were 49,856 appointments scheduled. Of these appointments, 83% have a report completed by the advisor regarding the details of the appointment. Approximately 17% of appointments were cancelled or “no shows.”

As census data become available, progression and retention results will be calculated. In addition, a student satisfaction survey tied to advising appointments was implemented in August 2017.

LESSONS LEARNED

The challenge in launching a centralized scheduling and advising platform for decentralized advising was respecting the autonomy of the different advising units. Advisors provided important input prior to the launch of EAB-SSC and continue to be active participants as the platform is expanded.

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT

Dr. Chris Hutt, Assistant Vice President for Academic Advising, (chutt@kennesaw.edu)

HIGH IMPACT STRATEGY – DECREASING DFW RATES

The Gateways to Completion (G2C) project and Supplemental Instruction both target high DFW rates.

COMPLETION GOAL

CCG Goal 2 - Increase the number of degrees earned “on time.”

CCG Goal 3 - Decrease excess credits.

CCG Goal 8 - Restructure instructional delivery.

DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY OR IMPACT

For students, earning a “D” or an “F” or withdrawing with a “W” in a course means additional time and tuition costs. For the institution, a high DFW rate in gateway courses can contribute to bottlenecks as students who need to repeat the course compete with students who need to take the course to stay on track. KSU is participating in Gateways to Completion (G2C) and continuing the Supplemental Instruction program to address high DFW courses.

1. GATEWAYS TO COMPLETION (G2C)

G2C is a national effort led by the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education to improve student success in large enrollment gateway courses that traditionally have high failure (DFW) rates. KSU is one of thirty institutions nationally and one of ten in the USG participating in the initiative. G2C is a three-year initiative that provides KSU with an institution-wide, data-driven, evidence-based process that includes policy review and course redesign. Faculty-led committees within each of the course disciplines lead the G2C effort. The five gateway courses are: ACCT 2100-Introduction to Financial Accounting, HIST 2112-US History Since 1890, MATH 1111-College Algebra, MATH 1190-Calculus I, and SCI 1101-Science, Society, and the Environment.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES - G2C

In 2016-17, the G2C task force engaged in a self-study based on key performance indicators. Quantitative and qualitative course success inventory data and student survey data were used. The self-study resulted in cross-course and course-specific synthesis reports and a comprehensive action plan.

For 2017-18, the G2C task force will communicate the action plan to campus stakeholders and begin the implementation of the action plan. Action Items to be implemented during 2017-18 are:

CROSS-COURSE ACTIVITIES:

- Pilot an early alert intervention for all faculty teaching G2C courses
- Enhancing the coverage of metacognitive skills, growth mindset, and social belongingness to the institution content into the first-year seminar course
- Participants in KSU's G2C course redesign faculty learning community (facilitated by CETL) during 2016-17 will teach their redesigned courses. The call for applications for the second cohort this fall will be open to all faculty teaching gateway courses and up to 25 faculty will be selected.

COURSE SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES:

- ACCT 2100: Streamlined course content aligned with course objectives and improved coordination among faculty teaching the course
- HIST 2112 and SCI 1101: Regular meetings among faculty to discuss successful teaching and learning
- MATH 1111: Expand ALEKS emporium sections
- MATH 1190: Study MATH 1111, 1112, and 1113 structure to determine effectiveness of these course as prerequisite path for MATH 1190

OTHER:

- Plans are for a new KSU academic building to be completed by 2020, the Academic Learning Center building (ALCB). The building will house the new Academic Learning Center (ALC) (1st and 2nd floors of the building), and University College will organizationally and physically place KSU's campus-wide tutoring, advising, ESL, supplemental instruction, and learning assistants programs in the ALC and ALCB, making it a one-stop center for academic student support.

MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS - G2C

Course redesign will contribute to a reduced DFW rate, a decrease in excess credits, and increased retention and graduation rates.

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT – G2C

Dr. Val Whittlesey, Associate Vice President for Curriculum (vwhittle@kennesaw.edu) or
Dr. Scott Reese, Assistant Dean for Curriculum (sreese3@kennesaw.edu)

2. SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION (SI)

SI provides structured, peer-facilitated help sessions for students enrolled in courses that traditionally have high DFW rates. Students may choose to attend sessions conducted by a student SI Leader who was successful in the course with the same instructor. These student facilitators provide assistance with devising learning strategies based on course content and instructor delivery style.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES - SI

Course offerings include lower-division courses in math, science, political science, economics, and accounting. Upper-division courses include math, biology, chemistry, engineering, physics, and architecture.

MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS - SI

Supplemental Instruction is designed to reduce DFW rates and contribute to increased retention and graduation rates. In fall 2016 and spring 2017, there were 24 unique courses offering SI with 185 sections, an 18% increase over the previous year. The SI leaders provided 2,079 sessions for a total of 23,428 contact hours. Students who attended SI were significantly less likely to make a DFW. See Appendix A for more details.

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT - SI

Dr. Stephen Moore, Director of Supplemental Instruction Program, (smoor204@kennesaw.edu)

LESSONS LEARNED

With enrollment increasing, lowering the DFW rate is critical to expanding capacity. All of these initiatives require cooperation and coordination between staff and faculty.

HIGH IMPACT STRATEGY - PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS

COMPLETION GOAL

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

CCG Goal 3: Decrease excess credits earned on the path to getting a degree

DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY OR IMPACT

KSU is committed to using data to support student success. There are three major predictive analytic platforms that are being utilized to increase operational efficiency and provide insights into student success.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

1. AD ASTRA PLATINUM ANALYTICS

If needed courses are unavailable, students may take courses that do not contribute to program completion to maintain their full-time status. The implementation of Ad Astra’s Platinum Analytics software continues to help academic departments better determine course demands and identify course bottlenecks which impede the degree progression of students. The result is that departments can better schedule course and seat availability to mitigate the bottlenecks and improve the progression of students toward graduation.

The on-going, re-evaluation of course sections allowed academic departments to redirect faculty resources to higher-demand courses. In addition, weekly data-snapshots provided an on-demand analysis of general education courses to help absorb new student enrollment. This analysis includes consideration of student schedule time conflicts and provides optimal times for additions and reductions in seat offerings.

Based on historical trends in student enrollment and course preference, evaluation of degree requirements and completion of course prerequisites, the following adjustments were made to the Fall 2017 course schedule (note section offerings may change slightly during the month of August 2017).

MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS - AD ASTRA PLATINUM ANALYTICS

- 98 courses were identified as addition candidates (more seats were needed to meet student demand). For these courses, ~1,500 additional seats were offered when compared to Fall 2016.
- 176 courses were identified as reduction or elimination candidates (fewer seats were required to fulfill student demand).

In working to enhance the ability for incoming students to get required courses, KSU has made significant progress on combatting first-year course bottlenecks.

First Year Course Bottlenecks				
	Kennesaw Fall 2014	SPSU Fall 2014	Consolidated Fall 2015	Consolidated Fall 2016
First Year Course Bottlenecks	53%	58%	56%	46%

Both before consolidation and during the first post-consolidation year, over half of the 1000 level courses were filled. In Fall 2016, the additional sections added allowed this percentage to drop to 46% in Fall 2016. The new competitive admissions model implemented in fall 2018 should allow KSU to continue to make progress on this metric.

KSU plans to implement the new Astra Schedule software in AY18. This software will provide Platinum Analytics course prediction data and course schedule building/room optimization functionality all within one platform.

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT – AD ASTRA

Mr. Kim West, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services, (kwest26@kennesaw.edu)

2) EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD STUDENT SUCCESS COLLABORATIVE CAMPUS (EAB-SSC CAMPUS)

EAB-SSC Campus is designed to support data-driven advising efforts that enable proactive, informed interventions with at-risk and off-path students. Committees met in spring 2017 to discuss college and department specific data available in EAB-SSC. The historical data available in the platform, along with institutional data on retention rates, graduation rates, and grade

distributions were examined. In fall of 2017, student success markers will be added to the platform based on these data and conversations.

MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS - EAB-SSC CAMPUS

Along with the historical data available in EAB-SSC, advising data and student support services data are available. These data can be used to determine the efficacy of advising outreach and intervention campaigns. Initial data for the first year of implementation are detailed in the Advising section of this report.

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT

EAB-SSC –Dr. Chris Hutt, Assistant Vice President for Academic Advising, (chutt@kennesaw.edu) and Sarah Matta (smatta1@kennesaw.edu)

3) EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE SOLUTIONS (EAB-APS)

EAB-APS is designed to provide information to multiple stakeholders to facilitate discussions surrounding enrollment, capacity, and resource allocation. This platform extends and enhances the information provided by Ad Astra. Dashboards, currently under construction, will provide additional insight into productivity

MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS- EAB-APS

Baseline data will be collected in the second half of 2017.

LESSONS LEARNED

Consolidated data continue to create challenges for functional and technical groups working on these projects.

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT

EAB-APS – Dr. Ken Harmon, Provost, (wharmon3@kennesaw.edu) and Dr. Wendy Kallina, Director of Academic Analytics, (wkallina@kennesaw.edu)

HIGH IMPACT STRATEGY: BEYOND FINANCIAL AID (BFA)

COMPLETION GOAL

CCG1 - increase the number of degrees awarded

DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY OR IMPACT

KSU provides an array of resources for students who may be experiencing financial difficulties. These resources include a limited amount of funds available for GAP scholarships, CARE center support (e.g., food pantry, connection with resources, assistance with homelessness, etc.), Emergency Retention Scholarships, and other population specific resources for students with unique and special needs. Participating in the BFA initiative provides a framework to increase the understanding of the needs of lower-income KSU students and identify relevant services.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The BFA committee completed an extensive review of the BFA strategies. Multiple analyses were performed included an in-depth look at characteristics of 2015-16 Pell recipients, and comparison of student success metrics with peer institutions. A detailed inventory of support services for low-income students was created. Potential action items were generated to increase the visibility and utilization of resources. Policies were reviewed for unintended impacts on students.

MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

Ensuring students have the resources they need to complete their degrees should contribute to an increase in degrees awarded. Understanding student need and identifying current and potential areas to meet that need is necessary before more detailed measures can be devised. Initial data reveal gaps between retention rates and graduation rates. The inconsistencies over time in the magnitude of these gaps support the need for further data analysis. Although Pell recipients may have similar financial needs, the circumstances surrounding those needs may be very different.

Total Cohort and Pell Completion Rates for First-Time Freshman						
	4-Year Graduation Rate			6-Year Graduation Rate		
	FT Cohort	Pell	Gap	FT Cohort	Pell	Gap
2007	14.3	13.7	0.6	42.2	41.9	0.3
2008	15.2	13.1	2.1	41.4	36.1	5.3

2009	14.7	14.1	0.6	40.3	36.6	3.7
2010	13.4	10.9	2.5	41.6	37.6	4.0
2011	12.6	11.3	1.3			
2012	13.6	11.2	2.6			

Total Cohort and Pell Retention Rates for First-Time Freshman			
	1-Year Retention Rate		
	FT Cohort	Pell	Gap
2011	76.0	74.1	1.9
2012	75.1	72.8	2.3
2013	77.7	75.0	2.7
2014	77.6	75.5	2.1
2015	79.6	76.8	3.1

LESSONS LEARNED

KSU has an abundance of resources available to students, the challenge is connecting student to the right resources in ways to ensure student privacy.

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT

Mr. Kim West, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services, (kwest26@kennesaw.edu)

Mr. Ron Day, Director of Financial Aid, (rday9@kennesaw.edu)