

UPDATES, PROGRESS AND FUTURE WORK

Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) is making satisfactory progress towards meeting its stated goals and metrics as outlined in the initial CCG Report and 3-Year Plan. As a result of the USG Peer Review process, this revised status report documents the streamlining of GPC's Plan from 14 Action Strategies to 8 Goals, with clearly articulated outcomes, designed to focus on "game-changing" strategies that will yield greater impact on student success.

CCG Goal: College Reach Out Program – Expand Early College Initiative/K-12 Partnerships

Original Action Strategy 1: Provide diagnostic COMPASS testing for selected feeder high school sophomores and retest these same students as seniors. The intent of this strategy was to decrease the percentage of students from Cross Keys and Social Circle High Schools who place into Learning Support when entering USG institutions.

Progress: Diagnostic COMPASS testing was not implemented in the 2012-13 academic year due to budget constraints and staff reductions. This strategy has been re-conceptualized as part of new Goal #1 described below.

Original Action Strategy 2: Conduct pre-college institutes for targeted student populations (GEAP, DECA and Upward Bound). The intent of this strategy was that at least 55% of institute participants would place directly into collegiate-level classes upon entering college. **Progress:** Upward Bound conducted 6 pre-college sessions, with a total of 15 Upward Bound participants, 11 of whom (73%) successfully placed into collegiate-level classes.

Updated Goal 1: Create an Early College Option for DeKalb County high school students. 75% of 10th grade Early College students will pass all sections of the COMPASS, eliminating the need for Learning Support. 75% of Early College high school graduates will have earned at least 12 semester credit hours in college-level gateway courses, and will pursue post-secondary education. **Progress:** Beginning in Fall 2014, the program will be piloted at Druid Hills, Stone Mountain and Towers High Schools, with a target of 50 students from each school for a total 150 participants, growing to 300 by Year 3. By the fourth year, the program will add at least one new high school (approximately 100 students) annually.

Updated Goal 2: Implement the GPC COMPASS Academic Review and Enhancement (C.A.R.E) Program each academic semester. The intent of this strategy is to assist prospective students scoring below admissions standards by engaging them in a 4-6 week immersion program. Participants will have the opportunity to strengthen their academic skills, achieve higher scores on the COMPASS retest, develop a cohort support network and familiarize themselves with the college and its resources. In addition to instruction in English, mathematics and reading, the students also will participate in a required college success seminar. **Progress:** GPC's Advising, Counseling, and Retention Services (ACRS) department recently piloted a Summer Compass Academic Review and Enhancement (C.A.R.E.) Program for approximately 14 students. Instruction on writing, math, and reading was conducted in 90-minute blocks in which each subject area met two times per week. The students also attended a required success seminar that focused on topics such as test anxiety and effective study skills. As a result, 13 participants who completed the program retook the Compass Test and 7 (53.8%) improved their test scores and were accepted to the College. Participants gained 1-9 points in math, 8-29 points in reading and 12-61 points in writing. The college plans to expand the program to 100 students in Summer 2014 on the Clarkston and Decatur campuses.

CCG Goal: Improve Access and Completion for Underrepresented Populations

Original Action Strategy 1: Establish Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program for military students and adult learners. The intent of this strategy was to reduce average time to degree for students who utilize PLA. While GPC has offered and continues to offer credit by examination, development of the PLA portfolio course was delayed due to budget constraints and staff reductions. In FY12, GPC enrolled 15,149 students over age 25, of whom 159 had CLEP credit. **Progress:** The Retention and Graduation Council has determined that this strategy does not have the potential

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for large-scale impact. While the College will continue to participate in the Adult Learner Consortium and offer PLA options consistent with budget and faculty resources, this strategy has been *eliminated* from the revised Plan.

Original Action Strategy 2: Increase participation in Work Study and tracking participants. The intent of this strategy was to increase the number of eligible students participating in Work Study. Both national and GPC data show that participation in Work Study has a positive impact on retention and graduation. In FY12, a total of 261 GPC students participated in the College Work Study program. **Progress:** The Retention and Graduation Council has determined that this strategy does not have the potential for large-scale impact. While the GPC Financial Aid Office will continue to encourage eligible students to take advantage of Work Study opportunities, this strategy has been *eliminated* from the revised Plan.

Original Action Strategy 3: Increase student knowledge and understanding of financial responsibility in the context of retention, progression and graduation. The intent of this strategy was to increase the number of students meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and increase the retention rate of FTFT freshman students on financial aid. **Progress:** In Fall 2012, a Debt Wise Vendor Fair along with two Career and Money Management workshops were conducted on Dunwoody and Clarkston campuses. 159 students attended the workshops. An additional 257 students completed the online Buttonwood modules (Financial Literacy Counts Campaign). In Spring 2013, a FAFSA and Tax preparation workshop was held at each of the Clarkston, Decatur, Dunwoody and Newton campuses. 96 students took advantage of the assistance. Financial Literacy workshops were conducted on the Dunwoody, Decatur and Clarkston campuses, attended by 55 students. The Retention and Graduation Council has determined that this strategy does not have the potential for large-scale impact. While the GPC Financial Aid Office will continue to encourage eligible students to attend financial literacy workshops, this strategy has been *eliminated* from the revised Plan.

Original Action Strategy 4: Implement reverse articulation agreement with Georgia Piedmont Technical College (GPTC). The intent of this strategy was that students who transfer to GPC from GPTC will graduate with the minimum number of credit hours required for their awarded degree. This articulation agreement was first implemented in Fall 2012. **Progress:** Data on transfers in to GPC from GPTC have not yet been collected and analyzed. The Retention and Graduation Council has determined that this strategy does not have the potential for large-scale impact. While the reverse articulation agreement remains in effect, this strategy has been *eliminated* from the revised Plan.

There is no Updated Goal for this CCG Goal. Because GPC is an access institution, almost everything we do is aimed at achieving this goal. Rather than identify specific initiatives to address this important statewide goal, we believe that it is both implicit and explicit in GPC Goals #1-2 described above, and Goals #3-8 described below.

CCG Goal: Shorten Time (or Credits) to Degree Completion

Original Action Strategy 1: Increase student success through intrusive Academic Advising. The intent of this strategy was to increase graduation rates of FTFT freshman students and reduce excess credits earned at time of degree awarded. **Progress:** During Spring 2013, GPC fully implemented (1) DegreeWorks, a web-based academic advising and degree audit system that enables students and advisors to monitor academic progress toward degree completion, (2) A revised "advisement hold" for both cohort and non-cohort students, which requires them to meet with their academic advisor and discuss academic progress, and (3) A revised early "alert system" as an intervention and retention tool to identify factors early in the semester that may impact the overall performance of students. Impacts on graduation rates will not be visible until late in 2015 or whenever the 3-year graduation rates for the Fall 2012 entering cohort are published by the USG.

Updated Goal 3: Graduation Rates for FTFT freshman students will increase to 10% for the Fall 2012 entering cohort and an additional 2% annually for subsequent cohorts. Average credits earned at time of degree will decrease by 2 semester credit hours (SCH) annually, beginning with the Fall 2012 entering cohort.

Original Action Strategy 2: Award degrees to all students who meet degree requirements. The intent of this strategy was to increase the number of degrees awarded. **Progress:** DegreeWorks scripting necessary to achieve this strategy was completed in March 2013, and tested and verified by August 2013. Review of students with 62 SCH earned and awarding of degrees to eligible graduates will begin in FY14.

Updated Goal #4: GPC will ensure that all students who meet degree requirements are awarded a degree. Total degrees awarded will increase by 7% by FY15. Once the review of eligible graduates is current, the focus will move to students with 45 semester hours or more who have not applied for graduation in order to encourage them to apply for graduation and complete their degrees.

Updated Goal #5: GPC will develop a framework for USG institutions to promote “Fifteen to Finish” plans within the university system and at each institution during FY14. The intent of this initiative is to encourage students to take 15 credits per semester to graduate on time. **Progress:** GPC has completed a draft proposal which outlines needed personnel to develop an appropriate framework for the USG, recommended resources to provide detailed templates, web and hard-copy for the development of best practice information to share with various constituencies, recommendations on assessment and analytic methods to measure success of plans, and related budget for FY 14.

CCG Goal: Restructuring Instructional Delivery to Increase Student Success

Original Action Strategy 1: Implement plan to reduce high WDFs in gateway courses. This strategy is intended to increase success rates in ENGL 1101, ENGL 1102 and MATH 1111.

Progress: Success rates in ENGL 1101 did not improve from FY12 to FY13. In fact, the success rates declined slightly, from 68.6% in Fall 2011 to 65.8% in Fall 2012, and from 59.8% in Spring 2012 to 58.9% in Spring 2013. Similarly the success rate in ENGL 1102 remained constant from 65.3% in Fall 2011 to 64.6% in Fall 2012, but increased slightly from 67.5% in Spring 2012 to 70.2% in Spring 2013. ENGL 1101 is one of the first courses targeted for increased engagement strategies as part of GPC’s QEP, beginning in Fall 2013. ENGL 1102 is scheduled to be implemented in the QEP for Fall 2014. Success rates in MATH 1111 have also declined from 53.3% in Fall 2011 to 48.0% in Fall 2012 and from 44.7% in Spring 2012 to 41.6% in Spring 2013. While MATH 1111 continues to be a target for improvement as an important gateway course for STEM majors, efforts are underway to provide appropriate advising to encourage non-STEM majors to select MATH 1001, with success rates well above 65%. Based on recommendations by the recent CCG taskforce, the MATH 1111 curriculum committee has been charged with creating a lab to accompany the course in FY13, for implementation in FY14.

Updated Goal #6: Increase success rates in ENGL 1101, ENGL 1102 and MATH 1111. College wide success rates for ENGL 1101 will increase to 70% in FY14 and by 2% annually in subsequent years. College wide success rates for ENGL 1102 will increase to 70% in FY14 and by 2% annually in subsequent years. College wide success rates for MATH 1111 will maintain at least 45% in FY14 and increase by 2-3% annually in subsequent years.

Original Action Strategy 2: Increase first-year student participation in Learning Communities. The intent of this strategy was to increase retention rates of FTFT freshman students participating in Learning Communities. **Progress:** Due to a combination of factors including a substantial decline in FTFT freshman students, limited student interest, and budget and staffing constraints, the Retention and Graduation Council has determined that this strategy does not have the potential for large-scale impact, and has *eliminated* it from the revised Plan.

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Original Action Strategy 3: Implement Supplemental Instruction in CHEM 1211 courses. The intent of this strategy was to increase the success rate in this important gateway course for STEM majors. **Progress:** Supplemental Instruction (SI) was implemented in selected sections of CHEM 1211 in FY13 as part of an externally-funded initiative. Data on the impacts of SI on course success have not been thoroughly analyzed. However, an extensive body of literature exists in support of SI for at-risk college students. GPC has renewed its budget commitment to SI for FY14 and plans to implement a college-wide effort with potential for large-scale impact on student success.

Updated Goal #7: Expand Supplemental Instruction (SI) to high WDF courses. The first courses targeted for SI in FY14 are ENGL 1101, MATH 1111 and CHEM 1211. The success rates for students who participate in SI are expected to be 5% higher than for students who do not participate in SI. The SI Coordinator will be working closely with the staff in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to explore statistical relationships between time spent in SI and course success, and to assess whether and how SI may be more effective in some disciplines than in others. Based on these findings, SI will be expanded to other gateway courses that may be barriers to timely progression.

CCG Goal: Transform Remediation Through Curriculum, FYE and Immersion Programs

Original Action Strategy 1: Learning Support course redesign. The intent of this strategy was to increase the number of students exiting Learning Support in one semester. **Progress:** Through college-wide implementation of course redesign, the percentage of students successfully existing LS-MATH in one-semester has dramatically increased from 7.5% in FY12 to 19.9% in FY13. Data for LS-ENGL and READ have not been thoroughly analyzed for FY13. A pilot project for LS-ENGL will be implemented in Spring 2014. Students will be eligible for the pilot if they have fulfilled all LS-READ requirements and scored between 50-63 on the COMPASS Placement Test for English. Qualified students will enroll in ENGL 1101, along with a mandatory lab that meets for 2 hours and 45 minutes per week, which will prepare students to meet ENGL 0099 exit requirements as well as reinforce the concepts and assignments in ENGL 1101.

Updated Goal #8: Increase the number of students exiting all Learning Support courses in one semester. Systematic reporting will be developed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to provide progression data in all 3 subjects on a consistent annual basis.

Original Action Strategy 2: Impact of FYE on LS Student Success. The intent of this strategy was to increase the LS exit rates of students enrolled in FYE courses. **Progress:** No data were analyzed in FY13 to assess the effectiveness of this strategy. Isolating the impact of the FYE sections on student success has been challenging because the FYE course (GPCS 1010) is mandatory for students enrolled in Learning Support. Rather than consider this a separate initiative, this strategy is now a component of Updated Goal #7. We will continue to seek appropriate assessment measures in order to better understand the direct relationship between the FYE course and student success in Learning Support.

Original Action Strategy 3: My FoundationsLab (MFL) Remediation Pilot for Incoming GPC Students. The intent of this strategy was to increase the number of students testing out of Learning Support and entering collegiate level courses. GPC implemented the MFL pilot in Summer 2012 for Fall 2012 applicants. **Progress:** Only 239 students participated in the pilot. Use of MFL produced very little demonstrable improvement in COMPASS test scores in comparison with simply retesting without MFL. There was a slight (but not statistically significant) advantage for MFL users in testing out of LS Reading and English, but no advantage for MFL users in testing out of LS Math, which is the largest population of Learning Support students. The Retention and Graduation Council determined that the 2-week study period that was employed in the MFL pilot study was not sufficient to produce the desired outcomes. This strategy, as part of the admissions/testing process, has been *eliminated* from the revised plan. However, other uses of MFL over longer periods of time have shown more promising results, as described in Updated Goals #1 and #2 above.

PARTNERSHIP UPDATE AND OVERVIEW

The K-12 Initiative is a public-private partnership between DeKalb County School System (DCSS), DeKalb Chamber of Commerce (DCC) and Georgia Perimeter College (GPC). Working in cooperation with the Chamber's Education Committee led by Diane McClearn of Oglethorpe Power, Georgia Perimeter and DeKalb County Schools are developing a **district-wide Early College Option** to exponentially increase the high school graduation and college completion rates in DeKalb County, especially among historically underrepresented populations (i.e., first-generation college-goers, low-income and minority students). Early College gives "average achieving" students the opportunity to earn transferrable college credits that count toward a diploma and post-secondary degree while still in high school. The initiative targets students from neighborhood schools who want to seriously pursue 4-year college credentials and a professional career pathway.

GPC and DCSS will develop and administer the program while the DeKalb Chamber will leverage its corporate membership in support of the Community Involvement component. Member employees will be asked to volunteer in schools as guest speakers, tutors, mentors and organizers of site-specific projects. The Chamber will work with its educational partners to build three-way communication channels between school, home and community that are effective, reliable and informative for all stakeholders. Additionally, the Chamber and its members will be asked to help identify monetary resources to off-set the educational expenses for those students who "opt" into Early College. Ultimately, this effort will not only increase the high school and college completion rates, it will assist in building the state's economic base and curtail the loss of new employers and new job creation in Georgia by creating a credentialed, skilled and enthusiastic workforce pool for 21st Century jobs.

LESSONS LEARNED SUMMARY

- ✓ GPC recognizes the need to develop and commit to project initiatives that are ambitious, yet more realistic in supporting the "game-changing" concept in order to yield the greatest impact on student success.
- ✓ GPC recognizes the importance of developing strategies to support data collection and evaluation of effectiveness for project initiatives during the planning and development phase. This will ensure that appropriate consideration is given to data analysis needs, collection/methodology and reporting.
- ✓ GPC recognizes the need to assist stakeholders within the college who manage the various project initiatives supporting the CCG Plan to clearly understand and align their related strategies and outcomes in the context of retention, progression, and graduation metrics. This fundamental concept is necessary in order to appropriately allocate and leverage resources from other closely related project initiatives.
- ✓ With the support of GPC leadership, the college is moving towards embracing intrusive advising as a college-wide responsibility, incorporating academics, support staff and student affairs units in addition to the professional advising staff. This helped to maximize the use of staffing resources and better ensure that more students were able to receive advising. Students experienced a greater range of support across the service units. The implementation of 18 and 36 credit hour holds ensured that students had touch-points with college advisors to discuss strategies to reduce time-to-degree, and graduation and transfer goals. Students better understand their own responsibility for successful completion of programs. Advisors are able to take advising out of the office and go where the students are: in the classrooms, hallways, computer labs, and in using technology.
- ✓ A lesson learned from the early alert process is that students do not respond to emailing. It is necessary to reach out in other ways: phone calls, visiting classrooms, and by using periodic holds placed on their accounts. Advisors need to cover multiple topics when students come for office appointments. Additionally, not all faculty members readily provide reports, so it is necessary to push or follow up with them as well.