



Georgia Southwestern State University

November 4, 2015

1. INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Georgia Southwestern State University's mission is to "cultivate excellence in learning and teaching that encourages intellectual, personal, and social growth for students, faculty, staff, and the community. Georgia Southwestern State University is a comprehensive state university within the University System of Georgia that offers a full range of bachelor degree programs, along with selected master's and specialist degree programs." Our mission is further augmented by the SACSCOC approved Quality Enhancement Plan, Windows to the World, which encourages all entering students to engage in global literacy in a robust fashion (first full assessment of this program due March, 2020, with data collected through the 2018-19 academic year). The mission of the institution is to strengthen the immediate region, but also to prepare students to be confident and knowledgeable as they venture into the global economy.

The primary service region of Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) consists of Sumter County and the seven counties contiguous with it: Crisp, Dooly, Lee, Macon, Marion, Schley, Terrell, and Webster counties. The majority of these counties are among the poorest counties in the state of Georgia. The student population is very diverse, including sizable groups of students often considered to have special challenges in completing college, such as non-traditional, first-generation, and low income students. Georgia Southwestern is dedicated to continue to enroll and to graduate students from this region of the state.

GSW's total undergraduate enrollment in fall 2014 was 2666 (2013: 2806—Note—significant changes from last year [positive or negative] are noted in parenthetical elements). At that time, the gender distribution of the student population was 63.2% women and 36.8% men. The ethnicity of the fall 2014 student population was 63.7% White; 27% Black (2013: 29.1%); 3.2% Asian and Pacific Islander; 4% Hispanic (2013: 3.3%); 1.5% Multiracial; 0.2% Native American; and 0.5% Unknown. Approximately 62% of GSW undergraduates receive Pell Grants; 53% are First-Generation college students (no parent/guardian with bachelor degree or higher); 22% began college for the first-time as adults (25 years old or older); and 30% are age 25 or older. The majority of our undergraduates (69.3%) are classified as full-time (taking 12 or more hours); 30.6% live on campus (2013: 27%); 55.7% are enrolled in one or more online classes (2013: 53.6%); and 24.1% are enrolled exclusively in online classes. These populations are also representative of our recent graduates. Out of the undergraduates who were awarded bachelor's degrees in FY15, 62.7% had received the Pell grant while enrolled at GSW (FY 2014: 57.5%); 51.8% were first-generation students (FY 2014:47.3%); and 30% were 29 or older at the time of graduation. First year retention rates are improving: the 2011 cohort was 62.6 percent; the 2012 cohort was at 64.9 percent; and the 2013 cohort was at 69.8 percent. The retention rate for the 2014 cohort, as determined on 1 July 2015, stands at 75.9 percent.¹

Corresponding with our student profile, we know that ample data demonstrate that these students have difficulty successfully transitioning to higher education and that retention of first-year students is typically very low. GSW's initial priority in improving completion has been to improve fall-to-fall retention of first year students through implementation of strategies that have been shown to have high impact among low-income and first-generation college students. National data show that improved first-year success and retention lead to higher persistence and improved graduation rates. An additional component of our retention strategies has been collection of data to identify areas of risk particular to GSW and to develop specific strategies that promise to benefit all our students.

2. INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS, HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

In order to improve the retention of first year students, which is an initial, primary goal, GSW has adopted several strategies shown to impact student retention: 1) improved and more intrusive advising, aided by technology [Matrix A]; 2) improved student engagement through peer advising [Matrix B]; 3) redefining of good standing and more information provided to advisors and faculty [Matrix C]; 4) strong emphasis on completing 15 credit hours each semester in order to graduate on-time [Matrix D]; and 5) improved and more

¹ In the Appendix, for Goal 1: Progress Metrics 1.1 in Table 6; Progress Metrics 1.4 and 1.5 in Table 10; Access Metrics 1.1 in Tables 1 and 2; Outcome Metrics 1.1 in Table 9; Outcome Metrics 1.3 in Tables 4 and 5; Outcome Metrics 1.5 in Table 3; Outcome Metrics 1.7 in Table 5

sustained extra-curricular student engagement, aided by technology [Matrix E]. These strategies are supported by several specific actions (some actions support more than one strategy). As we indicate in Observations, we intend to hold to these practices until we have amassed enough meaningful data to know that our improvements are not anomalies, and until these practices are fully engrained in GSW’s culture. In all cases, all activity and strategies support Goal 1: Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.

MATRIX A

High-impact strategy	Using Campus Labs technology in order to implement Beacon. Beacon is a type of early warning software to address academic integration (a risk specific to GSW based on data from the College Persistence Questionnaire, administered in 2013). This ties into Strategy 4.4 (establish criteria for identifying students who may need special interventions in the semester [e.g.: lack of attendance, poor performance on early assignments]) and into Strategy 4.5 (ensure that students who meet off-track criteria receive timely and targeted advising intervention). We are also employing Strategy 4.3 (use Degree Works to track student progress).
Related Goal	Goal 4: Provide intentional advising to keep students on track to graduate
Summary of Activities	Administration of the Student Success Inventory to first year students –The SSI measures student responses on several non-cognitive factors and has allowed us to identify several areas of attrition risk specific to GSW, including academic engagement, social integration, and institutional commitment. The results of this survey showed that although GSW’s students have a high degree of commitment toward possessing a college degree, their commitment to GSW is low, they have poor social integration, and they have poor academic integration. These are all factors that increase risk of attrition. GSW is in the process of implementing strategies specifically designed to address these issues
Baseline status	We have completed year one of the use of Beacon. Average retention rates have been approximately 67 percent before the advent of Beacon.
Interim Measures of Progress (Process Metrics)	Process Metric 4.3: Does the institution have clear criteria for identifying students who are “off-track” in their programs? Answer: To a certain extent. Metric 4.3.1: If yes, what are the criteria for being off-track? Answer: Found in most program handbooks and also indicated within Degree Works. Process Metric 4.4: Does the institution have clear criteria for identifying students who are off-track in courses? Answer: Yes. Metric 4.4.1: If yes, what are the criteria for being off-track in a course? Answer: Attendance, mid-term grades, individual test scores.
Measures of Success	Outcome Metric 4.1 (Table 9 in the Appendix): Improved first-year student success and retention. Also note Progress Metric 1.1 (Table 6 in the Appendix): we currently stand at 75.9 percent for a one year retention rate, up from 69.8 percent last year. We would hope to see sustained retention rates of close to 80 percent by 2020.
Lessons Learned	Faculty and staff can raise alerts on students who are not doing well in classes, or other concerns. All those in the student’s network can see the alert and are asked to intervene. We’ve seen some benefits from this but need to encourage more use of the system by advisors to respond to alerts raised about students.

MATRIX B

High-impact strategy	Creation and Implementation of Project Storm Spotters. The Storm Spotters Team (SST) consists of peer mentors who serve as co-instructors for UNIV 1000, Orientation to College Success. SST's connect first-year students to campus activities and to academic support services in order to improve engagement and academic success.
Related Goal	Goal 4, Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate
Summary of Activities	The Storm Spotters Team participates in the presentation of orientation material for UNIV 1000, they work on activities to improve student engagement (e.g. inviting students to meetings of student organizations), and participate in outreach to at-risk students. Starting in the Fall of 2013, GSW implemented Project Storm Spotters with funding from the USG through an Incubator grant. This project recruited and trained upper-class students as co-instructors and peer mentors for our first-year orientation course (UNIV 1000). Project Storm Spotters was designed to expand UNIV 1000 beyond a mainly orientation course to include much more student engagement and advisement. SST's were very successful in engaging with first-year students, which is important, as we know that first-year students are more likely to ask questions and take the advice of their peer mentors than from their instructors. SST's encouraged increased participation in student organizations and were successful at directing students to support services on campus.
Baseline status	Since implementation in Fall 2013, the contact rate between SST's and entering first-year students has been 100 percent. There has been intermittent contact between SST's and students after their first semester. In terms of affecting retention rates, 64.9 percent was the retention rate before implementing SST's. The retention rate of the first cohort to use SST's is 69.8 percent.
Interim Measures of Progress	Surveys indicated high levels of satisfaction among participating faculty, Storm Spotters, and first-year students. There are probably some paradoxical effects of the SST's. The withdrawal rate for certain core classes that we know to be difficult hurdles has been elevated, due in part to increased counseling by the SST's to students about the importance of maintaining a good GPA. Thus, as indicated in Table 6, our term-to-term retention rate actually declined slightly last year.
Measures of Success	Increased persistence in courses and successful completion of course work, as well as increased participation in student activities and utilization of student support services of various kinds. Improved retention of first year students as shown in Table 6 of the Appendix. By 2020, we would hope to have retention rates that are fairly steady from year to year. We would also expect revenue from retained students would support enhanced Storm Spotter activity, so that financially, by 2020, this activity is completely self-supporting.
Lessons Learned	The biggest immediate challenge has been how to pay for the program once the grant funding ran out. We pay SST's a very minimal stipend. Because we have made it a very selective, by invitation only position, pay has not been a delimiting issue. There will always be ongoing training because upper-class students are only here 2-3 years, so we will always be hiring new ones. That is why we have included the SST in orientation training this summer.

MATRIX C

High-impact strategy	Redefinition of Academic Good Standing and issuing of DWF Reports twice a semester. To identify and intervene with at-risk students earlier, we changed Academic Good Standing from a graduated scale to a 2.0 for all students and implemented an advising hold for all students with GPAs below 2.0. And, at mid-term and at the end of each semester, DWF reports are issued, with advisors being asked to contact students and advise them on the best options given their standing and to direct them to appropriate resources. The retention specialist and first-year advocate intervene with first-year and sophomore students who may not yet have a relationship with their major advisor.
Related Goal	Goal 4: Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate
Summary of Activities	<p>The increase in GPA required for Good Academic Standing has allowed us to identify students who are at risk academically much earlier and to target institutional resources on students who are most likely to benefit from intervention (those with GPAs 1.5-2.0). Students with GPAs below 2.0 have academic standing holds and are required to meet with their academic advisers to make changes to their schedules. They are also contacted by the Retention Specialist who invites them to one-on-one sessions to develop academic success plans. These interventions apply to all students and the effects are currently difficult to disaggregate for a single cohort.</p> <p>In 2012, we began distributing DFW reports to all advisors at midterm and at end of term. The reports list all advisees with grades of D, F, or W in any of their courses. Advisors are encouraged to contact advisees on their lists to discuss possible options for getting back on track (withdrawing from a course at mid-term, seeking tutoring support, repeating a course the next semester to improve a grade, etc.).</p> <p>We have also adjusted the academic calendar so that midterm grades are now due on the midterm date, thus giving students in trouble and advisors more time to develop success strategies for the rest of the semester. UNIV 1000 instructors are asked to contact first-year students who may not be connected with their academic advisors yet. The Retention Specialist and First-Year Advocate in the Academic Resource Center help students develop success plans. Through these efforts we have substantially increased the percentage of first-year students who complete the fall semester with at least a 2.0 GPA. In 2011, before these changes, only 63% of first-year students completed the first semester with a GPA over 2.0. The rate for the 2012 and 2013 cohorts was 74% and 75.5% respectively, a 12% increase over the 2011 cohort. For 2014, the rate was 75.3 percent (Table 7). The improvement in GPA is not only a result of withdrawing from courses where students were receiving low grades, but also from connecting to resources early, allowing them to recover and pass classes in which they were not doing well (Table 9).</p>
Baseline status	We discovered that with our previous sliding scale, we were blind to students who were in trouble academically, but who were not being flagged because they were technically in good standing (even at a 1.5 GPA). Moving good standing to a 2.00 allowed us to identify academic risk in the first semester of trouble rather than two to three semesters later. The DWF reports help us to pinpoint courses that need additional resources, such as Supplemental Instruction or dedicated tutoring, as well as alert us to students who are in academic difficulty as early as mid-term.
Interim Measures of Progress	These are relatively recent processes grafted on to the institution, and they appear to be having a positive effect.
Measures of Success	Outcome Metric 4.1 (Table 9 in the Appendix). By 2020, we hope to be able to use various analytic support mechanisms to ensure sustained success of our students.
Lessons Learned	Timing of distribution of the DWF report is crucial, as is having enough time between semesters to adequately work with students. In some cases, lack of core classes can create a difficulty in students progressing.

MATRIX D

High-impact strategy	Adoption and implementation of 15 to Finish. Beginning in Fall 2013, we increased the number of credit hours in the first-time freshmen learning communities from 12-14 hours to 14-16 hours and advisors have been trained to encourage students to continue taking 15+ credits each semester.
Related Goal	Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned “on time”
Summary of Activities	Credits assigned to first-year students have been increased from 12-13 to at least 15 credit hours. Advisor training will emphasize the importance of taking at least 15 hours each semester (in progress).Beginning Fall 2013, we increased the number of credit hours first-year students take with the goal of having all students enrolled in at least 15 credits each semester. This has been highly successful in increasing the number of students on track to graduate within four years. The effect has persisted with more students enrolling in 15 or more hours in the spring term. In two years we have almost doubled the percentage of first-year students enrolled full-time in credit-earning classes, who have successfully completed at least 28 credits by the end of the spring semester (17% of the Fall 2011 cohort did this, compared to 33% of the Fall 2013 cohort).
Baseline status	The general history of advising at GSW was to have students sign up for twelve hours a semester, in order for them to be successful in those fewer hours.
Interim Measures of Progress	Increased number of credit hours attempted and completed by first-year students enrolled full-time in credit-earning classes. In 2014, 61.7 percent of the FTFT cohort attempted 15 or more credit hours (compared to 2013, when 49.6 percent attempted). In 2014, 36.3 percent of the FTFT cohort actually earned 15 or more credit hours (compared to 2013, when 22.8 percent earned hours). At the same time, 75.3 percent of these students in 2014 maintained a GPA of 2.00 or higher.
Measures of Success	Improved 4-year graduation rate. Outcome Metrics 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 (Table 9 and 12 in the Appendix); Needed: Outcome Metrics 2.2. By 2020 we expect to have 22 percent of our students graduating within four years.
Lessons Learned	Better advisor training, and better preparation of students as they come through our summer orientation and registration programs have led to more students attempting fifteen hours a semester or more. The percentage of students taking fifteen or more hours, and the number of students coming into college already with college credit, continues to increase. A lesson learned is that students can do as well in 15 hours as 12 hours. In fact, with the right support, they can actually do better while taking more hours.

MATRIX E

High-impact strategy	Using Campus Labs technology in order to implement Collegiate Link. Collegiate Link is a type of social media software that fosters multiple and deeper integration into campus social networks sponsored and supported by Student Affairs. Our branded version is called Canes Connect, and is used to strengthen social integration primarily outside of the classroom.
Related Goal	Goal 2: Increase the number of degrees that are earned “on time”
Summary of Activities	All research shows that the more socially integrated students are in the culture of the academy, the more likely it is that they will succeed. Toward that end, we see the importance of extra-curricular activities as they are crucial in helping students feel they are part of the academic community. Any extra-curricular activity--from health, wellness, and intramural sports, to serving in the Student Government Association, to attending academic lectures—adds to the sense of cohesiveness and motivation that are necessary for all student success. The many activities sponsored within the Residence Halls, the debates and panels sponsored by Panorama, Third-World Studies, and Windows to the World, are crucial parts to engaging students and keeping them on track to graduate.
Baseline status	This system was implemented for the first time in the 2014-15 academic year.
Interim Measures of Progress	Table 15 shows specifically how data are collected in Canes Connect. The efficacy of the system is still in the developmental stages.
Measures of Success	Measures of success include data from Table 13 which are measures of student engagement, and data from Tables 16 and 17 that indicate health and wellness activities. Table 14, which is a compilation of results from Noel-Levitz surveys of parents during our summer orientation series, indicates areas of strength and weaknesses that need further addressing.
Lessons Learned	Canes Connect is a useful tool, but it is not yet fully integrated into GSW’s culture. Our Windows to the World program is relatively recent, with only one year of data that will remain incomplete until we have had a cohort go through a full four years of the program. With this said, we have very strong student programming in the extra-curricular dimension, and with the augmentation of Canes Connect, we should be able to safely say that these programs are having a positive effect on our retention and graduation rates.

3. OBSERVATIONS

The strategies listed in this report are not an exhaustive list of activities undertaken to improve student success, but they are ones in which we have invested much time and effort, and we hope to continue to focus on these particular strategies for at least several more years in order to have established clear patterns in the data that lead to a confirmation of practice. GSW is about to embark on a new strategic plan for the institution that will guide it over the next five to seven years, and we fully expect that the strategies in this report will not only be endorsed, but will serve as a foundation for further development in terms of how we encourage and sustain students beyond the first year. Indeed, toward that end, in May 2014 we held our first ever Retention Retreat. Partially growing out of the findings of that two-day process, we created an Enrollment Management Council, which will help oversee retention efforts and continue to aid in the effort to break down silos across campus and strengthen our ability to retain and graduate the students who come to our institution. In addition to these efforts, we have contracted with the Educational Advisory Board to aid us with data analysis and consultation over the next three years in an effort to become fully knowledgeable about best practice and to be better able to implement strategies in the most efficient manner possible. Specially, we hope that EAB will help us strengthen our advising process throughout a student’s career at GSW. As an institution, it is unlikely that we can move toward the professional advising model for all students, so helping our current faculty and staff become more efficient at what they do is part of how we intend to succeed. Degree Works should help with efficiency, but as this program was implemented only last year, we think it will be some time before it is fully integrated into our culture and can demonstrate that it is making a difference. A growing focus on transfer students and on on-line

students is also part of our planning for the future.

Indeed, perhaps the most important change we are making at GSW is a shift in our thinking about student success. During the past three years we have held a series of university-wide convocations to share retention data, propose institutional policies to address roadblocks to student success, and to solicit input on problem areas and strategies we might implement. These have been well-attended events and have fostered productive conversations outside of silos that are leading to a number of changes, big and small, but most significantly, they are leading to a change in our overall culture. Given the student population we serve, the stakes are high not just for GSW but also for our region and our state. We are looking forward to continuing our efforts to improve student success with the momentum gained over the last two years. In the end, we look at our one year retention rate, which currently stands at 75.9 percent, the highest it has been (with the exception of an anomalous year due to a financial aid issue) in the past fifteen years, and we think we are on the right track to doing some things well here at Georgia Southwestern State University.

APPENDIX
Complete College Georgia Campus Plan
August 3, 2015

Table 1: Fall Undergraduate Special Populations Enrollment

	Fall Term								
	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
Total Undergraduate Enrollment	2222	2221	2420	2659	2847	2811	2749	2667	2527
Number of Undergraduates with Record of Parents' College Level	1508	1520	1910	2250	2492	2469	2413	2376	2350
Number of First Generation Undergraduates (no parent/guardian with a bachelor degree or higher)	898	945	1279	1439	1521	1439	1379	1345	1346
% of All Undergraduates who are First Generation	40.4	42.5	52.9	54.1	53.4	51.2	50.2	50.4	53.3
Received Pell Grant Fall term	890	885	941	1134	1335	1377	1292	1254	1152
Percent Undergraduates with Pell	40.1	39.8	38.9	42.6	46.9	49.0	47.0	47.0	45.6
Number of Non-traditional Undergraduates (25 or older at first matriculation)	444	454	512	612	650	643	620	633	556
Percent Non-traditional Undergraduates	20.0	20.4	21.2	23.0	22.8	22.9	22.6	23.7	22.0
Number of Non-traditional Undergraduates (age 25 or older)	647	648	705	808	848	855	837	837	749
Percent of Undergraduates Age 25 or Older	29.1	29.2	29.1	30.4	29.8	30.4	30.4	31.4	29.6

Table 2: Fall First-time Full-time Freshmen Cohort Special Populations Enrollment

	Fall Term								
	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
Total First-time Full-time (FTFT) Cohort	399	388	418	435	474	404	374	351	386
Number of FTFT Cohort with Record of Parents' College Level	354	275	411	409	445	364	338	328	381
Number of First Generation FTFT Cohort (no parent/guardian with a bachelor degree or higher)	233	184	268	222	217	181	172	176	194
% of All FTFT Cohort who are First Generation	58.4	47.4	64.1	51.0	45.8	44.8	46.0	50.1	50.3
Received Pell Grant Fall Term	159	160	162	204	230	195	182	160	183
Percent FTFT Cohort with Pell	39.8	41.2	38.8	46.9	48.5	48.3	48.7	45.6	47.4
Number of Non-traditional FTFT Cohort	22	18	10	22	20	18	2	4	4
Percent of Non-traditional FTFT Cohort	5.5	4.6	2.4	5.1	4.2	4.5	0.5	1.1	1.0

Table 3: Demographic Information for Bachelor's Degrees Awarded in an Academic Year

		FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	1 Year Change	10 Year Change
Females	Asian	1	0	1	4	3	2	6	4	4	4	5	25.00	
	Black or African American	55	56	73	73	80	68	93	92	88	99	100	1.01	78.57
	Hispanic/Latino	2	1	3	3	0	3	6	5	4	6	17	183.33	1600.00
	American Indian or Alaska Native	0	2	1	0	2	3	2	0	0	0	0		-100.00
	White	167	157	170	170	160	195	255	229	243	258	211	-18.22	34.39
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0		
	Multiracial	1	0	0	4	2	2	6	4	6	4	7	75.00	
	Non-resident Alien	1	6	6	3	2	2	5	10	9	2	5	150.00	-16.67
	Race/Ethnicity Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	-100.00	
	subtotal	227	222	254	257	249	275	374	345	354	374	345	-7.75	55.41
Males	Asian	0	0	1	0	2	3	3	2	1	5	2	-60.00	
	Black or African American	19	20	21	14	32	29	25	24	33	26	32	23.08	60.00
	Hispanic/Latino	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	4	4	1	8	700.00	700.00
	American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	-100.00	
	White	85	79	92	85	101	91	111	137	102	123	122	-0.81	54.43
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	Multiracial	0	1	0	3	0	2	2	4	0	4	1	-75.00	0.00
	Non-resident Alien	3	5	1	3	1	2	5	8	17	6	7	16.67	40.00
	Race/Ethnicity Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	-100.00	
	subtotal	107	106	116	105	136	131	149	181	157	167	172	2.99	62.26
Total		334	328	370	362	385	406	523	526	511	541	517	-4.44	57.62
Number Received Pell Grant (at any time at GSW)		182	183	187	182	199	199	284	295	301	311	324	4.18	77.05
%		54.5	55.8	50.5	50.3	51.7	49.0	54.3	56.1	58.9	57.5	62.7		
Number of First Generation (no parent/guardian with bachelor degree or higher)		63	50	114	108	138	213	280	297	253	256	268	4.69	
%		18.9	15.2	30.8	29.8	35.8	52.5	53.5	56.5	49.5	47.3	51.8		
# Graduates with First Generation Data		116	96	221	224	226	310	436	443	423	475	465		

Table 4: Demographic Information for Bachelor's Degrees Awarded in an Academic Year Continued

	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	1 Year Change	10 Year Change
Age 17-19 at graduation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0		
Age 20-22	76	91	105	100	103	98	155	114	124	132	118	-10.61	29.67
Age 23-24	103	109	112	118	105	109	133	160	142	162	149	-8.02	36.70
Age 25-26	49	32	46	40	44	49	46	55	61	59	61	3.39	90.63
Age 27-28	31	26	23	28	26	28	38	38	33	32	34	6.25	30.77
Age 29-30	12	11	16	14	18	15	26	38	22	22	38	72.73	245.45
Age 31-34	21	20	24	21	23	33	45	39	42	48	29	-39.58	45.00
Age 35-39	21	16	28	18	28	30	32	29	40	35	43	22.86	168.75
Age 40 +	21	23	16	23	38	44	48	52	47	51	45	-11.76	95.65
Average	27.2	27	26.7	26.7	27.9	28.6	27.9	28.1	27.7	27.3	27.7		

Table 5: Number of Bachelor’s Degrees Awarded in an Academic Year

School or Department	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	1 Year Change	10 Year Change
Biology	6	6	13	10	9	6	9	5	11	13	14	9	7	9	28.6	0.0
Chemistry	12	9	4	9	7	3	6	2	6	8	2	0	3	0	-100.0	-100.0
English and Foreign Languages	8	6	7	2	5	4	4	9	6	16	5	7	7	12	71.4	140.0
Art	7	10	7	9	5	6	3	8	5	7	9	6	4	3	-25.0	-40.0
Dramatic Arts	0	0	0	2	2	2	4	3	2	2	7	3	4	8	100.0	300.0
Music	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	1	5	1	2	0	3	3	0.0	200.0
Geology	6	1	0	4	3	0	1	2	2	3	2	1	4	3	-25.0	0.0
History	8	9	10	12	11	19	18	13	15	12	10	13	15	13	-13.3	18.2
Political Science	1	6	6	0	6	4	7	2	2	7	9	4	6	6	0.0	0.0
Mathematics	2	0	4	3	7	3	2	9	8	7	9	8	4	4	0.0	-42.9
Psychology	44	27	46	27	34	41	33	39	32	33	34	41	49	32	-34.7	-5.9
Sociology	17	17	19	13	15	18	19	10	15	8	10	11	15	16	6.7	6.7
Business	85	89	97	88	109	107	125	148	141	197	208	201	208	197	-5.3	80.7
Computer and Information Science	25	21	7	13	16	17	8	10	9	13	10	11	20	22	10.0	37.5
Education	68	62	64	87	51	76	76	66	72	108	96	72	76	80	5.3	56.9
Health and Human Performance	13	19	14	35	23	31	15	28	22	29	34	36	30	39	30.0	69.6
Nursing	9	22	21	19	24	31	30	30	53	59	67	90	91	80	-12.1	233.3
Total	311	304	319	334	328	370	362	385	406	523	528	513	546	527	-3.5	60.7

Table 6: One Term and One Year Retention Rates of First-time Full-time Freshmen Cohort

Fall Cohort	First-time Full-time Freshmen	Institution-specific Retention Rates	
		1-Term	1-Year
		(1st Fall to 1st Spring)	(1st Fall to 2nd Fall)
2001	266	92.11	71.80
2002	331	91.24	65.56
2003	326	90.18	65.64
2004	360	87.50	70.28
2005	357	88.80	64.71
2006	399	88.47	63.91
2007	388	93.30	76.03
2008	418	91.39	68.90
2009	435	92.18	66.44
2010	474	90.51	64.77
2011	404	89.11	62.62
2012	374	91.18	64.97
2013	351	92.02	69.80
2014	386	91.71	75.9 as of July 2015

Table 7: Freshmen Cohort* Term Grade Point Average (GPA) at end of First Fall Term

Fall Term GPA	Cohort Year															
	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
3.50 to 4.00	75	17.6	109	22.8	82	16.7	91	18.1	59	14.3	77	19.3	74	19.7	77	19.6
3.00 to 3.49	95	22.3	87	18.2	102	20.8	97	19.3	63	15.3	74	18.5	78	20.7	86	21.9
2.50 to 2.99	81	19.0	81	16.9	83	16.9	93	18.5	70	16.9	81	20.3	70	18.6	68	17.3
2.00 to 2.49	61	14.3	71	14.9	70	14.3	63	12.5	70	16.9	65	16.3	62	16.5	65	16.5
1.50 to 1.99	34	8.0	40	8.4	42	8.6	42	8.4	59	14.3	38	9.5	33	8.8	36	9.2
0.00 to 1.49	68	16.0	67	14.0	79	16.1	102	20.3	87	21.1	60	15.0	56	14.9	56	14.2
No GPA**	12	2.8	23	4.8	32	6.5	14	2.8	5	1.2	5	1.3	3	0.8	5	1.3

*Includes both full-time and part-time students. **Didn't Complete Term or was Enrolled only in Learning Support Courses

Table 8: First-time Freshmen Cohort First Fall Term Grades (% of As, Bs, Cs)

Course	Percent of As, Bs, Cs							
	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
Principles of Biology I	34.9	59.4	28	46.1	30.8	43.3	50.0	37.9
Essentials of Biology I	71.4	64	69.4	70.2	56.7	74.4	60.2	56.3
Principles of Chemistry I	87.6	57.2	77.8	71.4	83.3	70.6	50.0	91.7
Earth, Mat., Processes, & Env.	-	71.5	53.6	81	65.5	38.9	53.8	--
College Algebra	68	57.6	52.7	63.8	59.5	75	52.6	67.8
Math Modeling	-	-	-	-	66.7	92.3	57.1	64.7
American Government	69.8	71.9	75.3	53.1	48	44.8	58.1	50.0
World Civilization I	71.2	93.4	65.2	38.8	66.7	76.5	44.4	80.8
World Civilization II	78	65.5	41.2	50.5	45.6	60.3	73.5	70.0
US History I	81.3	-	90.2	72.8	-	--	--	--
US History II	83.3	68.2	75	75.4	75.8	56.4	73.3	77.6
Introduction to Psychology	67.3	83	68.1	72.8	68.7	72.5	72.7	80.8
Human Growth and Development	-	79.4	85.2	77.1	69.6	91.8	78.5	85.9
Introduction to Sociology	76.5	57.3	53	57.2	64	46.3	78.0	61.4
English Composition I	77.7	77.3	78.4	81.2	62.2	73.3	72.6	80.2

Table 9: Credit Hours Attempted and Earned by the First-time Full-time Freshmen Cohort						
	Cohort Year					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number First-time Full-time Freshmen Cohort	435	474	404	374	351	386
Number Attempted 15 or more Hours in Fall Term	68	98	81	62	174	238
Percent Attempted 15 or more Hours in Fall Term	15.6	20.7	20.0	16.6	49.6	61.7
Number Earned 15 or more Hours at end of Fall term	34	45	29	31	80	140
Percent Earned 15 or more Hours at end of Fall Term	7.8	9.5	7.2	8.3	22.8	36.3
Number Earned 30 or more Hours in Fall/Spring Terms	22	28	23	39	49	98
Percent Earned 30 or more Hours in Fall/Spring Term	5.1	5.9	5.7	10.4	14.0	25.4

Note: Hours = institutional hours only. Hours earned for Fall 2009-2012 were not extracted until 2013. As a result of repeated classes, these numbers under-represent the actual hours earned at the end of the term because credit hours from repeated courses are excluded from the total hours earned in previous terms.

Table 10: Retention Rates for GSW First-time Full-time Freshmen Cohort

Rate	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Institution-Specific	63.9 (n=399)	76.0 (n=388)	68.9 (n=418)	66.4 (n=435)	64.8 (n=474)	62.6 (n=404)	65.0 (n=374)	69.8 (n=351)
Disaggregated Institution-Specific								
Traditional-aged	66.3 (n=377)	76.8 (n=370)	69.1 (n=408)	68.3 (n=413)	65.9 (n=454)	64.5 (n=386)	65.1 (n=372)	69.7 (n=347)
White, Non-Hispanic	67.3 (n=220)	72.3 (n=242)	69.3 (n=241)	67.3 (n=254)	66.3 (n=297)	67.9 (n=221)	61.3 (n=230)	71.5 (n=221)
African American or Black, Non-Hispanic	67.5 (n=126)	87.0 (n=108)	67.9 (n=140)	67.7 (n=130)	63.5 (n=126)	58.9 (n=112)	70.2 (n=124)	60.0 (n=95)
Other	54.8 (n=31)	75.0 (n=20)	74.1 (n=27)	79.3 (n=29)	71.0 (n=31)	62.3 (n=53)	77.8 (n=18)	87.1 (n=31)
Male	62.2 (n=156)	75.4 (n=134)	61.7 (n=175)	61.8 (n=173)	64.1 (n=178)	65.4 (n=159)	62.6 (n=155)	65.2 (n=138)
Female	69.2 (n=221)	77.5 (n=236)	74.7 (n=233)	72.9 (n=240)	67.0 (n=276)	63.9 (n=227)	66.8 (n=217)	72.7 (n=209)
White, Female	70.5 (n=122)	72.0 (n=143)	79.7 (n=128)	74.6 (n=130)	67.9 (n=184)	67.5 (n=123)	61.5 (n=130)	77.0 (n=135)
Black, Female	68.3 (n=82)	87.5 (n=80)	68.5 (n=89)	69.5 (n=95)	61.5 (n=78)	57.5 (n=73)	73.7 (n=76)	58.3 (n=60)
White, Male	63.3 (n=98)	72.7 (n=99)	57.5 (n=113)	59.7 (n=124)	63.7 (n=113)	68.4 (n=98)	61.0 (n=100)	62.8 (n=86)
Black, Male	65.9 (n=44)	85.7 (n=28)	66.7 (n=51)	66.7 (n=35)	66.7 (n=48)	64.6 (n=39)	64.6 (n=48)	62.9 (n=35)
Initially enrolled as Commuting Students	58.3 (n=115)	74.2 (n=97)	67.0 (n=112)	71.5 (n=123)	69.2 (n=133)	66.1 (n=118)	65.0 (n=100)	68.0 (n=97)
Initially enrolled as On-campus Residents	69.9 (n=262)	77.7 (n=273)	69.9 (n=296)	66.9 (n=290)	64.5 (n=321)	63.8 (n=268)	65.1 (n=272)	70.4 (n=250)
Initially enrolled in Learning-support classes ¹	57.4 (n=54)	78.2 (n=55)	45.8 (n=48)	63.0 (n=46)	68.4 (n=38)	55.3 (n=47)	54.6 (n=22)	58.3 (n=24)
Non-traditional ²	22.7 (n=22)	61.1 (n=18)	60.00 (n=10)	31.8 (n=22)	40.0 (n=20)	22.2 (n=18)	50.0 (n=2)	750.0 (n=4)
Pell Recipients	55.3 (n=159)	73.8 (n=160)	59.9 (n=162)	62.3 (n=204)	64.1 (n=231)	56.4 (n=195)	62.1 (n=182)	68.8 (n=160)

Table 11: Six Year Bachelor’s Graduation Rates for GSW First-time Full-time Freshmen Cohort						
Rate	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Institution-Specific	35 (n=323)	30.7 (n=352)	30.1 (n=356)	29.3 (n=399)	35.8 (n=388)	32.1 (n=418)
Disaggregated Institution-Specific						
Traditional-aged	37.7 (n=300)	31.8 (n=321)	32.7 (n=324)	31.0 (n=377)	37.6 (n=370)	32.8 (n=408)
White, Non-Hispanic African American or Black, Non-Hispanic	40.4 (n=161)	34.3 (n=201)	35.2 (n=210)	34.5 (n=220)	37.5 (n=240)	34.0 (n=241)
Other	35.8 (n=120)	29.4 (n=109)	31.1 (n=90)	28.6 (n=126)	37.1 (n=105)	32.9 (n=140)
Male	26.3 (n=19)	9.1 (n=11)	16.7 (n=24)	16.1 (n=31)	40.0 (n=25)	22.2 (n=27)
Female	29.4 (n=102)	26.4 (n=106)	22.4 (n=152)	22.4 (n=156)	34.3 (n=134)	26.9 (n=175)
White, Female	41.9 (n=198)	34.4 (n=215)	41.9 (n=172)	37.1 (n=221)	39.4 (n=236)	37.3 (n=233)
Black, Female	41.7 (n=96)	39.8 (n=123)	44.4 (n=108)	41.0 (n=122)	40.4 (n=141)	43.0 (n=128)
White, Male	42.9 (n=91)	27.9 (n=86)	40.7 (n=54)	35.4 (n=82)	38.5 (n=78)	32.6 (n=89)
Black, Male	38.5 (n=65)	25.6 (n=78)	25.5 (n=102)	26.5 (n=98)	33.3 (n=99)	23.9 (n=113)
Initially enrolled as Commuting Students	13.8 (n=29)	34.8 (n=23)	16.7 (n=36)	15.9 (n=44)	33.3 (n=27)	33.3 (n=51)
Initially enrolled as On-Campus Residents	31.5 (n=111)	24.0 (n=121)	31.8 (n=110)	31.3 (n=115)	30.9 (n=97)	28.6 (n=112)
Initially enrolled in Learning-support classes ¹	41.3 (n=189)	36.5 (n=200)	33.2 (n=214)	30.9 (n=262)	39.9 (n=273)	34.5 (n=296)
Non-traditional ²	28.6 (n=28)	28.8 (n=59)	27.7 (n=47)	18.5 (n=54)	27.3 (n=55)	20.8 (n=48)
Pell Recipients	0 (n=23)	19.4 (n=31)	3.1 (n=32)	0.0 (n=22)	0.0 (n=18)	0.0 (n=10)
	32.6 (n=138)	23.7 (n=152)	22.4 (n=143)	26.4 (n=159)	28.8 (n=160)	24.1 (n=162)

Table 12. First-time Full-time Bachelor Degree-seeking Cohort Graduation Rates						
Cohort Year	# in Cohort	% Graduated by:				
		4 YRS	5 YRS	6 YRS	7 YRS	8 YRS
2000	306	14.4	30.7	37.3	40.9	42.2
2001	266	11.7	29.7	35.0	37.2	38.0
2002	330	13.6	25.8	32.7	35.5	36.4
2003	323	14.9	30.3	35.0	37.5	39.0
2004	352	11.4	26.1	30.7	32.1	32.7
2005	356	10.4	25.0	30.1	30.9	31.7
2006	399	13.0	26.8	29.3	31.3	32.1
2007	388	15.2	30.4	35.8	37.4	
2008	418	10.1	25.6	32.1		
2009	435	11.3	26.0			
2010	474	13.7				

Table 13: Measures of Student Engagement



Office of Student Affairs
Residence Life Programing Summary
2014 – 2015

1 Residence Life Programming Model

- The department offers residents programs centered around a Five Star model (Community Development, Leadership, Educational, Social, and Philanthropy)

2 How programs are implemented (RA Requirements)

- Resident Assistants are required to plan and implement at least one Community Development, one Social, one Leadership, and one Educational program each semester. The philanthropy programs are completed by a residence hall’s entire staff.
- Resident Assistants complete program proposals and submit them to their area’s Residence Life Coordinator or Hall Director. These Head Staff members review the proposals and offer guidance to enable each program’s success. After programs are completed, the resident assistants submit a program summary to their supervisor which include an evaluation of the event’s outcomes, a log of its attendance, and an explanation of how any university funds were spent. These program reports are then compiled by the RLC/RHDs and submitted to the Director of Residence Life each semester.

3 Programming Summary 2014 - 2015

- This academic year we had **209** programs with attendance of approximately **5400** students.

	Oaks/FYE/LEAD 1000	Pines	Magnolia	Total
Community Development	32 (878)	13 (322)	11 (224)	56 (1424)
Leadership	19 (437)	11 (267)	9 (231)	39 (935)
Social	35 (905)	13 (350)	13 (272)	61 (1527)
Educational	27 (778)	10 (177)	8 (180)	45 (1135)
Philanthropy	6 (230)	1 (69)	1 (80)	8 (379)
Total Number of Programs (Attendance)	119 (3228)	48 (1185)	42 (987)	209 (5400)

Career Services

- Staff provided an introduction to Career Services in every University 1000 class (The GSW Experience); every freshman student at GSW must take this course.
- The Director offered the Foundations in Personal Finance course. One of the main reasons mentioned for dropping out of school is money. Budgeting and personal financial management are skills that can prepare students to be responsible with money, stay in school, and help to reduce defaults on student loans, which is an item on the President's College Score Card. Employers are seeking employees who will be responsible for planning and following budgets at work. Financial records are part of background checks, and ALL students desperately need this information. Sixteen students participated in the course introduction session, and four students purchased the text to complete the course. One student said, "Thank you for instructing this course. It has been one of the most valuable courses I've taken in my college career."
- The staff used Canes Connect and Beacon to connect with students. A Career Services Organization was established in Canes Connect. Staff produced marketing materials to encourage students to get involved in Canes Connect and to join the Organization's membership. Thirty-one members connected. Some of the students have their privacy setting to "hidden," so only the names of 8 students is known. The staff promoted 9 Different Career Services Events. In Beacon, email groups were formed to provide direct access to send event invitations to targeted groups.

Noel-Levitz Assessment

During the 2014-2015 academic year, there were 1369 members of the parents' email list. This was an increase of 23% from the 1110 members during the 2013-14 academic year. All members of our Parents Association email list are sent the monthly edition of an electronic newsletter, "Student Health 101." Student Health 101 is a monthly health and wellness magazine just for GSW students and their families. Each issue contains valuable information that will help students make better decisions and can help parents/guardians gain a better understanding of the health and wellness challenges that face today's students. Each month, our Parents Association members receive an e-mail with the latest issue of the family-only Student Advocate, along with the Student Health 101 issue that their students will receive. The newsletter is provided by a national organization, College Health Services. Members of our Parents Association also receive a monthly e-edition of a Campus Link Newsletter, published by Paper Clip Communications, but customized for GSW, including its logo. It addresses a wide range of topics and issues faced by college students, including tips and advice for dealing with those issues. Finally, members of our Parents Association receive some of the emails that are sent to students via the student email system. The emails are monitored and ones with information deemed important or interesting for parents is forwarded to the parent email list.

We began using a Noel-Levitz Assessment to determine how well we are communicating with students' families in order to promote and increase family support for students' college success. Fifty-six parents completed the survey at the end of the Spring 2015 semester.

Table 14: Noel-Levitz Results
(Sent to 1369 Parents Association members; 56 participated, a 4% response rate.)

This year the individual items on the survey that were determined to reflect our STRENGTHS were:

- 3. The campus is safe and secure.
- 14. Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of my child.
- 28. Security staff respond quickly to calls for assistance.
- 4. The content of the courses within my child's major is valuable.
- 49. If needed, my child can readily access medical care, either on campus or in the community.
- 18. Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.
- 58. Campus item: My child is developing skills that will serve him/her well in life beyond school.
- 60. Campus item: My student is comfortable with the atmosphere of this campus.

Noel Levitz's analysis shows the following items from the survey to be CHALLENGES:

- 46. I am confident my child will be well-prepared for his/her chosen career path when he/she graduates.
- 47. I am confident my child will be successful academically at this institution.
- 36. The quality of instruction my child receives in most of his/her classes is excellent.
- 10. Academic advisors help my child to set goals to work toward.
- 16. Academic advisors are available when my child needs help.
- 23. My child is able to register for classes he/she needs with few conflicts.
- 35. My child seldom gets the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus.
- 24. My child receives the help he/she needs to apply academic major to career goals.
- 8. Financial aid awards are announced in time to be helpful in college and financial planning.
- 27. This institution helps our family to identify resources to finance our child's education.
- 17. There are sufficient courses within my child's program of study available each term.
- 38. My child receives ongoing feedback about his/her progress toward academic goals.
- 5. Administrators are available to hear students' concerns.
- 11. Financial aid counseling is available for my child as needed.

For the purposes of benchmarking, the Noel Levitz analysis highlights that GSW received higher ranking of satisfaction than the national norm in the following items:

- 28. Security staff respond quickly to calls for assistance.
- 13. Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable for my child.
- 18. Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.

And lower than the national norm in these items:

- 47. I am confident my child will be successful academically at this institution.
- 8. Financial aid awards are announced in time to be helpful in college and financial planning.

Collegiate Link

Collegiate Link or Canes Connect as we call it at Georgia Southwestern is an online platform that allows student organizations and students to stay connected through campus engagement, student activities, and event promotion. This online platform allows for new students to assess their desires when it comes to student involvement and receive placement based on the desires/likes they checked off through their profile. Student organizations have the capability of registering their organization on a yearly basis, and promote student events, whether it is philanthropic, academic, or social in nature.

1124 individual unique users have signed in to the Canes Connect System. This would include faculty, staff and students. There are currently 70 registered student organizations/departments. These organizations/departments consist of 5 Academic Organizations, 17 Departmental Departments, 13 Fraternity and Sorority, 1 Club Sport, 3 Honor Societies, and 31 GSW Student Organizations. There are 1070 student organization members claiming to be part of an organization through Canes Connect.

Table 15: Planned Student Events

The following organizations had the planned events advertised and attendance assessment through Canes Connect:

Event	Program	Attendance
Intercultural Ambassadors-Orientation	Windows to the World	10
Forecast Friday	Career Services	13
Campus Pride Day November	Campus Life	17
Student Appreciation Day 2015	Campus Life	17
Campus Pride Day February	Campus Life	18
Students in Shanghai	Windows to the World	22
Greek Week 2015: Service Project	Greek Life	38
Crisis in Ukraine: Causes and Implications	Windows to the World	52
Greek Week 2015: Social	Greek Life	54
The Reality of Living in a Global Community	Windows to the World	56
Students' Experience in UNIV 4000 - Nicaragua	Windows to the World	58
Evolution of a Black Girl	Campus Activities Board	62
Greek Week 2015: Convocation	Greek Life	76
The U.S. and the Middle East	Windows to the World	85
Build-A-Bear Valentine's Day Edition	Campus Activities Board	148

There were 301 events registered through the Canes Connect system for the Academic School Year.

The Campus Activities Board conducts a student satisfaction and programming survey to all students during the Spring Semester at GSW. This survey helps CAB decide when to program, what to program, and how students think the organization is doing. This survey is given online through Survey Monkey and is given to every student attending GSW through their campus email account. 408 students completed the CAB satisfaction survey which is approximately 15% of the college student population.

Campus Recreation

Georgia Southwestern State University’s **Department of Campus Recreation and Intramurals** for FYE 2014-2015 provided Intramural Leagues, Tournaments, individual play sports, group exercise, fitness center hours, open gym hours, game room hours and special events.

Recreational Sports received a SGA allocation of \$48k which was an increase of \$3k. This small increase enable Intramurals to offer small tourneys to accommodate student needs for recreational sports.

Table 16: Campus Rec and Intramural Impact

- Provided 2 major IM Leagues
- Offered 9 special events/tourneys
- Championship Awards were not provided

GSW Unique Participations	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Male	151	115	195
Female	36	31	147
Co-ed	0	113	92
Total teams	31	38	65

Table 17: Fitness and Wellness

This program is continuing to grow and remains significant to the GSW campus community as well as Americus community. Fitness Center is serving more than ever and Group Exercise continues to transition due to budget cuts. Yoga remains our most popular class.

- GSW Fitness Stats - Fitness Center had 56,769 swipes for year 2014-2015; 10,811 more than previous year (45,958).

Group Exercise	2013/2015	2014/2015
Males	273	644
Females	2718	3721
unknown	2446	
Total	5437	4365

SSC Game Room

The game room continues to draw a significant participation. Yearly upgrades to this area have been beneficial.

- Game Room Participation – 2013/14 had 10,307 swipes and 2014/15 had 12,444 swipes.