



FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Institutional Mission

The mission of Fort Valley State University (FVSU) 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 120 years of experience and tradition. As Georgia's only 1890 Land Grant institution, FVSU offers academic programs in a variety of disciplines which include agriculture, family and consumer sciences, technology, and a new program in supply chain management just to name a few. FVSU has a commitment to continue to further its traditions of excellence in programs in the liberal arts and humanities, social, natural and physical sciences.

Student Body Profile

FVSU enrolled 2,624 students. The student retention rate is currently 73%. FVSU administrators believe this increase is due to many initiatives that have been implemented. The majority of FVSU students are African-American (91.5%) and as of 2019, 87% of FVSU students received Pell Grant Funds. Approximately only 1% of the incoming freshmen class were considered adult learners (25 years or older), therefore the majority of the student body is comprised of high school graduates who are products of lower-performing high schools in the inner cities or rural areas. However, a shift has occurred in the enrollment practices and the reward for this is a higher retention rate and, hopefully, a future increase in graduation rates. 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 should be developed to increase student success outcomes for the institution.

MOMENTUM YEAR UPDATE

During the previous academic year, the Momentum Year team address many of the projects that were proposed in the Momentum Year Plan. The Momentum Year team worked with the academic dean and department chairs to identify nine credit hours from each major to complete the academic focus areas. Specific academic milestones were also incorporated into the classes. To heighten campus awareness and commitment to the adoption of civic engagement and service as a required component of student development and learning, Academic Affairs hosted the LEAP (Leadership, Engagement, Academics and Professionalism) summit as part of the faculty and staff in-service. There was also a faculty development workshop to facilitate training around the new degree maps and tools available for advisement. Through the University College and the Center for Student Engagement, the Momentum Year team connected the advising process and career planning and preparation through the use of ePortfolios to connect student learning experiences both in and out of the classroom.

At Fort Valley State University, all incoming students are required to select a major as part of the initial admissions process. Through the University College all first-time students meet with professional advisors to assist them in making purposeful choices. To assist with the process, the first year of all majors have been aligned with an academic focus area or "metamajor", which have common first and second semester courses. The degree maps have been updated to include introductory English and Mathematics, 15 credit hours each semester and nine hours in the academic focus area.

OTHER INSTITUTIONAL HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES, ACTIVITIES & OUTCOMES RELATED GOAL

Strategy 1

High impact practice: Implementation of University college

Related Goal

Goal 1: To achieve a 77% retention rate for first-time freshmen by observing an increase of two percentage points each year.

Goal 2: Engage 80 % of freshmen and sophomore students in academic advising by the end of each academic year.

Goal 3: Engage 80% of first and second-year students in student engagement programs and services (e.g. civic engagement, service learning, lecture series, symposiums, first & second-year experience programs, and mentoring programs, etc.)

Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact

This priority demonstrates FVSU's commitment to increase its annual retention rate of first-time freshmen, increasing efforts that enhance academic advisement services and student engagement initiatives.

Summary of Activities

During the Fall of the 2018-19 academic year, FVSU continued the implementation of the University College (UC). The (UC) is an innovative, interdisciplinary approach to achieving student success and engagement outcomes for undergraduate students. The UC serves as the entry point for students, an innovator of new academic initiatives, and a catalyst for student success and retention for the campus. The UC includes academic advising, academic counseling and disability services, tutorial services, supplemental instruction, reading and writing lab services, co-requisite support and the First & Second-Experience Programs.

The UC provides direct intensive support to entering freshmen who are admitted under the provisions of the limited admit status; however, services are provided to all incoming undergraduate students. Establishing the UC transforms how the institution promotes student success, engagement, and retention.

Measures of Progress and Success

Measure, metric, or data element

As a method of evaluation, FVSU has chosen to assess the following student success outcomes:

- Increase the number of students achieving a grade of "C" or better in general education courses by 10%.
- Engage 75% of freshmen and sophomore students in academic advising and registration sessions provided by their academic advisor in the UC.
- Engage at least 80% of first and second-year students in first- student engagement programs and services. (e.g., civic engagement and volunteerism, tutorials, first and second year experience courses)

Baseline measures

- The retention rate for the 2016-17 academic year was 67%, for the 2017-18 academic year it was 75%, and for 2018-19 it was 74%, so there was no significant change in first year retention.

Interim Measures of Progress

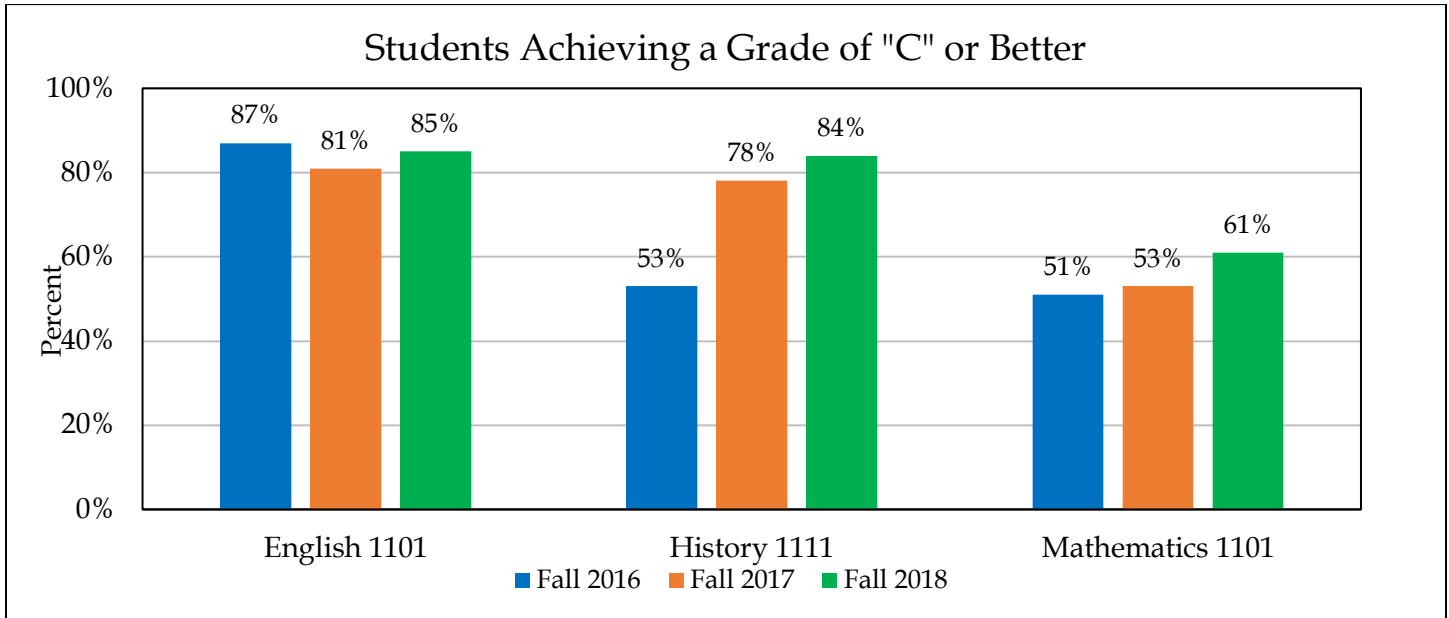
- The Center for Retention Services served as the previous academic support model for the university. This method has worked for quite some time; however, including the elements of civic engagement, leadership development and professional as components to complement services already in place will provide for a more comprehensive model for student success for the student demographic FVSU serves.

Measures of Success

- With implementation of the UC, first-time freshmen retention is expected to rate of 77% over the five-year period. With the implementation of the required advising model through the UC, we expect 100% engagement with freshman and sophomore students.

Outcomes

- We focused on the English 1101, History 1111 and Mathematics 1101 and courses for the assessment of the General Education achievement (Table 1). English had a 5% increase after an initial decrease in fall 2017. History had a 6% increase over fall 2017 and overall 8% increase from 2016. Mathematics 1101 had a 8% increase over fall 2017, but had a 15% increase over 2016, which surpassed the 10% increase goal.
- With the implementation of the required advising through the UC, 100% of freshman and sophomores engage with academic advisors prior to course selection and registration.



Lessons Learned

The University College continues to work with the departments that manage the gateway courses to improve student success. The math faculty will be undertaking a course redesign in collaboration with the John Gardner Institute through the Gateway to Completion process coupled with the Momentum Year corequisite model. The UC does not have an adequate strategy in place to track first engagement through our first-year experience program.

Strategy 2

High-impact strategy: Strengthening Student Engagement

Related Goal

Goal 1: Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG

Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact

The Center for Student Engagement (CSE) utilizes an integrated theoretical approach to service, leadership and career development by offering purposeful opportunities and resources that complement the academic experience. Our office is dedicated to helping students develop both in and out of the classroom through programs and activities that advance student learning and prepares students for success in the global community.

With a focus on civic engagement, leadership and career development, we connect the university and the community to provide curricular and co-curricular opportunities for our students.

Our strategy involves Civic engagement and leadership, Service learning, Career and professional development through the L.E.A.P experience.

FVSU requires students to complete a brief training session to discuss the benefits of service to them currently, how it can help prepare them for life after college, and how it impacts the organizations and communities they serve. In this session, students are provided general rules of conduct as well as their rights as volunteers with the organizations they work with. Once training is completed, their names are entered in our registry of trained students, and they are matched with the partner site of their choosing.

Students trained 2018 - 2019: 521

2018 - 2019 only			
# of hours	Economic Impact	# of participants	Average Hours per student
2489.4	\$61,313.92	228	10.92
642.65	\$15,828.47	146	4.40
843.45	\$20,774.17	286	2.95
1983.64	\$48,857.05	372	5.33
406.59	\$10,014.31	73	5.57
438.75	\$10,806.41	151	2.91
724.25	\$17,838.28	167	4.34
515	\$12,684.45	157	3.28
1588.8	\$40,403.18	397	4.00
55.5	\$1,411.37	12	4.63
9688.03	\$239,931.62	1989	4.87

Summary of Activities

Partner Information

Currently, the Center for Student Engagement has 28 iHelp Program Partners where students are able to engage in a variety of experiences that allow them to develop the necessary essential skills needed to become stronger workforce candidates upon graduation. Students can elect to serve with an organization outside of our Partner Network, but they are encouraged to begin with the guaranteed positions we have available for them. Examples of those positions are:

Fort Valley Health & Rehabilitation Center – students can interact with nursing home residents by assisting with activities, exercise, spending time talking to patients, or helping in the office at the Center.

The P.E.A.C.H. Pit – The P.E.A.C.H. Pit is a 58-acre equestrian therapy barn that focuses on assisting veterans and adults and children with behavioral and cognitive disorders. Students can assist with daily upkeep of the land and horses, or work as camp counselors during summer youth camps.

Hunt Elementary School – Students participating with Hunt Elementary School can serve as teachers assistants in the classroom or work with students as reading buddies or mentors.

FVSU Office of Recruitment & Admissions – Participants help in the office by filing papers for potential and incoming freshmen and by making calls to potential students to walk them through completing their admissions process.

2019 FVSU Annual Day of Service

Each year, our Annual Day of Service has grown tremendously with the 2019 Day of Service being our largest yet. There was a total of 312 participants, made up of faculty, staff, and students. They took part in 18 different activities at 18 of our partner sites and were awarded over 1000 hours for their efforts. The economic impact for that day alone was over \$31k, concentrated in the city of Fort Valley, GA.

Total Number of Participants	312 students, faculty, & staff	Total Hours Awarded	1243 hours	Total Economic Impact	\$31,609.49
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Day of Service attendees were able to select the service experience they desired either by pre-registering or checking in at our centralized sign-in table. The activities ranged from one on one reading at elementary schools in Byron and Fort Valley to assisting an equestrian therapy barn with preparations for a veteran’s retreat they were hosting.

Lessons Learned

Through implementation, expected barriers will be how to ensure that students complete the required service hours and how will they be captured.

Strategy 3

High-impact strategy: Intrusive Financial Aid Advising

Related Goal

Goal 1: Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG

Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact

As over 80% of the student body at FVSU receive some form of federal student aid, it is essential that the university provides intrusive financial aid advising. The university has taken steps to implement technology that enhances customer service in this area; specifically with the implementation of Qless and CampusLogic software packages and custom videos with Ocelot. These technology upgrades have tremendously improved the process for awarding financial aid for students and the university expects to continued success.

Summary of Activities

The University continues to make a commitment to enhancing technology and providing training for the financial aid staff in order to increase the level of intrusive financial aid advising for students. To complement this effort, the Office of Financial Aid has hired an Outreach Specialist to assist students, families and communities with the financial aid process; educating them on financing higher education and the necessary steps that should be taken in order to be awarded federal student aid.

Measures of Progress and Success

The success of intrusive financial aid advising can be measured by outcomes of the following: growth in the number of students that complete their FASFA by the deadline and before they depart the institution at the completion of the academic year. In addition to this, there should be a continued decline in default rates, the percentage of students that make satisfactory academic progress, and the quantity of financial aid outreach activities and services conducted on an annual basis.

Measure, metric, or data element

The university’s financial aid office will continue to conduct annual reports and analysis of the measures of progress and success outlined above.

Baseline measures

As the measures of progress and success have been recently identified during the 2018-2019 academic year, the Office of Financial Aid must move forward with developing baseline metrics in order to assess improvement in the areas listed above. These baselines will be developed by assessing the year-to-year progress in each area described in the *measures of progress and success* section of the report above.

Interim Measures of Progress

The total enrollment for the 2018-19 academic year was 3,050 students. Of this population, there were 2,587 undergraduate students. Statistically, approximately 72.6% of the undergraduate student population are Pell eligible, or receive some form of federal financial assistance to attend the institution. Therefore, the Office of Financial Aid was able to successfully award approximately 2,400 undergraduate students with federal student aid with the implementation technological systems which enhanced customer service, providing for increased efforts in financial aid advising.

Measures of Success

Measures of success would include the percentage of students who successfully complete the financial aid process each academic year.

Lessons Learned

The university continues to experience barriers with the ability to convey information to first-generation college students and their parents about the financial aid process, especially as it relates to the process for applying for Parent Plus Loans. However, with developing an outreach initiative led by personnel to assist in this area, the institution foresees continued advances in this area.

OBSERVATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Over the past year, we have seen progress made toward the goals of each of our strategies through a number of successful activities and initiatives. The University College continues to address the advising needs of our students. Our engagement with students that includes academic advising, First and Second Year Experience programs, counseling and disability, reading and writing lab, supplemental instruction, service learning and student leadership development have contributed to the success of our students. The Office of Student Engagement through the implementation of the L.E.A.P. Initiative has focused on civic engagement, service learning and student leadership development, which are all high impact practices to improve student success. The Office of financial aid continues to implement technology to improve customer service. We have implemented a number changes to our completion activities, many of which align with Momentum Year and the Momentum Approach. We have fully implemented degree maps with four year plans that include milestones to keep students on track. The next steps will focus on the intrusive advising model that will include faculty and staff development activities. We will also define measurable outcomes for engagement within the University College.

STUDENT SUCCESS AND COMPLETION TEAM

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