



Fort Valley State University

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Institutional Mission

The mission of Fort Valley State University is to advance the cause of education with emphasis upon fulfilling commitments that our community members have undertaken collectively. As an institution of the University System of Georgia, Fort Valley State University naturally embraces the principles articulated by the Core Mission Statement for State Universities as approved by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The university’s primary commitments include, among others, enhancement of teacher training programs grounded upon a liberal arts foundation, as reflective of over 110 years of experience and tradition. Additionally, the university recognizes with great pride and desires to further its responsibilities as Georgia’s only 1890 Land Grant institution by offering programming excellence in agriculture, agribusiness, family and consumer sciences, extension, technology and military science and leadership, as well as to further its traditions of excellence in programs in the liberal arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural and physical sciences.

Student Body Profile

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

FVSU enrollment reached a high in 2011 (3896) and now stands at 2594. The student retention percentage is slightly higher than it has been over the last two years but has averaged only 58% for the last three years, after having reached a peak of 77.8% in 2003. Much of the enrollment increase and retention decline can be attributed to the increase in the number of underprepared students that were admitted to FVSU over that period. Likewise, the influx of less-prepared students resulted in a decline in the four-year graduation rates by cohort, which was only 10.9% in 2009. The six-year graduation rate by cohort, likewise, has suffered a decline and is only 27.9% for the 2007 cohort. Clearly, FVSU serves a unique population. The majority of FVSU students are African-American (95%) and as of 2013, 80% of FVSU students received Pell Grant Funds. Approximately only 2% of the incoming freshmen class were considered adult learners (25 years or older), so the bulk of the student body is made up of high school graduates who are products of lower-performing high schools in the inner-cities or rural areas. Our slightly higher female population is consistent with national trends. These indicators were used as the committee devised the Complete College Georgia Plan for FVSU as benchmarks and as points of reference for strategies that needed to be developed and for historical perspective as the plan was plotted for the future of FVSU.

TABLE 1: ENROLLMENT, RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATE BY COHORT

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Male Enrollment												1529	1530	1574	1442	1286
Male Enrollment												2024	2198	2322	2126	1894
Total Enrollment			2561	2485	2446	2537	2558	2174	2176	2568	3106	3553	3728	3896	3568	3180
Retention by Cohort			72.7	75.3	77.8	67.9	74.8	75.2	74.5	71.1	63.5	58.93	58.4	59.3	72.7	
Four-Year Graduation Rate by Cohort			13.95	14.7	15.9	13.1	14.9	15.53	10.4	7.6	10.8	10.9				
Six-Year Graduation Rate by Cohort	30.1	25.6	36	32.3	35.1	33	34.3	33.6	29.4	27.9						

TABLE 2: ENROLLMENT BY ETHNICITY

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
African-American	1859	2017	2351	2850	3304	3510	3650	3100	3045
International	34	35	33	26	23	21	12	15	17
Caucasian	64	54	50	51	43	51	57	84	88
Hispanic	4	5	6	15	13	11	11	5	10
Asian	3	2	4	8	6	6	7	2	12
Native-Am.	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	2	2
Multiracial	8	4	9	18	23	17	11	42	6
Not Listed	0	0	0	0	7	16	7	0	0
Total	1974	2120	2454	2969	3419	3632	3755	3250	3180

TABLE 3: PELL RECIPIENT AND ADULT LEARNERS BY INCOMING FRESHMEN COHORT

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Enrolled Cohort	457	319	515	720	1071	1030	869	1063	669	538
Pell Recipients	283	190	335	503	742	761	709	893	563	435
Pell Recipients (%)	61.9	59.6	65.0	69.9	69.3	73.9	81.6	84.0	84.2	80.9
Adult Learners	17	10	26	26	22	44	49	48	19	10
Adult Learners (%)	3.72	3.13	5.05	3.61	2.05	4.27	5.64	4.52	2.84	1.86

INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by Fort Valley State University “on time”.

Challenges: Only 10% of FVSU students graduate in four years. This low graduation rate in four years means higher debt accumulation for students and increases in attrition. Many FVSU students graduate with an excessive amount of earned credit hours. FVSU does not have a learning analytic system that allows for immediate recognition of this phenomenon by all internal stakeholders; however, the Institutional Research Office (only three employees) provides pertinent data and reports. Additionally, the culture of being receptive of data and making decisions must be enhanced. Dr. Ivelaw L. Griffith, President at FVSU, has increased receptivity to data driven decision-making processes.

Strategy

- a. Examine data in FVSU’s Banner System for students who are within 20 to 30 credit hours from completion and notify department chairs, advisors and students of courses needed for completion and actions to be completed for graduation.
- b. Assess all major programs of study to shorten those which greatly exceed 21 credit hours.
- c. Encourage all undergraduate students to enroll in fifteen hours each semester.
- d. Develop reverse articulation agreements with Georgia colleges.

Steps Taken

- a. Data were provided to all Deans during Deans’ Council meetings. All Deans met with their school leaders in program areas and began to develop plans to include reviewing balance sheets and transcripts for students who have more than 100 credit hours to determine a likely graduation date. Degree Works will be used as a tool to ensure success of this strategy in the future. Frequently, students’ coursework may have gotten off-track for a specific major, but can still be packaged for a degree in Liberal Studies, thus enabling the students to graduate in four years.
- b. Conversations have begun within the colleges about re-examining the majors, many of which exceed the required seven courses. Shorter majors would encourage graduation within four years.
- c. Unless restricted by being on Academic Probation, all students are being encouraged by their advisors to enroll in at least 15 credits each semester. That is the number of credits needed to graduate within four years.
- d. FVSU has developed MOUs with local colleges, like Central Georgia Technical College and Georgia Military College that will allow students to complete their associates or bachelor’s degrees at FVSU. Likewise, students who begin matriculation at FVSU can complete associates degrees at these other schools.

Goal: Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate.

Challenges: Three years ago FVSU, as a cost saving strategy, decentralized the advising process. This decentralization of these services transferred all advising duties to faculty members at FVSU. This strategy was not successful as the implementation of

the strategy was not well planned and many students did not understand the new approach especially new students. As this decentralization has now been reversed, the issue of funding has become very prevalent; however, funds have been allocated to reengineer the advisement process and a new Advising center has been established.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Steps Taken</i>
<p>a. Reengineer the advising process at FVSU to include professional advisors and faculty advisors.</p> <p>b. Provide advisement tailored to specific student types and specific mediation points such as initial advisement, advisement when students are identified as at-risk, pre-registration advisement, and pre-graduation advisement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire Professional Advisors to strengthen the advising process at FVSU. • Train faculty advisors. <p>c. Provide Supplemental Instruction (SI) and expand peer tutoring for traditionally difficult courses with high D, F, W rates.</p>	<p>a. New advisors have been hired along with a new Director of Advisement. Advisement for freshmen and sophomores will be done in the Academic Advising Center. Faculty Advisors will advise juniors and seniors. Both groups of advisors will monitor all students that are assigned to them. In addition, a limited number of faculty will be assigned to work within the Center for Retention Services to assist with advising of freshmen and sophomores, especially during peak periods.</p> <p>b. An advisement manual was prepared; advisors are being trained with materials from NACADA (National Academic Advisement Association) and have attended the national conference in October 2014. Initial advisement will be summer for new students. Meet/Greet sessions at the beginning of the Fall Semester have been established and a Grand Opening Ceremony for the New Advisement Center took place. October has been designated as Advising Month and advisement information sessions have been developed. Registration and Post-Registration follow-up meetings are now mandated with spring semester following a similar plan.</p> <p>c. Supplemental Instruction has been implemented in the Pre-College Academy launched in fall 2014. Advisors and Lab Coordinators will receive D/F lists from ENGL 1101, 1102, MATH 1101, 1111, HIST 1111/1112, and Learning Support courses and assign tutors to the students that failed the courses. These sessions will be mandated.</p>

Goal: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by Fort Valley State University.

Challenges: In previous years FVSU admitted high numbers of unqualified students, which impacted the retention rates and the overall culture at FVSU. Thus, FVSU’s student body is still populated by students who are at-risk and, consequently, in danger of not completing their bachelor’s degrees.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Steps Taken</i>
<p>a. Expand and enhance the relationship with local high school and middle school counselors and principles.</p> <p>b. Initiate the “Adopt-a-High-School” program.</p> <p>c. Begin to offer Associates Degrees.</p> <p>d. Launch the Pre-College Academy</p> <p>e. Launch University College</p>	<p>a. The Office of Recruitment and Admissions developed a robust Recruitment Plan in October of 2013 that included enhanced, regular outreach and communication with local public and private high schools. The VP for Student Success and Enrollment Management and the Director of Recruitment and Admissions made personal visits to the superintendents of service area school systems and the VP for Student Success/Enrollment Management and the Dean of Students made a presentation to the Middle Georgia RESA Board of Control. These activities are designed to increase the prominence of FVSU in the local community and to, therefore, increase enrollment.</p> <p>b. All faculty and Staff of FVSU have been asked to made contact with at least one high school, make personal contact with one or more individuals there, provide recruiting materials, and, whenever possible, make personal presentations to the students about FVSU. This effort is designed to increase FVSU’s enrollment numbers and to provide more students the opportunity to obtain a college degree.</p> <p>c. Because the new funding model will allow some credit to institutions for the awarding of associates degrees, FVSU will, once again, be awarding associates degrees to its students. This will allow those students who persist for at least two years to receive a degree for the time spent on campus.</p> <p>d. FVSU’s first Pre-College Academy began October 22, 2014 and is planned to end November 21, 2014. Twenty-eight students, who had previously been rejected for enrollment at FVSU, are being given an opportunity to raise their skill levels in reading, writing, and mathematics and to prove themselves college-ready for admission in spring 2015. These are students who would not have had an opportunity to gain a college degree without this program.</p> <p>e. University College, planned for spring 2015, is a program designed specifically for the</p>

students who would ordinarily be rejected for admission to FVSU, but who would be allowed entry as a Limited Admit. These students will be identified for the program based on their having a high school GPA of no less than 2.7. The program will surround these students with an array of support services (Supplemental Instruction, gateway courses with co-requisite Learning Support, tutoring, mentoring, intrusive advising, etc.) that will assist in their successful matriculation. These students will be limited to no more than 40% of the entering class.

- f. FVSU Outreach Programs along with Tutors and FVSU student leaders will conduct enrichment programs with local K-12 schools to increase academic and social preparation in the area.
- f. Upward Bound: Upward Bound provides instruction in required core curriculum in mathematics through pre-calculus, laboratory science, foreign language, composition and literature and other electives. Currently Upward Bound serves (70) students in grades 9-12 from Peach County and Macon County. The program's goals are to increase the rate at which participants complete high school and enroll in and graduate from college. Educational Talent Search Field Representatives are providing ongoing academic activities, career development activities, personal development activities via workshops and group counseling, and campus visits for middle school and high school participants in the area to increase academic and social preparation in the nine county target areas for the ultimate goal of postsecondary placement.

SUMMARY OF GOALS, HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 Use Data Analytics
 General Description: Make full use of the D2L course management system to identify at-risk students early in the term. After faculty identifies these students, Center for Retention Services staff will contact students, answer questions, and make appropriate referrals designed to help the students persist to second year.
 Internal Partners: Faculty, Staff, Administrators and Students
 Measure of Success: Data Analytics purchased and Implemented.
 Status: Ongoing
 Progress: Identified at-risk and underprepared students will be assigned to a Retention Specialist. Each time these students see their Retention Specialist; they must see their Academic Advisor. Advisors will assist with assigning Tutorial Services and monitoring their attendance with tutorials. Currently, this activity is in progress as Noel Levitz Retention Management System is being used to identify at-risk students.

Activity 2 Complete Integration of Supplemental Instruction
 General Description: Provide Supplemental Instruction (SI) and expand peer tutoring for traditionally difficult courses with high D, F, W rates.
 Internal Partners: Faculty, Staff, Administrators and Students
 Measure of Success: Certified Supplemental Instructors in place and a Certified Supplemental Supervisor Identified with at least 20 Courses using this approach.
 Status: Ongoing
 Progress: A Supplemental Instruction (SI) Supervisor has been identified and received certification. More classes are being added to the Supplemental Instruction List. Additionally, Advisors and the SI Supervisor will receive D/F grades lists from barrier level courses to determine "high need" courses.

Activity 3 Institutionalize the Center for Retention Services
 General Description: Develop an aggressive campaign by the Center for Retention Services for providing needed intrusive services to all incoming freshmen students to include increased participation in retention sessions and participation in tutoring and supplemental instruction.
 Internal Partners: Faculty, Staff, Administrators and Students
 Measure of Success: FVSU will increase retention, progression, and Graduation rates as stated in the CCG Plan.
 Status: Ongoing
 Progress: The processes have been established and implemented for providing incoming students with intrusive retention services. Students are assigned to Retention Specialist upon enrollment and are monitored and tracked accordingly. Furthermore, Retention Specialists meet with students regularly to address concerns and help develop appropriate academic behaviors. Lastly, a mentoring program is being developed that

will connect incoming students with a faculty, staff, peer, and/or alumni mentor to help navigate the transition into the college environment.

Activity 4

Intrusive Advising

General Description

Provide customized academic support services to students on academic probation and academic warning, as well as those on warning for violating Standard Academic Performance (SAP) requirements. FVSU will develop proactive and intrusive intervention strategies.

Internal Partners

Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Alumni, and Students

Measure of Success

Students graduating on time and registering for 15 or more credit hours per semester based on their degree program.

Status

Ongoing

Progress

Retention Specialists are assigned to students on Academic Probation, Academic Warning, and SAP violators. Each time these students see their Retention Specialist; they must see their Academic Advisor. Advisors will assist with assigning Tutorial Services and monitoring their attendance with tutorials. Students must attend tutorials at least 10 times during the semester.

Students on probation work closely with Retention Specialists (RS) to develop Academic Improvement Plans and are placed on an academic contract to hold students accountable. Additionally, students meet with Retention Specialists bi-weekly to discuss improving academically and developing appropriate academic behaviors.

Activity 5

Expand Adult Learning Opportunities

General Description

1. Expand efforts to identify needs and increase access to FVSU programs and degree completion for adults returning to college, active military, and current student veterans to include creating additional assessment, planning, and intentional programs and services as needed.
2. Create a virtual one-stop-shop for military students, including online students, to include admissions, registration, advisement, graduation applications, and financial aid counseling.
3. Through Advance2Go, a project funded by the Adult Learning Consortium, FVSU will provide assessment, competency-based introduction in math, reading, and writing skills in preparation for the COMPASS exam, support and instruction in learning and personal strategies, career counseling, and Prior Learning Assessment evaluation. Initially, Advance2Go will include marketing and identification of adults who may benefit from the program as they begin or reenter college.
4. Launch the FVSU "Recruitback" program.

Internal Partners

Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Alumni, and Students. FVSU is a member of the Adult Learning Consortium and of Solders2Scholars.

Measure of Success

An increase in enrollment of Adult learners at FVSU.

Status

Ongoing

Progress

One faculty member is assigned to maintain records of students with potential to earn credit through Prior Learning Assessment and enlist faculty support to offer PLA opportunities to adult learners and military. Hiring of a military liaison/resource center coordinator has been requested to implement one-stop process. The VA certifying official is responding to active military recruits who indicate an interest in FVSU through CONAP immediately.

The VA certifying official is completing transfer of credit forms based on the ACE Guide and forwarding these to departments where veterans have chosen to major so veterans can receive academic credit they are entitled.

Postcards will be sent to all students who attended Fort Valley State University but who stopped out without receiving a degree, from 1990 to the present. The communication will invite these adult students to return to FVSU under the terms of the new Academic Renewal policy.

Activity 6

Intrusive Financial Aid Advising

General Description

Identify and implement initiatives to address financial needs of students from these populations in a timely fashion.

Proposed efforts will include seeking outside funds, changing policies on campus, and providing financial literacy education.

Internal Partners

Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Alumni, and Students

Measure of Success

Decrease in student complaints in regards to Financial Aid.

Status

Ongoing

Progress

The reorganization of the Office of Financial Aid, to include the addition of a Banner Systems Analyst, has resulted in the development of a proper business plan for Financial Aid operations. This includes the

timely notification of students who have been selected for verification; placed on SAP dismissal, need to submit missing documentation, etc. The University has contracted with a default management firm to provide financial literacy education to students and their parents and to decrease the FVSU Cohort Default Rate. The office of Institutional Research Planning and Effectiveness worked to develop flow charts to outline Financial Aid Processes. This was done to identify gaps in the processes that could cause conflicts with students completing the overall process in a timely manner. Additionally, this will aid the department in identifying issues for the non-traditional students in the educational pipeline as well.

Activity 7

Launch Pre-College Academy

General Description

Students formerly rejected for admission to FVSU, but who meet our minimum criteria, are invited to attend a five-week, intensive program designed to fortify their skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. Based on their successful completion of this program, they become candidates for admission to the University College as FVSU students the following semester.

Internal Partners

Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Alumni, and Students

Measure of Success

Course embedded assessments will be used to measure success within the program.

Status

New

Progress

The first class began October 22, 2014 and is scheduled to conclude November 21, 2014. Complete Program Evaluation is due December 2104. Already, seventeen of the students in the Pre-College Academy would qualify for admission into University College. Future recruiting for restrict enrollment in the Pre-College Academy to those with high school GPAs of between 2.2 and 2.7.

Activity 8

Institute University College.

General Description

This program, scheduled to launch spring 2015, is designed to provide the maximum learning support to those students who enter the university not yet college-ready. Minimum criteria for admission into University College are high school GPA greater than 2.7 or successful completion of the Pre-College program.

Internal Partners

Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Alumni, and Students

Measure of Success

Successful retention of freshmen and progression to the sophomore year

Status

New

Progress

Recruiting is now underway for admission.

OBSERVATIONS

What strategies and activities have been most successful? What have been least effective? Has your institution made adjustments to completion activities over the past three years? If so, please explain why.

Fort Valley State University has had success in the shift of culture as it relates to being cognizant of retention, progression, and graduation efforts. This effort has been assisted by an infusion of direction and intentional efforts of the new President, Dr. Ivelaw L. Griffith. Dr. Griffith has organized strategic taskforces to deal with issues to include enrollment management, collaboration/partnership development, honors and undergraduate research programs, globalization strategies, special populations' recruitment and adult/military student populations.

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

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

Professional Advisors, which promote stronger communication and less students falling through the cracks.

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

Dr. Ivelaw L. Griffith, President. By way of this relationship, seven campus leaders were funded to participate in the AVID Summer Institute by an external source.

- The Pre-College Academy appears to be quite promising. Based upon the response received, we could have enrolled even more students in the initial class. Though the decision was made to keep this class small, future enrollments should serve as a strong pipeline to enrollment.
- Administrators examined data at FVSU for students who are minimal hours from graduation but do not seem to be completing the final steps. By doing this, FVSU was able to notify Department Chairs, advisors, and students of courses needed for completion and actions to be completed for graduation. This intentional step has allowed for many visionary conversations about why this phenomenon occurs, but now will end with some solutions to this occurrence, especially if degree programs can be shortened.
- Fort Valley State University has not been successful at providing additional scholarship funds for low income and first generation populations. Scholarships have been a major point of contention as the institution is not in a position to increase the amount of scholarships awarded.
- FVSU employed a working group for Financial Aid processes and the entire process was mapped out and new processes and deadlines were established. However, FVSU still encounters problems with

technology and infrastructure in regards to processing and eliminating/reducing lines and other obstacles. Many of the past problems were attributable to personnel. A new Financial Aid Director has been hired.

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

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