



# Albany State University

## INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

The primary mission of Albany State University (ASU) is to educate students to become outstanding contributors to society. To that end, ASU offers Bachelor's, Master's and Education Specialist degrees, and post-Masters certificates. The University emphasizes the liberal arts as the foundation for all learning by exposing students to the humanities, fine arts, social sciences and the sciences. In addition, global learning is fostered through a broad-based curriculum, diverse University activities and the expanding use of technology. These programs and activities are executed in conjunction with a major goal of ASU's Strategic Plan which guiding principle maintains that "leadership in community and global partnerships and service" can impact retention through various internships and student academic and non-academic activities relative to their majors. Involvement in service learning activities instill a sense of purpose and boost self-esteem, making the student more likely to recognize personal and professional opportunities for growth.

ASU is categorized as a historically black college and university (HBCU), in that it was founded to serve the educational needs of African Americans. While the University has evolved during the past 100 years of its existence to serve an increasingly diverse population, its primary student demographic remains largely African American. In 2014-2015, ASU enrolled 3,910 students (3,316 of whom were undergraduates). There were 2,698 females (69%) and 1,212 males (31%). Overall enrollment dipped slightly from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014 (down 350/8%). Retention from freshman to sophomore year decreased to 69% in 2014, from 70% in 2013 (Appendix A). The 6-year graduation rate also decreased from 42% in 2013 to 40% in 2014 (Appendix B), which ranked ASU third among USG Universities.

ASU has taken several campus-wide actions designed to support the goals of its Complete College Georgia (CCG) Plan. In spring of 2013, each of its 4 Colleges was asked to develop specific action plans in alignment with the goals of its CCG plan. The action plans were tied directly to the degree majors offered within the College and included dates for accomplishment as well as individuals responsible. The intention was to create a deeper sense of ownership by each College and its respective faculties. In addition, each College level plan addresses how it will support the campus-wide activities of the Academic Advising and Retention Center and the Academic Success Unit. In Spring 2015 faculty in each department evaluated their progress for the 4 goals: reduce midterm deficiencies, increase retention rates, increase graduation rates, and establish/expand partnerships. During the Fall 2015 Faculty/Staff Conference, the plans' progress, results, and use of results were shared with all ASU personnel for input. For example, each department expounded on how students were referred to peer tutoring or supplemental instruction if their exam scores were not at C or higher in any class by weeks 4-5 of the semester. The Academic Advisement and Retention Center provided colleges and departments with grade distributions by course to ensure that all faculty were aware of student progress.

Each college has implemented or expanded the number of on-campus and off-campus engagement opportunities available to students in their majors. As examples: the College of Business continued to use "Cash Mobs" for local and area businesses, providing students insight into the power of the average person to influence the economic success of local business. In Spring Semester 2015, the College of Business (COB) convened a week-long meeting among members of their advisory board, COB students and COB faculty to investigate the curriculum, internship experiences and other business-related opportunities for COB students with area employers. As a result, the COB strengthened the student learning outcomes in the internship courses and identified additional opportunities for skill-building for students. The College of Education has implemented study activities for area public school students, linking future teachers to methods and practices that instill a desire in public school students for success and further education, leading them to be productive citizens. The music majors from the College of Arts and Humanities perform for area schools, civic and service organizations; an example is providing musical performances at area nursing homes where students interact with residents following their performances.

## INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Albany State University's 2014-2015 goals were to 1) reduce mid-term and final semester academic deficiencies by 2% per year over the next 5 years; 2) increase ASU's retention rate to 70% by 2017 and 3) increase ASU's graduation rate to 45% by 2017. During AY 2014, ASU came up short by a mere 1% in reaching its retention goal of 70% and a slight decrease in graduation rate to 40%. Data collected and maintained by the Office of Institutional Research showed a 3% decline in deficiencies from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014.

In 2014-2015, 4 of 8 Learning Support (LS) students enrolled in ENGL 0989 progressed to ENGL 0999. Fourteen of 26 LS students enrolled jointly in ENGL 0999 and ENGL 1101 exited from Learning Support and received academic credit for ENGL 1101. In 2014-2015, 29 of 55 LS students enrolled in MATH 0989 progressed to MATH 0999. Of the 80 students jointly enrolled in MATH 0999 and MATH 1111, 55 percent exited Learning Support and received academic credit for MATH 1111. When reviewing fully admitted students in credit-bearing courses who required remediation, there was a decline in the number from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014. In Fall 2013, 177 students required remediation in English, reading (or combined English/reading), and mathematics. In fall 2014, 154 students required the same remediation support.

For 2015-2016, ASU's goals will be to: 1) target the increase of graduations of college students and students from racial/ethnic minorities; 2) shorten the time to degree completion; and 3) increase the likelihood of degree completion

by changes in remediation. ASU colleges and departments will continue implementing strategies to increase graduation rates that include timelines, responsible persons, expected outcome dates, and reporting of progress to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs as noted in the previous discussion of the College-wide CCG plans each College developed. Some of the strategies include better and more frequent academic advisement by the Academic Advising and Retention Center (AARC) and by department faculty; clearer delineation of required course offerings and scheduling and adherence to student's program of study; earlier career counseling for different majors; better use of Degree Works and Grades First to better identification of students who would benefit from tutoring and supplemental instruction; and more student-faculty engagement activities. ASU will continue to increase the use of curriculum mapping in all majors to identify gaps in content and institute ways to close the gaps. Colleges will expand on their alumni databases speakers who can share with students their models of success and also serve as student mentors. Continued collecting and reporting of these data will help focus the activities needed for improved retention and graduation. ASU has set the retention rate to 70.25% and the graduation rate to 42% for 2015-2016.

ASU will shorten time to degree completion by use of dual enrollment and prior learning assessment. During 2014-2015, ASU had Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Dougherty County Early College and with Deerfield Windsor School. Thirty-six Early College students were enrolled in ASU courses in Fall 2014 and 18 in Spring 2015. Four of the 20 Early College students who graduated from high school were either Valedictorian or Salutatorian of their high school. Twenty-three DCSS students have been admitted to ASU for the Fall Semester, 12 have registered, and other students have applied. Fourteen Deerfield Windsor students were enrolled through ASU in Fall 2014 and 11 in Spring 2015, both of its top two honor graduates attended ASU in 2014-15. Fourteen DWS students are already admitted to ASU for Fall 2015. In the spring of 2015, ASU personnel met with the Dougherty County Curriculum Director and high school principals/assistant principals about the progress of dual enrollment. Beginning in Spring 2015, the Dougherty County School System consolidated its dual enrollment to meet Move on When Ready (MOWR) guidelines and is providing additional options for its students. ASU faculty will continue to interact and provide professional development to local and area middle and high school teachers in ways to better prepare public school students for college readiness.

ASU will increase the likelihood of degree completion by enhancing additional remediation activities. Some of the enhancement activities include continued identification of students requiring additional learning support and enrollment in identified English and math courses that have a supplemental learning lab in order to increase academic success. Workshops will be provided for faculty in order to share effective teaching strategies. Throughout each semester, workshops, peer tutoring, teaching assistants, and supplemental instruction in areas identified as challenging will be offered to students. In addition, organizations such as the Center for the African American Male (not restricted to males) will offer study sessions, as well as counseling and personal and professional development of students. Activities will be evaluated at the end of Fall and Spring semesters to note the more effective activities as well as the suggestions to improve remediation which can then be incorporated in the following year.

In July 2014, Albany State University and Darton State College signed four articulation agreements (Criminal Justice, Forensic Science, Music Education, and Social Work). In Spring semester 2015, ASU faculty planned to teach two upper level ASU courses on the Darton campus – one each from Forensic Science and Criminal Justice. Based on space, only one ASU Forensic Science course by an ASU faculty member was offered at Darton in Spring Semester 2015. Negotiations for additional courses are ongoing. Although the articulation agreement with Darton in music education remains current, ASU has not received any students from Darton in music education; however, we have received one student who is pursuing the Bachelor of Arts in Music.

The ASU College of Business continues to explore an articulation agreement with Darton State College for Supply Chain and Logistics Management (SCLM). Currently, Darton State offers a certificate program and has expressed an interest in ASU assisting Darton to build the certificate program into an associate degree in SCLM, thus allowing their associate degree graduates to transfer to ASU to earn a Bachelor's degree in SCLM. In the Spring semester 2014, there was an addition of over 20 areas to the Albany State University-Albany Technical college articulation agreement for students with an Associate in Applied Science in Technology Management to complete the Bachelor of Applied Science in Technology Management at ASU, and 10 have applied for or begun classes toward the BAS at ASU. In 2014-15 the COB and the Online Admissions Office have recruited more actively at the technical colleges. Expanding the number of articulations between ASU and other institutions will lead to easier transition for students and increase the number of Georgia residents earning bachelor degrees.

## **SUMMARY OF GOALS, HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Goal 1: (CCG #1) Increase the Number of Undergraduate Degrees Awarded By ASU.**

ASU will continue to target first generation college students and students from racial/ethnic minorities. Data on these students will be disaggregated from their cohort with regards toward progression toward graduation.

The high impact strategy for increasing the number of undergraduate degrees at ASU is to effectively implement the action plans developed by each department in the four colleges which include implementing and intensifying target advising for students who are not progressing through the Early Alert System, actively recruiting military personnel through The Veteran Office for Institutional Community Engagement (VOICE), developing both a comprehensive University Diversity and Retention Plan as well as strategies from supporting departments and organizations such as AARC and CAAM. Each department identified increased intrusive and encompassing advisement for all students. Progress in 2015-2016 will be strengthened by ensuring that each department develops an action plan for greater faculty-student involvement in student success. AARC increased the use of Grades First to inform faculty and department chairs of students who would benefit from involvement in supplemental instruction, peer tutoring, etc. Each

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college will be required to provide the Office of Academic Affairs with updates on the status of implementation of these plans and an end-of-the-year accomplishment report will be required, using the targeted goals set. The action plans will be used for improved student success, to assess the effectiveness of the plans, and to frame revisions to the goals/actions for the following year. Data will be submitted each semester to the IR Director for analysis and dissemination of findings.

Interim measures of Progress and Measures of Success: In Fall 2012, the retention rate was 67%, increasing to 70% in Fall 2013, and decreasing to 69% in Fall 2014. The 6-year graduation rate for the freshman cohort entering in 2006 was 39%; for the 2007 cohort the rate was 42% but decreased to 40% for the 2008 cohort. ASU ranks number 3 among Georgia Universities in 6 year graduation rates.

**Goal 1:) Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by ASU for traditionally underserved populations (Hispanic, veteran and military personnel, and adult learners)**

Strategy/Activity	Target	Measure of Progress	Assessment	Responsible Division
Implement and intensify targeted advising for students in collaboration with faculty who are not progressing through Early Alert System.	3% increase in students achieving advising through the Early Alert System	% of students who have not successfully completed required Math or English course upon completion of 20 hours	Compare change in the % of students who have not completed at least one English and one Math upon reaching 20 credit hours from Fall 2015 baseline	AARC
Actively recruit military personnel through The Veteran Office for Institutional Community Engagement (VOICE) veteran support service center	3% increase	# of military personnel applying as well as number of admissions	Compare change in the number of military applying and accepts from Fall 2015 baseline	VOICE Admissions ARC
Actively recruit Hispanic/Latino students	3% increase	# of Hispanic, students	Compare change in the number of Hispanic students who apply, those accepted, and those enrolled from Fall 2015 baseline	Admissions
Develop a Comprehensive University Diversity Plan	Completion of Plan	Completed Plan approved by President & Cabinet	Completion and Implementation of Plan	Admissions
Develop a Comprehensive University Retention Plan	Completion of Plan	Completed Plan approved by President & Cabinet	Completion and Implementation of Plan	Led by AARC
Comprehensive Financial Aid Advising	10% Decrease in student withdrawals/noncompliance in reference to Financial Aid	% of decrease in reference to Financial Aid	Financial Aid discrepancies	Enrollment Management Director Financial Aid

**Goal 2: (CCG #6) Shorten time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school and by awarding credit for prior learning that is verified by appropriate assessment.**

In order to shorten time to degree completion, ASU is currently a) offering dual/joint enrollment programs for high school students; b) awarding credit based on Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate scores/exams; c) awarding credit based on assessment of prior learning via CLEP or DSST scores; d) awarding credit based on ACE credit; e) assigning an enrollment management specialist (advisor) solely for high school students, parents, and counselors to provide them with a dual enrollment orientation, and encourage dual enrollment students to matriculate to ASU, and f)

university open house for students and parents to learn about dual enrollment opportunities.

Progress in 2014-2015: Fifty-three Dougherty County Early College (DCEC) students enrolled as dual enrolled students in Fall 2013; 36 students enrolled in Fall 2014; and 12 have registered for Fall 2015. A decision by the Dougherty County School System to move the students at the DCEC from the ASU campus to one of the high schools in the county or allow the students to enroll in the high school closest to their homes resulted in fewer Early College students enrolled in fall 2015, confirming ASU’s impetus to continue reaching out to the Dougherty County high schools as well as other high schools in the region to establish new Dual Enrollment agreements. The ASU recruitment team with representatives from Admissions, Financial Aid, Online Learning and Academic Affairs met at various times with principals or counselors from five area high schools during the year. An agreement was reached with one of the high schools, and eligible students are to enroll in spring 2016. Twelve of the Early College students who graduated in May of 2015 enrolled early as regular college students at ASU beginning either in the Summer or for the Fall 2015 semester. ASU will continue to maintain data on the dual enrolled students. One concern voiced by the DCSS was transportation of students wishing to participate in dual-enrollment at ASU. An agreement was made to allow academically qualified DCSS teachers to be part-time ASU faculty and use the ASU syllabus for each course, thus allowing some students to remain in their schools rather than being transported to and from the ASU campus. Faculty credentials are being reviewed.

Deerfield Windsor School (DWS) continues to actively work with ASU in dual enrollment of their students and the Counselor sits with the students interested in dual enrollment prior to the end of their sophomore or junior year and assists them in completing their FAFSA and ACCEL applications for the coming year. ASU’s meetings with DWS administration, parents and students continue to see an increased interest in dual enrollment – some with ASU or others with our area state college.

In July 2015, the new Enrollment Management Associate Provost assigned two experienced staff members to recruit at the area high schools and to serve as liaisons at the local technical college and the state college with a goal of increasing the transition from the student’s previous institution to ASU. One of these liaisons will also coordinate courses for ASU at the Cordele campus to be shared with Darton State College.

ASU strategy to retain dual enrollment students as ASU freshmen by increasing matriculation rates of dual enrollment students to at least 3% in Fall 2016 will begin in Fall 2015 and will be facilitated by Enrollment Management. The Director of Admissions will identify dual enrollment students to department deans and chairs to be contacted on the basis on their anticipated major for recruitment in their projected major. ASU recruiters will also actively contact these dual enrollment students with ASU information to retain dual enrollment students as ASU Freshman.

ASU Open Houses for college-bound high school students will provide students with a first-hand look at the benefits of attending Albany State University. The Open Houses will include: Information Fair – Chat with representatives from ASU organizations and offices while gathering information and giveaways. Academic Sessions – Hear from faculty, staff and students within the schools/colleges, campus and residence hall tours. Information Sessions- Topics such as admission requirements for transfer students, military veterans as well as information regarding the application and financial aid processes.

**Goal 2:) Shorten time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school and by awarding credit for prior learning that is verified by appropriate assessment**

Strategy	Target	Measure of Progress	Assessment	Responsible Division
Offering increased dual/joint enrollment programs for high school students	3% increase in Dual enrollment students  3% increase in dual enrollment credits successfully obtained	# dual enrolled students  Number of credits awarded to dual enrolled students  Number of high schools from which ASU draws dual enrolled students.	Increase in # of dual enrollment Students from Fall 2014 baseline  # of credits/semesters from Fall 2014 baseline	AARC
Awarding credit based on Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate scores/exams	3% increase in credit awarded based on Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate scores/exams	Credit hours awarded	Credit hours awarded	OAS&R
Awarding credit based on	3% increase in number of	Number of exams administered	Exams/Scores	OAS&R

assessment of prior learning via CLEP, ACE or DSST scores	exams administered  3% increase in number of credits awarded based on CLEP scores	Number of credits awarded based on CLEP scores		
Assign an Enrollment Management Specialist (Advisor) for high school students, parents, and counselors to provide information assist with orientations, complete registration, and encourage students to matriculate to ASU	Assignment of EM person	Hiring of EMS	Hiring of EMS	Enrollment Management
University Open House for parents and students who visit to learn about dual enrollment opportunities	# of high school students who attend Open House	# of high school students who apply & enroll as a result of Open House	Open House Attendance/Applications	Enrollment Management

**Goal 3: (CCG #7) Increase the likelihood of degree completion by transforming the way that remediation is accomplished.**

ASU is currently pursuing the following strategies to address degree completion by initiating the USG guidelines for how remediation is accomplished: a) enrolling students most in need of remediation in gateway collegiate courses in English and mathematics, with corequisite Learning Support; b) combining remediation in English and reading; c) ensuring that all remediation is targeted toward supporting students in the skills they need to pass the collegiate course; and d) ensuring that students have unlimited “attempts” to complete corequisite remediation.

In Fall 2014, ASU’s students’ mid-term course success rate was 73% (up from 2013’s mid-term success rate of 72%), and the final success rate of 86% for the semester (up from Fall 2013’s rate of 83%). Grades First was used by AARC and faculty to contact students and recommend additional support. AARC sends early alerts to faculty of freshmen students, students on probation, students re-admitted after academic suspensions, and student athletes for advisement and academic support. All faculty continue to use Desire-2-Learn (D2L) in all courses, both online and face-to-face, for reporting attendance and grades and posting course syllabi and supplemental materials. D2L allows for tracking of attendance as well as monitoring of the academic progress of students. AARC generates e-reports on student progress for each student’s advisor, department chair, designated instructors and the Provost/VPAA one quarter of the way through each semester. Data on student use of supplemental instruction were collected by AARC in 2014-2015, and those areas offering the greatest usage and support for students were identified. In the Fall of 2013, the Academic Success Unit (formerly Learning Support) implemented credit-bearing courses in English and math and also developed a Learning Community designed to instill skills necessary to succeed in and complete college. In the fall of 2013, 177 students required remediation in English (or combined English/reading), reading, and mathematics. In the Fall 2014, 154 students required remediation in English (or combined English/reading), reading, and mathematics [English or combined English/Reading]. The College of Sciences & Health Professions offered study sessions each week in math, science and nursing and others as indicated. The Academic Advising and Retention Center monitored progress in all core courses identified as challenging and established study sessions for these courses.

Goal 3: Increase the likelihood of degree completion by transforming the way that remediation is accomplished.

Strategy	Target	Measure of Progress	Assessment	Responsible Division
Enrolling students most in need of remediation in gateway collegiate courses in English and mathematics, with corequisite Learning Support	10% increase in student enrollment over three years	% increase	Student Enrollment/Attendance Fall 2013 baseline data	Academic Success Unit (Learning Support) OIE
Combining remediation in English and reading	10% increase in student enrollment over three years	% increase	Student Enrollment/Attendance Fall 2013 baseline data	AARC OIE
Ensuring that all remediation is targeted toward supporting students in the skills they need to pass the collegiate course	10% increase in passing collegiate courses over three years	% increase	Passing rates over three years Fall 2014 baseline data	AARC OIE
Ensuring that students have unlimited “attempts” to complete corequisite remediation	Provide training for enrollment management, faculty and advisors so that students are appropriately enrolled and advised	Number of trainings/number attending training	Trainings/Student attempts	ASU Enrollment Management AARC OIE

**OBSERVATIONS**

Increasing the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by ASU, shorten the time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school and by awarding credit for prior learning that is verified by appropriate assessment, and increasing the likelihood of degree completion by transforming the way that remediation is accomplished are all continuous performance goals and targets for improvements at the University. Current academic and operational plans identified include strategies and measures that are intended to accomplish these goals.

ASU came up short by a mere 1% in reaching its retention goal of 70% and a decrease in the 6-year graduation rate from 42% to 40% was an area of University concern. In the Spring of 2015, ASU hired a new Enrollment Management Associate Provost who has begun to place increased emphasis on the design, implementation, and management of a strategic, comprehensive, and integrated enrollment management program at ASU. The Enrollment Management Associate Provost has implemented activities such as ASU liaisons, developing an ASU Retention Plan, and working closely with the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Offices of Admissions, Registrar, Financial Aid, New Student Orientation, Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the ASU Senior Leadership Team in order to facilitate student recruitment, retention, and graduation successes. These efforts, along with the comprehensive enrollment management plan will not only build on the University’s current enrollment successes, but also position the University to achieve future enrollment and retention goals.

ASU is committed to shortening the time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit as well as by continuing to target military personnel; therefore, ASU continues to be a designated military-friendly campus. Military spouses have enrolled in programs such as nursing and education. Additionally, the University has a Military Liaison who works with veterans and their families. ASU has maintained its statewide articulation agreement with the Technical College System of Georgia for the Fire Service Program and continues to add MOUs with area technical colleges. As noted earlier in this report, in 2014, ASU signed four articulation agreements with Darton State College and is working on admissions and reverse transfer opportunities with Darton. The results of these articulation agreements have been slow in the enrollment of new students but have resulted in more contacts than previously. One student who transferred from the technical program has completed his BAS in Fire Services and three others are in the process of being admitted into the program. One ASU student has completed Reverse Transfer and has received her associate degree. Two additional ASU students are in the process of completing requirements for their associate degrees through Reverse Transfer. The Admissions Office personnel are actively working with those interested in enrolling at ASU to facilitate their admission and enrollment. ASU’s President continues a coordinated local effort to

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address issues such as the local graduation rate. That collaboration of this effort among the ASU President, the Darton State College President, the Albany Technical College President, and the Dougherty County School Superintendent continues.

ASU saw a decline in remediation from the Fall of 2013, with 177 students requiring remediation in English (or combined English/reading), reading, and mathematics to 154 students in the Fall 2014, requiring remediation in English (or combined English/reading), reading, and mathematics [English or combined English/Reading]. ASU also saw a decline in enrollment from the Fall of 2013, with 3878 students to 3567 in Fall 2014, and 3,492 in Fall 2015. The rigorous examination of ASU student enrollment data was used to develop what strategies and activities were the most and least effective at ASU and expand on the development of new more innovative strategies.

The strategies and activities are identified below:

- Enrollment of students most in need of remediation in gateway collegiate courses in English and mathematics with corequisite. Learning support has been a successful strategy as this process has shown a decline in students needing additional support in other collegiate courses.
- Previously, ASU centralized the advising system. The centralization of advising was all advising being done by advisors in conjunction with Grades First. This strategy was not successful. This centralization is in the process of being reversed. Intensified and targeted advising for students with more collaboration from faculty, AARC, and retentions specialist will provide capacity building ultimately resulting in student personal and academic success.
- Enrollment Management is in the process of creating exuberant Diversity, Retention, and Recruitment Plans that will enrich the collaborations with local and regional educational agencies. These Plans will increase the visibility of ASU which will in turn, lead to an increase in enrollment.
- Reorganization of the Office of Financial Aid. The reorganization of the Office of Financial Aid will result in the development of new policies, training, procedures, and hiring of new financial aid advisors. This information will provide a more robust financial aid process to address any student financial aid issues in a timely fashion.
- Administrators, faculty, and staff examined ASU enrollment data which supported the fact that ASU has not been successful in continuously increasing the number of traditionally underserved populations (Hispanic, veteran and military personnel, and adult learners). This will be achieved by the following strategies. 1. Actively recruit and increase the number of military personnel, veteran, and Hispanic/Latino students enrolled at Albany State University. 2. Develop a comprehensive Diversity Plan. 3. Develop a comprehensive Retention Plan. Each of these strategies will lead to the successful recruitment, admissions, retention, progression, and graduation of these traditionally underserved population at ASU.

Data were collected and will continue to be collected by Institutional Research from student persistence, progression, retention, and completion rates. Institutional data in conjunction with IPEDS, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management and Financial Aid, are accurately and systematically collected and analyzed in order to achieve these goals.