



Georgia Southern University

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Georgia Southern University is a public, Carnegie Doctoral/Research university devoted to academic distinction in teaching, scholarship, and service. It is the largest and most comprehensive research institution in southeast Georgia. The University's hallmark is a culture of engagement that bridges theory with practice, extends the learning environment beyond the classroom, and promotes student growth and life success. Georgia Southern's nationally accredited academic programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional studies prepare a diverse and select undergraduate and graduate student population for leadership and service as world citizens. The University offers a student-centered environment enhanced by technology, transcultural experiences, private and public partnerships, and stewardship of a safe residential campus recognized for its natural beauty. Georgia Southern University is committed to advancing the State of Georgia and the southeastern region through the benefits of higher education, offering over 124 baccalaureate through doctoral degrees and a variety of certificate and outreach programs. The University fosters access to its educational programs, provides a comprehensive and fulfilling university experience, and enhances quality of life in the region through collaborative relationships supporting education, health care and human services, cultural experiences, scientific and technological advancement, athletics, and regional economic development.

As a residential campus, Georgia Southern's enrollment trends are strongly influenced by the characteristics of a traditional age, residential student population. As of the Fall 2014, Georgia Southern's total enrollment stood at 20,517, with students from all 50 states and over 87 countries. Demographic characteristics of the undergraduate population have varied little over the past five years. Fall 2014 undergraduate student enrollment was 18,004 students, representing 87.08% of the total enrollment. Of this population, 88% were full time students (12% part time). The average age of the undergraduate student was 21. Slightly over 52% percent of the undergraduates were female and 35.5% were from minority backgrounds. Only 5.9% (n = 1071) of the undergraduate population were new transfers to the institution, 70.6% of whom transferred from University System of Georgia institutions (46.8% from USG State Colleges) and 3.7% from Georgia Technical College System institutions. Ninety-three percent of beginning freshmen lived on campus. First time Freshmen retention rates rose from 81% in FY2014. First time Freshmen six year graduation rates rose to 51%. A total of 3217 undergraduate degrees were awarded in AY 2015, an increase of 244 undergraduate degrees from AY 2014. Successful course completion pass rates remained stable in AY 2014 at 87.7% (AY 2013 = 87.9%) for all courses attempted. Attempted courses with failing grades dropped to 5.9% and withdrawals from courses dropped to 6.1% for all attempted courses.

Thirty four percent of undergraduates (n = 6,890) were Pell grant eligible in AY 2014 which was up from 6753 in AY 2013. This reflects an increasing number of students with significant financial need. Only 23% (n = 4,141) of undergraduate students were first generation in Fall 2014, typical for the past three years. Of that total, 55.1% were female. Lastly, a mere 9% (n = 1846) of undergraduate students were adult learners.

Graduate student enrollment for AY 2014 was 2,513 (down from 2,613 in Fall 2013), representing 12.2% of the total enrollment. Of these, 42.2% were full time students (57.8% part time), 66.8% were female with an average age of 32. A total of 972 graduate degrees and post-master's certificates were awarded in AY 2015, an increase of 113 degrees from the previous year (n = 859 degrees awarded in AY 2014). Course completion rates increased over the past year with an 89.4% success rate.

This past year, attending to our mission to meet the educational and economic development needs of our region, we have focused our completion efforts in the areas geared towards the unique needs of our traditional residential (and young) majority student population. We have increased intensive advising and early intervention efforts for undergraduate students. We increased supplemental instruction delivery and support resources available to assist students at risk academically, being more aggressive in reaching out to these students earlier and with more intensity. We have increased strategies to shorten the time to degree by intensifying efforts to increase the number of credits students take per semester and to encourage summer enrollments. We have continued outreach to non-traditional student populations, particularly those students who have some credits towards their degree and those whose academic needs are changing due to economic or educational requirement demands. In particular, we increased opportunities for undergraduate online degree courses and programs and initiated or expanded programs to meet the needs of special populations such as active military and veteran populations, racial/ethnic minorities, and Eagle Incentive Program students (i.e., students seeking admission who present below the entry requirements).

INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Georgia Southern University continues with its focus on the following top priority completion goals and selected high impact strategies (Six of the numerous strategies employed were selected for this update narrative.):

Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded

- Implemented aggressive recruitment and retention efforts (with intensified focus on STEM students, joint/dual degree students, Eagle Incentive Program students, military/military supported students,

Hispanic students, part time students, and Bachelor of General studies students) to increase both student retention and graduation rates by 1%

- A. **Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate**
 - Increased required intrusive advising for any student identified as at risk for retention and progression using required meetings, mandatory supplemental instruction, and automatic referrals to Academic Success Center resources
- B. **Shorten time to degree completion**
 - Increased aggressive advising efforts to encourage students to register for summer courses and to take credit hour averages of 15 semester credit hours/semester leading to earlier completion of degrees
 - Increased opportunities for students to obtain credits through joint enrollment, advanced placement, and prior learning assessment
- C. **Restructure instructional delivery and resources to support educational excellence and student success**
 - Increased availability of online course spaces in the Bachelor of General Studies program and actively recruited former students with some credits towards their degree
- D. **Improve access for underserved and/or priority communities**
 - Aggressively recruited new and transfer students (Eagle Incentive Program Students, military/military supported students, Hispanic students) to increase these underserved student populations

Our ongoing longitudinal analytics indicate that these strategies address the most pervasive issues facing Georgia Southern University students attempting to complete their college education. As a residential campus, Georgia Southern’s enrollment trends are strongly influenced by the characteristics of a traditional age student population. Hence, our strategic initiatives for increasing completion have been heavily focused on “on-campus” direct engagement with full time students, particularly those at- risk for progression towards graduation. We have experienced promising success in increasing retention of at-risk students through our implementation of strategies aimed at the early identification and subsequent intrusive advising of these students. We have also had success making aggressive semester to semester contact with students not registered, but eligible to register.

We continue to be challenged in our outreach efforts to special populations. Although we are seeing some increase in non-traditional student and adult population enrollment through our implementation of online program offerings, we continue to be viewed as a campus for traditional aged students. We are working on renewed undergraduate recruitment branding processes and strategies which we hope will increase our admission of non-traditional students. We have increased admission and retention resources for special populations, in particular Hispanic students, military and military supported students, part-time students, and adult learners with some college credit.

SUMMARY OF GOALS, HIGH IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Goal	Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded
High-Impact Strategy	Implemented aggressive recruitment and retention efforts with an intensified focus on STEM students, joint/dual degree students, Eagle Incentive Program (EIP) students, military/military supported students, Hispanic students, part time students, Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) students, and low income students to increase to increase enrollment numbers, as well as retention and graduation rates by 1%.
Summary of Activities	<p>The University Enrollment Management Council engaged in strategic planning for recruitment activities targeted at the University’s traditional as well as specific potential student populations (joint/dual degree, EIP, military, Hispanic, part time, BGS, low income). Recruitment targets and goals were set at a 1% increase. Strategies included the development of programs, dedicated admissions personnel, and funding sources for each student category.</p> <p>Additionally, increased focus was placed on retention of undergraduate and graduate students and growth of graduate program students. A target of a 1% increase was set for both retention and graduation rates. Advisors continued aggressive attention to student registration for Fall, Spring, and Summer sessions including multiple direct contacts with all eligible students not registered. Students were encouraged to take 15 credits/per semester in order to progress to graduation in 4 years. A strategic funding schedule for increasing the number of scholarships available for high ability and high need students was continued.</p>
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>Student enrollment in Fall 2014 was stable at 20,517 students; Spring 2015 registered a decrease of 218 students (-1.14%); Summer 2015 registered an increase of 40 students (+0.40%). Total increase for the 2014-2015 academic year was under the 1% goal set. Contributing factors were identified: 1) A significant portion of non-returning students documented financial difficulties which either prohibited their return or resulted in transfers to institutions closer to home; 2) A decrease in students graduating in the state of Georgia, coupled with decreasing state SAT scores, diminished the pool of available and qualified students; 3) Transfer student numbers were down related to the mergers of several of our traditional transfer institutions; 4) Graduate school programs across most Colleges did not reach enrollment goals.</p> <p>Retention of Georgia Southern students was up by 1% (to 81%). An analysis indicates that this retention rate reflects an increase in early interventions by faculty and Interventionist Advisors. Additionally, the rate continues to reflect students who transfer to</p>

other institutions and students retained at the Freshman standing status related to their accruing fewer course hours. The persistence rate for students in selected majors, already taking courses in the major ranged from 77.3% to 87.5%, indicating that once a student engages in their major area of study, their persistence rates improve significantly. Strategies to encourage students to progress to the point of enrollment in a major and in major area courses are a continued focus for advising efforts. The average number of student credit hours taken per semester (Fall/Spring semesters) remained virtually unchanged at 12.41 credits (up from 12.34 credits in AY 2013). Although gains were made, the goal to increase the Sophomore to Junior retention rate to 69% (as recommended by the Complete College Georgia Action Team) has not yet been achieved. The AY 2014 sophomore retention rate was 66% (up from 62% in AY 2013). It was noted that 558 freshman and sophomore students transferred (successfully) to other institutions to continue their studies, thus skewing the actual Sophomore to Junior retention rate.

The recruitment of special populations yielded initial data which was encouraging. Military associated students grew to over 948 students, primarily undergraduates (843 students). Overall Hispanic enrollment also grew to 4.6% (n = 946). The number of first time freshmen undergraduate Hispanic students has grown to 598 (up from 521 in 2012) with a retention rate of 75.1%, 5% under the total University retention rate. The six year graduation rate for first time Hispanic Freshmen entering in AY2008 (45.2%) was lower than that of AY 2008 first time non-Hispanic Freshmen (51.3%). Part time students grew to 2,160 students in AY14 from 2142 students in AY2013. Eagle Incentive Program students increased to 572 students (up 24 students from AY13). Eighty-eight percent of these students (n = 505) achieved admission eligibility and returned in Fall 2014. Students joint enrolled through our ACCEL program have grown 69% (n = 179) since 2008, with an increase in first time enrolled students (n = 148) this year and a 79.5% retention rate after the first semester for this population. The entering undergraduate adult learner population (i.e., those 25 years of age or older) remained virtually unchanged at 192 students (down from 202 students in 2013).

AY 2015 enrollment in STEM related fields equaled 4846 students, up from 4505 students in AY 2014, an increase of 341 students. This represents a 5.46% increase in the past year. In AY 2015, 824 baccalaureate degrees were awarded in STEM fields, an increase of 49 STEM degrees from AY 2014 (n = 775). This represents an increase of 15.68% over AY 2014.

Degrees awarded increased in baccalaureate degrees and in all classifications of graduate degrees for the 2015 academic year. Overall there was an **increase of 356 degrees** conferred.

- **3,217** Baccalaureate Degrees were awarded in 2015, **an increase of 244 degrees**
- **772** Masters Degrees were awarded in 2015, **an increase of 109 degrees**
- **73** post masters certificates/EDS were awarded in 2015, **a decrease of 4 degrees**
- **68** doctoral degrees were awarded in 2015, **an increase of 7 degrees**

Scholarship awards in 2015 totaled \$2,143,977 compared with a 2014 total of \$1,636,277. An analysis of financial supports available for high ability and need based students indicates a continued need for increasing the financial awards. All Colleges have a major gift advancement officer, and there has been an overall 7.6% percent increase in the amount of scholarship dollars available for distribution.

Measures of Success

The University's Office of Strategic Research and Analysis at Georgia Southern University provides the metrics and analysis of all outcome assessment data. Metrics used for the analysis of this strategy included:

- Undergraduate and Graduate Level Headcounts, Credit Hours, and Full-Time Equivalency by College, Department, Degree, Major, and Delivery Mode—AY 2000 to 2014 (This includes the history of students completing degrees in STEM fields.)
- Peer and Aspirational Institutions, Comparative Analysis of Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Data—AY 1999 to 2014
- Annual Report Data for Each College/Department: Fall Semester Enrollment, First Year Retention Rates, Six Year Graduation Rates, Degrees Awarded, Course Completion Rates—AY 2014 (This includes annual data for STEM fields.)
- Graduate Level Program Completion Rates—AY 2007 to 2014
- Transfers of Students To and From Georgia Southern—AY 2006-2014
- Cohorts of First-Time Degree-Seeking Transfers to Georgia Southern University: Retention and Graduation Rates—Fall 2006-2014
- Eagle Incentive Program, Non-Eagle Incentive Program, and Integrated Post-Secondary Data System (IPEDS) First Time Freshmen: Retention, Graduation, Demographic and Academic Comparisons—2004-2014
- Bachelor of General Studies Students: Enrollment, Retention/Progression, and Graduation Rates—AY 2011 to 2015
- Characteristics of Military, Veteran, and Other Comparison Student Groups AY 2013 to 2015
- Sophomore Persistence Rates by Selected Major Groups and Exit/Transfer Information—AY 2004 to 2014

- University Advancement Office Annual Reports of Awards and Scholarships—AY 2012 to 2015

Goal	Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate
High-Impact Strategy	Increased required intrusive advising for any student identified as at risk for retention and progression using required meetings, mandatory supplemental instruction, and automatic referrals to Academic Success Center resources
Summary of Activities	<p>This year, significant progress was made on this goal as a result of the following activities that were engaged in to keep students on track for graduation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placed a specialized Interventionist Advisor in each College Student Advising Center • Introduced intrusive advising interventions that promoted retention, increased graduation rates, and encouraged enrollments, particularly for at risk students • Continued the implementation of a mandatory Early Alert system for all Freshmen students, adjusted the timing for reporting students at risk to intrusive advisors to 3 weeks into the semester, added increased specificity in identifying issues causing concern • Monitored courses with high DFW rates and employed strategies to reduce those rates by creating supplemental instruction courses for core STEM courses experiencing particularly high rates • Received approval for changes to the Academic Renewal Policy by the faculty Academic Standards Committee and Faculty Senate. Now, students who leave the institution for academic, financial, or personal reasons may request renewal after only 3 years. (versus 5 years prior to this change). In addition, students may now transfer back to the institution any courses they successfully complete during their period of separation. • Instituted mandatory referrals to the Academic Success Center for students identified as at risk through the Early Alert system. The resources directed to these students included: Tutoring (in person/online—individual, group); Testing preparation; Learning support for placement in supplemental courses; Supplementary courses in math (n = 4), English (n = 1), Reading (n = 1); Methods of learning course; One-on-one consultation in any area needed; Study skills sessions; University Writing Center referrals with workshops on effective writing, computer labs for writing assignment preparation, online resources, and ½ to one hours consultation sessions on writing
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>Academic Interventionist Advisors met with all students who were not in Good Standing in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015. The number of students not in Good Standing decreased overall by 0.3%. The number of students placed on Probation decreased by 8.23% in Fall 2014 and the number of students who were placed out on Exclusion 1 (1 year period) decreased by 2.68%. In several Colleges, students returning to Good Standing rose by 8 to 17%.</p> <p>Additionally, the increase in intrusive advising—including referring students to mandatory sessions in the Academic Success Center—resulted in over a 1% increase in first year freshman retention rates (from 80 to 81%) in Fall 2014.</p> <p>Supplemental instruction courses were expanded for core STEM courses that experience particularly high levels of D, F, W grades. DFW rates in core math courses dropped to between 22.88% and 29.62% this year, a decrease of 1-4% from last year. Core science courses experienced DFW rates between 20.31 to 30.8%, a decrease of 3.24-3.95% from last year.</p> <p>The overall DFW rate improved and successful completion of courses rose by 1% in courses taken in AY 2014:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AY 2013—12.8% (6.2% obtained D's or failed; 6.6% withdrew); 87.2% of courses were successfully completed • AY 2014—11.7% (5.65% obtained D's or failed; 6.05% withdrew); 88.3% of courses were successfully completed
Measures of Success	<p>An analysis of undergraduate students placed on academic warning, probation, or exclusion also demonstrated improvement. The total number of students <u>not</u> in good academic standing decreased by 0.3% in AY 2014. The number of students placed on academic warning/probation status decreased by 8.23%. Those students placed on Exclusion 1 (dismissal from the University for 1 year) dropped by 2.7%.</p> <p>The University's Office of Strategic Research and Analysis at Georgia Southern University provides the metrics and analysis of all outcome assessment data. Metrics used for the analysis of this strategy included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report Data for Each College/Department: Fall Semester Enrollment, First Year Retention Rates, Six Year Graduation Rates, Degrees Awarded, Course Completion Rates—AY 2011 to 2014 • Grade Distribution Summaries Per College, Department, Program, Student Status, Course—AY 2013 to 2014 (Conducted every semester—with 5 year comparisons) • DFW Course Reports—AY 2011 to 2014 • Graduate Level Program Completion Rates—AY 2007 to 2014 • Sophomore Persistence Rates by Selected Major Groups and Exit/Transfer Information—AY

2004 to 2014

Goal	Shorten time to degree completion
High-Impact Strategy	Increased aggressive advising efforts to encourage students to register for summer courses and to take credit hour averages of 15 semester credit hours/semester leading to earlier completion of degrees
Summary of Activities	<p>The following activities were implemented (or already in place) to encourage students to increase their credit load per semester:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used Degree Works to track student progress, advise them of their time to completion, show the consequences of changing their major or delaying graduation, show their likelihood of gaining enrollment in certain programs (e.g., Nursing, Engineering) • Provided one-on-one counseling, both at registration times and at the SOAR new student orientation/registration sessions, to students (and parents) regarding the cost of taking fewer than 15 credits per semester; • Instituted an aggressive summer registration marketing and enrollment plan which included: 1) advisors contacting students directly and through injection pages on the University website which presented mandatory surveys of students' plans for the summer; 2) advertising in multi-media forms; 3) mailing letters to students at their home residences; 4) increasing the number of online courses and available seats in on-campus courses
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>Student credit hour averages for the year were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2014 = 12.46 (up from 12.40 in AY 2013) • Spring 2015 = 12.36 (up from 12.28 in AY 2013) • Summer 2015 = 6.69 (down from 6.73 in AY 2013) <p>Despite aggressive advising for students to take a fuller course load, we continue to have difficulties in getting students to enroll for 13-15 credits hours per semester. Contributing factors appear to be: 1) Parents/peers advising students to take fewer credits in order to retain the Hope Scholarship and/or "enjoy" their college experience; 2) Fiscal issues related to the gap between 12 and 15 credits which results in additional tuition charges. As a result, the University is considering instituting a flat tuition model which would lower tuition for students taking a full 15 credit hour per semester load.</p> <p>Summer enrollments were up for 2015 by 0.40% (n = +40 students). While an increase in new students enrolled in fully online courses was realized, a decrease in continuing graduate online course enrollment was experienced (- 54 continuing graduate students registered). This appears to reflect a decrease in teacher graduate education enrollments being caused by changes to state level support and requirements for ongoing education as a career ladder incentive.</p>
Measures of Success	<p>The University's Office of Strategic Research and Analysis at Georgia Southern University provides the metrics and analysis of all outcome assessment data. Metrics used for the analysis of this strategy included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Dashboard Enrollment Reports (providing year to year comparisons) • Undergraduate and Graduate Level Headcounts, Credit Hours, and Full-Time Equivalency by College, Department, Degree, Major, and Delivery Mode—AY 2000 to 2015

Goal	Shorten time to degree completion
High-Impact Strategy	Increased opportunities for students to obtain credits through joint enrollment, advanced placement, and prior learning assessment
Summary of Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively recruited high school students from area school districts and private high schools to joint enroll; Hired an advisor who visited schools to recruit and assist students wishing to joint enroll • Expanded the number of articulation agreements allowing students with Associate Degrees to enter into accelerated paths to graduation • Analyzed current opportunities and processes for students to seek prior learning assessment at the graduate and undergraduate level
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>Enrollment of ACCEL (joint enrolled) student grew 69% from AY 2008 to AY 2014 to a high of 179 students in Fall 2014 (an increase of 48 students from Fall 2013). The retention rate for first time ACCEL students was 79.5% in Fall 2014. Area schools served by the University joint enrollment advisor yielded the highest enrollment numbers (72% of students enrolled).</p> <p>New articulation agreements were signed between the University and schools from the Technical College System of Georgia and junior colleges. Programs leading to baccalaureate degrees in all engineering programs, information technology programs, logistics and supply chain programs, and general education programs were signed. These programs additionally allow for joint enrollment (and reverse transfer credit) for the Associate Degree student taking University baccalaureate coursework.</p> <p>The full complement of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and College-Level</p>

	<p>Examination Program credits continue to be available to all entering and enrolled students. In AY 2014, 15.43% of new first-time freshmen (n = 536) entered with Advanced Placement credit, down from 17.98% of new first-time freshmen (n = 637) entering in AY 2013. Only 0.02% of first time entering freshmen (n = 7) brought International Baccalaureate credits, as compared to 0.56% in AY 2013 (n = 20).</p> <p>Processes for seeking undergraduate prior learning credit are available and specifically tailored to individual programs of study. Few undergraduate students seek prior learning credit, likely a factor of our traditional aged students. One exception is students in the RN-BSN program who are returning to complete their baccalaureate degree. This cohort is awarded credit for prior learning from their Associate Degree program, allowing them accelerated advancement. This past year, the University began exploring processes for creating graduate level prior learning credit opportunities and a proposal will be put before the Graduate Committee in Fall 2015.</p>
Measures of Success	<p>The University's Office of Strategic Research and Analysis at Georgia Southern University provides the metrics and analysis of all outcome assessment data. Metrics used for the analysis of this strategy included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Dashboard Enrollment Reports (providing year to year comparisons) • Undergraduate and Graduate Level Headcounts, Credit Hours, and Full-Time Equivalency by College, Department, Degree, Major, and Delivery Mode—AY 2000 to 2014 (This includes the history of students completing degrees in STEM fields.) • ACCEL Program Student Demographics, Retention, and Graduation Rates AY 2008 to 2014
Goal	Restructure instructional delivery and resources to support educational excellence and student success
High-Impact Strategy	Increased availability of online course spaces in the Bachelor of General Studies program and actively recruited former students with some credits towards their degree
Summary of Activities	<p>The activities supporting the increase in the availability of the Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) program included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded recruitment of BGS students through the BGS Online Support Office • Expanded the number of available sections/seats in BGS core and emphasis courses • Created additional emphasis areas sought by potential online BGS students and investigated additional programs of study for future emphasis area program development
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>The online Bachelor of General Studies Program (Initiated in 2011-2012) was designed to attract non-traditional students who have prior college credits. Many are part time students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online BGS—AY 2014, total enrollment 322 • Online BGS—AY 2015, total enrollment 380 <p>The online first year retention rates for online BGS students showed improvement, but remained lower than the University's overall retention rates at 78% in Fall 2014 (67.3% in Fall 2013). The graduation rates for this population are also lower than the University's overall graduation rate at 40.2%.</p>
Measures of Success	<p>The University's Office of Strategic Research and Analysis at Georgia Southern University provides the metrics and analysis of all outcome assessment data. Metrics used for the analysis of this strategy included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of General Studies Students: Enrollment, Retention/Progression, and Graduation Rates—AY 2008 to 2015 • Undergraduate and Graduate Level Headcounts, Credit Hours, and Full-Time Equivalency by College, Department, Degree, Major, and Delivery Mode—AY 2000 to 2014 • Annual Report Data for Each College/Department: Fall Semester Enrollment, First Year Retention Rates, Six Year Graduation Rates, Degrees Awarded, Course Completion Rates—AY 2011 to 2014
Goal	Improve access for underserved and/or priority communities
High-Impact Strategy	Aggressively recruited new and transfer students (Eagle Incentive Program Students, military/military supported students, Hispanic students) to increase these underserved student populations
Summary of Activities	The Military Affairs Center provides the services that have been high priority requests from surveyed military students Recruitment activities continued with direct contacts at local area/regional military bases.
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>The recruitment of special populations yielded initial data which was encouraging. In AY 2015, military associated students grew to over 948, primarily undergraduates (n = 843). Military related students were enrolled as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active military and Reservists—217 • Veterans—222

- Dependents receiving military or veterans education benefits—509
Overall Hispanic enrollment also grew to 4.6% (n = 946). The number of first time freshmen undergraduate Hispanic students has grown to 598 (up from 521 in 2012) with a retention rate of 75.1%, 5% under the total University retention rate. The six year graduation rate for first time Hispanic Freshmen entering in AY2008 (45.2%) was lower than that of AY 2008 first time non-Hispanic Freshmen (51.3%).

Eagle Incentive Program students decreased to 572 students (down 10 students from AY 2013). Eighty-eight percent of these students (n = 505) achieved admission eligibility and returned in Fall 2014 (down from 94% in AY 2013). EIP first year retention rates decreased from 81% to 76% for the AY 2013 cohort. EIP freshmen cumulative grade point averages were 2.57. Six year graduation rates for EIP freshmen increased to 51%, equal to non-EIP students.

Measures of Success

The University's Office of Strategic Research and Analysis at Georgia Southern University provides the metrics and analysis of all outcome assessment data. Metrics used for the analysis of this strategy included:

- Undergraduate and Graduate Level Headcounts, Credit Hours, and Full-Time Equivalency by College, Department, Degree, Major, and Delivery Mode—AY 2000 to 2014
- Eagle Incentive Program (EIP), Non-EIP, and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDA) First-time Freshmen: Retention, Graduation, Demographic, and Academic Comparisons AY 2005-2014
- Characteristics of Military, Veteran, and Other Comparison Student Groups AY 2013 to 2015
- Goizueta Foundation Hispanic Student Recruitment and Retention Report—AY 2012 to 2014

Georgia Southern University is interested in implementing additional high impact strategies including:

- Offering incentivized tuition rates for students to take a semester credit load of 15 credits, thereby graduating in 4 years
- Increasing the faculty's use of "free" electronic textbooks and supplemental learning resources
- Increasing Sophomore retention efforts through expanding the Early Alert System to this population and increasing aggressive interventionist advising of students at this level
- Expanding online program offerings (and space in online programs) for non-traditional adult learners; Developing on-line badging opportunities for TKES and ACE related modules to address changing performance evaluation requirements for Pre-K to 12 educators
- Expanding restructured educational systems to include more innovative approaches to deliver support services and supplement instruction, particularly for students at risk for progression
- Expand faculty development opportunities in the areas of online course development and online teaching pedagogy, quality improvement assessment of online courses (Quality Matters certifications), innovative uses of new teaching strategies and resources
- Expanding articulation agreements, transfer and reverse transfer MOUs with TCSG Institutions and USG State Colleges

OBSERVATIONS

Georgia Southern University continues to experience the most success with strategies that support and intervene with students identified as at-risk for completion. The expansion of intensive advising and early intervention efforts for undergraduate students and the increase in supplemental instruction delivery and support resources have demonstrated proven gains in retention and graduation rates.

While we have increased strategies to shorten the time to degree by intensifying efforts to increase the number of credits students take per semester, this continues to be a challenging area. We hope to implement new strategies related to offering incentivized tuition rates for students graduating in 4 years. We continue with aggressive efforts to shorten time to degree by encouraging summer enrollment as a recommended part of program course planning. Additionally, we have identified a striking increase in the number of students who fail to return to the University because they lack sufficient funds to continue. We are exploring funding sources that may assist in "rescuing" students experiencing temporary or limited funding barriers to continuing/completing their education.

We have had moderate success in continued outreach to non-traditional student populations, particularly those students who have some credits towards their degree and those whose academic needs are changing due to economic or educational requirement demands. We have had success in increasing opportunities for undergraduate online degree courses and programs, particularly our Bachelor of General Studies program. However, we have experienced decreases in out of state online student enrollments in some programs, particularly at the graduate level. These decreases are directly related to difficulties in securing state authorizations to offer courses in a number of high cost/high requirement states. We continue to pursue authorizations and hope to increase access to more online out of state students next year. We are expanding programs to meet the needs of special populations such as active military and veteran populations, Pre-K -12 educators, adult learners, and Eagle Incentive Program students (i.e., students seeking admission below the entry requirements).